



## President's Report



**December 31, 2021**

**Our next Association meeting is slated for February 7th, 2022 and may be subject to change due to conflict with Canadian IAFF Policy Conference.**

**There have been a few changes to our OPFFA Standing Committees. Join me in welcoming Executive Board Member Guy Beaudoin as Co-Chair of our JOHSC Committee, Executive Board Member Rob Collins as Shop Steward Chair, and Geoff Randall as Clothing Uniform Committee Chair. I want to also welcome Shop Steward Genna McMillan and Member Tracy Shields to the Human Rights and Accommodation Committee. The official list will be posted to the Association website under Member's Only Section.**

**A huge thank you to Louise Hind-Schmidt and Martin Davey for all their excellent work on the Human Rights and Accommodation committee. As well as extending thanks to Victor Dillabough who stepped down as Co-Chair on our Joint Health and Occupational Safety Committee but will remain on the committee to assist in fostering a proper succession plan in 2022.**

**A friendly reminder that Constitutional Amendments for our OPFFA Constitution are still opened to being received until the deadline on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022. You can send your amendment(s) to [g\\_housch@ottawafirefighters.org](mailto:g_housch@ottawafirefighters.org)**

### **Association Office**

**Following Ottawa Public Health Guidelines, those who can work from home should. And as such, the office will be running on the similar schedule that was in 2020 and 2021. Executive Director will have the office on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Sick Benefit Fund Manager Craig Morrison will have access to the Office on Mondays and Thursdays (if required).**

**All requests for access to office shall go through the President of the Association by text or cellphone, until further notice.**



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### Grievance Updates

The Association has pushed back on multiple issues. One issue that came to fruition in the month of December was a grievance on Accommodation from a couple of years ago. Unfortunately, we were not successful in our litigation over this grievance. It did leave some areas for progress in the future. We were successful in one benefit claim grievance for a member that is now retired and still have ongoing benefits claim for an active member awaiting and arbitration. In regards, to the vaccination policy, we put in grievances on the timeline issues and had those timelines moved. We also had some grievances dropped as members decided to get vaccinated. We filed grievance on City email being canceled for those not conforming to the policy to which we had some resolve. We have an ongoing extension for a member regarding a religious exemption to the Vaccination Policy and that will be dealt with in the New year. On top of all these, we initiated discussion with the Employer over bereavement leave. The Association was successful in 3 out of 6 bereavement denials being overturned and have filed grievances over the other 3 outstanding from 2021.

### Vaccination Policy Updates

Currently, the Association is navigating the issues concerning members out to the workplace on leaves and some recent unpaid leaves which are erroneous from our standpoint. The Employer has stated they will rectify two recent members unpaid leaves as they are either on sick leave or WSIB.

If you recall, Fire Services management put out an email blast regarding booster shots for Covid-19 vaccines and the Association had to have discussions with management to retract their email. The booster shot is not mandatory, and the Association recommends that members do not have to upload their 3<sup>rd</sup> dose until that is communicated as part of the process for the policy. By uploading in the current CANImmunize platform you will encounter a partial vaccination issue and the Association would rather not deal with this until we must.

With Covid-19 Omicron ever changing our day-to-day duties including callback. The President met with the Acting Fire Chief to discuss the Fire Services Continuity of Operations Plan. This plan would have seen L47, R53, and SU45 go out of service to counter the Omicron positive cases that were growing. The proposed solution from the Association President was to allow for more than 24 hours of continuous overtime rather than apparatus out of service. This would only be invoked once the primary and secondary lists are exhausted. This is an agreed emergency measure that does not give precedence to those who are



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working lieu day exchanges or shift changes, until the primary and secondary lists are exhausted. The historical value to this is that many other Locals in Ontario have similar provisions for emergency use to allow more than 24 hours of overtime. This now being in place, should negate apparatus and stations from going out of service or being “browned out”. Which if members can recall, was an issue we brought to grievance with the employer over two instances occurring during late summer 2021.

The current self-isolation practice as we close out the year is as follows from the Fire Service Messaging on December 31, 2021:

- The announcement by the Province yesterday identified eligibility requirements for PCR testing and “first responders” were **not** included in the eligible criteria. With that said, and the strong support from our Emergency Operation Centre and Ottawa Public Health they have made special local provisions to have PCR testing available for Fire and Police first responders. This is an added level protection to keep you and the residents of Ottawa safe. Please see the highlighted changes below.
- When you attend a testing centre, please have OFS ID available and advise them you are “patient-facing health care worker”. You must follow the applicable testing centre’s registration process which can be found online.

### COVID 19 – Symptoms & Isolation Requirements

#### ***Have symptoms of Covid 19.***

- Isolate for 5 days following the onset of symptoms
- Notify your supervisor immediately
- End isolation after 5 days if symptoms are improving for at least 24 hours

Follow all Public Health measures (masking and physical distancing)

- Suppression members are required to get a PCR test at the onset of any symptoms
  - PCR test results negative – return to work
  - PCR test results positive – Isolate for 5 days and can end isolation after 5 days with no symptoms or if symptoms are improving for at least 24 hours

#### ***Exposure to someone who has tested positive.***

- You have **symptoms**, follow the above directions
- You have **no symptoms** and **do not live** with the positive case.
  - Self-monitor for symptoms for 10 days since last interaction
  - Adhere to all Public Health measures requiring masking and physical distancing

#### **Exposure to Household contact** of individuals who have tested positive.

- You must self-isolate for 5 days



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- End isolation after 5 days if you have no symptoms or if symptoms are improving for at least 24 hours
- Follow all Public Health measures (masking and physical distancing)
- Suppression members are required to get a PCR test
  - PCR test results negative – return to work
  - PCR test results positive – Isolate for 5 days and can end isolation after 5 days with no symptoms or if symptoms are improving for at least 24 hours

### Collective Bargaining Mediation Day#2

On December 3rd, the Bargaining Committee did a Zoom meeting with our IAFF advocate OntPFFA Bargaining Field Service Representative Bob McCutcheon, apprentice Rich Kelly, and Counsel Jeffrey Sack to prepare for the upcoming second mediation day with the Employer

The Association Bargaining Committee along with IAFF advocate OntPFFA Bargaining Field Service Representative Bob McCutcheon, apprentice Rich Kelly, and Counsel Jeffrey Sack attended the December 9th mediation. It was long day with a lot of back forth between the two parties. The meeting started off with the Employer side only wanting to discuss salary and then benefits but they were not providing much movement on either item. The Association plead its case to discuss all items on the table while the Employer was standoffish about that premise. In the end, the Association explained all its items left on the bargaining slate. A basic counteroffer was proposed on benefits by the Employer, but it was no better than was originally proposed in the Employer's submissions

The Association has requested dates in January 2022 for arbitration and are awaiting reply from Arbitrator Burkett.

### Provincial Government Lobbying

The Association continued its lobby efforts by sitting in virtual meetings with MPP Lucille Collard (Ottawa Vanier) on December 6<sup>th</sup> and MPP John Fraser (Ottawa South) on December 13<sup>th</sup>. Once again advocating for simultaneous dispatch and fire service standards of certifications. The feeling was over a month of lobby work that it was mostly positive, and we are awaiting any changes to reflect this as we head into 2022.



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### Large Urban12 meeting

The proposed meeting on December 14th, 2021, for the large 12 urban centres of Ontario in Mississauga was cancelled due to Covid-19 Omicron. This did not stop the LU12 OntPFFA Union Presidents from meeting virtually to discuss lobby efforts, bargaining, and vaccine issues.

### Events for IAFF

The IAFF Affiliate Leadership Training Symposium is to take place in Orlando, Florida for the week of January 9th to 13th, 2022. The President, Vice President, and Executive Treasurer are planning to attend to this essential training with some emphasis on planning for our IAFF Convention in August. We are awaiting updates from the IAFF regarding Covid-19 Omicron in the USA to make further decisions on this.

The Canadian IAFF Policy Conference to be held in Burnaby, British Columbia was changed to a virtual convention, and it will be held February 6-8, 2022.

### Old Ottawa Black Book Time Owing

The Association has discussion with the Employer around these old Ottawa processes. The Employer has agreed to that any 1/2 day portions can be put into banked time owing (BTO). All other days must be used up. In a communication sent out by Jim Andrews to those affected, it was stated that the time had to be used by March 31, 2022. If you have an issue using your Black Book time owing contact the President at [dmclennan@ottawafirefighters.org](mailto:dmclennan@ottawafirefighters.org). An arrangement can be made on a case-by-case basis with the Employer to assist you in this matter.

### Miscellaneous Updates and Ongoing Issues

Ottawa University/ Health Canada dermal decontamination study ended after a few delays and data provided revealed some interesting information in the areas of contaminants and PFAS. Thanks to all our members who volunteered for this study.

The Association is still having discussions with the Employer surrounding out of town travel for Hazmat courses, OMERS issues for a member who didn't have deductions on payroll, accommodation processes for software and technology associated. Promotional courses and those who are on



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accommodation. Disciplinary issues for a member in recent day are still in the discussion stages with the Employer.

IMS 200 was discussed with the Employer, as it was communicated to our members that they would be taking part in a 2-day course the Collective Agreement states 3-day course and the Employer was notified of this erroneous communication. The hinge that this is attached to is the OBEM component to the IMS 200, which was sectioned off to only be for Captains. More communication is to follow on this in the New Year.

Only one contestation for the Strategy and Tactics came through in 2021 and it was dealt with between the Employer and Association.

On December 31, the Vice President and President sat down on Teams with Dave Matschke and Jim Andrews to complete the tie break draws for the promotions list in 2022. There were some good discussions regarding making the spreadsheet randomization more efficient and the Employer will take that back for consideration in 2022. The draws were completed, and the list will be made available on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022. The draw was recorded and available upon request through the Employer, as it is not a provision of the Collective Agreement and was done in the past due to technological change. Along with the timing and Omicron issues it was done fairly and overseen by the Association.

### Good and Welfare

We have had a lot of positive things come our way this month. Partnerships with Coca Cola for our toy drive attached with charitable functions and parades. Lionsgate movie screening partnerships that will most likely continue into 2022.

The phenomenal work by our parades committees and our charitable committee should not go overlooked. Toy mountain has never been higher. We still got a parade off even with the Wisconsin tragedy. The CHEO event was another tremendous success and the members of Station 35A and 12A deserve a huge thank you. The OIM food drive at Station 12 and 35 (A and D Platoon) did not go unnoticed and you should be proud of the community involvement and outreach that has really helped our vulnerable citizens!



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With the recent passing of our esteemed member Ryan Hill, and earlier in the year, Martin Charbonneau, it is very apparent how great our members are and where their hearts really lie. The support for one and other, and our member's families is a true testament to our bonds we forever share. While they have passed away; they will never be forgotten. I as President, personally thank each and every member for taking the time to fill a shift or lend a helping hand during these challenging times.

As we foster in a new year, I hope that those who are feeling the strain of the holidays due to a rough couple of years will take the time to lean on their fire family. We are best at carrying one and other. I would hope that in each other's time of need with openness and empathy, we can be there for one and other.

I wish you and your families all the best as we close out 2021 and truly hope that all of us here in Local 162 are blessed with prosperity and health, as we head in 2022!

In solidarity,

Doug McLennan  
President