

**REPORT
OF THE
INTERIM NATIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT
Benoît Thibault
May 2020**

This first report covers the period from March to May 2020.

PROCESS TO FOLLOW TO ELECT AN INTERIM NVP

- Last February, Todd Panas, National President of the Union of Health and Environment Workers (UHEW) submitted his resignation to the UHEW National Council.
- As a result of this announcement, Shimen Fayad, National Vice-President (NVP), has assumed the position of Acting National President.
- A process has been set in motion for the election of a candidate for the position of Acting NVP. Here is the email sent to the UHEW National Council on March 2nd:

Dear Council members,

Following our discussions at the last Council conference call, and in accordance with UHEW By-Laws, we will be conducting a secret ballot to elect an Acting National Vice-President from among the former UEW members on the National Council. This role is to fill the position of National Vice-President currently vacant until the 2020 UHEW Convention.

All nominations submitted for this election must be seconded by an individual and sent to Julie.Lavictoire@uhew-stse.ca to the National Office *by Monday, March 16 at midnight*. The nomination must be accompanied by a one to two-page biography or statement from the incumbent RVP indicating that the candidate agrees to have his/her name on the ballot, and include other information that he/she wishes to convey to Council.

For further information, please contact me.
Thank you and good luck to all those interested!

Shimen Fayad
a/National President
Union of Health & Environment Workers

- Due to the workload at the National Office, it was decided to advance the deadline for submission of nominations to March 9. Here is the email sent to the UHEW National Council on March 11th to announce the appointment of the NVP:

Following the call for nominations for the position of Acting National Vice-President sent out on March 2, 2020, only one nomination was received.

We are pleased to announce that Benoît Thibault, RVP-Quebec, has been appointed to this position.

Arrangements will be discussed with Benoit regarding his presence at the National Office, and we will then inform the National Council. We will send an email to all locals to inform them of Benoit's appointment.

Please welcome Benoit in his new role. Congratulations!

Sent on behalf of / Envoyer au nom de

Shimen Fayad

A/National President // Présidente nationale/intérimaire

- I officially took office on March 30, 2020. But between my appointment and my official entry into the VPN position, I had a series of calls and video conferences with Shimen who updated me on the various issues at hand at the national level.
- This assignment was to last until the Triennial Convention in August 2020, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Convention had to be postponed to August 2021. My mandate will therefore extend until that date.

WORKING FILES

NATIONAL OFFICE

- The National Office will be closed until June 1st.
- We will develop a return-to-work protocol in conjunction with the employees' union representative:
 - o Phased Entry
 - o Possibility of continuing to telework
 - o Supply of disinfectant, masks, gloves,
 - o Instructions on the use of common areas (fridge, microwave), meeting room, photocopier, installation of plexiglass at the reception desk.
 - o Arrows on walls/floors
 - o Respect of the 2 m distance
- National Office Employee Manager
 - o Leave
 - o Special needs due to working at home
 - o Training
- We have a videoconference call every week to keep in touch and make sure everything's okay.

- Planning for the arrival of the new labour relations officer, Victor Bilodeau
- Call with LRA's for the development of union education materials for members
- Discussions to switch from Gmail to Office365
- Familiarization with desktop drives. Remote access with NVP

DFO SURGITE

- Fishery Officer Reclassification File
- This file has been ongoing for several years
- Shimen and I had a call with Darren Goetze and Marc Sicard, Conservation and Protection (C&P).
 - o Management is aware that this file is dragging on and would like to reach an agreement.
 - o This file affects not only the reclassification of GT positions, but PM positions, training plan, etc.
- Preparation of an action plan with Fishery Officers from all regions

UHEW FINANCE COMMITTEE

- Will be Chair of the Committee for the UHEW National Convention
- Conference Call with Finance Committee Member and Financial Officers
- Familiarization with each budget line and the UHEW financial statements
- Rules, proposals, resolutions
- Conference calls with banks (RBC and National Bank) re: UHEW investments
- Issues following the postponement of Convention to August 2021

COVID-19

- Most federal offices have been closed since March 16.
- I have participated in several conference calls at the local, regional and national levels with DFO and ECCC. Here are the various points that were discussed:
 - o Office closures
 - o Designation of critical services
 - o Problems associated with telework and ergonomics
 - o Leave 699
 - o Issues related to lab and field work
 - o Mental health issues due to mandatory confinement
 - o Obligation of the employer to provide protective equipment to employees and to ensure the disinfection of workplaces and equipment used by employees
 - o Return to Work Protocol

ESSENTIAL SERVICES AGREEMENTS

- Discussion with representatives from ECCC, DFO and Treasury Board on a tool that explains the process for determining essential services. This tool will be distributed to managers and unions
- With Shimen, review of lists of designated employees, provided by departments, and give our feedback.

GRIEVANCE ON WORK DESCRIPTION -- TOBACCO AND VAPOR PRODUCTS AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES DIVISION (HEALTH CANADA)

- Appointed in charge of this FILE, along with Mark Hockley.
- A series of grievances filed last fall from three regions. Labour relations was ready to work on this file.
- UHEW wants a national approach to deal with these grievances.
- I've followed up with RVPs who have members in this division.
- Once I am assured that all members wishing to file grievances have been reached, we will move forward with the process.

UHEW SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

- Contact with Committee members :
 - o Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the Committee considered whether to postpone these scholarships for one year, or whether UHEW would award these scholarships this year.
 - o The Committee has decided to award these scholarships this year, but we will be changing the deadline for applications.
- Work to determine this year's theme

TRAINING

- On-line training re: UnionWare

JOINT LEARNING PROGRAM (JLP)

- Due to the pandemic, all JLP workshops are suspended until further notice.
- However, I did participate in an orientation session on a new discussion series, "The Power to Talk About It", which allowed participants to refocus in times of uncertainty.
- These 2-hour workshops will be given by video-conference.

NATIONAL OFFICERS PSAC-QUEBEC

- Bi-monthly conference calls with PSAC-QC, COVID-19 Update

SUPPORT TO INTERIM RVP-QC

- Transfer of knowledge on the dynamics of the locals
- Support to Luc in his acting position