

## Mayor sets dates for meeting

Mixed Reactions

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After weeks of pressure from political adversaries, Mayor David Miller set a date yesterday for a Toronto council meeting to deal with city business left by the wayside during a five-week-old civic strike.

But those who have been clamouring for a council session were divided yesterday about whether the Mayor's announcement was meant to send a tough message to picketing workers, pre-empt the efforts of councillors trying to force their own meeting or buy time for a settlement.

Mr. Miller set the Aug. 5 and 6 special sessions for City Hall in council chambers, with about 50 items on the agenda, such as a deal to renovate Union Station and a plan to move a sewer to accommodate the Sheppard light-rail line. A regular council agenda typically has about 130 items.

"One of our interests at the city is to keep people working during recessionary times," Mr. Miller said of the large number of contracts on the agenda. "That's why in this labour dispute we want to keep people working. Our contracts and construction contracts allow people to stay employed."

The Mayor said if the city reaches a deal with the 30,000 civic workers before the meeting date, he will cancel it and convene a regular session of council within a week of the strike's conclusion.

Councillor Doug Holyday (Etobicoke Centre) found it significant that the special meeting is planned for almost two weeks from now. "I think maybe the Mayor's trying to send a message to the strikers that we're prepared to be here for a while and that we're planning for the future," he said.

Mr. Holyday has been seeking support for a meeting to discuss rolling back councillors' salary increases and will try to get that topic on the agenda for Aug. 5.

Councillor Denzil Min-nan-Wong (Don Valley East), however, said there is a glaring omission from the council agenda: the strike itself. "I find it outrageous that we're going to have a council meeting and we're not going to deal with the strike," he said. "There's no single more important issue."

Councillor Peter Milczyn (Etobicoke Lakeshore), who is one signature away from forcing his own council meeting, suggested the Mayor is once again trying to head off the efforts of councillors. Mr. Miller first signalled his intention to call a council meeting the very day Mr. Milczyn clinched 22 of the 23 names required for his petition.

"My office advised the clerk that we were likely to have a petition of 23 signatures on Monday morning to submit



Mark Blinch, Reuters

*Striking CUPE members Goretta Gianetta, centre, and Christian Giles, right, picket in front of City Hall last month.*

for a meeting next Wednesday. I have no doubt that the clerk would have communicated that to the Mayor; he's the head of council," Mr. Milczyn said. "More and more members of council -- and now it appears some that tend to be more supportive of the Mayor usually -- are getting tired of being locked out of council.

"It's reaction and it's also buying some time."

Also yesterday, the city announced it has two more cleanup orders for temporary dumps from Toronto's Medical Officer of Health.

The orders are to douse pesticides on Campbell Park, where pickets have prevented spraying since Sunday, and to remove illegally discarded trash in Bluffer's Park, where the unions have also thwarted efforts to remove the garbage.

Mr. Miller said if the pickets continue to interfere, the city will seek injunctions to execute the cleanup orders.

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