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**NATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT  
TO THE  
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD**

Ottawa, Ontario

March 18-20, 2024

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Dear Sisters, Brothers, and Friends:

The last year ended on a high note with the presentation and adoption of CUPE's historic 2024 budget, and I want to recognize the courage of the members of the National Executive Board who unanimously supported this progressive plan for our organization. I had the privilege to present the highlights of our budget to CUPE staff across the country in the first weeks of the year, and it was met with gratitude to the NEB for recognizing and acting on this need for both members and staff. The staff commitment to fight with our members for better working conditions and a more just society leaves me with no doubt that the new resources will be put to good and immediate use for CUPE's and our members' continued benefits.

As always, there are many challenges ahead of us this year, but our organization is not known for shying away from our responsibility to do everything possible to advance the interests of our members and our communities, no matter how difficult the task may appear. I am so proud of the work we are doing everywhere across the country to achieve good collective agreements, oppose right-wing governments, and stand up with our members and allies against injustice and bad employers.

CUPE members ended the last year with some historic achievements at the bargaining table. They continued to mobilize to demand more from employers and governments alike at a time when the effects of the crippling inflation of the last few years are still with us. Judging from the first quarter of 2024, I expect at least as much energy this year as we make our recent successes a catalyst for more to come.

**MARK HANCOCK**

National President/Président national

**CANDACE RENNICK**

National Secretary-Treasurer/Secrétaire-trésorière nationale

**PATRICK GLOUTNEY, FRED HAHN, JUDY HENLEY, SHERRY HILLIER, KAREN RANALLETTA**

General Vice-Presidents/Vice-présidences générales

## **Meetings with CUPE Staff**

The first weeks of the year were busy with CUPE staff meetings across the country. I had the pleasure to attend all of them, though virtually in Saskatchewan and Quebec. In an attempt to improve my language skills and respect the region of Quebec, I delivered most of my remarks in French. It's always a great comfort to know that our union can count on the commitment and passion of hundreds of dedicated staff. As always, I was impressed with the quality and depth of the reports that were presented on the work that our members and staff are doing in all regions of the country. A big thank you to all the staff for their constant leadership, guidance, and support.

## **CUPE Ontario Secretary-Treasurers' Conference**

It was an honour to be home in Ontario, attending the Ontario Secretary-Treasurers' Conference. This is a conference that I started during my time at CUPE Ontario and I am so happy to see that Yolanda has carried on the tradition. Making space for Treasurers and Trustees to come together to better understand their roles and obligations is crucial to the success of a healthy local. Delegates tackled many issues, from Financial Officers' Training, By-laws, National Per Capita Tax remittances, Trustee Audits, developing Budgets, how to identify fraud, and so much more. I would encourage other regions to consider offering this type of event for Treasurers and Trustees in our union.

## **Support Rally for the Members of the Perley and Rideau Veterans Health Centre**

On February 21, I rallied in Ottawa with OCHU and our members at CUPE 870, Perley and Rideau Veterans Health Centre, to demand better for our members and for the vulnerable residents they so deeply care about. With an insufficient workforce, these great workers cannot provide the service that their residents need. It is time for the government and this employer to ensure that adequate measures are put in place to increase staffing at the Perley and Rideau Veterans Health Centre, including marked improvements in wages and working conditions that are fundamental to attracting and retaining qualified staff.

## **Support Rally for Locked Out Members at Videotron**

On February 27, several NEB members joined Mark and me in Montreal, in front of the Quebecor building, to participate in a rally held in support of CUPE 2815 and its 214 members currently locked out. These determined members have been locked out since October 30, 2023, by Videotron's King of Lockouts, Pierre Karl Péladeau, as they continue to oppose his demands for unlimited access to subcontracting. It's always an honour to stand up in solidarity with courageous workers and to show this terrible employer how strong 214 workers can be when Canada's largest union stands behind them.

## **NEB Retreat**

On February 27 to 29, with elections looming in several provinces, and a federal one that could be extremely consequential for the labour movement, I participated in a 3-day retreat in Montreal, along with the members of the NEB, to discuss CUPE's political role in a country and a world increasingly divided, and in which the support of our members will be crucial to advancing a progressive and inclusive vision for the future. The adoption of our 2024 budget was the first step in defining CUPE's role in Canada's political environment. I am proud of the commitment of our leaders to invest resources and work with allies to transform the angst and anger felt across the country into the energy required to elect progressive governments instead of the fuel for extremists who foment division and hate.

During that session, the NEB pledged financial support to the CLC Federal Election campaign. That pledge will be confirmed via a motion at our March NEB meeting.

## **Solidarity with Striking CUPE 3903 Members at York University**

On March 6, with Mark and labour leaders from across Ontario, I joined our CUPE Local 3903 members, York University academic workers, for a picket line rally. These members have been on strike since February 26 to demand that the university address the severe affordability crisis they are facing.

In the days that preceded this demonstration of solidarity, one of our members was arrested for setting up a picket line. I can't help but notice that at York University and elsewhere, employers and law enforcement are increasingly interfering with the right to strike to undermine our legitimate actions and their impacts.

## **Unwavering Support for CUPE 1490 in the Township of Black River-Matheson**

Members of CUPE 1490 in the Township of Black River-Matheson, who were locked out by their employer last fall, are now on strike since January 22 after voting down the Township's concessions. Our members have been facing incredible oppression by their employer and now by the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP). In recent weeks, the Township and the police have sought to criminalize entirely legitimate picketing activity. We have filed a challenge to this in Superior Court on March 12 and an unfair labour practice complaint with the Ontario Labour Relations Board. Mark and I have also written to the Commissioner of the OPP, urging him to have his officers cease interfering with a legal strike and our members' constitutional right to picket. This small group of workers, holding the line against the entrenchment of two-tiered wages, deserves all our support.

## **Strike Fund Regulations Online Forum**

On March 6, with the members of the NEB Sub-Committee on the Strike Fund Regulations, we hosted the first-ever online forum to hear directly from members about their experiences with the regulations. Over 100 locals registered for the event. The feedback we received from locals who have recently experienced a labour conflict or prepared for one will be used to inform the Sub-Committee's recommendations for the next review of the regulations. These recommendations will be presented to the NEB later this year, in June. I wish to thank all of those who took part in this forum for their experience and insights.

## **International Women's Day**

For International Women's Day, I was honored to take part in a special episode of the CUPE Cast. March 8 is always a moment to celebrate women and all that we have achieved. We are using our bargaining power across the country to negotiate good collective agreements, pay equity, maternity and parental benefits as well as fair working conditions. We are also campaigning to increase public spending in health care, child care, long-term care, social services, municipal and education programs – all the sectors where women work, and on which women depend for their well-being. We have a lot to be proud of and still a lot to strive for. I'll be proud to stand alongside my sisters in the battles to come.

## **68<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women**

CUPE had a strong presence as part of the trade union delegation to the United Nations Committee on the Status of Women (UNCSW) this year. Our delegation consisted of myself, Yolanda McClean, the staff support Elizabeth Dandy, and Andrea Addario.

CUPE's delegation was present for parts of the first week of this two-week annual event that took place from March 11 to 22, and we were able to cover a lot of ground. In addition to participating in trade union and official government briefings, we took every opportunity to press labour's priorities at the conference, attending many side and parallel NGO events. Collectively the CUPE delegation focussed on powerful events covering labour rights and decent work, the care economy, public services and social protections, multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, and the disproportionate impact of the war in Gaza on women and children.

Yolanda and I attended a reception hosted by the Canadian government and the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, Marci Ien. We also attended a session called Parliamentarians Against Poverty, hosted by the Canadian Senate and featuring MP Leah Gazan, and another session hosted by the Native Women's Association of Canada and the governments of Canada and Mexico on Indigenous women's issues.

We also collectively contributed to the Global Unions' blog, which can be found here: <https://unioncsw.world-psi.org/>.

## **Saskatchewan Division Convention**

Division conventions make every spring a busy period for CUPE. Spring was early this year with the Saskatchewan Division Convention from March 13 to 15. I was extremely happy to join the delegates on March 14 and to co-host, with Mark, the Officers' Breakfast on March 15 as we prepare members for the role, we must play to ready the union for the upcoming federal election.

I want to take this opportunity to recognize the outgoing CUPE Saskatchewan President and a friend, Judy Henley, who stepped down as CUPE Saskatchewan President to take on a new and exciting role as the Labour Appointee on the WCB Board in Saskatchewan. Judy was always a strong advocate for her region at the NEB and could always be counted on to take on additional responsibilities. Most notably, her long standing tenures as a Pension Trustee for the CEPP and member of the CUPE Bargaining Committee. Thank you, Judy. I wish you all the best, and you will be missed.

Congratulations to Kent Peterson, who was elected President of CUPE Saskatchewan. I have had the opportunity to work with Kent since he joined the NEB as Regional Vice-President in 2020. I know that our members in Saskatchewan will have a strong voice to represent them inside and outside our organization.

## **Safe Union Spaces - New Office**

Over 100 applications were received for the Director position in the new office being created to deal with internal gender-based violence and sexual harassment. The calibre of candidates to select from is outstanding, making the shortlisting process a challenge. I want to thank Anne Healy, Sylvia Soufi, Alison Davidson, Annick Desjardins and Andrea Addario for their support with this process. At the time of writing this report, we had interviewed one candidate, with the others being interviewed in the weeks to come.

## **Collective Bargaining with Unifor 2013**

The collective agreement of our Quebec National Representatives expired on December 31, and a new round of negotiations is about to begin. Tentative dates were scheduled for April but not all parties were able to proceed with those dates. We will be meeting to exchange proposals at the earliest possibility.

## **National Events**

We have been very busy planning the upcoming All-Committees' Meeting, which will take place in Ottawa at the Shaw Centre from March 25 to 28, 2024. All eighteen national committees will be brought together under one roof, and this meeting will allow new and returning members to meet as one large group in a plenary session and within their individual committees to discuss issues directly affecting them. The All-Committees' Meeting sets the stage for the next two years for our committee members and lays the groundwork for their goals and expectations.

In addition to this year's All-Committees Meeting, we have already begun preparations for the 2024 Sector Conference, which will take place at the RBC Convention Centre in Winnipeg from October 7 to 10, 2024. We were last in Winnipeg for the 2016 Sector Conference and look forward to returning to the city.

CUPE understands the importance of having staff and members meet and discuss pertinent issues that relate to their work and their lives within the community, and we continue to work hard to create these opportunities for all members of our CUPE family.

I want to use this opportunity to say a big thank you to Katia Beck, who has served in the role of Events Coordinator at CUPE National for many years. Katia is taking an extended leave of absence starting in July to travel with her partner for his work. We are presently in the process of interviewing for this replacement. Katia will be missed, and we wish her the best.

## **2024 BUDGET**

Following the adoption of our 2024 budget in December, my office approved a small change to the staff allocation in the Quebec Region. For a number of reasons, one of the Servicing Representative positions allocated to the Quebec Regional Office was moved to the Sherbrooke Area Office. This change was requested by the Regional Director and supported by the Quebec NEB members. The final distribution of the region's new staff is, therefore, as follows:

QRO – Servicing Representative (U)  
QRO – Servicing Representative (U)  
QRO – Temporary Servicing Representative (U) – Mentor  
Quebec City – Servicing Representative (U)  
Sherbrooke – Servicing Representative (U)  
QRO – Administrative Support Professional (U)  
Quebec City – Administrative Support Professional (U)

## **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE QUARTER ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023**

### **GENERAL FUND**

#### ***Statement of Financial Position***

**Assets:** The total assets in the General Fund at December 31, 2023 were \$404,201,237 million compared to \$363,281,273 million at December 31, 2022.

The bank balance at December 31, 2023 was \$14.7 million, down \$9.3 million from the balance at December 31, 2022. The bank balance includes various internal cash reserves, which are set aside for retirement payouts, future benefits funding, property maintenance, the Convention, and the Regional Building Fund.

**Liabilities:** The total liabilities in the General Fund were \$340.1 million at December 31, 2023 up from \$316.4 million at December 31, 2022.

**Employee Future Benefits Obligation:** As at December 31, 2022, CUPE had recorded the full liability of \$249.6 million on the Balance Sheet and had met the goal of the Employee Future Benefit Roadmap that was put in place in 2005. Since then, we have continued to book the expenses according to the budget throughout 2023. As at December 31, 2023, the liability recorded for employees' future benefits stands at \$275.5 million.

We will know the true amount of the liability only when our Actuary completes the annual valuation report, which is due in early April. Final adjustments to this amount will be made for the audit and presented to the Board in June.

**Fund Balance:** The Fund Balance at December 31, 2023 is \$64.1 million, of which a total of \$3.7 million is restricted as follows: Convention and National Events Assistance Fund, \$1.2 million, and Regional Building Fund, \$2.4 million. Of the remaining Fund Balance, we have invested \$69.5 million in fixed assets, leaving a negative unrestricted balance of \$9 million. This means that all the equity in the General Fund is spoken for either in terms of being allocated for a restricted purpose or tied up in fixed assets.

### ***Statement of Operations***

The preliminary and unaudited operating surplus for the year is \$17.3 million.

**Revenue:** Total revenue was \$281.1 million compared to December 31, 2022 at \$229.6 million. Per Capita Tax and Initiation Fees made up \$264.4 million of the total revenue and came in at \$17.2 million over budget. Interest and unrealized gains accounted for \$16.1 million of total revenue.

**Expenses:** Total expenses were \$263.8 million, which came in at \$13.2 million over budget.

Salaries are over budget by \$1.2 million, and current benefits are over budget by \$1.2 million. Directors' and Representatives' salaries are over budget by 0.8% (\$552,000), while Administrative and Technical Salaries are 3.1% (\$410,000) over budget. Vacation relief is over budget by 16.9% (\$264,000).

### **Operating Expenses**

Below are some of the more significant items on operating expenses at December 31, 2023:

1. Overall programs are \$1.5 million **under** budget.
2. Office Expenses are \$1.0 million **under** budget.
3. Operational travel is \$1.8 million **over** budget.

## NATIONAL DEFENCE FUND

### *Statement of Financial Position*

**Assets:** As at December 31, 2023, we have \$33.6 million in total assets compared to \$28.1 million at December 31, 2022. The cash balance at December 31, 2023 is \$5.2 million, down from \$6.0 million at December 31, 2022. In addition, we have investments totalling \$25.7 million on the books at December 31, 2023, which is an increase of \$6.2 million from December 31, 2022.

**Liabilities:** Under Liabilities we have accounts payable and accrued liabilities of \$2.1 million at December 31, 2023 same as at December 31, 2022. There is also \$12.7 million in cost-shared campaigns' liabilities compared to \$10.2 million at the end of 2022. Finally, \$420,000 is owed to the General Fund at the end of 2023.

**Fund Balance:** At December 31, 2023 the Fund Balance was \$18.5 million, compared to \$15.4 million at December 31, 2022.

### *Statement of Operations*

At December 31, 2023, the Defence Fund had a preliminary and unaudited surplus of just over \$3 million which includes \$645,000 of unrealized gains.

**Revenue:** Total revenue in the fund is at \$16.7 million. Per capita tax allocated to the Fund in 2023 was \$15.9 million, and \$790,000 in interest was earned on investments.

**Expenses:** Total expenses in the Fund were \$14.3 million as follows:

Cost-shared Campaigns: \$5,848,611 in cost-shared campaigns have been approved by the National Executive Board with an annual budget of \$4.9 million. There was a recovery of \$2.8 million in unused funds from prior years' cost-shared campaigns that have been closed out during the year.

Major Organizing Expenses: Expenses were \$4,067,837 against an annual budget of \$4.575 million.

National Strategic Initiatives: Expenses were \$2,217,502 against an annual budget of \$2.85 million.

Regional Strategic Initiatives: Expenses were \$2,121,258 with a budget for the year of \$2.45 million.



## NATIONAL STRIKE FUND

### *Statement of Financial Position*

**Assets:** Total assets in the National Strike Fund at December 31, 2023 are \$125 million, compared to \$135.5 million at December 31, 2022. These assets consist of \$3.8 million in cash, \$2.6 million in per capita receivable, \$872,000 in accounts receivable, and \$117.7 million in investments.

**Liabilities:** We have accounts payable and accrued liabilities totalling \$2.0 million, same as at December 31, 2022.

**Fund Balance:** At December 31, 2023, the Fund Balance was \$123 million, compared to \$130.6 million at December 31, 2022.

### *Statement of Operations*

The Fund has an operating deficit of \$7.6 million after unrealized gains of \$4.1 million in 2023.

**Revenue:** Total revenue in the fund was \$19 million. Per Capita Tax allocated to the Strike Fund is \$15.9 million. Investment income was \$3.1 million.

**Expenses:** Total expenses at December 31<sup>st</sup> were \$30.7 million as follows:

Strike Related Expenses:	\$25,815,484
Strike Averting Expenses:	\$3,623,873
Legal and Arbitration Expenses:	\$697,380
Bargaining Rights Legal Challenges:	\$600,000

The Fund also has unrealized gains of \$4.2 million.

## STRIKES AND LOCKOUTS FOR THE Q4 2023 FINANCIAL REPORTING PERIOD

CUPE members are standing up and demanding more and better all across the country. During the Q4 reporting period, the following locals were on strike, or locked out:

NB – Local 486, City of Saint John

QC – Local 5454, Société québécoise du cannabis

QC – Local 2614, Société des arrimeurs du Québec (lockout)

QC – Local 2815, Vidéotron (lockout)

QC – Local 4545, City of Laval

QC – Local 1573, Syndicat des fonctionnaires provinciaux du Québec

QC – Public Sector Locals:

Local 311 – CISSS de l’Abitibi-Témiscamingue

Local 899 – CRSSS de la Baie-James

Local 1108 – CHUQ

Local 1878 – Institut Nazareth et Louis-Braille

Local 2115 – Centre Miriam

Local 2442 – Centre d’accueil Saint-Joseph de Lévis

Local 2718 – Centre de la jeunesse Batshaw

Local 2881 – CIUSSS de l’Ouest-de-l’Île-de-Montréal

Local 2960 – Institut Philippe-Pinel

Local 3161 – Centre d’hébergement et de soins de longue durée Heather

Local 3247 – CISSS de la Montérégie Ouest

Local 3300 – Institut universitaire de cardiologie et pneumologie de Québec

Local 4475 – CIUSS de l’Estrie

Local 4628 – CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l’Île-de-Montréal

Local 5007 – CISSS du Bas Saint-Laurent

Local 5087 – Centre de santé Tulattavik de l’Ungava

Local 5425 – CIUSSS de l’Est-de-l’Île-de-Montréal

Local 3280 – CSS des Grandes Seigneuries

Local 4296 – CSS de la Seigneurie-des-Mille-Îles

Local 1821 – CSS de Laval

Local 317 – CSS de Rouyn-Noranda

Local 1366 – CSS de l’Or-et-des-Bois

Local 2057 – CSS des Affluents

Local 1993 – CÉGEP Marie-Victorin

Local 2244 – Collège de Valleyfield

Local 5222 – CSS de Laval, des Affluents, et de la Seigneurie-des-Milles-Îles

Local 1911 – CSS du Lac-Témiscamingue

Local 1538 – CSS Marie-Victorin

Local 2222 – CSS de la Pointe-de-l'Île

Local 1296 – CSS de la Capitale

Local 1208 – CSS Marguerite-Bourgeoys

Local 1412 – Collège Maisonneuve

Local 1340 – CSS de Portneuf

Local 1105 – Collège de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue

Local 1365 – CSS de la Baie-James

Local 3259 – CSS de Saint-Hyacinthe

Local 1679 – CSS Rivière-du-Nord

QC – Local 2468, Ville de Dolbeau-Mistassini

ON – Local 905, Bradford West Gwillimbury Public Library

ON – Local 3314, Hastings Prince Edward Public Health

ON – Local 53, Town of Whitby

ON – Local 1490, Town of Black River-Matheson (lockout)

ON – Local 136, Town of Oakville

SK – Local 882, Municipality of Prince Albert

## **STRIKES, LOCKOUTS AND SETTLEMENTS FOR THE CURRENT QUARTER (Q1)**

At the date of writing this report, the following locals had been on strike or locked out in the current quarter:

Local 2614 (QC) – Société des arrimeurs du Québec (longshore workers), 81 members locked out since September 15, 2022.

Local 2815 (QC) – Vidéotron, 214 members locked out since October 30, 2023.

Local 3187 (QC) – École de technologie supérieure, 600 members on a one-day strike on January 16, 2024.

Local 5522 (QC) – Société québécoise des infrastructures, 750 members on strike on March 12 and 13.

Local 306 (QC) – Ville de Longueuil, 1200 inside workers on strike on March 13 and 14.

Local 1490 (ON) – Town of Black River-Matheson, 12 members locked out from October 15, 2023 to January 21, 2024. On strike since January 22, 2024.

Local 3903 (ON) – York University, 3,000 members on strike since February 26, 2024.

Locals 4376/2348-33 (MB) – Ten Ten Sinclair Housing, 175 members on strike since March 6, 2024.

Local 4500 (BC) – BC Transit Authority, 180 members on strike on January 22 and 23, 2024.

## **QUEBEC COMMON FRONT**

I want to congratulate the thousands of members and staff in Quebec for their organization and mobilization in pushing back concessions and holding strong to achieve a good collective agreement. The unity and courage demonstrated by our members in Quebec was inspiring. It was an honour to watch the display of solidarity during the months of bargaining and job action.

## **PER CAPITA ARREARS**

For the quarter ended December 2023, the total arrears were \$9,628,467 which was an increase of \$1,011,036 or 11.73% from the previous quarter ended September 2023. Total arrears have increased 73.82% as compared to December 2022, and overall arrears per member are \$13.33, an increase from \$7.96 at December 2022. Arrears per member are calculated based on the December 31, 2022, twelve-month average membership of 722,183.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) REPORT**

### ***Member Relationship Management System (MRMS) Enhancements***

The IT development team continues to focus on enhancing the MRMS Local Union Information (LUI) module by designing and building new reporting capabilities, including analytical reporting. These new enhancements are tentatively scheduled to be released this quarter.

A new JustPay application is being developed to replace the current legacy system. The JustPay application helps Job Evaluation Specialists and Job Evaluation Representatives create and test a variety of weighing, banding, and costing scenarios for job evaluations, which is a complex iterative cycle of negotiations. The new application is tentatively scheduled to be released in the summer of 2024.

The IT development team is also working on designing and implementing a new case management solution for the Legal Branch that will help to provide support in the National President's Office (NPO) with the trial procedure process where CUPE members submit complaints. The trial procedure system helps track the status and deadlines of all trial procedure case files. The new solution is expected to be implemented in the spring of 2024.

### ***Accounting System Replacement***

We are moving to a new system called Dynamics 365 Finance and Operations (F&O). The project to implement Dynamics 365 F&O is now well underway, with implementation targeted for late Q3 of 2024.

### ***Per Capita Tax System Replacement (will be renamed LRS, Local Remittance System)***

A portion of the PCT system overlaps with an accounting system and given the replacement of CUPE's accounting system, CUPE will be taking this opportunity to create a more automated integration between the new LRS and the new F&O accounting system. The new LRS project is now well underway, with LRS implementation targeted for late Q3 of 2024 with the new accounting system.

### ***Avanti***

The HR team has finalized the questionnaire to capture self-identification data for employees for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. This is being tested by the HR team and is expected to be implemented in February 2024.

### ***Information Management (IM) Solution – CUPEDocs***

In the last quarter, the groundwork had been established for CUPE's retention and disposition schedule of electronic files, paving the way for effective content lifecycle management. The project team is actively pursuing the launch of this feature, with the implementation target set by the end of March.

The project team is concurrently undertaking initiatives, including implementing Teams for the CUPE Leadership groups and developing comprehensive training materials for all staff to be posted on the CUPEDocs resource site.

The forthcoming stage for the CUPEDocs team involves ongoing deliberations and strategic planning for the regional rollout. The rollout is scheduled to commence in mid-2024. The CUPEDocs team must gain a more precise understanding of specific roles undertaken by regional staff, ensuring a well-informed and seamless implementation process, region by region.

### ***End User IT Infrastructure / IT Security***

Over the next several months, CUPE IT will deploy new laptops to nearly 400 employees. These new devices will replace current ones that are four years old and will give end users the latest hardware technology to work better remotely and with our members.

CUPE has deployed a new cyber security awareness solution called Safe Titan. This mandatory training is now available for all users and must be completed before the end of the year. Training allows CUPE to equip employees with a solid understanding of phishing, ransomware, and various cyber threats while allowing them to recognize and respond to those threats. With the ever-increasing threat of security breaches, all CUPE employees must remain vigilant. CUPE staff must train annually as a condition of our cybersecurity insurance policy.

CUPE IT has completed its testing of biometric options for more robust authentication and simplified password procedures to access CUPE IT systems and tools. This new authentication method will be deployed to all users commencing in March. Along with rolling out an annual cybersecurity awareness training program, this is designed to ensure CUPE's IT investments are continually protected against cyber threats.

## **PROPERTIES AND LEASEHOLDS**

We are in the process of implementing a new standard office design that aligns with post-covid work environments and will better serve our operational requirements. The property management team started rolling out this new design in 2024 as we relocated leased offices and renovated owned facilities.

During this first quarter of the year, we have been reviewing various options regarding leases coming to term in St. John's, Sydney, Timmins, Kitchener, Peterborough, Pembroke, and Grande Prairie.

We have ongoing leasehold improvement projects in Sudbury, New Glasgow, Regina, Edmonton, Lethbridge, and Victoria, and for the expanded space at the Manitoba Regional Office and have started the planning of major renovations in our Montreal Office.

We are also in the planning phase for capital investments in several of our properties, including an HVAC upgrade at the British Columbia Regional Office, renovations to the Comox Area Office, the installation of EV chargers at the Ontario Regional Office, and numerous building systems and security systems upgrades throughout the portfolio.

## **PENSION ADMINISTRATION**

Effective January 1, 2024, I became the Chair of the Joint Board of Trustees, and Emily Niles became the Vice-Chair.

The Joint Board of Trustees will have its first scheduled meeting of the year on April 10. The Trustees will discuss, amongst other things, the preliminary valuation results at January 1, 2024.

Following the filing of the Actuarial Valuation on September 11, 2023, the employer contribution rate was confirmed at 13.20% of pensionable earnings. In 2024, the employer contribution rate will remain the same at 13.20% of pensionable earnings.

Preparations are underway for the 2023 Pension Fund Audit.

Judy Henley has resigned as a CUPE Pension Trustee and CUPE as the Settlor will be replacing her in the days to come.

### **Retirements**

Stéphane J. Lalonde, Ottawa Area Office, February 1, 2024

Donald Styles, Ontario Local 79, March 1, 2024

Margaret Putgatschew, Ontario Regional Office, March 1, 2024

Nancy Murphy, Oshawa Area Office, March 1, 2024

Keith Sandford, Peel Area Office, April 1, 2024

Corinne A. Iwata, British Columbia Regional Office, May 1, 2024

Garth Smith, National President Office, July 1, 2024

Humberto da Silva, Ontario Regional Office, July 1, 2024

Francois Bellemare, Organizing & Regional Services Department, March 1, 2025

Tammy Griffin, Finance & Administration Department, September 1, 2025.

## CONCLUSION

From the reports that I am receiving from across the country, it looks like spring will be hot this year! Inspired by an unprecedented wave of mobilization that has been happening in locals, regions, and sectors everywhere, CUPE members know that after years of giving their best and sometimes even putting their lives on the line, it is now their turn to receive. We are seeing increased job action and mobilization in every region in the country. Our organization continues to be hard at work to ensure that the resources and support they need in their fights for good working conditions, progressive governments, and a fairer society continue to be available. I look forward to meeting members at the upcoming division conventions, standing with them on picket lines, and working together to demand more and better.

Respectfully submitted by,



CANDACE RENNICK  
National Secretary-Treasurer

:nf/ceu