

IBEW LOCAL 1007

ANNUAL LETTER TO THE MEMBERSHIP

from Jimmy Connor, Business Manager and Financial Secretary



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I usually look for some positives to include in my annual letter to the members, but it's way more difficult to do that this year. That's not to say I'm ungrateful for what we have and what we've achieved in 2019. All of that is simply overshadowed by the fact we lost over 30 of our sisters and brothers to layoffs.

I've had the honour to represent you as chief spokesman at 25 bargaining tables negotiating contracts worth hundreds of millions, across all 6 of our bargaining units (EPCOR, City of Edmonton, Capital Power, IBEW 424, the 424 Employee Benefit Fund Administration, and the Electrical Industry Training Centre at 424). I've sat in over 100 successful grievances, thousands of meetings and taken dozens of educational courses. Roberta and Mike have been tireless in their efforts. In addition to that, the IBEW 1007 staff, past and present, and our Executive Boards and Shop Stewards, past and present, are a force to be reckoned with.

We have used every resource at our disposal, including other Unions and labour friendly City Councillors. However, we have fallen to the same market forces that brought this incredible Province to its knees - the Almighty Dollar, the Bottom Line, the Low Bid.

I worked in Traffic & Streetlights for the largest chunk of my IBEW career and I can say confidently that no one in Western Canada can build and maintain that system better than my IBEW colleagues at EPCOR Technologies. We lost some of that City of Edmonton work because City Council and the City administration took a disgraceful, short-sighted approach and went for the "Cheap" option. (Please don't confuse our concerns involving City Council with the exemplary work done by the IBEW 1007 Members who work for the City of Edmonton).

Although I've appeared before City of Edmonton Executive committees, lobbied City Councillors and screamed from the rooftops, I could not stop the Low Bid Juggernaut. However, the fight goes on. I will never give up. Here's the thing though, I need help. We need to see you at Union Meetings. We need you to write letters to your City Councillor. Make an appointment with them and tell them your story. IBEW 1007 has built and maintained Traffic and Streetlights since our inception in 1938. The workers who formed our Local worked on them for many years before that. They built the very first Traffic lights at Jasper and 101 street in 1933.

2019 was a major setback for sure. It was absolutely devastating for over 30 of our Brothers & Sisters. But we must stick together as a Union. We must fight together as a Union. I promise you I will do everything in my power to get those jobs back.

Another important note ...the Short Term Disability and Medical Leave within EPCOR, the City of Edmonton and Capital Power have seen a sharp increase in the last 2 years. Some of our own members have expressed concern there are a small number who feel entitled to always take all 3 days sick and to use all 3 hours for a medical leave. The overwhelming majority of our members use this benefit in a reasonable manner. I urge everyone to do the same, that is how we maintain this indispensable benefit.

Bargaining Update:

We ratified a 2-year deal with Capital Power (in force until December, 2020).

We ratified a 3-year deal with the City of Edmonton (in force to December, 2021).

We have Collective Bargaining Agreement in place with EPCOR (until December, 2021).

We ratified a 2-year deal with the Electrical Industry Training Centre (in force to December, 2021).

We are going to the table with IBEW 424, and the Employee Benefit Fund Administration soon.

You can find all the details of the CBA's at our website www.ibew1007.org

None of us know what the next 2 to 3 years have in store, but I can guarantee you this, I'll bring every ounce of my passion and experience to work every day on your behalf.

Since 2012 I've had the privilege of leading our bargaining teams. We've seen wage increases of 28.2% over 9 years at Capital Power, 26.25% over 9 years at EPCOR and 23% over 10 years at the City of Edmonton. We've had other significant enhancements; those increases are wages alone. Few have done better in the entire country.

Our members at in the 3 bargaining Units at 424 have not fared as well, as we have seen the construction industry decimated.

I'll make the same plea I make every year. Please come out to the Union meetings. We are stronger and more responsive with your input. This is YOUR union. I hope to see you at a meeting soon. In the meantime, please stay safe.

Sláinte (Good health)

Jimmy Connor
Business Manager & Financial Secretary
IBEW Local 1007

