

CUPE 2950 General Membership Meeting Minutes

February 25, 2021 @ 12:00-2:00pm

Recorder: Chloe Martin-Cabanne

Territorial Acknowledgment

1. **Roll Call of Officers** – Karen Ranalletta, Ross Idler (National Servicing Rep), Frans Van de Ven, Leslie Hodson, Jaimie Miller, Adam Huizinga, Hollie Griffin, Odette Rivers, Lily Lew, Vladimir Petchkovsky, Dagoberto Vargas (regrets), Rey Astronomo, Parvin Bolourani, Lyn Pedro & Chloe Martin-Cabanne
2. **Equality Statement** read by Rey Astronomo and Hollie Griffin
3. **Adoption of Agenda** – Karen Clare/Kristen Wong **M/S/C** by Zoom vote
4. **Adoption of Minutes** Lyn Pedro/Karen Clare **M/S/C** by Zoom vote
5. **Business Arising from the Minutes:**
 - a. **Nominations for CUPE Local Executive (2021-2022)**
Treasurer – n/a
6. **Unfinished Business**
7. **Executive Report (Karen)** – Karen has been filling in for Trevor Davies, Secretary Treasurer at CUPE BC, who has been off on parental leave. Karen has been working half at CUPE BC and half at CUPE 2950. Trevor is at the meeting to give the membership some very important news.

Day-to-day servicing continues, and the local is now working with a new Employee Relations manager, Effie Taylor. She is getting to know the bargaining unit, and the local is getting to know her.

A PDF of the updated Collective Agreement is now on the CUPE 2950 website: <http://www.cupe2950.ca/collective-agreement/> and is also available through UBC HR. Printed copies will soon be available, so email the union office if you would like a copy.

In Labour Relations news, the Provost sent a message to all deans and directors outlining a potential return to campus in September. Some departments have shared this information with staff. CUPE 2950 has not had any conversations with the employer about a real return to campus. There are many moving parts to consider, including updates to safety plans, considerations for provincial health regulations and guidelines, as well as building capacities for a full return to the office. Karen's guess is that we will continue to work from home at least partially for the next while. The closer we get to a return to the office, the more conversations CUPE 2950 will have with UBC. Adam is working on the Telecommuting Committee as we negotiate a potential framework for working from home, which is supposed to be in place by June 2021. As you may recall, we reached a Collective Agreement deal two days before we were sent off campus to work from home. The employer seemed allergic to the idea of members working from home during negotiations, but it was easy to implement telecommuting when they were forced to do so at the beginning of the pandemic.

CUPE BC has set up a post-secondary cost share campaign to lobby the provincial funding policy. Post-secondary institutions have been underfunded by public dollars, so colleges and universities throughout the province are coming together to advocate and push government funding for public institutions.

CUPE National came to campus on February 24th to take photos of members at the Chan Centre and the Library for a magazine article featuring CUPE members at work.

Paul Farro, president of CUPE BC, announced in early February that he would not be re-offering for re-election. He has been president since 2015, and the vacancy will create an election at the CUPE BC Convention, May 19-21. Karen is excited to announce that she is running for president of CUPE BC. Karen has been on the Executive Board of CUPE BC for the past 8 years as Vice President and works hard to amplify members' voices in all levels of government and at city council meetings. She makes sure that the voices of CUPE members are heard by decision makers. Karen is proud to come from CUPE 2950. Susanne Lester was a mentor to Karen and was the local's Vice President for decades. She was very supportive of Karen's

role in the union and pushed Karen to take on more. Karen is proud to run for president of CUPE BC in Susanne's memory. It's scary, but she knows that she has had the support of the local for a long time. The members of CUPE 2950 make her proud. This will hopefully be the first time in 25 years that a woman will be president of CUPE BC. Karen has invited her friend Trevor Davies to speak to the membership, as they will run as a team, Trevor running for re-election as Secretary Treasurer of CUPE BC. They have worked together for eight years on the Executive Board. Trevor is a great advocate for workers and his financial stewardship of CUPE BC has positioned the union to be in a good place to combat any issues that members have with their employers.

8. **Business Agent's Report (Frans)** – It is not my role to get involved with CUPE politics, but I have worked for Karen for some time in her role as President and on the Executive. She is coming from the right place. I don't think that I have worked with anyone who has so much time for individual members. She cares about people. CUPE BC will be well served.

In other news, servicing goes on. Karen alluded to the fact that the CUPE 2950 portfolio is moving from Korey Onyskevitch to Effie Taylor, who we met just recently. We had a wrap-up meeting to ease the crossover and take stock of outstanding issues. Some have been settled, others are moving forward, including two possible arbitrations. Jaimie will discuss the particulars.

An update on the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP): CUPE 2950 used to pay 30% of the premium, but the employer has now taken on 100% of the costs for all employee groups. The focus of their work has been on personal issues, with anxiety leading the list rather than problems based strictly in the workplace. Our usage has been pretty good, but we have fallen behind other groups in the post-secondary sector. We will be getting a proposal from the employer to reinforce publicity and encourage members to make use of the benefit as part of servicing. We continue to recommend the program when appropriate. It is voluntary, confidential, and often members who have engaged with EFAP are happy they did so.

9. **Treasurer's Report** – A draft 2021 budget will be published on Monday, March 1st and presented at the March GMM for approval by our members.

10. **Committee reports:**

- a. **Grievance Committee (Jaimie)** – Our last grievance committee meeting was on February 4th. We are following up on getting Korey's attention, and now Effie's attention, on outstanding grievances. Korey was to remain involved in ongoing cases to the necessary extent, all other issues shift to Effie.

We have an ongoing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) grievance for UBC not providing masks to members. This grievance has been going on since November. Employee Relations and HR is clear UBC is responsible for providing masks and other PPE to staff. We are still hearing from Health & Safety committees as well as individuals that the equipment is not being supplied by departments. We are working to figure out where the disconnect has occurred. Regarding the provided masks being too large – if the PPE doesn't fit, it is not being provided. Email the union office with your examples. Each individual experience is helpful to inform our case.

We had a grievance regarding unpaid O/T and shift differential. The O/T portion has been resolved, while the shift diff is still in progress. We are waiting to come to an agreement for staff.

The tuition waiver grievance is proceeding. The employer acknowledged what we have outlined. Staff are paying fees that we do not feel are appropriate given the language in the collective agreement. We will meet with the employer again to come to a better agreement about where the line is drawn on student fees.

The snow policy grievance has been going on for a couple years and is still unresolved... and it snowed this morning! We need to come up with a solid way forward so that when it snows again, we are not dealing with a situation where staff are coming into work many hours after students and faculty are told to stay home due to inclement weather.

Jed Cheng asked, "If it snows a lot, can't we just work remotely?" Jaimie answered that although most of us are working remotely, the grievance occurred in December 2019 (before the pandemic) when there was severely inclement weather. In Vancouver, this means traffic snarls and people stranded at UBC campus, which is at the top of a hill. If folks can make it to campus in inclement weather, they risk getting stuck there. The core of the grievance is that we have language for inclement weather in the collective agreement which was not followed by the employer. UBC acted briskly telling the students not to come to campus, but staff were an afterthought. We would like to change that.

Other grievances are being processed. We have no news on them.

- b. **Contract Committee (Adam)** – We are coming up on a year since we signed our contract, which puts us two years into the three-year contract. We will see a 2% pay increase on April 1st, then we'll be back to negotiating in 2022.

From someone who has used it, EFAP is a great resource full of people who know about a lot of things. It's not just counselling; these people can help you and direct you to different resources that would otherwise be difficult to find and access. It's a one-stop-shop to point you in the right direction. It's a very underutilized benefit, and I encourage you to check it out. Children and dependents are covered by EFAP, although they may not be listed in the program.

The telecommuting working group is still in progress. We will email those who expressed interest in joining. The last call for people to participate is Monday, March 1st. In cases of inclement weather or emergencies, will you be sent home with the expectation that you will complete your work at home? What are the expectations? We need to work out the details.

A paper was recently published called "Higher Racism: The Case of the University of British Columbia – On the Wrong Side of History but the Wrong Side of Optics." It is about how UBC is addressing racism and gives a brutal, frank analysis of how managers are trying to control the optics of racism. Read it here:

<https://ices.library.ubc.ca/index.php/workplace/article/view/186661>

- c. **Communications Committee (Dagoberto)** – n/a

- d. **Diversity Committee (Odette)** – Thanks to Adam for mentioning the "Higher Racism" paper.

The Diversity Committee is currently preparing a list of resources that members can consult in the event that they are looking for help in matters of sexual violence, bullying and harassment. The list includes a link to EFAP. The committee is meeting on March 4th in order to finalize and publish the list.

The committee is also working on a book club called the "Anything EDI Club". We will talk about important topics that are related to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion: books, movies, podcasts, talks and you can even bring your own experience to the meeting in a supportive environment. Two members have expressed interest in joining so far. The committee will discuss dates to meet once a month, likely on Wednesdays or Fridays for about an hour. We will send invitations and information to the membership when the dates are finalized.

A new book has been published called "Challenging Racist British Columbia." One of the seven authors of the book is a UBC PhD student. The book tells stories about people who have experienced racism while living, studying and working in BC. The book is available to read for free: <http://challengeracistbc.ca/>

- e. **Chief Steward (Hollie)** – Payroll is working in the office and just got fancy UBC and CUPE 2950 masks with nosepiece adjusters and filters. Email Hollie or the Union Office to get a CUPE masks.

February 24th was Pink Shirt Day, a tradition that was started in Nova Scotia by two high school students. They campaigned to wear pink in sympathy for a Grade 9 boy who was bullied and harassed for wearing a pink shirt to school. The students distributed pink shirts to all the boys in the school, thus starting Pink Shirt Day. This shows that two people can change things and say no to bullying.

Reach out if you are interested in becoming a Shop Steward. If you want to know what shop stewards do, want to know more about the Collective Agreement and your rights, or if you have questions, give me a call.

- f. **Job Evaluations (Rey)** – There are no current appeals for Job Evaluation. A reminder to keep tabs on your job description. If your job is changing, it is a good idea to review your job description to see what you were hired to do and compare it to what you are doing today. If your job does not match the description, review and discuss it with your manager to see what they think. If you have concerns and want to run it by the JE committee, send Rey and the union office an email.

A reminder since we're going to work from home for a few more months: remember to log off and unplug from work to have a distinct separation of personal and professional time. Don't work outside working hours. If you have a hard

time unplugging, focus on that. Work from home smartly.

- g. **Education (Lily)** – We have had a number of lunch and learns hosted by Parvin’s Health & Safety Committee, and one hosted on February 24th by the Education Committee. The next lunch & learn will be presented on March 30th by Nourish Cooking School, where there will be demonstrations of how to prepare healthy, quick and delicious meals for your family. We have had requests from members for a lunch & learn to discuss care for aging family members. We will have another about anxiety in children due to COVID. The UBC Parent Council is hosting a webinar tonight (Feb. 25th) about risky outdoor play during the pandemic.

We have 40% of our Professional Development funds available. The deadline to submit is Friday, March 5th.

- h. **Health & Safety (Parvin)** – We are organizing webinars for members to attend, and have hosted two so far, one about stress management, the other about nutrition and health. The next webinar will be Yoga on March 9th. We are planning more sessions about lymph nodes, sleeping, posture and other workshops. Hope you can make it! We host the webinars during lunch, so grab a bite to eat and listen. If you have any other topics you would like to hear about, please get in touch.

If you have questions or concerns about health & safety in your department, email Parvin and the union office.

- i. **Sergeant at Arms (Vladimir)** – The Young Worker’s Caucus is moving along. We would like to write a mission statement for the website and want to formalize the organizational status of the caucus to see if it will be ad hoc or part of the executive committees list. We would like the union executive to provide us with a list of members and statistics regarding age groups if available. The exec is considering allocating money to the committee, for consideration in the March budget proposal. The YWC would like to cooperate with executive committees to attract young workers and start campaigning within the local.

A young worker is defined by the labour movement as someone who is aged 30 or under. The caucus would like to discuss whether the age limit should be pushed up to 35. This is a lightning rod discussion in the labour movement! Karen replied that we are open to discussions and thanks for connecting us with young workers and the VDLC.

11. New Business

a. David Fleming – Build Seamless Childcare

David Fleming is a good friend of the local. He is a CUPE National Rep based out of the CUPE BC regional office in Burnaby. He is a member, organizer and privatization coordinator for the BC Childcare Campaign. Many members will be familiar with CUPE’s support for a universal affordable childcare program, an NDP campaign issue that has been supported and campaigned upon over the past two elections. The plan is supported by UBC, as well as municipalities and school districts throughout the province. The NDP was not in a position to make changes to childcare in their minority government, but now with a stable majority position, they are able to make the big changes necessary to implement universal childcare.

CUPE is working to promote universal affordable childcare at a provincial level. CUPE’s view is that the K-12 education system is an ideal place to role out affordable expansion of childcare in locations that are accessible to families. The vision is for an E-12 system, or as Karen says “ECE to PhD!” Strategically, we are encouraging school districts to work with CUPE locals to expand before and after school care into a seamless model. School districts are the ideal place to roll out seamless childcare because they already employ CUPE members, who play a fundamental role in delivery of service by having the skills and interest which school districts can employ. School districts can move ahead quickly, as their existing infrastructure and spaces requires little capital expansion for childcare.

Check out our website: <https://www.buildseamlesschildcare.ca/> to learn more about the campaign. The objective is that this is an active website in which you can enter your name and postal code to automatically generate a letter to school district trustees telling them that you support before and after school care for families in your community. We invite all members to do that! Another piece is to share the campaign on your social media platforms to help it grow organically, as people are more likely to engage with programs that their friends support rather than those that are advertised to them. Pushing the campaign in the right direction in the right places will transform our society into a just and equitable place.

Universal, affordable and accessible public childcare will predominantly lift women and give them equality in the

workplace. CUPE will provide good paying jobs with benefits and pensions to childcare workers.

b. Trevor Davies – running for election as Secretary Treasurer of CUPE BC

Thanks for the opportunity to meet with you, I really enjoy meeting with new members and appreciate you sharing your time. I have been off on parental leave for the past six weeks to spend time with my daughter Sophie, who was born on January 22nd. Karen and I have a great working relationship, and I trusted her to come into the office and fill my role as Secretary Treasurer while on leave.

I come from a CUPE 374, the municipal local in Colwood on Southern Vancouver Island. I was born and raised in Kamloops. I started out as the parks guy, then my role morphed into health & safety, where I found a passion for helping members. The safety guy often becomes the union person! I joined my first membership meeting at age 22 and became active in the union immediately. I became president of the local at age 25 and was elected to the CUPE BC executive board in 2009 at age 27. I was the youngest person elected to the board at the time. I often joke that I'm the most established as well as the youngest member of the board.

When Mark Hancock moved to his role as the president of CUPE National, I was elected to Secretary Treasurer at CUPE BC. I take a risk management approach and my campaign have been successful out of the determination of our members. The union was outspent and out resourced at the time of the election, and my mandate was to combine the strength of our members with an efficient office and budgets. I modernized our operations and have a million more ideas to increase efficiency. When I started in office, CUPE BC was \$1.8 million in debt. During my tenure, we have added \$300,000 to the bank, paid our debt off early, and built a \$5 million defense fund, which is important to have for bargaining in large sectors like ours. Our membership wants to know that when tough issues and strike votes occur, they will have CUPE's financial support. I honour this promise.

I really enjoy being Secretary Treasurer. When the election opportunity came up for president, I talked to Karen about her plans. Karen is the senior leader in our organization, and it's a no brainer that if she stepped forward to campaign as president, I would support her. President and Treasurer are full-time officers at CUPE BC, so it's crucial to have a good team with a good working relationship. Karen and I are different enough to challenge one another in conversation, and we have the space to have conversations that are respectful, even if we disagree with one another. We have different backgrounds and ideas, which is ultimately the best leadership for an organization.

The upcoming election is bittersweet, as it feels like you are losing your president, but you are happy to see them move on. Everyone knows Karen, and as president of CUPE BC, she will put CUPE 2950 on the map. These are the relationships that really matter.

I hope to have your support with Karen as I run for re-election as Secretary Treasurer. It's a new era and a new team. I'm honoured to support Karen as president, and although I recognize the good leadership of CUPE BC over the past 25 years, we need a change at a presidential level. Follow our campaign at:

<https://www.facebook.com/karenandtrevor2021>

c. M/Hollie Griffin to endorse Karen Ranalletta as President and Trevor Davies as Secretary Treasurer at the upcoming CUPE BC convention, S/Adam Huizinga, C/ by Zoom vote

d. Open nominations for the upcoming CUPE BC Virtual Convention, May 19-21 (8 delegates)

1. Jaimie Miller
2. Shehnaz Motani
3. Hollie Griffin
4. Chloe Martin-Cabanne
5. Kristen Wong
6. Lily Liew
7. Vladimir Petchkovsky

Nominations close during the March GMM. Email office@cupe2950.ca if you would like to attend.

Motion to adjourn the meeting **M/Jaimie Miller, S/Lyn Pedro, C/ by Zoom vote**

Meeting adjourned 1:30 pm