

Bargaining starts up again Tuesday

After a five-week interruption, your OPSEU bargaining team is heading back to the table with OPTrust management on Tuesday, November 4. This is the second meeting between the teams. On October 1, the teams met to exchange non-monetary proposals.



monetary proposals. These deal with a range of important issues identified by members during our demand-setting process last spring including:

- Alternate work arrangements
- Classification issues
- Job protection during organizational & technological change
- Job security improvements.

What's on the table

In all, OPSEU tabled more than 30 non-

continued on page 2

Show you're **STILL** plugged in!

In early October, OPSEU members at OPTrust marked the start of bargaining in style. You wore stickers, you put up posters and you turned out in force for a pizza lunch in the OPTrust café.

The result was a clear message to OPTrust management that you want a fair contract – and that you are paying close attention to what happens at the bargaining table.

Mobilizing for a strong contract

Since then bargaining has been on hold due to a scheduling problem with the management team.

The good news is that a committee of volunteers has used that time to plan ways members can help reinforce our message as bargaining continues. And with contract talks starting up again this week, the committee is asking for YOUR support.

Want to help?

Have ideas for building our campaign as bargaining proceeds? Want to get more involved? Contact a member of the **OPSEU Mobilizing Committee** or send an e-mail to opseulocal568@yahoo.com.

Plug yourself in: Nov. 3 to 7

Here's how you can help show OPTrust management that you're still paying attention.

➡ Wear a new **"I'm STILL plugged in"** sticker every day this week, from Monday Nov. 3 to Friday, Nov. 7.

➡ Put up an **"I'm STILL plugged in"** poster at your workstation

➡ Join us for **coffee and Timbits** during your morning break on Wednesday.

Where: OPTrust Café
12th Floor, 1 Adelaide St. E.

When: Wednesday, Nov. 5,
between 10 and 10:45 a.m.

See your steward or a member of the mobilizing committee for new stickers and posters.

Your OPSEU Mobilizing Committee is: Rita Aretusi, Sonia Baistrocchi (co-chair), Leigh Brain, Keith Duguay; Michelle Freitas, Ross Harper, Brian Hawrysh, Sean Homaie, Patricia Johnson, Myles Magner, Jocelyn Midghall, Yaso Myl, Henry Nanes, Satwant Pannu, Shirley Pazhaidam (co-chair), Richard Nelson, Joseph Rampersad, Jerry Sullivan, Dino Teixeira, Curtis Wright.

Bargaining resumes Tuesday ...continued from page 1

Other OPSEU proposals deal with:

- Protection for bargaining unit work
- Training & professional development.

The union team also made a number of minor housekeeping proposals to clarify, update or correct minor problems in the wording of the collective agreement

For its part, OPTrust management tabled nine proposals, including:

- Changes to current provisions for compensating time off
- Language on the use of BlackBerrys
- Changes to health & safety language on video display terminals (VDTs)
- Changes regarding work-life balance days.

That is where contract talks will pick up on Tuesday, with the start of real bargaining on these issues.

Bargaining basics:

Answers to your questions about bargaining at OPTrust

Q. How long will it take to negotiate our new contract?

A. That depends. Your OPSEU team is aiming to achieve a tentative agreement before the end of 2008. But we also want to negotiate a strong contract that makes progress on the key monetary and non-monetary issues identified by members.

It should be possible to achieve both goals. But that will depend on whether OPTrust management shows up ready to negotiate. That's why your visible support is so important. By showing that you back your team, you can help convince the employer that they have a stake in bargaining a fair deal now.

Q. Our contract expires on December 31. What happens if we don't have a deal by then?

A. If we still don't have a new contract by December 31, the terms of our current contract will continue unchanged into 2009. That is because under Ontario's labour law, a "freeze" comes into effect as soon as either party issues a notice to bargain. OPSEU did this on October 1.

That means your pay, benefits and working conditions would stay the same. But you also wouldn't get a pay increase on January 1.

What happens next?

The next several days of negotiations are important for three reasons.

First, your OPSEU team will be pushing for real progress on your key non-monetary issues. Second, the next few weeks will set the tone for the rest of bargaining – including monetary issues like wages and benefits. And third, they will tell us how ready management is to negotiate a fair contract that addresses your priorities.

Bargaining dates are currently scheduled for:

- November 4, 6 and 7
- November 13 and 14
- November 25, 26 and 27.

Stay tuned for more news on bargaining – and how you can help.

So if bargaining continues into 2009, our final agreement would need to deal with the question of retro pay. That's one of the reasons your bargaining team wants to achieve a fair contract before year-end.

Got a question about bargaining? Just let us know. Contact a member of the OPSEU bargaining team or the OPSEU mobilizing committee. Send an e-mail to opseulocal568@yahoo.com. Or come to the OPSEU coffee break on Wednesday Nov. 5.

Another way to stay plugged in

OPSEU local 568 is baaaack – online, that is. This week marks the re-launch of our local website.

On the site you'll find a complete archive of Bargaining Updates from this round of negotiations at OPTrust, a copy of our current collective agreement and lists of local contacts.

Check us out at www.opseu568.com and add the site to your bookmarks. That way you'll be able to get the latest news as OPTrust bargaining heats up.