



Community Social Services: Monetary proposals tabled... awaiting employer response

June 1, 2012

The multi-union bargaining committee for community social service workers presented its monetary proposals to the employer during the latest week of bargaining, including wage and benefit demands

The employer will table their wage and benefit proposals and respond to unions when bargaining resumes the week of June 4.

Union representatives have made it clear that Community Social Service workers deserve a fair and reasonable deal, including a wage increase. The bargaining committee is also pushing back on concessionary demands by the employer, including revisiting improvements gained in the last round of bargaining with respect to job selection and bumping.

However, the employer ... the Community Social Services Employers Association (CSSEA) ... has already indicated that they are bound by the government's "co-operative gains" mandate, whereby modest wage increases can be found only by finding savings within existing budgets.

Regarding health and welfare benefits improvements, the union bargaining committee has now finished reviewing proposals for improvements. As part of the committee's due diligence, union representatives met with several benefit carriers as well as with WorkSafeBC - the Workers' Compensation Board of BC. Essential service levels for all the agencies and all the worksites will be completed very soon.

In summary, it appears that the parties may be far apart, especially on monetary issues. Even with bargaining dates scheduled until end of June, it is clear that the next bargaining session scheduled for the week of June 4 will be critical.

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CSSBA includes nine unions with a combined membership of about 15,000. The BCGEU is the largest union in the community social services sector, representing about two-thirds of workers. HSA, CUPE, and HEU are also in the association.

The Community Social Services Employers Association represents 220 agencies.

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