



Municipally Speaking

Spring 2016

Hello and welcome to the Spring 2016 Sector 13 newsletter for OPSEU members working in municipalities. With this newsletter, we hope to keep you informed about upcoming events and what's happening in our sector.

Message from the Chair

When I became chair of the sector we were in the process of finalizing our sector bylaws. The process was long and challenging at times, but I'm very glad to say that we finally received approval of our updated bylaws from the president's office in December 2014.

With the bylaws updated, the executive has turned its attention to developing a compilation of article language from all sector collective agreements. It is our intent that bargaining committees from sector units will be able to access one consolidated document with language from different articles to assist with their own bargaining demands. If units are able to read language from similar units from across the province they will be able to see where they can make gains and improvements.

As we move forward with the consolidated survey of agreements we are also focusing on planning a bargaining conference. This one-day conference will bring together members of sector units and/or bargaining team members from across the province to discuss strategies and work on setting demands for bargaining.

Your sector executive is always looking to improve connections with members. The newsletter is just one way we can connect with members. The sector also has a Twitter feed and Facebook page; please be sure to like and follow us to keep up with current issues.

In solidarity
Tara Langford - Chair, OPSEU Sector 13

Goals of the executive

As your executive for the period of 2015- 2017, we thought you might like to know a few of the things that we plan to do:

- We will be reviewing sector units to ensure all units are meeting bylaw descriptions.
- We have started compiling data on survey articles and will collectively review them to determine which agreements are missing language, and which have the best language. We would like to see all units with the best language to suit their members.
- We will regularly review bargaining settlements to ensure the executive is up to date on settlements.



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Sector 13 Executive

At last year's Broader Public Service conference we elected our new executive. Here they are!



Chair - Tara Langford

I have worked for the County of Lanark for more than 22 years. During that time I have held many different positions in the social services department and I am currently an Ontario Works caseworker.

I have been actively involved with OPSEU in my workplace for almost 20 years. I have participated on many committees and have been a steward and local president for many years. I became part of the municipalities sector in the early 2000s and have been chair of our sector for the last six years.



Vice Chair - Theresa O'Connor

Five years ago I returned to an employer where OPSEU was the union. Since that time I have been very active and I'm very proud to be part of a wonderful organization. I started as a steward in my local. I was elected to the bargaining team and while trying to bargain a fair contract was invited to be the union mobilizer when my local was facing a potential strike. Two years ago, I was selected to be on the Aboriginal Circle for Region 2. I have been very active in my local community sitting on boards and councils for various organizations. I was attending my first BPS conference in 2015 and was intrigued enough to decide to run for a position on the executive. I am delighted to be part of the municipalities sector executive as the vice chair. During the next two years I would like to see the sector revive the voice of our members so that we have larger involvement at the BPS conference. I would like to see a pre-bargaining conference so that we can all benefit from a consolidated approach in contract negotiations. I look forward to serving you as the vice chair.



Treasurer - Pam Schmidt

I am employed in the finance department with the County of Hastings in Belleville where I have held the position of bookkeeper for more than 11 years. I became a steward after three years. Two years later, I ran for local treasurer and have been successful in maintaining my position to date.

I attended my first BPS conference in 2011. I was successful in running for the position of treasurer for the sector. With my background in finance I completed the accounting program at Loyalist College; I feel it is my professional strength and knowledge of accounting that I can offer to OPSEU.



Secretary - Dwayne Ebbers

I wish to thank our sector's brothers and sisters who gave me the opportunity to be the secretary on the Sector 13 executive.

My role is to record the minutes of our meetings in order to share with you the work being done by the executive. At the same time this is a wonderful opportunity to learn about the sector and how we are all dealing with issues in our locals.

I welcome any suggestions you may have for me so that I can better perform my duties. Please forward your ideas to our sector chair Tara Langford and she will forward them to me. In solidarity we will overcome all obstacles!



Communications - Kerri Wells

I have been a caseworker with Grey County social services since 2011. I was elected as union steward for my local in 2015 and also attended my first BPS conference that same year. In the past year I have attended educationals and conferences to enhance my knowledge and provide me with the tools to be a successful steward. I look forward to the next two years as an executive member.

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