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Community Social Services unions get ready to bargain

With collective agreements in the community social services (CSS) sector set to expire on March 31, 2010, preparations for contract talks are getting underway.

The multi-union negotiating committee held initial meetings in June and will be resuming those discussions during another three-day session, beginning October 28. At that time, they will be reviewing the bargaining priorities put forward by each member union in the Community Social Services Bargaining Association (CSSBA), which bargains on behalf of all unionized employees in this sector.

HEU's CSS bargaining committee worked over several days in mid-August to assemble members' priority demands. Those demands are based on issues and priorities identified through a member survey and during the HEU's CSS bargaining conference held in early June.

During that conference, delegates also elected Marilynn Rust and David Huespe to HEU's CSS bargaining committee, which also includes union representative Bob Wilson.

Upcoming discussions among the members of the multi-union bargaining committee will begin the work of preparing the association's detailed bargaining proposals.

There are currently 11 unions in CSSBA, who together represent the more than 15,000 employees working throughout the sector.

Member unions include the B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, the Hospital Employees' Union, the Health Sciences Association, the United Steelworkers of America, the Professional Employees' Union, the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, the International Union of Operating Engineers, the Construction and Specialized Workers' Union, the Christian Labour Association of Canada, and the BC Nurses' Union.

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