



Introduction of the reasons for the GA by Roy Fu, based on the legal requirements for a social strike, what the legal implication are, etc. Introduction by Roy Fu of our guests Patrice Racine from FNEEQ, and Diane Ford from CSN.

1. Adoption of Agenda

Moved by: Derek Maisonville Seconded by: Debbie Lunny

– Question – is there or is there not going to be a strike vote? Not on the agenda, cannot have a strike vote without 24 hours' notice.

– Answer – Because of the advice we have received from FNEEQ we need to have a vote on the motion before us, and the word “strike” has been used judiciously. And notice was sent out last Friday, meeting the 24-hour rule in the Constitution.

– Answer – Mob. committee discussed it this morning. Not asking for work stoppage today, asking for a plan of action that will last 1-1.5 hours.

– Answer – What is a strike under the Labour Code? There is a wide range of things that can be construed to be a strike action.

Adopted

2. Adoption of Minutes of the GA of February 17, 2015

Moved by: Ed Hudson Seconded by: Eileen Kerwin Jones

Date change to Feb 19.

Adopted

3. Announcements

3.1 – Next GA – May 13 – Elections. May 14 - BBQ

3.2 – JACFA Release – verbal agreement for 2.75 with the Administration

4. Updates

4.1. Collective Agreement Negotiations/Government actions (Austerity Program)

4.1.1. – Jean-Marc presented an overview of the government actions, closure on legislation under consideration. Protest movement, social action to show our resolve to obtain a negotiated agreement. Cuts of \$39 million to the réseau, and \$1.5 million to John Abbott.

More students in class, lack of repairs, etc. We have to be the defenders of public education before we are hit with a special law in the fall. Now the first round of nego is done, we are diametrically opposed to the government. 16 CEGEPs have already voted for a strike. 20 more will be voting before the 1st of May.

The need to mobilize before the point where we can strike. Ruthless advance on legislation, attacks on the CEGEP system, no faith in the process. Volet II to be removed in order to control departments from the top. Cuts to the budgets, Demers report, removal of general education to create a la carte diplomas.

This is when we can get the most bang for our buck in the type of protest we do. Before there is a decree, and they expect our protests. There is strength in numbers. There is such a push to change the education system that would create technical diplomas with no general education component.

4.2. Mobilization, JACFA and beyond

4.2.1. – Presentation by Roy Fu on the timeline proposed by FNEEQ where there is a crescendo of the actions taken in order to demonstrate our mobilization. At a certain point, there is a point to stand behind what we believe, what is important. They are also cutting in the operational budgets that will affect our jobs. Not replacing support staff, maintenance, etc.

It is time to support the CEGEP de Sherbrooke. They moved to go on a social strike if they were supported by 10 other colleges. They have the support, and then some.

One day strike; legal or not? We don't think that a one-day walkout is what we should do, but that a smaller demonstration would be appropriate.

– Question – Is there anything in the Patronal offers that talks of Volet II cuts, or Demers report?

– Answer – We should not turn this into an action based only on our local situation, but on a larger picture. People who have noticed are the least protected in our society. There is more than just a contract negotiation – we need a rapport de force of all the people who receive the services. Women are the most touched, by using the service or providing the services.

There were demonstrations, that were very broad based, that showed support across the social divides. The others don't want to be used by the unions as a pressure tactic only for themselves. Call it a day of social action, protest, upset. We are not at a strike, but we need to do something. Everybody has to be on the street at 12 noon.

This is a way of connecting to the broader values of our rights for public services, equality of men and women, people getting the help they need that is now being cut back. One CSSS in Laval is proposing staffing levels that is below the minimum level required for essential services.

– Comment – In any negotiation do you have the rapport de force you need to get what you want? We need to have a broader social support; the government thinks it can get what it wants (3%, pensions, etc.) – change leaves, change salary insurance, technical programs, workload formula, allocation process, remove chairs, change schedules, change powers of Council, grade reviews, control of departments, tenure, grievance and arbitration, union release reduced.

What do we do about this? Rapport de force on our own. Anti-austerity is part of this, to build a coalition to fight these changes.

Do we need a one-day strike to do this? If this was a collective union movement, the motion would come from FNEEQ. Should we wait until it approaches legality? We have gone on illegal strikes before to get what we want.

How is this day going to advance our movement towards a collective agreement? It is a great idea, but having a strike? March around the oval, boycott the all chairs meeting. Many things can be done, but I don't think a strike is the way to go.

Patrice & Diane –

In terms of the motion before you, it is a lunchtime activity. It is not a strike. But... any planned work stoppage is a strike. At this point in the bargaining, it is illegal to stop working.

Three criteria to qualify for an illegal strike – work stoppage, organized, by a group of workers.

CSN will be responsible for any fines or disciplinary actions that may be taken against you, if there is a strike vote. Can the fines or discipline happen? Yes. Will they happen? Historically, no.

According to the Labour Code – 60 day mediation period, 20 days for mediation report, right to strike is “acquired”. Strikes existed before the labour code. It is to ensure labour peace when a contract is in effect.

Constitutionally it is a right (Saskatchewan). The labour code is still in effect, it has not been struck down by the decision of the Supreme Court.

Member of the coalition on the protests – there will probably be around 25 CEGEPS on strike on May 1.

– Comment – As I understand it, it is to fit the legal notion of a strike. I don't think the administration will be taking a hard line. It does a disservice to think this is only about the collective agreement. It is about more. Socialists, trade unionists, Jews, me, nobody.

It is about what it means to have as a society. So that we can stand up in front of our students, and defend our points.

The least we can do is stand with the other, so that they will stand with us.

– Comment – What are we prepared to do? Debate the motion, and then see what we need to do to protect ourselves.

5. Social strike vote; Moved by Derek Maisonville, Seconded by Wendy Hadd.

Motion: **Whereas, the Liberal government's Austerity program stands to undermine the integrity and quality of CEGEP education;**

Whereas, the Austerity measures threaten the ability of CEGEP teachers to reach a fair and negotiated settlement in the current Collective Agreement negotiations;

Whereas, these measures are poised to destroy both the availability and quality of public services in the health, education and social welfare institutions of Quebec, thereby depriving citizens of Quebec their fundamental rights to receive adequate health, education and social welfare services;

Be it resolved that,

The John Abbott Faculty Association joins with other CEGEP unions, the CSN, FTQ, CSQ and all members of the Quebec union movement both public & private, as well as various non-syndical organizations, members of the broad coalition “Réfusions l'austérité” in a day of province-wide protest and disruption on May 1st, 2015.

BIFR that JACFA invites all teachers and students and staff from JAC to a “RALLY TO DEFEND EDUCATION FROM THE AUSTERITY AGENDA” Friday May 1st from noon to 1:00.

BIFR that JACFA encourage all teachers teaching from 12-1 on May 1st to bring their students to the rally.

– Comment – as of Friday, April 17 – 18 CEGEP unions, 14 student associations, 174 community groups in 50 different cities have voted to support the strike action.

You won't see big ads in the papers, nobody will buy them. Go on FB Printemps 2015. Information is there.

We have to do something on May 1. It is not a question of if, but of what we have to do. We have to step up to the plate.

For me a strike day would be closing the college. We are not there, but we have to do something so the government will see that we all are not happy. It is a society thing, we need to forget about ourselves, and think of the others. My son of 17 years of age gets up at 05:30 to go on the picket lines.

– Comment – Three things I want to talk about.

Social strike – broad based, grass roots, cross sectoral actions. Political expression of our discontent.

Austerity – Policy of reducing governmental deficits, regardless of the social costs.

Action plan – make an austerity slogan in class, poster creation. Picketing in front of the building. Food. Rally. Student speakers.

The suggestion that people take their class time to discuss austerity is not necessarily a work stoppage. It can be a pedagogical activity.

– Comment – Less to teach with, more students in class. Austerity is evident.

But I teach during the proposed time. There is not enough time to get them their competencies. How forceful is the 2nd BIFR. Are there other activities that are not at the same time, so that those that teach can do something else to support the action.

– Comment – Timing politically. I have heard we want to be solid. But we are currently in negotiations. We would be disingenuous to present ourselves if we are thinking about our contract.

– Comment – there is no contradiction. It is a broad social issue; the struggle for institutions and a collective agreement are not separate. It is like Passover. We are going to link what we struggle for to what the CSSS and the students and the others for one day, one hour.

The teacher is sovereign in their classroom. You may participate. You may not. There is freedom of expression.

– Comment – Austerity is going like a freight train. The government showed it today. With the nurses, thousands of nurses will retire if the changes to the pension funds go through (5-8yrs). This will be a mess.

If we don't try to fix this now, the impact will be on all the classes to come in the future. Please, let us move forward with this.

– Comment – I am still trying to figure this out. One hour, one day, one week. You can do this, but only if you want to? Some teachers may go, some may not? What does JACFA tell the college – we are on strike, some may be on strike, and what do you tell them?

This is a political move. Three of the 4 parties are in agreement with this type of cutbacks. I get that we are supporting the social movement. I don't get what happens on May 1.

There is no FNEEQ proposal. I think that if we mess it up (as on May 1) it will show us as weak. This is why I will vote against this, and why I will encourage others to vote against.

– Comment – the first goal of a CEGEP is to educate a “critical citizen”. Take the time in class to do this.

PATRICE – whether you are on strike or not, it is about the motion in front of you. Technicality. If the Administration makes a move to be serious, a strike vote will give full protection from the CSN. Potential but unlikely sanctions.

But... it is never played on actions – it is played on technical aspects, interpretations, wording.

Fiona Tomaszewski (HEPS) – Motion to Call the Question. Seconded; Wendy Hadd.

Adopted

Vote on the motion as presented. Secret Ballot - For or Against.

Nomination of scrutineers:

Bruce Tracy self-nominated, Seconded; Ed Hudson

Marie-Claire Rioux self-nominated, Seconded; Shireef Darwish

Results of the vote: 84

For: 48 Against: 34 Spoiled: 2

Motion Carries

Motion to destroy the ballots; moved by Marion Bemer, seconded by Rhoda Sollatzo.

Move to adjourn by Roxane Millette, Seconded; Sharon Rozen-Aspler.

Meeting adjourned 19:20