



## MEDIA RELEASE

### Council Endorses Agreement Between City and Union

**For Immediate Release – Tuesday, January 13, 2009 – 6:00 p.m.**

**Welland** – At a special meeting of Welland City Council this evening, Council endorsed the terms of a new contract. Although the memorandum of settlement was unanimously recommended by the negotiating teams from the Corporation of the City of Welland and CAW Local 523 during their final negotiations this past Saturday, Council this evening, in a recorded vote, endorsed the memorandum of settlement in a vote of 7 to 2, in favour. In favour were Councillors Sharpe, Chiochio, O'Dell, Letourneau, Campion, Grenier, and Mayor Goulbourne. Councillors opposed were Dzugan and Van Vliet.

Absent from this evening's special meeting of Council were Councillors Alexander, Larouche, and Belcastro. In addition, Councillor Alakas was not present and previously declared a conflict of interest in this matter as he is president of CAW Local 523.

Prior to meeting in open session, Council met in-camera, as permitted under legislation, to receive updates from staff on the most recent negotiations between the parties.

"These negotiations were all about perceptions and respect between the two parties. The perceptions of job security created a strike position for one party and the perception of future economic sustainability created a fixed position for the other", said Craig Stirtzinger, City Manager.

"A significant job security issue for CAW was Public Private Partnerships (P3's), which was resolved early in the evening on Thursday, January 8. Monetary and other issues remained outstanding", said Mayor Goulbourne. "We were all pleased when the CAW negotiating team approached the City stating they wanted to get back to the negotiating table quickly."

Goulbourne added, "I appreciate the long, difficult hours that both sides put into resolving these contract talks; it certainly shows the respect that both parties have for this community in ensuring our citizens experienced minimal disruption of services."

Stirtzinger indicated that both negotiating teams were professional and respectful of each other's positions in this process including understanding the position of the community.

"I am extremely grateful that both parties were able to come to an agreement that will enable our focus to be in the interests of our community", said Stirtzinger.

"And, although I do recognize and appreciate the efforts of the CAW Local 523 throughout this process, as expressed in Tuesday's Tribune following its report on the CAW vote, it really takes teamwork on both sides and between both sides to achieve consensus," maintains Stirtzinger, "I would be remiss in not underscoring just how important the efforts of the City's negotiating team, led by Rosanne Mantesso, Gabriella Ristine, Gary Lapierre, Bill Fenwick, and Sal Iannello were in bringing this to a close."

The new contract between the City and its outside workers includes wage increases of 2.5% on January 1, 2009, and 2.25% on January 1, 2010, and the resolution of job security issues. Although some benefit changes were negotiated, the City will experience no increase in cost as a result of those changes. The new contract also consists of changes to bereavement leave, clothing/uniform and safety apparel allowances, resolution of skilled trade recognition, and the development of a Corporate Seniority List as opposed to the current departmental seniority list.

The negotiating teams for the City and its employees represented by CAW Local 523 first met on November 27, 2008, with several meetings between that date and the successful culmination of talks on January 10, 2009.

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