

CWU and PBL hold “meaningful talks”

The parties were granted 6 weeks to finalize an out-of-court settlement

BELIZE CITY, Tues. May 10, 2022

The seven members of the Christian Workers Union (CWU) being sued by the Port of Belize Ltd. (PBL) for approximately a million dollars (PBL), are currently engaged in out-of-court talks with PBL in an effort to reach a settlement in order to avoid being ordered to give PBL a payout that would likely, in conjunction with the legal fees that would be incurred, far exceed the resources of the union, which had resorted to collecting \$1 donations from supporters in the community. Justice Lisa Shoman granted the two parties 6 weeks to continue dialogue that will hopefully lead to a finalized settlement agreement. Yesterday, the parties appeared before Justice Shoman and gave an update on the discussions that have so far been held, and their attorneys have informed the

court that they have been engaged in talks with the aim of settling the dispute out of court.

The lawsuit stems from an eight-day strike staged by the stevedores in January of this year after their efforts to negotiate better working arrangements and compensation for lost earnings due to the transfer of sugar-loading to Big Creek were met with proposals by PBL that the stevedores found to be insulting and provocative. PBL claims that the strike was illegal (although there had been a notice of



CWU representatives

industrial action by the union a few months

before) and that it caused significant economic losses, since the industrial action by stevedores who belong to the CWU prevented the loading and unloading of containers on ships docked at the PBL.

PBL has been claiming a total of \$1.034 million dollars in damages from 7 named members of the union, inclusive of stevedores who sit on the CWU's negotiating team and the president of the CWU, Evan Mose Hyde (and the move has been seen by many trade union activists in Belize as an attempt to deliver a blow to the labor movement in the country). The details of the draft settlement reportedly submitted by Darrell Bradley, attorney for CWU, to PBL have not been released.

It was also reported today that a majority of the ex-gratia payment granted by the Government of Belize to the CWU for suffering and financial losses caused to the stevedores by the privatization of PBL has been disbursed. The CWU confirmed that approximately \$400,000 of the fund remains frozen in the account as a result of a last-minute effort by the PBL to get the court to place a hold on the payment of the funds to the stevedores. This means that approximately \$1.1 million dollars has been paid out to the stevedores.

This case is being heard by Justice Lisa Shoman as a separate matter between the CWU and the employer, PBL.

Whether or not the parties will reach a settlement in the lawsuit for loss of earnings brought by the PBL against its employees will be seen in 6 weeks or so when the parties return to court. If no settlement is reached, the case continues.

The lawsuit has been condemned by both the Belize National Teachers Union and the Public Service Union (PSU), which stated in a press release that the actions of the Port of Belize Ltd. to freeze a payment of \$1.5 million to the stevedores who belong to the CWU was “financial and legal harassment of the CWU, its President, and members by the proprietors of the Port of Belize Ltd. (PBL)” and it condemned the actions of the Port of Belize limited as “a threat to all workers and an attack on the Belizean trade union movement... intimidation and retaliation against workers who choose to collectively bargain in order to better protect their rights when faced with injustice”.



MINISTRY OF INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING INVITATION TO QUOTE



PROCUREMENT OF DUMP TRUCKS AND A 15 SEATER VAN

The Government of Belize via the Ministry of Infrastructure Development and Housing (MIDH) intends to procure twelve (12) Dump Trucks and One (1) 15 Seater Van to facilitate Ministry to undertake maintenance of the Public Road Network.

The MIDH now invites sealed quotations from eligible and qualified Suppliers for the supply of the following item:

Twelve (12) Dump Trucks - 15 cubic Yards and One (1) 15 Seater Van.

Bidding will be conducted through National Competitive Bidding Procedures (Shopping Procedures).

Interested eligible suppliers may obtain the full Invitation to Quote for the Twelve (12) Dump Trucks and One (1) 15 Seater Van **as of Monday May 13, 2022** from the MIDH's Offices located at #1 Power Lane, Belmopan from Monday through to Friday 8.00 AM – 5.00 PM.

Quotations must utilize forms provided in the Invitation to Quote. One (1) Original and two (2) copies are to be submitted in sealed labelled envelopes to the address indicated below. Quotations by email **WILL NOT** be accepted.

Offers will be submitted on the Quote Submission Sheet including a description of specifications offered, Price Schedule for Goods and Related Services. These templates are annexed in the full Invitation to Quote. All documents must be completed without any alterations in format, and no substitutes shall be accepted. All blank spaces shall be filled in with the information requested. Suppliers are informed that they can only quote for the type of **equipment** specified, and quote for all items in this Invitation. Price quotations will be evaluated for all the items. Price quotations should be **exclusive of both Import Duty and 12.5% General Sales Tax**.

The Purchaser shall award the Contract to the Supplier who complies substantially with the technical specifications and other requirements in these documents and submitted the lowest evaluated price.

All sealed Quotes must be delivered to the address below by **11.00 AM local time on May 30, 2022** and they will be **opened on the same day at 11.15 A.M.**, at the address below. Late bids will be rejected.

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