

BC INTERIOR

USW WOOD COUNCIL 2019

BARGAINING BULLETIN #18

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IFLRA; USW resume bargaining; make some progress but talks stall after industry refuses to respond to last USW proposal

At the request of the IFLRA, your bargaining committee returned to the table on January 15, 16 and 17 in Kelowna BC. Despite what can only be described as a frustrating 3 days, your committee continued to work diligently towards concluding a fair collective agreement.

Although significant movement was not achieved, the IFLRA did back down from their position that retroactive wage increases would only be paid if an agreement was ratified by December 31, 2018. They also backed away from their concessions to the Health and Welfare plan and made a small improvement to Shift Differential.

However, the parties remain apart on wages and the industry's insistence that Tuesday-Saturday Clean-up at straight time become part of the collective agreement. The industry also refuses to address our boot allowance proposal or implementation of the Aboriginal Stat language, should it be declared by the Federal Government.

Late Wednesday night, your committee made significant moves with the hopes of concluding an agreement. The IFLRA responded to our proposal by informing us that our moves were insufficient. They also advised us they would not be providing a counter proposal until we got serious.

We returned to the bargaining table Thursday morning and informed the IFLRA that we are prepared to bargain, and they owed us a response to our last proposal. The IFLRA continued to refuse to respond, we advised them that when they were prepared to table a counter proposal and that we are prepared to continue bargaining.

Bargaining is scheduled to proceed with Canfor Plateau and Polar Operations in Prince George on January 23, 2019. Your Bargaining Committee will be meeting to decide how best to apply pressure to BC Forestry companies to achieve a fair collective agreement for the workers who make profits possible.

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