

# BARGAINING UPDATE



## TOWN OF PONOKA LOCAL 118 CHAPTER 004 – ALL STAFF

### Town of Ponoka: Bargaining survey results are in *Bargaining update for Local 118 Chapter 004, Town of Ponoka*

Your negotiating team would like to thank all the members who took the time to fill in our bargaining survey.

Please read the detailed information about the survey results below and get in touch with any questions you may have!

Your survey responses gave us a good understanding of the problems we are facing collectively in our workplace, and we have included your concerns in our bargaining proposals.

#### What We Learned

The survey results emphasized that members are struggling as inflation and cost of living rises faster than wages, benefits and other compensation.

Some members told us in their own words what this feels like:

*Wages have not kept up to inflation. I would like to see higher wages to entice better people to the town.*

*I can barely make ends meet with my wage for the basic necessities.*

*This needs to be increased and is a MAJOR problem.*

*Cost of living is higher and [health] benefits for some families are a necessity. More coverage can help the families that need these.*

And the numbers tell the story overall:

- 74% said they could not keep up with the cost of living
- 38% said they cannot cover basic costs such as food and housing
- 44% are looking for different work that pays more

The solution to these concerns according to survey respondents are to ensure wages rise in proportion to cost of living as well as to improve employee benefits.

- 94% expect to see cost of living protections
- 71% expect to see the Health Spending Account increased to match what other Town employees are receiving (\$1000 vs. \$500)

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Respondents also identified other aspects of the benefits plan that need improvement, including increasing benefit eligibility for part time, casuals and seasonals as well as increasing coverage for areas such as vision, dental and orthodontics.

Other concerns and priorities focused on:

- Frustrations with delays in the Town's job description review and members identified specific classifications where duties and rates of pay need attention. 76% said that their rates of pay do not reflect the value of their work compared to other positions at the Town and/or compared to other similar positions with other employers.
- Interest in improving scheduling provisions, including increasing regularity of scheduling for part-time and seasonal workers and pursuing possibilities for flexible work arrangements, such as working 4 days/week with increased daily work hours.

Survey respondents also showed an awareness that achieving these bargaining priorities will require support from the entire membership. The bargaining committee is particularly grateful to those members who came forward to be worksite contacts, to help us ensure effective communications with the whole membership throughout the bargaining process.

We will be meeting to begin bargaining with the Town of Ponoka on December 3 and will keep you posted as we move through the negotiations process. Please reach out to a member of your negotiating team with any questions or concerns.