

Union bargaining update: Palace Casino management retreats at the bargaining table

Negotiations continued with your Employer in our ongoing efforts to conclude a Collective Agreement on March 17th, 18th and 19th.

As you will recall from our last update the company has pursued a controversial proposal at the bargaining table involving Pit Managers and Floor Supervisors. They have consistently requested that Floor Supervisors and Pit Managers be “merged” into one classification. They advised your Union that they had applied to the AGLC to approve and facilitate this.

We are pleased to announce that the company has retreated from this position.

At our last set of negotiations the company indicated that they were already rethinking the position. They indicated that they found the Union’s opposition to the proposal and our related arguments persuasive. They said, in fact, that they were likely to rethink the matter and approach the AGLC to withdraw or amend their request for the merged positions. They have advised us that before they could even do so the AGLC has denied their request. As a result the company has withdrawn the proposal and all related proposals and matters at the bargaining table.

Not surprisingly, your bargaining committee and affected Employees are relieved. Some were initially excited at the thought of getting a promotion, but nothing prevents the company from still promoting people if they have the right stuff. One of the main concerns was that people would effectively be forced out of a valued career with Union protection to the “never-never land” of management where an appealing salary is not offset by long hours, big headaches and no job security.

It is still important to know that we are left with an outstanding concern in this circumstance. What if the company attempts to do this “merge” during the term of a new Collective Agreement? The Union is attempting to negotiate protections in this area.

The other main issue canvassed during collective bargaining at recent sessions was the concept and system of layoff and recall. In a time of economic uncertainty, the prospect of layoffs is always of significant concern. Your Union’s job is to ensure that if layoffs ever occur that seniority and fair play are protected.

Generally we can say that the tone of bargaining is much better than last time. That, of course, is not saying much, given the irrational anti-union perspective the Employer adopted at the last set of negotiations. A strike was the result. The company lost very significant revenue but Employees won the right to have a real Union.

As bargaining continues be reminded of the victory we achieved last time and how we did it. It was through solidarity and collective strength. In the current economic environment, Employees can be tempted to become too conservative and be prepared to sell themselves short. There is no reason, however, that Palace Casino cannot negotiate a fair Collective Agreement with real improvements to your day to day rights at work and real improvements to your wage and benefit package.

Your Union bargaining committee