

# TTH-Teleconference Town Hall- Questions and Answers

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## 1. Why is the hall closed?

As Management, it is our responsibility to make sure we are minimizing the risks of spreading the virus within our membership and ensuring the same level of service is provided through other channels. That is why it was decided to have limited access for the time being.

## 2. Pension fund, H&W and other Union's funds and their Health.

The pension fund is healthy and in good shape. Our investments have taken a small hit due to the market, but the forecast is they will recover.

The restructuring that was done in the previous years and the reduction to some benefits, was to align the plan with minimal loss. Moving forward, our goal is to increase our Health Welfare and Pension to ensure you have coverage. Pension is no different; this administration wants all members to live comfortably when they choose to pull them.

## 3. Was the Awards banquet cancelled this year? Are the long service awards going to happen this year?

The long service awards have always been an event I enjoy attending. Paying respect to the members who built this organization is a must. The entertainment committee plans to hold the 2020 & 2021 Awards together in the Spring of 2021. Please visit our web site for further information or speak with an Entertainment Committee member for more information.

## 4. Why was the meeting so short?

Since this was the first time a Town Hall Meeting was executed, we were not sure if we would get 10 members or 2500 members. I am glad to say we reached 1962 members. This is more members than we would have reached in a year of union meetings. Now, we are in a place where we can plan our next meeting, so we are looking at extending the duration to 1.5 -2 hours.

## 5. What is the cost of this event?

Due to Covid-19 restrictions for large gatherings, we had to find a way to communicate with all of you to update you on our Financials, Committees, New Contracts and to address your questions. The Teleconference Town Hall meeting was an efficient way to do so. I cannot post the actual cost but will say it was a great return on our investment. The value of being able to reach out to you and address your concerns is a must.

## 6. Online dispatch: Is it going to be permanent? How do you ensure transparency?

The online dispatch is going to be the tool we will be using as long as the Covid-19 restrictions are in place. Looking at how dispatch has changed over the past many years, I do see it also changing in the future. Peoples lives are busy and offering services such as online dispatch is one way to make members lives easier. I know we have members not in favor of going electronic, however, I will say that the group is getting smaller with each passing year and I am just projecting my thoughts. As for transparency, it is ensured by you contacting our elected officials and asking any question related to the Online Dispatch, Name Hires, Transfers, whatever your queries are. I have always said we work for you, our members.

## 7. Names Hires- Posting names and dates online

Due to privacy restrictions we are unable to post online names and other related details. Members are welcome to call their Agents to ask any questions related to name hires.

## 8. How can I check my position on the main board?

Members are welcome to call their Agents to ask any questions related to the work board and their positions.

## 9. Newsletter: When will it be issued again?

The new issue of the Pipeline Newsletter will be issued in November and will be mailed to all members. If you have moved lately or changed your phone number, please make sure your contact information is up to date. Any questions you have, please call our offices.

## 10. Heritages: What is the plan during Covid-19?

We have been having small heritages in our building, up to 10 at a time to swear them in. We are concentrating on bringing in Apprentices and Alloy Welders. Our record shows we are short of both. If someone has more questions on this topic, please contact an agent.

## 11. I am a member of Local 488 and I live in Newfoundland. Would I be able to renew my safety certification at another Local out of convenience and practical reasons?

Local 488 is working with UA Canada regarding a national training program. Although this is a big undertaking, it will benefit all members. If you have questions regarding training, please call our college at 780 488-1266.

## 12. Lifetime memberships: what is the process to become one?

Please check Article 9, pg. 14 of our bylaws and working rules. Or click on the following link:

[https://www.local488.ca/system/files/pdfs/lu488\\_bylaws\\_working\\_rules\\_website\\_-\\_rev9\\_jan\\_2020.pdf](https://www.local488.ca/system/files/pdfs/lu488_bylaws_working_rules_website_-_rev9_jan_2020.pdf)

## 13. What is happening at the Garner work at the Cascade plant at Edson?

The work awarded so far is non-Union. We are in discussions trying to get members to the site.

## 14. Are there Union members working at the IPPL Heartland in Fort Saskatchewan?

Yes, we have almost 200 UA Members working at IPPL Heartland. It is the only new construction site in our jurisdiction and a site we felt it was a must to be on. I am happy to say, even though we are enabled, we are the highest paid craft there.

## 15. There are rumors at Syncrude that they do not want to hire people outside of Alberta. Are these rumors true? Is there a decision made by the employer or the Union to not accept people outside of Alberta? Is this something that other companies are considering doing?

Because of the pandemic, the owner decided they would help reduce the spread by hiring locals at this time. Also, if an employee was from out of province and contracted the virus getting home would be an issue. With members from Alberta they are a car ride away from being home. This was not the Union's decision.

## 16. We settled with 2 paid breaks and now we are losing one of them. Why is that?

Our efforts were focused on leaving the wages the same, so our members continue to receive the same paychecks. At this time, it was decided to lose a paid break instead of a (5%) percentage cut from our wages.

## 17. Bursaries fund + 300 hours rule: Now with the Covid-19 does that rule still apply?

We are trying to work around the 300 hours rule due to Covid-19 impacts.

18. As a retired member of local 488, I am wondering about the sustainability and viability of our benefit plan. Are there imminent changes coming to the plan? My pension question was answered at the meeting.

At this present time, our Health and Welfare plan is secure, and we see no issues in the future, providing for our retired members.

19. Benefits for retired members: are the rates going to be adjusted for the pension contribution? What benefits do we get as a lifetime member?

Members need to communicate with the Health and Welfare Department. According to your service in the local Union, the people at H&W will determine what you pay for your Health and Welfare. You will then receive a retirement application that includes all questions necessary to provide your personal union history and service for your retirement benefits. The Health and Welfare Administration will also determine your lifetime benefits and how it applies to you.

*Please note: If you need more clarification on the above, or you have any other questions, please contact an Agent or a Rep directly.*

Fraternally Yours



Rod McKay

