

10 Things You Should Know

National Post Published: Thursday, July 30, 2009

Early Monday, the city and the union representing outside workers announced a tentative deal that could get 6,000 striking workers back to work. Later that day, the union representing 24,000 indoor workers reached a tentative deal as well. It appeared some city services would resume as early as the weekend, but yesterday there were new snags between the unions and the city. The National Post's Emily Senger gives 10 more things you should know about the contract deal some members are voting on today, and what is slowing things down.

1 The strike is not over yet.

2 Members of CUPE Local 79, the union representing indoor workers, voted in favour of a contract deal, the union announced last night. Mayor David Miller confirmed that the CUPE Local 416 deal, yet to be voted on, includes similar provisions.

3 The deal gives workers a 6% pay hike over three years, with the first 1.75% increase retroactive to Jan. 1 of this year.

4 A major sticking point in the negotiations was the city's drive to scrap a system where union members could bank up to 18 sick days a year and cash them in upon retirement, for a six-month windfall. The deal allows all current unionized employees to keep their banked sick days, and continue to accumulate new sick days, as under the previous contract.

5 Or current unionized employees can choose to switch to the new illness and injury plan. In this arrangement, the city would buy out the remainder of their sick days now at a discount.

6 A third option allows current unionized employees to members to switch to the new illness and injury plan, stop accumulating new sick days, but wait and get paid out upon retirement.

7 New hires will received the City's new Illness and Injury Plan, which provides members with up to 130 days per year (6 months of full or partial pay).

8 When CUPE Local 416 president Mark Furguson, who represents outdoor workers, said Monday's deal was tentative, he meant it. The outdoor workers union is still in talks with the city, to finalize a deal they can vote on. of their sick days now at a discount.

9 One of the issues stalling talks is amnesty for pickets, a picket captain told the National Post yesterday. There have been reports of union members fighting with each other and with citizens, and slashing tires. Bill Steele, who acted as picket captain and union steward for the Commissioners Street transfer station, said the union wants to amnesty for acts committed during the strike.

10 To actually get indoor workers back to work, City Council need to vote in favour of the deal accepted by Local 79 in a special meeting Friday morning. As for the outdoor workers, at press time, there was no way of knowing when they will be back. To all those waiting for garbage pickup: sorry.

esenger@nationalpost.com