



EXECUTIVE REPORT

2ND NATIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT

ADAM JACKSON

UNION OF TAXATION EMPLOYEES

NATIONAL CONVENTION

JULY 2021 - VIRTUEL



2021 NATIONAL TRIENNIAL CONVENTION OF THE UNION OF TAXATION EMPLOYEES

REPORT OF THE SECOND NATIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT TO THE EIGHTEENTH TRIENNIAL CONVENTION (2021) OF THE UNION OF TAXATION EMPLOYEES

I was honoured to have been elected as your 2nd National Vice President at the 2017 UTE Convention and absolutely loved serving the membership for what turned out to be four years in this capacity.

At the September 2017 Executive Council, I was assigned the duties of Chair of the Workforce Adjustment Committee and the Co-Chair of the Staffing Committee. In addition to the elected portfolio of Collective Bargaining, I was also a member of the Executive Committee.

The primary roles and activities of the 2nd National Vice-President responsible for bargaining are set out in By-Law 10 Section 2 and 4 of the UTE By-Laws (copied below) and certain parts of Regulation 10.

BY-LAW 10 - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 2 - Vice-Presidents

1. The Vice-Presidents shall submit written reports on their assigned responsibilities at each regular meeting of the Executive Council and to the Convention.
2. If the office of President becomes vacant between Conventions or the incumbent becomes unable to perform the duties of the position, the 1st Vice-President shall assume the office temporarily.
3. In the temporary absence of the President and with the concurrence of the President, the 1st Vice-President shall exercise all the functions and shall be vested with all the powers of the President.
4. In the temporary absence of the President and the 1st Vice-President and with the concurrence of the President, the 2nd Vice-President shall exercise the functions and shall be vested with all the powers of the President.

5. In circumstances not covered by these By-Laws, the Executive Council shall have the authority to appoint persons to these positions temporarily.
6. At the meetings of the National Board of Directors of the PSAC, the Alternate to the President shall be the 1st Vice-President or in the absence of the 1st Vice-President, the 2nd Vice-President shall be the Alternate.

Section 4 - The 2nd Vice-President responsible for Collective Bargaining shall:

1. oversee the implementation of the Regulation governing Collective Bargaining procedures;
2. issue frequent bulletins on the state of negotiations during the bargaining process;
3. be the Chairperson of the Standing Bargaining Committee;
4. participate on the PSAC/CRA Negotiating Team;
5. be the Chairperson of the National Bargaining Committee;
6. be a member of the PSAC National Strategy/Strike Co-ordinating Committee (NSCC);
7. ensure that the bargaining process for UTE is handled in a sound manner in the best interest of the members; and
8. attend and participate in discussions and meetings in preparation for bargaining between PSAC/UTE and the employer.

In accordance with the Regulation and By-Law above, I attended regular Executive Council meetings, Presidents' Conferences, and a PSAC National Board of Directors meeting, in addition to Annual General Meetings, regional meetings/virtual town halls and pre-negotiation meetings with the employer.

BARGAINING

When I was elected the 2nd National Vice-President, our collective agreement had been expired for nine (9) months. The Local Presidents had to elect their Tax Centre (TC) and Tax Services Office (TSO) representatives for the Standing Bargaining Committee and then Executive council had to appoint five (5) Regional Vice-Presidents (RVPs) to the National Bargaining Committee (plus the members of the Standing Committee). At that point, over ten days, the National Committee put together the package of demands to present to our National Bargaining Team for negotiation at the table. Once that was assembled, we reached out through our Negotiator, Morgan Gay, to signal to the employer our readiness to meet.

After ten (10) bargaining sessions, two (2) impasses, two (2) weeks of mediation, a Public Interest Commission hearing, and multiple strike votes, we finally won an historic agreement that was ratified; one that was contingent upon the UTE and CRA agreeing on precedent setting term conversion. The UTE literally made history. Now we build on it!

There is no way this could have been done without the membership and local activists helping support the fight every step of the way. Each T-shirt, each poster in a cubicle, each local action, each plant-gate, each time we engaged each other, the employer watched and saw the solidarity growing. That is what gets us a contract.

I was incredibly privileged to work with a team that brought that solidarity to the table and overcame every obstacle put in our way. I would also be remiss if I didn't take a moment to thank everyone for their unwavering support during a time of indescribable personal loss for me. The words of support and love kept me going. You will never be forgotten. We will all experience this at some point and I can say without reservation, there is no stronger bond, no more caring group, no more steadyng keel than the union movement and in particular, the UTE. You are in the right place, friends.

Currently, the Senior Labour Relations Officer and I are in talks identifying housekeeping items and "irritants" in the collective agreement that are causing mutual problems or even no longer apply to our members so that we can save a bit of time at the table as we move along. As you know, we are coming up to an expired contract and the work has already begun. The pandemic has changed our work-life and the way we do things and we need to incorporate unprecedeted protections next round to ensure that while the world has changed, not always for the best, our protections will grow for the better.

Your collective agreement is the guardian of your work-life. It is your Union's greatest tool in fighting for your rights. Never give up the fight.

Workforce Adjustment

Arguably one of the most important provisions in the collective agreement (and arguably one of the least read, thankfully) is on job security. Appendix C covers workforce adjustment (WFA).

I was assigned the Chair of this Committee, but had been a member of the Committee for many years before and have been through all sorts of Harper-Era WFA where the lists of affected members kept growing and growing through cutbacks wrapped in a fuzzy blanket called Cost Containment or Expenditure Review. Whenever you hear silly names like that, it is time to pay attention; it literally means the job you know and love is at risk.

Fortunately, this time around, the number of affected members was very small and managed quickly and effectively. We had very little reason to meet as Guaranteed Reasonable Job Offers and Reasonable Job Offers were being issued routinely. A WFA Committee that is not busy means a workforce that is not affected.

CONCLUSION

No single position can be effective without the support and the incredible knowledge base we have around us. It is what makes us a Union. The fight for better work-life balance, especially in light of what we have all been through, is best done as a large group. While it is cliché, there is no greater truth than “there is strength in numbers”. Without each other, we will fail - make no mistake. The bargaining process is no exception. We have proven we can overcome obstacles. We have proven we can serve Canadians when called upon and we will never underestimate our worth.

Stay safe, take care of your loved ones and keep up the fight.

In solidarity forever, I submit,

Adam Jackson
2nd National Vice-President