

BULLETIN

Val Avery re-elected as HSA president

April 11, 2017

Physiotherapist Val Avery was re-elected to serve as HSA president for another two years at the union's annual convention in Vancouver over the weekend. More than 300 delegates attended the convention.

"I've been active in the labour movement for over 30 years and let me tell you I have never once stopped being amazed at the skill, dedication and passion of our members," Avery told delegates.

"Every one of us comes into this union as an individual, often with a singular focus on the many challenges of our diverse and unique professions. But then something happens.

"We begin to see what binds us together, and what we can achieve when we are united. I am grateful you have given me your trust and confidence, and I pledge to earn it every day as we make the changes needed to build a stronger union in challenging times."

Following the convention, the Board of Directors re-elected Janice Morrison, a physiotherapist at Kootenay Lake Hospital, to serve as vice president and Cheryl Greenhalgh, a medical radiology technologist at Royal Columbian Hospital, to serve as secretary-treasurer.

With the provincial election approaching, delegates debated resolutions on a number of issues calling for improved services for the patients and clients they serve as health care and community social services workers across the province, including support for a poverty reduction plan, improvements in mental health services, and action to prevent violence in health care and social services workplaces. BC NDP Leader John Horgan and Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives Director Seth Klein spoke to delegates about the importance of investing in public services in British Columbia.

Delegates also supported a number of resolutions to set the direction for the union for the coming year, including directing the union to consider hiring additional labour relations officers to keep up with growing demand for services, and the continued development and expansion of education programs to support stewards working to represent members in protecting their collective agreement rights.

Delegates again debated and rejected the question of moving away from a system of representative democracy for the election of president, voting to keep the current system of electing the president at conventions every two years. Delegates also rejected a proposal to limit the terms of office for elected union representatives.

BC Federation of Labour President Irene Lanzinger and National Union of Public and General Employees Secretary-Treasurer Elisabeth Ballerman both addressed the convention, and reiterated their support for HSA's efforts to protect members from a raid led by the BC Nurses' Union.

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