

CLC Summer School – Parliamentary Procedure and Public Speaking for Women
Port Elgin UNIFOR Family Centre
July 13 – 18, 2014

Thanks to COPE491 for the privilege and to CUPE for the leave of absence to attend my first CLC Women's Summer School in beautiful Port Elgin. I've gained an experience of a life-time. Exceptional camaraderie of sisters from other unions.

There were 21 participants from other Unions – as well as other sisters from a few CUPE locals attending the Parliamentary Procedure and Public Speaking for Women.

There were three of us from CUPE National who attended the weeklong school. We arrived there Sunday, July 13, and were separated for registration after which we attended the opening plenary and then to our individual class.

Our opening Plenary *"Why Ignite the Spark?"* Guest Speaker: Barb Byers, Secretary Treasurer, CLC – *Fanning the flame* – helping women to be aware why it would be important to get women elected. A culture of mutual support.



Later in the evening we had a 'Welcome Social' at the Gazebo fire pit which was fun.

On Monday, July 14, we started with Plenary: *"Assessing our Skills, Considering the Possibilities"* then to classes.

On Tuesday, July 15, our Plenary: *"Be inspired by Women Leaders"*

On Wednesday, July 16, our Plenary: *"Where We stand, Who We know"*

The plenary was very, very, interesting with presentations from union activists; Nancy Hutchinson, Secretary-Treasurer OFL; MP Rathika Sitsabaiesan who shared their struggles and challenges which were very inspiring.

We have learned, shared experiences, information and made friendships that will help to build the labour movement.

This course has given me valuable exposure into the do's and don'ts when chairing a meeting – using Bourinot's Rules of Order.

A good chairperson should know the rules. Always be honest.

- it is also important to remember when chairing a meeting that the chair calls the meeting to order
- asks if the quorum – minimum number of members – been reached
- acknowledge the agenda
- asks for any amendments.

The chair should make sure the meeting is structured and everyone given the opportunity to speak

- be unbiased and encourage discussion. Do not criticize others nor allows confrontation and lose focus.

Punctuality is also very important.

We had a class project whereby each of us conducted and chaired timed meeting.

Public Speaking

Learning the key parts of communicating – verbal and non verbal, listening and effective communication.

We were asked to do a three minute presentation as well as a videotaped timed speech. Most importantly for Public Speaking – being aware of where I am, prepare my notes before speaking, know my assembly and stay on topic – use of humor to keep my audience interested in what I have to say – review/practice my speech ahead of my speaking engagement.

My Instructors Gogi Bhandal, CLC Ontario and Edie Danette Strachan, NUPGE/OPSEU Local was amazing. They made their lecture so straightforward – everyone was alert and focused on the instructions. They are both very knowledgeable. Best of Luck to both!

In solidarity,

Selena Lashley

COPE 491

August 28, 2014