

Hello

I'm writing with another update, as there are a few things going on right now that I want to let you know about. I'll be talking about the proposed constitutional amendment, the collective bargaining survey, and some information from the recent General Meeting.

### **Proposed Constitutional Amendment**

You should have all had an email today about the current constitutional amendment. The proposed amendment, if approved, will change the position of the Business Representative from being an elected position to a hired position. There are advantages and disadvantages to both options.

#### **Advantages of Having a Hired Business Representative**

One of the main advantages is that we would be able to hire from a highly qualified pool of candidates. At present the only qualification to be our Business Representative is to be a member in good standing. Over recent years our Local has grown significantly and as such the Business Representative's job has become increasingly more complex. In short, the Business Representative has a very broad range of responsibilities ranging from lobbying with federal, provincial and municipal levels of government, leading collective bargaining, liaising with studios and producers, and being a central point of contact with many other outside agencies. Although it is possible, it is difficult to develop all of these skills within the film industry, so it can be beneficial to bring in a well qualified external candidate. Most Locals of our size (and many smaller ones) have a hired Business Representative including IATSE 669, Teamsters 155, UBCP/ACTRA and DGC BC.

Another advantage, although it is one that we would hope we don't have to exercise, is that in the event that a hired Business Representative failed to perform or acted in an inappropriate manner, it would actually be easier to replace them than to replace an elected Business Representative mid term, so in many ways would be more accountable to the membership.

#### **Advantages of Having an Elected Business Representative**

The main advantage of having an elected Business Representative is that it is more in line with the ideology of our Union being a democratic entity. Through being elected the Business Representative is selected directly by the membership, and is drawn from the membership. They will likely also have a greater connection to the Local and in some aspects have more 'skin on the game'.

#### Misconceptions About The Constitutional Amendment

I also want to address some of the misconceptions that I have seen shared on Social Media and elsewhere such as at the recent General Meeting. The first is that this amendment will remove the Business Representative from our Local. This is absolutely not true. We would still have a Business Representative. What will change is the selection process for the Business Representative.

The second is that a hired Business Representative would not be accountable to the membership. This is also not true. Although we would not be able to remove a hired Business Representative through voting them out, they would still be required to report to the membership and could have their employment terminated if necessary. The accountability would be different, but it would still be there, just as it is with other Locals that have a hired Business Representative.

#### Constitutional Amendment Ballot

Please participate in the ballot as it is important that the result reflects the wishes of the whole membership.

#### **Collective Bargaining Survey**

You should also have received an email with the link our Local's Collective Bargaining Survey. Please take some time to complete the survey as it will help the Bargaining Committee determine the membership's priorities for our next round of Collective Bargaining. I have my own thoughts on what our priorities should be, but I want to hear yours, and the best way for me to hear them is through the survey.

#### **Recent General Meeting**

You may have heard some reports from our most recent General Meeting where the members present overturned a decision of the Executive Board to stop the software reimbursement, and as a result the software reimbursement program will be reinstated. While it is necessary for us to have a process to be able to overturn decisions of the Executive Board I want to provide some context on this particular occurrence.

Reinstating the software reimbursement will cost the Local something in the region of \$200,000 per year, in a year where we have just seen a deficit of about \$6,500,000. And we don't know if we will break even this year either.

While I would really like to see more members get more of everything, software is ultimately a tool, which should be rented by productions, and not subsidized by union members. And I believe that decisions like this, with this level of expenditure, should be made by the whole membership, not just the members present at a General Meeting.

Over the coming weeks I'll be looking at submitting a constitutional amendment requiring decisions like this, involving significant levels of expenditure, to be put to a vote of the whole membership. Because if it is the will of the membership to make that decision, then so be it, but I do believe we as members need greater input in these kinds of decisions.

Yours in Solidarity  
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A Rising Tide Floats All Boats

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