

The Union of Environment and Health Workers held its 2nd National Triennial Convention from August 17 to 20 in a virtual manner for the first (and probably not the last) time. And boy, what a convention it was! Of course, it was missing the in-person social aspect of being able to see **in-person** members whom I hadn't seen since the last triennial, but that is the way it was, due to our back-then, and current, pandemic situation. On a positive note, that meant a lot of funds were saved on lack of travel-costs, convention hotel costs, conference centre bookings, refreshments, etc...

I attended as an **Observer...again**, so I went...as an **Observer...again**, but it's not the ability or inability to vote at the Convention that is important. The real takeaway is what you can learn and take back to the membership. That being said, it would be *nice to attend as a delegate* in the future so that I can *participate even more*. Observers can't vote and can't speak at the microphone. So when there is an issue one is very passionate about, as an Observer, you're mute. Maybe those reading this report will *consider supporting and voting* for me when the delegates for the 3rd Triennial Convention are being elected?

At the convention I submitted my name as a delegate to attend the PSAC Triennial Convention in 2022, but didn't secure enough votes. A big thanks goes out to my nominator and seconder for believing in me and giving me the chance to run.

Out of 58 resolutions, 37 were dealt with. There was the usual back-and-forth bickering regarding the fact that certain regions of the membership seem to have more "influence" on resolutions passing or failing, but all in all, I think the resolutions that were meant to be passed, passed and those that weren't ready to pass, didn't. If a member's resolution doesn't pass, they shouldn't take it personally, it just wasn't the right time.

The convention was done virtually, and members tended to adapt well to the new methods of coming to the microphone, objecting and voting. There were the usual bugs that needed to be worked out on the first day, but by the 3rd day the delegates were very competent at using the unfamiliar virtual/digital format. I suspect this format is here to stay, so we had better get used to using it, and quickly.

Elections were held for National and Regional Officer positions and Shimen Fayad remained as National President, with Benoit Thibault as National Vice-President.

From the reports of the various committees, it looks like our union is in good shape financially and with the retirement of our previous NP, the new NP is settling into her position and moulding the UHEW into her way of doing business. I found it reassuring and inspiring, but I'll spare you all the boring details of each and every event that occurred.

In a nutshell, the convention was an update on our progress and our condition, which is fair to good right now due to the current pandemic situation and our employer being a minority government.

Things are probably going to change a lot in the next year and a half: What effect will the pandemic have on our economy, what effect will increasingly significant climate change events have, more and more workers are working from home/abroad (possible contracting out), and possibly less in-person meetings/gatherings in the future due to pandemic paranoia and restrictions. Also, as union activists, it's getting more difficult to reach members since they aren't coming to the workplace.

We will have to see what effect these things will have on the resolution priorities for our next Triennial, and can our UHEW National Executive team deal with these pressures effectively? This has been the 2nd triennial convention since the merger of the National Health Union and the Union of Environment workers, so far so good...but can this marriage last? I could sense some unease in some of the delegates and I wonder if they aren't thinking of how to destabilize this new arrangement? That remains to be seen in 3 years time when we have the 3rd Triennial Convention.

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