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For Immediate Release

Hamilton, Bermuda – Thursday, March 16th, 2017

The Corporation of Hamilton would like to make comment relating to the laying down of tools by approximately 20% of the City's industrial workforce today.

The Corporation has and does abide by the terms of the CBA it shares with the BIU; it has and does comply with all legal requirements under labour legislation. The Corporation is not a minimum standards compliance organization, it is one that values and treats with respect and fairness all of its employees.

This morning the Corporation granted to its industrial workforce, the opportunity to attend a meeting at the Bermuda Industrial Union. This meeting was scheduled at an agreed date and time by both organizations. As told to the Corporation by the BIU, the agenda to be discussed at the meeting was regarding work ethic as well as productivity. In actual fact and later discovered, the meeting was to inform the workers that the City refused to come to the table regarding an ongoing internal labour matters.

It appears from comments printed in the RG that the reason for this spontaneous action is due to claims of unfair dismissal of a number of employees. Some of these dismissals go back several years. It is unfortunate but the union is being very disingenuous with the facts in this instance as it is well aware of the extreme efforts the Corporation has and is going to, to work with the union on labour issues.

The Corporation vehemently denies the accusation and categorically states that it is working with its legal representatives and the Chairman of the tribunals to agree a date for preliminary hearings for the two tribunals to be heard under the Labour Disputes Act. The Corporation has exercised the right not to accept another tribunal under the Labour Relations Act as the matter had already been addressed via the grievance process with the BIU and Work Force Development.

After today's meeting, the majority of workers returned to work while about 20% laid down tools. Mr. Chris Furbert has denied to senior management at the Corporation ever telling the workers to down tools; that he in fact, instructed them to go back to work. Some of the workers downing tools work in a division that is considered an essential service. Management have instructed the staff to return to their duties and that opportunities to question and obtain any information would be made available to them.



The Corporation wants to assure the ratepayers that the city services will continue to operate without interruption, and that the Corporation will remain open to discuss this and any issue with the BIU.

It has always been, and will remain, the Corporation's objective to work with its employees, the BIU and other stakeholders to produce a productive and harmonious working environment by ensuring that good policies, processes and procedures are in place. Additionally, to make sure that employees receive necessary training, guidance and referrals, to assist them in carrying out their day to day duties.

ENDS