

Let's Put a Cap on the Attacks on Cities



SEIU 721 CITIES ACCOUNTABILITY PROGRAM (CAP)

Volume 1, Issue 1

JANUARY 2012

City Workers Across the Union Unite to Fight Back



SEIU 721 Cities Accountability Program (CAP) Forum Dec. 2011

On Dec. 10, 2011, SEIU 721 member-leaders from cities all over Southern California gathered at a Cities Leadership Forum in downtown Los Angeles to develop strategies to win and stop the attacks on city workers. The forum was presented by the Cities Accountability Program, a project of SEIU 721 that is designed to build power for city workers and unite city workers across Southern California.

We Heard You!

According to the reports from the different groups at the CAP Forum, the most common issue is member involvement. Here is the plan to build our foundation and recruit more members to be involved in actions to fight back.

Suggested Action Items:

1. Mobilize Members

- *Monthly worksite meetings
- *Identify Efficiencies
- *Engage members in a dialogue
- *Strategy encountering management tactics for dividing employees
- *Create bridges between MOUs
- *Find common ground
- *Unite members with one voice

- *Member education – relationship based; factors and history of labor; cause and effect; mentoring others (i.e. new and younger generation); the need for unions

- *Empower workers to be leaders

- *Education – knowledge to share with coworkers; engagement; unit – all the same; flyers that frame issues, increase # of stewards and provide them the information

- *Active caucus across regions – easier to organize more relevant events, help with education, build community support, issues are relevant

- *Survey to ID issues; 1:1 with leaders; once-month lunch chats to agitate and ask questions (i.e. West Valley Sanitation); Unit Picnic

- * Incentive program for members to participate plus a worksite presence

- *20% member participants in a union activity/event

- *Back up union stewards

2. Communication

- *Media advertising including radio; “truth about government employees” on TV, news paper and social networks

- *Distribution of information (i.e. info boards) to get family involved (i.e. events)

- *Publicize victories and wins

- *Agitation on privatization to get people involved – clear & defined goals, timeline, media

- *Networking –grants, education, training, paper trail

CAP Mission: To harness the energy and talent of member leaders to engage in a program to organize around common sense solutions to the economic challenges cities face such as accountable public sector pension fund infrastructure investment, ambitious code enforcement, efficient tax and fee collection, and state and local policies that improve the delivery of services to residents and the workers who provide them. Unite CA public sector locals on a collective program and be a value added vehicle to encourage employee organizations to join SEIU 721.

Calendar:

JAN 23 CAP PLANNING
MTG

FEB 4 LA CITIES CLUSTER
MTG

FEB 25 INLAND AREA

TO BE DETERMINED TRI-COUNTIES AREA

END OF MAR CAP 2ND FORUM

APR/MAY CAP SOLIDARITY ACTIONS

JUNE/JULY CAP CA WIDE KICK OFF

“City officials are outsourcing our work to private companies, laying off workers and attacking our retirement security. The Cities Leadership Forum was about getting together with other city workers in order to fight back against these threats.”



Tim Burke, Lead Water Distribution Operator, City of Hemet

We Heard You! (Continued)

*Strike team – targeted Member Organizers’ to support organizing

*Use website to upload photos of contractors doing public sector work; services not done as well; public sector workers can plan better for emergency situations

*Email/text actions to city council members regarding the needs of workers

3. Meetings

*Town hall meetings by council district to present the problem; invite chief of staff of each councilmember

*Good Jobs LA meeting turnout; “we’re taxpayers as well; if you keep cutting services you pay for it in the long run, i.e. street repair”

*Union Participation – event with large turnout from managers to members “strength in numbers”

*Follow-up meetings to debrief and follow through

4. Organize the worksites with tools at our disposal – culture, issues, fun social; contract leaders

5. Have city get their \$ from code enforcement parking tickets and water rates/bills

ESCALATION for different phases:

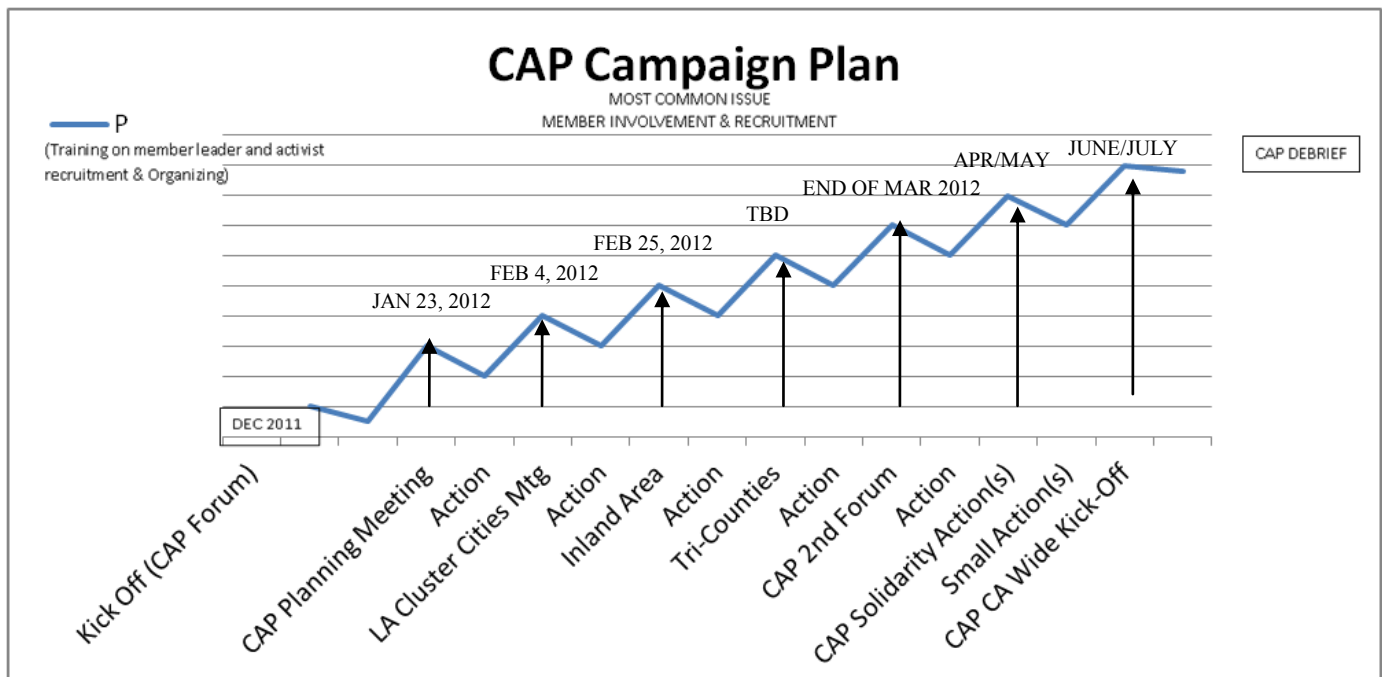
⇒Canvassing in the community; lobbying, public hearing; member mobilization

⇒Network and mobilize like minded individuals; i.e. airport security workers have a special connection with the public

⇒Preparing a vision of how to manage the budget deficit and protect services long term

⇒Be a force multiplier in the community on our issues to avoid cuts; i.e. DWP officers underutilized

⇒Hold politicians accountable daily



What about the other issues?

Other issues were discussed at the CAP Forum in December and they are shown below. After we have built our foundation, we can figure out how to attack these issues or they can also be incorporated in our strategy with the actions we take.

- *Stop Management from Reopening LA cities LOA with Back End Costs – it happened twice; city expenses have increased, deficit increased
- *Increasing management collaboration with workers (Focus on Labor Management Process that works)
- *Furloughs –reduction in staff; no extra staff; part-timers (38hrs/wk no benefits) no full-time staff hired; retirement
- *Contracting out- privatization; cuts to services
- *Politicians not held accountable
- *Increase city contribution to health insurance
- *Keeping the contract strong while not having layoffs or furloughs
- *Need to hold management/city accountable to their money

HOW DO WE GET TO VICTORY?

- *Mobilization at City Council to find budget inefficiencies instead of reopening LOAs with more cuts to workers
- *Encourage management to share policy objectives with workers (expand Joint Labor Management)
- *Regional/statewide/citywide caucuses councils
- *Contract-in the private sector and part-time workers
- *Communication - Getting word out to stewards and members
- *Close MOU loop holes regarding contracting out
- *Fill vacancies; stop position elimination; make part-timers full-timers; lift freezes
- *Anti bullying rule –where management cannot bully lower management
- *Replace city managers and council members
- *Have committees/watchdogs of SEIU members with capacity other than advisory



SURVEY
QUESTION: WHY
DID YOU ATTEND
THIS EVENT?
“NEED TO BE
MORE INVOLVED
WITH THESE
ISSUES
CONCERNING
OUR
LIVELIHOOD”





Let's put a CAP on the attacks on Cities!

SEIU 721

1545 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90017

JAMES JOHNSON
Affiliation Director
Phone: 213-494-8688
Email:
james.johnson@seiu721.org

ANTOINETTE WITHERS,
CAP Coordinator
Phone: 323-356-2637
E-mail:
antoinette.withers@seiu721.org

IGNACIO GARCIA
CAP Community Coordinator
Phone: 213-448-6255
Email:
ignacio.garcia@seiu721.org

Member Leaders leading the way

The following members are willing to...

- ***Educate** co-workers about attacks to pensions, benefits and jobs: Larry Beal, Ramon Burgos, Tim Burke, Johnny Clark, Conchita Cox, Adriana Dominguez, Richard Guzman, Kesavan Korand, Artemio Resulto, Glenn Sanders
- ***Canvass or Call** 721 members that live in the city where we work: James Cordova, Conchita Cox, Avis Harris, Jesse Valdes, Artemio Resulto
- ***Meet with State Legislators** about the impact of budget cuts to the City: Larry Beal, Raul Ortega, Nader Haghghat
- ***Participate in the planning group** for a Statewide conference of Cities Leaders in 2012: Johnny Clark, Adriana Dominguez, Nader Haghghat, Avis Harris, Kesavan Korand, Alan Peshek, Glenn Sanders,
- ***Do whatever it takes:** Tim Burke, Michael Hunt, Kevin Jeffery, Nady Maechling, Charley Mims, Andre Quintero, Raymond Rice, Simboa Wright
- ***Other:** Public Speaking (Nady Maechling and Andre Quintero), Get education on grants and grant writing (Nader Haghghat), help start legislation to raise/increase tax revenues from wall street profits (Cash Russell), help establish a "contracting out" department within SEIU 721 to address the issue (Michael Hunt)

THANK YOU!

Visit us on the web:
www.SEIU721.org



SEIU 721 Executive Board Members in attendance at CAP Forum and Josie Mooney.

Thank you to the member leaders that stepped up and took a role in making this event successful.

Khalid Abd-Rahman, LA City Convention Ctr.

Larry Beal, City of Riverside

Tracey Boykins, LA County Department of Social Services

Tim Burke, City of Hemet

Rudy Gaona, LA County USC Medical Center

Michael Hunt, LA Cities Transportation

Nady Maechling, LA Cities Solid Resources Citywide Recycling

Carol Maxey Ware, LA County Registrar Recorder's Office

Reggie McCoy, LA Community Col-

lege District

Jake Miller, East Valley LA Animal Shelter

Alan Peshek, LA Cities GSD Supply Services

Simboa Wright, LA Cities Waste Water Collection

LA/OC Cities Staff, Paul Hayes, Mark Klein, Molly Rhodes

Navarette, Gabriella Suci, Tri-Counties Worksite Organizer,

Joaquin Avalos, OC Member Organizer and...**Andre Quintero**, Mayor, City of El Monte