

**REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT
Mauricie Area Council (CRDLM)
Region 09
2017-2021**

2017

Sister Sylvie Masse stepped down after the 2017 PSAC-Quebec convention, and Sister Sabrina Williams became President in her stead for the remainder of the one-year term. In November 2017, a new executive was elected: Sabrina Williams, President; Annie David, Vice-President; Johnny Maillot, Secretary; Jimmy Mailhot, Treasurer. The new Executive thanked Sylvie Masse, Michelle Lafond, André Bélanger and Sylvie Héon for their involvement in CRDLM.

Ratification votes for several collective agreements took place with the local executives in affected locals. The planned training was held with good attendance and good member appreciation feedback. The President attended the meetings of the Quebec Council and the committees on which she served.

Productive discussions took place with Minister François-Philippe Champagne, Liberal MP for the Saint-Maurice—Champlain riding, concerning possible investment in the Shawinigan Tax Centre by Justin Trudeau's majority Liberal government. Discussions were also held to a lesser extent with Robert Aubin, NDP MP for Trois-Rivières, and Ruth-Ellen Brosseau, NDP MP for Berthier—Maskinongé.

2018

At least six meetings a year were held in 2017 and 2018. The President attended the meetings of the Quebec Council, the National Officers and the committees on which she served. The region organized political actions related to Phoenix and lobbied MPs in the region. On October 20, 2018, a successful campaign highlighting the start of the one-year countdown to the next election was held outside Minister Champagne's riding office. Minister Champagne was at his office and met privately with the CRDLM and regional local officers. Members in the region marked the anniversary of Phoenix on February 28.

At the annual election in November, a new CRDLM Executive was elected: Sabrina Williams, President; Jimmy Mailhot, Vice-President; Caroline Frappier, Secretary; Mireille Dupont, Treasurer.

A lockout declared by Aluminerie de Bécancour Inc. (ABI) in the middle of the night in January prompted a surge of union solidarity. Magali Picard visited the region several times to show PSAC's moral and financial support.

2019

The annual election saw another change of Executive: Jimmy Mailhot, President; Julien Nobert, Vice-President; Jean-René Leblanc Gadoury, Secretary; Dany Gélinas, Treasurer.

Training was held as planned, once again with strong member participation. The President attended the meetings of the Quebec Council, the National Officers and the committees on which she served. In the fall, Mauricie Area Council set up its own Facebook group.

We lobbied the federal election candidates in the Trois-Rivières riding concerning collective bargaining and the impact that setting up a single tax system administered by Quebec would have. A debate between two of the election candidates, Valérie Renaud-Martin of the Liberal Party and Robert Aubin of the NDP, was broadcast on the PSAC-Quebec Facebook page. The Conservative candidate withdrew on the morning of the debate.

The Mauricie Regional Young Workers Committee formally became the first PSAC-Quebec Young Workers Committee after its inaugural meeting in December. Congratulations to our members age 35 and under for your involvement and perseverance: you set the example for PSAC-Quebec's young workers.

The Area Council took part in a sombre rally to mark the first anniversary of the ABI lockout. In addition, our members maintained the picket line while the locked-out workers met to consider the employer's offer. Mauricie Area Council made sure that moral and financial support and gifts of food for the locked-out workers remained frequent topics of discussion and action. The success of May's solidarity march organized by the Steelworkers in Trois-Rivières was a clear show of our ongoing support for the workers, who have been locked out since January 2018. CRDLM took part in the Sherbrooke mobilization for the visit by Justin Trudeau.

In the spring, CRDLM took part in the awareness meetings for all MPs that were held across Quebec on the same day. We also participated in the office closures on set days in various cities. The goal was pop-up targeting of different federal departments on different dates.

2020

Bargaining is underway for all tables and agencies. UTE strike votes begin in February. Six votes were held over two evenings at the Auberge des Gouverneurs in Shawinigan for UTE 10005 and 10027. There was a "Strike Alert" action on January 22 (yellow) and February 27-28 (red).

March 13, 2020: The COVID-19 pandemic led to global turmoil that did not spare PSAC or the federal public service. All strike votes were immediately suspended and in-person meetings prohibited. Members found themselves in particularly challenging conditions that included school and workplace closures and a total lockdown ordered by public health authorities. The use of 699 leave expanded. Teleworking started to become part of the lives of many members. The large-scale participation of UTE members in delivering CERB to Canadians on such a short deadline was a proud moment for the federal public service.

Until the fall, public service workers continued to adapt to the new normal of telework. PSAC members very regularly found themselves in virtual meetings. No training took place until November. The triennial regional conventions, component conventions and other work planned for 2020 were delayed by a year without knowing what the coming months would bring.

Bargaining concluded successfully in July and August for most tables and agencies. Ratification votes were held in webinar format. At the same time, a Phoenix settlement exclusively for PSAC members was announced.

The AEC adopted a motion to suspend the requirement to hold in-person meetings and elections for all bodies in the current year. As a result, the CRDLM Executive remained unchanged, with the exception of the resignation of its Vice-President in August.

2021

The new normal became part of the lives of all Canadians. Teleworking, masks and physical distancing have become part of our daily lives and work. Teleworking has started to reveal the good and bad sides of every worker. Many have never been happier working from the comfort of their homes. But for others, the lack of support you get in a workplace, increased workloads and the difficulty of disconnecting has led to anxiety and mental health issues. Remote working has made reaching members more challenging. On the training front, a wide range of online courses and webinars were offered to members. Their feedback was fairly positive.

Patrick Bertrand was elected to the vacant Vice-President position in February. The PSAC-Quebec convention will be held virtually in June. Mobilization activities were held in the region to denounce Bill 59 on the modernization of the *Act Respecting Occupational Health and Safety*. Public health restrictions made contact with members difficult at the beginning of the year. Vaccination offers a glimmer of hope. Balancing privacy issues with teleworking are at the heart of member concerns. Ergonomics, the definition of “workplace” under the Act and the Employer’s high requirements for employee productivity when teleworking have put the need for a specific agreement on teleworking at the heart of our plans for upcoming rounds of negotiations.

The union will also change how it works. Many challenges await us. We must stand in solidarity more than ever before when faced with member division resulting from telework and rotating on-site work.

CRDLM would like to note the contribution made by Brother Yannick Martineau, whose death on June 10, 2019 was a sad loss.

Jimmy Mailhot
President
Mauricie Area Council