

2018-2019-2020 REPORT
Area Council 08

2018

New plans for Matane to assist the Miramichi Pay Centre.

Magali attended the Area Council meeting in January (Phoenix tour). PSAC plans to ask for compensation for the Phoenix fiasco.

Meeting with MP Massé concerning the proposed CRA mailroom.

The CEIU NVP asked me to stop lobbying the regional MPs regarding staff shortages in the regional offices.

Brunch in Matane with the new REVP, Yvon Barrière. Meeting with MP Massé and Yvon Barrière. Rally in front of the PSPC office in Matane attended by the REVP.

I represented PSAC at the FTQ symposium on universal pharmacare.

I talked to the media on the proposed Canada Revenue Agency mailroom.

I was elected president of the FTQ area council for Bas-Saint-Laurent/Gaspésie/Îles-de-la-Madeleine.

Training session in Matane on workplace violence.

2019

Visit from Steven MacKinnon, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, and MP Massé at the Matane office.

I attended the AGM of UHEW Local 10052 (Maurice Lamontagne Institute in Mont-Joli).

At a union-management meeting in Ottawa, I raised the fact that payroll employees were not receiving any of the incentives negotiated in the collective agreement for the recruitment and retention of compensation advisors.

A rally was held in front of MP Massé's office, followed by a meeting with him.

At the Local 10060 AGM, I lost the election for President, a position I had held for 14 years.

I attended an Executive Committee meeting of the CEIU local in Rimouski.

I attended an Executive Committee meeting of GSU Local 10011 in Quebec City in my capacity as Alternate RVP.

MP Massé lost to the Bloc Québécois candidate in the election.

A training session for local officers took place in Matane on October 25 and 26, followed by convention training on November 2.

Sonia Gagné was the Area Council's delegate to the FTQ convention in November.

I was re-elected President of AC-08.

At the last Quebec Council, I expressed my anger about equity groups and said that, in my opinion, we were no longer a union working toward a common goal. I believe that creating different equity groups divides us, resulting in battles on issues that are not of common interest to all members. I have nothing against the equity groups, but I think that a union is the wrong platform for putting forth their demands.

On December 19, I met for the first time with Kristina Michaud, the new Bloc Québécois MP in my riding. We discussed the future of the federal building in Matane, bargaining and regional development. She will look into the progress of renovations or the construction of a new building for Matane.

2020

The Area Council has not met yet.

The proposed CRA mailroom has gone to the private sector but there are still two projects under discussion that should come to Matane.

The first phase of the strike alert is underway. We are now under Yellow alert and will transition to Red for the anniversary of the Phoenix implementation on February 27.

I facilitated the Grievance Handling course in Quebec City on January 31 and February 1, and the Introductory Health and Safety course from February 11 to 13. Both were very well attended.

Marc Robidoux
President, Area Council 08

2020-2021 REPORT

Area Council 08

To mark International Women's Day, the Area Council made financial contributions and actively participated in the event organized on March 12, 2020 by the AC 08 Regional Women's Committee. This major event brought together 115 people from the region. Affiliates, including the FTQ, also participated, making it a great success.

The pandemic officially started in Canada on March 13, 2020. The federal government closed practically all of its offices. It instituted teleworking for its employees where possible and paid the others 699 leave in order to protect them all.

In Matane, the PSPC office closed at the end of the day on March 16 due to the pandemic. Essential services were maintained by some 35 to 50 people working from the office and at least 100 to 130 people teleworking. The building's remaining employees – about 200 – were paid 699 leave.

On March 17, at the very outset of the pandemic and the shutdown of our non-essential services, a committee comprising management, the union, HR and partners started a daily teleconference to consult one another, make decisions on certain initiatives and employee issues, receive information from the Deputy Minister for PSPC, and devise strategies to keep employees informed and plan the eventual return to the workplace. The OHS joint committee also continued to meet through the shutdown. We took key decisions on issues that fall within our mandate and others specifically related to COVID-19. The committee has always been proactive in its goal to protect employees.

In April and May, we held virtual meetings with the management of the departments and PSAC-Quebec to answer member questions and concerns and receive updates from the employer during the pandemic.

In June, given that the PSAC-Quebec training was on hold, the national office made webinars available to help train new shop stewards. We publicized the webinars through AC-08. Given the return to the bargaining table from June 23 to July 3, we will work to update member contact information.

I attended many Teams meetings, including the PSAC-Quebec OHS committee and the Quebec Council, webinars on domestic violence during lockdown, COVID updates and the meetings of Area Council 08 and Regional Women's Committee 08.

In July, I continued to attend webinars, on issues such as the tentative agreement and Phoenix damages as well as a meeting of the PSAC-Quebec Finance Committee. Answering member questions about the agreement was a full-time job for our elected officers.

In August, I attended the information webinar on the ratification vote with Quebec Council and the National Officers.

In September, I attended the meetings of the Quebec Council and the PSAC-Quebec Finance Committee, as well as the webinar on privacy protection for teleworking and the return to work.

In October, members at the PSPC office in Matane expressed the same frustrations as members in other departments, like Service Canada, the MLI and Parks Canada. We know this has not been easy for members. However, in Matane, we have contracts with other departments if members are unwilling to cooperate on issues like evening shifts or the redundancy plan (teams work alternating weeks in the office and from home) so that teams do not cross paths. There will clearly be an impact on the mental health of members, which we will have to monitor.

In December in Matane, due to the non-renewal of our agreement with the Miramichi Pay Centre effective March 31, 2021, a committee comprising management, HR, labour relations and the union was struck to work together to reassign the 53 affected indeterminate and term employees. We did not want to create a workforce adjustment committee since it was not needed and because all committee members shared a goal of reassigning all the employees. On December 1, I was elected to Area Council 08, where I had been serving since May 2020 as Acting President, replacing Marc Robidoux.

From January to March 2021, the Matane local and I had weekly meetings to closely monitor the reassignment of the 55 members. By March 31, all employees had received offer letters from ESDC, the PSPC Pension Centre or the Imaging and Receiver General Operations Directorate in Matane. Mission accomplished.

Sonia Gagné

President, Area Council 08