



CEMA Newsletter

October 2019

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CEMA Events

CEMA Drop-in Event

This event took place on September 12th at Boston Pizza in the Edmonton Tower. It was decided by the Board that we would try more events like this to encourage casual conversation and networking for our members. Those in attendance provided some very positive feedback and really enjoyed the evening. A special thank you to all members of ELT for attending the drop-in event. Members were very appreciative.



A BIG shout out goes to Lyla Peters, Lana Phillips, Cameron Fani, Alannah Webb, Cherie Fuchand and of course the always charming Raja Bajwa, whose idea it was to donate the extra food left over to a local homeless shelter. These members loaded up all the leftovers and walked them over to the homeless shelter after the event



Holiday Luncheon

Thursday, December 12, 2019 at 12 p.m. at the Westin Hotel. Further details to follow closer to the event date.



Golf Tournament

Over 100 members and guests attended the CEMA sponsored golf tournament held at the Mill Woods Golf Course, on June 14, 2019.

The teams looked like they enjoyed the course and the food after...and the weather cooperated this year! Thanks to board member Jason Halayko who booked the event and to the many prize donors and sponsors. Other board members helping out at the event included Brenda Waluk, Beatrice McMillan, Gail Hickmore, Satya Gadidasu, and Derek Hanson.

Legal Assistance Criteria Changes



In the past year, CEMA has been experiencing a high volume of legal assistance requests. This is due in large part to the increased number of members who have been terminated or disciplined. It is becoming a challenge for CEMA to continue to finance the number of requests that we are receiving so we have changed the criteria to better address this challenge. The following new criteria has been approved by the CEMA board. CEMA members who have:

- 1-5 years of membership can receive up to \$250.00
- 5-10 years of membership can receive up to \$500.00
- 10 plus years of membership can receive up to \$1000.00

Members have to apply for legal assistance and all requests are subject to approval by the Board.

Major Governance Changes to LAPP



Payers into the LAPP will now have more direct influence on how LAPP funds are managed and LAPP will no longer be under the control of the province's Finance Minister.

The Local Authorities Pension Plan (LAPP) has recently undergone some major governance changes, resulting in large part from a labour coalition comprised of unions and associations that lobbied the provincial government for many years, for change. The LAPP is now governed independently by a Sponsor Board and a Corporate Board. Under the new governance framework, sponsor organizations of LAPP including employers, unions and associations are directly responsible for key decisions affecting the future of the plan.

CEMA representatives will continue to attend Sponsor Consultation Group (SCG) meetings. These meetings have now become more relevant given that the members of the two boards (Sponsor and Corporate) are present and are now directly accountable to the payer's of the system. At the last SCG meeting, the new governance structure was introduced as were the members that will comprise the two boards. Although CEMA is not represented on either of these two boards attending the SCG meetings will continue to be a way to ensure the interests of our members are represented going forward.

CEMA attended the latest SCG LAPP meeting that took place on October 25th. At this meeting it was reported that the financial position of the pension fund is very strong. The valuation of the fund is very close to 45 billion dollars with a surplus of 3.2 billion. It was also stated that their will be no change to contribution rates for 2020.

For all things LAPP: www.lapp.ca

“Ted Talk” on Inspiring Great Leaders



The following links to a [Ted Talk](#) about how great leaders inspire action, by Simon Sinek.

Let’s Talk Compression

CEMA members have expressed to its board that management pay compression is a major concern. “Compression occurs where, in a permanent/ongoing pay situation, there exists an annual salary differential of less than 5% between a supervisory position and its subordinate position(s) which will not be remedied in range increases.” To clarify this situation, both individuals must be at the top range of their pay band or pay scale for this to be a compression issue. In a letter from the City Manager, dated December 6, 2018, Linda Cochrane committed to “rectify identified pay compression situations through compression adjustments to annual salaries where necessary.” This is positive news for CEMA members who may be experiencing this situation. The CEMA Board will continue to highlight concerns of CEMA members and if you would like to discuss situations where this is occurring please contact Dave Loken

Duty to Accommodate

As of the last meeting of the Duty to Accommodate Committee, there have been no significant Supreme Court of Canada cases to report. However, there was a local decision made that is relevant to CEMA members who work in transit. ATU Local 569 challenged the City on “the imposition of a driver evaluation policy for transit operators.”

The union argued the test was unreasonable under the KVP rule (see attached link for details) and that it was an invasion of the employee’s medical privacy. In this case the arbitrator found that “the amount of medical information required, and the mandatory nature of the process was excessive and unreasonable.” Anybody who was unfairly subjected to this policy should have been compensated by now.

A new chair and a new director were appointed to the Alberta Human Rights Commission. Michael Gottheil was appointed Chief of the Commission and Tribunals of Alberta in August of 2018 and Nancy Henderson was appointed to a five-year term of the Commission on February 19, 2019.

For explanation of the *KVP* rule: [labour law; KPV test](#)

Jurisdictional Challenge

The City is reviewing a number of current positions at the request of CSU 52. CSU 52 is challenging the City to make these positions fall under CSU 52 jurisdiction. CEMA is very concerned about this process and has been promised to be kept informed on it and any effects that it may have on current CEMA positions. To date, we do not have any information on how many CEMA positions will be affected. We have asked HR to keep us updated on the progress of this initiative.

Benefits Review

Your CEMA Board have been very vocal in raising the importance of a benefits review for CEMA members with the City Manager, as out-of-step with benefits offered to other City employees. This is an issue that was highlighted by CEMA members in our member survey as well as through more recent emails. As a result, CEMA has agreed to be part of a benefits review that the City is currently undertaking and remains hopeful that it will result in much needed improvements to the current benefit plan. Your board will keep you posted as this review progresses.

Peer Group Support for CEMA

We recently met with City Chaplain John Dowds about CEMA forming its own Peer Group Support network. With the number of ongoing workplace culture changes and CEMA members being under constant change and stress due to these changes, it is timely that CEMA form its own peer support group. We will be working with the City Chaplain to develop this group and will report back on our progress at a later date.

Unions and Associations

What bargaining power does CEMA have in comparison to the unions? This has been a frequent question posed to your board from members and reflects comments received in the last member survey. Essentially by way of their collective agreements and by certification from the labour board, unions have a right to bargain. The difference between a union and association in this regard is that since CEMA is not a "certified bargaining unit", it has no right to bargain. If CEMA wanted the same right, it would have to organize and seek certification from the labour board.

Harassment and Discrimination Process

The City continues to transition into a new formal process for dealing with H+D complaints. A new office has opened under a revised approach to handle new complaints going forward. Complaints can be sent by email or by calling in person to the newly established Safe Disclosure Office (SDO), open at the Bonnie Doon Mall site.

For more information: [COE Respect in the Workplace](#)

The new process replaces the contract that the City previously had with Deloitte in dealing with complaints. A few remaining H+D cases in the works will be finished under that contract.

Workforce Transition Program

This program was offered this past May for management and out of scope employees. This was a voluntary retirement package offered by the City Manager. The program offered two options: A transition to retirement benefit which included three months of salary and continued medical and dental benefits for five years up to age 65, whichever comes first or a voluntary resignation package of six months of salary. CEMA received many inquiries regarding this program and decided to seek a legal opinion to try and answer many of the concerns raised.

CEMA was not consulted nor was any of the criteria discussed. We were concerned about the inconsistent way this program was being offered and we did not feel that the incentives offered were adequate considering that in the past one year buy outs were offered. In its totality CEMA was also concerned that because of the way the program was designed, that it may have a negative effect on some of the younger staff leaving the City. The entire process was City driven and controlled. We have most recently asked how many employees took part in the program and we are waiting for a response.

Meeting with Councillors

Last fall, CEMA President Brenda Waluk and Executive Director Dave Loken met with City Councillors individually in order to educate members of council regarding CEMA issues. The response was great, and it was felt that these meetings were worthwhile. CEMA Executive will be scheduling these meetings again this fall.