

CUPE 2950 General Membership Meeting Minutes

April 29, 2021 @ 12:00-2:00pm

Recorder: Chloe Martin-Cabanne

Territorial Acknowledgment

1. **Roll Call of Officers** – Karen Ranalletta, Frans Van de Ven, Leslie Hodson, Jaimie Miller, Adam Huizinga (regrets), Hollie Griffin, Odette Rivers, Lily Lew, Vladimir Petchkovsky (regrets), Dagoberto Vargas, Rey Astronomo, Parvin Bolourani, Lyn Pedro & Chloe Martin-Cabanne
2. **Equality Statement** read by Chloe Martin-Cabanne and Odette Rivers
3. **Adoption of Agenda** – Hollie Griffin/Lyn Pedro **M/S/C**
4. **Adoption of Minutes** deferred to May
5. **Business Arising from the Minutes:**
 - a. **Nominations for CUPE Local Executive (2021-2022)**
Treasurer – Danielle Hull
6. **Unfinished Business**
7. **Executive Report (Karen)** – Day to day servicing continues. At the last meeting, we reported that UBC switched our Employee Relations manager from Corey Onyskevitch to Effie Taylor.

In my role as Vice President of CUPE BC, I had a meeting with Minister of Advanced Education, Annie Kang, regarding funding for post-secondary and September restart plans. The directive from the government is that unions must be consulted on restart plans before employees return to work. CUPE 2950 has had zero contact with UBC on this issue. We don't know what things will look like in September, and it appears that UBC is still trying to figure out what they are doing to do. We will share information about returning to work with members as soon as we have it. The status quo is that we continue to work as we have been unless the university tells us otherwise. As for funding for post-secondary institutions, most universities and colleges are submitting a deficit budget for the next two years. There will be a post-secondary funding review in the middle of the year, where the government will look at all aspects from tuition, operational costs, capital funding, etc. When the funding revue comes up, we will have the opportunity to put a submission forward.

We are three weeks away from the CUPE BC Convention. I am running for president of our provincial unit. Of the 6 regional councils in the province, 4 have come out publicly to endorse me. I am hustling and talking to many locals. The election is on May 21st.

8. **Business Agent's Report (Frans)** – We are aware of the problems with connecting remotely in servicing. I want to thank Leslie, Jaimie and Karen for keeping things going. I am along for the ride, doing the best I can.

Last week I had my first in-person meeting with the employer and an employee. It was not a pleasant meeting given the subject matter, but way more productive than it would have been in Zoom. Simply being in the same room, making the usual animal connections made a big difference. I am looking forward to having more of that.

I had a thought about Marshall McLuhan's quote, "The medium is the message." The means by which we communicate is the lens that shapes the content. If we try to get things done that are fraught, we notice it at a gut level. I am looking forward to things *not* being the same.

We can reflect on changing work in the collective agreement as something that can be cut both ways. Working remotely will create opportunities and challenges for the next contract committee. We've got lots of experience working from home under our belts, so figuring out the protocols for work shouldn't be a huge issue, but you never know. UBC's bureaucracy creaks along slowly.

9. **Treasurer's Report (Leslie)** – We have finalized our 2019 audit and are starting on our 2020 audit. We should have the year end figures ready for our May GMM. We are caught up on the books, but the over/under is not up to date. We will bring it all to the May meeting.

10. **Committee reports:**

a. **Grievance Committee (Jaimie)** – We held a grievance committee meeting earlier this week and completed all business to date. We are meeting with the employer regarding grievances and are waiting for responses.

Personal Protective Equipment – the employer has been inconsistent in providing PPE to members despite their obligation. We made the case for the employer's obligation to provide, and the employer has been clear that they concede and agree with our position. The weak point is getting the employer in its distributed way to get PPE into the hands of the members who need it.

Theatre – this grievance has been resolved in our favour, and we are waiting for the final confirmation that our members got their pay out. The grievance was two-pronged: it was for overtime worked over a period and shift differential which should have been paid out to some folks working in the department. The result was that the overtime was paid out and that shift differential would be paid out as well.

Snow Policy – we have a meeting scheduled with the employer on May 7th regarding this grievance

b. **Contract Committee (Adam)** – n/a

c. **Communications Committee (Dagoberto)** – Karen nominated me to attend the CUPE BC Convention as a Young Workers Representative. Attended the Labour Economics Series which has provided me with insight, I am ready to attend the convention. Invited to join a meeting for Workers United after presenting the work that CUPE 2950 has done in the past and my own work. I invite all members to get involved in activities to support those who have been affected by the pandemic. We will work to get through the pandemic together.

d. **Diversity Committee (Odette)** – The first Equity, Diversity and Inclusion book club meeting is on Friday, April 20th from 2pm-3pm. Thanks to those who have expressed interest in attending. For the Zoom invitation, email orivers@mail.ubc.ca. We posted a recommended reading list in the CUPE 2950 bulletin, but it is not necessary or mandatory for you to read the books before attending. You can bring any EDI content that you'd like to share, or we welcome you to join us and listen to the round table conversations. You do not have to speak, just listen if you would like. Following tomorrow's meeting, we will have Diversity Committee meetings on the last Friday of each month starting Friday, May 28th. We will provide dates in our monthly bullitens.

The Ceremonies and Events Office is hosting a virtual forum on UBC's Inclusion Action Plan on Friday, May 7th from 1pm-2:30pm. If you are interested in attending, you can sign up here: <https://app.cyberimpact.com/newsletter-view-online?ct=czaTDkBJgVgNHF9xEsfQN2HxeTVZfL4ycBw0lp-5cvXTVgKTDjAQkOyW8XykrSfbN7uEqSbVSr-mb1Q8KOUSHg~~>

e. **Chief Steward (Hollie)** – Working from home now! Anyone interested in becoming a Shop Steward and attending the training session, please email hgriffin@finance.ubc.ca. The CUPE BC website has listed many courses in April: a Secretary Treasurer course for our new Treasurer, a note-taking course for Stewards, and also an intro to Stewarding Levels 1 and 2. With a Treasurer, we will also be able to appoint Trustees, which means that we can enter draws to win stuff at conferences!

f. **Job Evaluations (Rey)** – The committee is not currently working on appeals. We are doing general servicing, answering questions and offering advice to members as they contact us. A reminder to be on top of registering for vaccines and keeping up with the options. We are almost through. Be safe and kind to one another.

g. **Education (Lily)** – We are starting a webinar series with speakers who can provide support to the membership regarding gaining parents and relatives. We had a successful cooking class with Nourish on March 30th. It was really fun and we will invite them back. One member asked to connect with a speaker, Terry Small, on health brains and how to keep our minds healthy and happy. We will connect with him again and publish the date in the bulletin. The JSTP funds cycle has reopened for the new fiscal year.

- h. **Health & Safety (Parvin)** – We have published a series of webinars in the newsletter about health & safety topics. Join us if you can! We are trying to host webinars at least once a month. Lots of people have joined and we have received great feedback so far. If you have suggestions for webinars, contact parvin@mail.ubc.ca.

11. New Business

a. **Adam Ledger – Save the PNE Campaign**

Thanks for the opportunity to speak. I am the president of CUPE Local 1004, a composite local representing City of Vancouver outside workers, Parks Board workers, the Portland Hotel Society, Easy Park and the PNE.

The PNE is a landmark in the Lower Mainland, and when Public Health Orders shut down the site, we saw hundreds of regular employees laid off and thousands of casual and auxiliary staff members not provided with work. PNE workers do not just work the fair, they also work trade shows and other events at the site. All work was shut down during the pandemic.

The PNE is unique because it is unlike other organizations who have enjoyed federal wage subsidies and grants. We do not have access to federal funding because the PNE is owned by the City of Vancouver as a non-profit society that funnels money back into the municipality as a stand-alone society. Because the PNE is a municipal entity, it precluded us from accessing government support. The COVID-19 pandemic closures have caused a huge hit for the site and for our members who have been laid off for 14 months. We've started lobbying with the city to try to get them to help out and they did step up to a degree. The PNE is still 10 million dollars in debt, and the city has secured the debt, so if the PNE does not come back, they are on the hook for the money. Because the PNE is owned by the municipality, the government says that it is up to the city to bail us out.

Higher levels of government have access to more money, and what is considered a drop in the bucket for the federal government is a huge amount for the municipal government. The municipality just doesn't have the budget to support the operations of the PNE. We still have costs to upkeep brick and mortar buildings, insurance, and the grounds during the closure, and all of these are considered the city's responsibility. Without wage subsidies and revenues, this threatens the PNE's existence. The federal government came to the table for similar fairground sites across Canada, especially in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, where the large fairs are not owned and operated by the municipality. A few million dollars were allocated to the PNE from this budget, but they then told that they did not qualify and could not spend the money.

We pivoted to ask the province for funding, as 100 million dollars is being allocated from the federal government for tourism and anchor attractions in BC. The PNE fits this description, as it is a 110 year old anchor attraction that British Columbians have enjoyed for generations.

The PNE is in dire straits. It is an important venue for BC and an important place for workers. Many British Columbians' first jobs were at the PNE, we are the largest youth employer in the province. We provide good union jobs to young workers, which sets up expectations for how their employers should treat them going forward in their careers. It is also a great place for new Canadians to gain experience. All of these are important factors for us as trade unionists and people who believe that young workers and new Canadians should have access to good work.

The PNE was supposed to open on May 1st, but the opening date was pushed back by Dr. Bonnie Henry. The PNE is viewed as an outside business and not a tourist site. Last year, the PNE operated through the pandemic. Safety plans were in place, workers seemed comfortable and confident, and there were no transmissions recorded at the site.

The campaign to save the PNE website is www.savethepne.ca. Log into the website, read the blurb about the PNE and what we're asking for, and fill out the portion which send a letter to your MLA and to the Minister of Tourism and Travel, Melanie Mark, and to your local MP. It is impactful that members of the public have filled out the form and want to see the PNE continue into the future. We are leaning on all levels of government and sending a message that when the province considers allocating its funds, the PNE won't be left behind. The campaign is a 2 week push to get people to write to the government and express the importance of the PNE. We want to see the PNE continue into the future.

Motion to adjourn the meeting **M/Hollie Griffin, S/Oraz Hezretov, C/**

Meeting adjourned 1:20 pm