

June 10, 2005

MEMBERS FIGHT CONTRACTING OUT OF GARBAGE COLLECTION

Councillors Divided

Over the last couple of weeks there have been numerous meetings with City Councillors and the Mayor to find a solution to the threat of contracting-out of garbage collection.

It looks like the Executive Policy Committee is going to support the Alternative Service Delivery Committee effort to privatize all garbage collection.

Some of the progressive Councillors have said they will oppose the ASD committee recommendation to contract out solid waste. Others have said they will back a plan to have businesses do more public sector work.

Free Press Commentary

The Winnipeg Free Press ran a long commentary last week on the garbage privatization issue. The Commentary, by Mike Davidson, Local 500 President, challenged the city managers on their justification for contracting out solid waste collection. He emphasized how a mix of public and private waste collection could give the city and residents the best control over private collectors.

According to the commentary, “Simply put, city management has recommended a high-risk solution to a problem they created. Privatizing will not give residents a better service for less cost. And if council endorses this recommendation, they will be blindly following the blind.

“Instead of relying on private contractors, we recommend keeping a mix of public and private collection, where the city has some in-house collection and contracts out the rest. In this way, managers have the resources and capacity to monitor, direct and challenge all collection providers to innovate. This way the city gets a labour force that is available for core services as well as responsive to other needs that arise.”

Casualties of War

According to City Councillor and ASD Chair, Franco Magnifico, temporary workers who lose their jobs though privatization could be referred to as “casualties of war.”

About 25 temporary employees with seniority are working in the Solid Waste Services Division. Some have upwards of 15 years of service. For a number of years, these employees were laid-off for two weeks at the end of each year so the City would not have to treat them as permanent employees.



When this manipulation was confronted by the union on the employee’s behalf, management then said these positions would be reviewed, another manipulation that could go on indefinitely.

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If these temporary employees including students are laid off, it will mean a hardship for all of them and their families.

Campaign Launch

The “**Don’t Trash Us**” campaign to keep solid waste collection in public hands is gearing up.

On **Saturday June 18**, working families and activists will go door to door with leaflets through selected areas on the south side of the city. “We must help the public understand the issue and what is at stake”, says Todd Martin, Shop Steward for the CUPE members in the Water and Waste Department.

It’s time to speak out and take action! Give a little of your time – and be part of history.

**Contact the Local 500 office
at 942-1001 to lend a hand to
help keep solid waste
collections a public service!**



Other Ways You Can Help

You can also help by contacting your City Councillor to ask them to keep your waste collection in city hands.

Winnipeg City Council

Mayor Sam Katz	986-2171
Bill Clement	986-5232
Harvey Smith	986-5951
Lillian Thomas	986-5195
Jenny Gerbasi	986-5878
Harry Lazarenko	986-5188
Mark Lubosch	986-5196
Mike O’Shaughnessy	986-5264
Mike Pagtakhan	986-8401
Donald Benham	986-5236
Franco Magnifico	986-5206
Peter De Smedt	986-5920
Jae Eadie	986-2110
Justin Swandel	986-6824
Gord Steeves	986-5088
Russ Wyatt	986-8087

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