

## Secretary-Treasurer's

### Report to Convention – April 2018

---

Since December of 2015 I have had the pleasure of serving CUPE members as the Secretary-Treasurer of CUPE BC. This position has challenged me in ways I never could have anticipated, but even in the most difficult of days I still count myself lucky (pun intended) that I get to work on behalf of 87,000 amazing CUPE members.

Over the last few years I have dedicated a great deal of time analyzing the financial state of our union. Learning not just what we do, but why, because the history is imperative for any officer to know before implementing change in an organization. This report provides an opportunity to share not only the positive financial status of our union, but to also highlight areas that will need our collective attention in the coming years to ensure we remain a well functioning, and financially strong provincial union.

The shortest summary I can provide of a year in review is we ran small surpluses in all three funds. A positive step, though I am still cautious our level of assets is below what we should have, especially in the Defence Fund.

### CUPE BC Finances

CUPE BC's financial operations exist in three separate funds. The General Fund, which covers operation and governance items, the Defence Fund which is responsible for campaigns, donations and strike pay, and the Colleen Jordan Humanity Fund which is responsible for both international and domestic humanity and solidarity projects. All per cap contributions from locals go into the General Fund and then are transferred to the Defence Fund and Colleen Jordan Humanity Fund.

The constitutional breakdown of the per capita per fund is:

General Fund:	0.08%
Defence Fund:	0.05%
<u>CJ Fund:</u>	<u>0.01%</u>
Total:	0.14%

These three funds are regularly monitored and quarterly reports are provided to the CUPE BC Executive Board and trustees. Our finances are cared for by our accounting staff of CUPE BC – Wendy Monkhouse and Jolanta Osowska.

### **General Fund**

Our total income in 2017 was \$2,843,616, of which \$2,624,296 comes from per capita. Our total spending was \$2,802,074 which resulted in a year end surplus of \$41,542. This improved our asset position in the General Fund from \$622,688 in 2016 to \$664,230.

This small surplus was actually a major achievement considering the challenges of 2017. Over the last year we had some major challenges. The first of them being the move from our office on Canada Way to our new office on Willingdon. To help control costs, we did not hold a conference in 2017. This provided some additional capital to use on building costs and allowed us to absorb additional building expenses and the retirement costs of an office staff member. Unfortunately the building move was delayed until February 2018 which resulted in many move related expenses occurring in 2018 instead of 2017. We made as many advanced payments as possible to stay within budget plans, but with the official move occurring in 2018 this will result in major challenges to maintain a positive balance in the General Fund in 2018.

The asset position of the General Fund is an area of concern, albeit not a major issue. Currently our asset position would provide enough reserve funding for CUPE BC to operate for 6-8 months without income. This risk is only of concern during years with large sector (K-12) or mass coordinated bargaining (Metro/Great Victoria municipal, Post Secondary) when the potential of a large number of locals and members going on strike at the same time would result in a massive reduction of income into the division. With a major reduction of income, CUPE BC would be forced to draw funds from our savings in order to operate. I believe this is a low risk scenario, but it is worth increasing assets in reserve to over a million dollars to ensure a healthy contingency is available for CUPE BC to operate in emergency situations.

Some additional points on the expenditures:

Administrative Committee and Executive Board expenses have increased from a total spending of \$133,719 in 2016 to \$217,330 a total increase of \$83,611. This increase comes primarily from our 'One Big Committee Meeting' which occurs every two years, and, the addition to the executive board and number of committees created at last year's convention. There was also an increase in costs resulting from the expansion of positions on the executive board following last convention. In 2018 I expect a reduction in expenses as we won't be holding a One Big Committee Meeting and with the new meeting room options in the new office building we should be able to hold Administrative Committee meetings in the new office which we expect will result in reducing expenses for that event.

2017 Convention expenses came in at \$385,933, a \$20,499 increase from 2016 convention. This is a trend we expect to continue with some expenses related to convention growth at near double digits.

Committee expenses from the General Fund came in at \$219,755, which is up from 2016 spending of \$196,659. This is an important item to note for future challenges; currently our committee expenses are split between the General Fund and the Defence Fund. This developed over time as campaigns started in the Defence Fund created working groups, which then are formalized into committees. The General Fund does not have the capacity to absorb the additional expenses of the 12 committees which live in the Defence Fund. This is an example of what I consider the most critical challenge for our finances going forward; the amount of operational or organizational spending that the Defence Fund is required to cover because the General Fund does not have the capacity to absorb the expenses. This will be covered in more detail during the Defence Fund review.

Administrative Expenses for the Division in 2017 came in at \$1,830,208. This represents the cost of office and staff operations as well as the CUPE BC Magazine *The Public Employee*.

The final note on the General Fund is to highlight the growth of operating expenses specifically meeting and hotel rooms, convention facilities, even food are growing at

double digit levels and are far outpacing our revenue growth. In the coming years we will not be able to avoid hard conversations about how we operate and we will need to consider the simple financial reality of either reducing expenses, or increasing revenue. A \$41,542 surplus is razor thin for our union, and while I will be proposing a balanced budget to delegates at this convention; with growth of operating expenses and the additional move related expenses, I nervously predict we could run a deficit in 2018 in the General Fund if we are not extremely careful.

### **Defence Fund**

Our total income for 2017 was \$1,860,272, of which \$1,803,433 comes from per capita which includes \$163,675 from the Colleen Jordan Humanity Fund. Our total spending was \$1,228,138, which resulted in a year end surplus of \$632,124.

This improved our asset position in the Defence Fund from \$1,836,115 in 2016 to \$2,468,249.

The asset position of the Defence Fund is far below what is necessary to respond to a large scale job action by locals. This remains the biggest area of concern for CUPE BC and I believe for locals as well. While CUPE has much different structure than other unions in BC, it remains appropriate to compare unions by expectations of the union membership. Based on data available online while preparing for this convention, CUPE BC currently has one of the lowest capital reserves available for strike pay and support of comparable unions in British Columbia. The BC Teachers' Federation, Move Up, the Federation of Post Secondary Educators, and the Health Sciences Association all have much larger defence funds, and we are completely dwarfed by the over 90 million in assets the BC Government Employees' Union holds in its defence reserves.

Comparison of defence funds between unions should not be the basis on which we evaluate our own fund, but is worth using as information on how other unions have financially prepared themselves for job action.

It is appropriate for CUPE BC to use our past experience, and future predictions to determine our need. At \$15 per day for a member participating in a job action (strike or lockout) the chart below can be used as a rough prediction of current capacity and I only

show the largest groups of members that potentially can go out on job action at the same time and is based on \$2,400,000 of defence fund assets.

<b>Sector</b>	<b># of Members</b>	<b>Per Day strike pay</b>	<b>Estimate number of days CUPE BC can pay strike pay</b>
K-12	28,000	\$420,000 per day	Less then 6 days
Lower Mainland Municipal	20,000	\$300,000 per day	8 days
University	12,000	\$180,000	13 Days
Great Victoria Municipal Locals	4500	\$67,500	35 days
Community Social Services	2,100	\$31,500	76 Days

The chart above is a simple risk analysis tool we can use to predict future expenses. In addition to this we can use our experience from the previous two large scale job actions of 2007 and 2014. In both cases our defence fund was exhausted and required loans from CUPE National to continue to pay strike pay. More alarmingly, in 2014 two of the largest locals were required to pay up front all of the CUPE BC strike pay themselves, because CUPE BC did not have the resources to pay their members strike pay until much later.

Strategically the benefit of building a large savings in the Defence Fund allows us to utilize the savings as an investment vehicle to realize meaningful returns. Should CUPE BC find itself in the future with assets in the Defence Fund of 8 to 10 million the investment returns alone would likely provide hundreds of thousands of dollars which could be used for a variety of projects or campaigns.

## **Debt in the Defence Fund**

Another area which reinforces the need to strengthen the defence fund is the acknowledgement of the debt to CUPE National. As mentioned before, In 2014 CUPE BC required a \$1 million loan from CUPE National to meet our obligations to locals for strike pay. At this time CUPE BC already had a debt to National from 2007. Since becoming your secretary-treasurer I have made additional payments on our debt which eliminated the 2007 loan early.

For the 2014 loan, the conditions on the debt are favourable: 10 year repayment, zero percent interest. Even with that, its important to reaffirm CUPE BC should have started paying down this debt in 2015, not 2017. At the current rate CUPE BC will be debt free in 2026.

## **Action Plan**

The Action Plan is supported by the Defence Fund and represents countless campaigns, communications support for our convention and promotional goods to promote our union. CUPE National provides significant funding assistance for strong communities, and anti-privatization programs, however to access this funding CUPE BC must first spend its own money, and then invoice CUPE National at year end to receive reimbursement. This creates a large build up of expenditures, and difficulty accurately reflecting true costs of CUPE BC. In 2017 we implemented a new practice to accrue recoveries during the year which allows us to better report the true cost of CUPE BC for Action Plan programs. With this new reporting practice we can clearly see from the audit \$224,239 was spent on campaigns and programs in 2017; compared to \$493,559 in 2016. CUPE National contributed \$542,000.

Total spending including both CUPE BC and CUPE National on campaigns and programs in British Columbia was \$766,239.

Since Action Plan projects represent the largest financial commitment in the Defence Fund outside of strike support, it is critical we work closely with the executive board and CUPE National to ensure our spending supports our need to significantly build the assets in the Defence Fund. There are numerous campaigns and projects which are

coded to the Action Plan and in order to better control spending I plan to work even closer with our accounting staff to monitor activities in the 2018 Action Plan.

### **Community Events Trailer**

During 2017 the CUPE BC Community Events Trailer (CET) travelled throughout the Province in support of BC local's initiatives and events including parades, promotion of CUPE workers, strike/lock-out support, local union picnics, festivals and other outdoor functions endorsed by the Division and its affiliates. The CET is offered to and transported to these events at no cost to CUPE locals.

Our CET is equipped with a fold down stage, a large awning, a propane fueled generator, a full sound system, an advanced first aid station with an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and a full kitchen (including a stove, micro-wave, fridge and sink with hot and cold running water). The CET also has a large BBQ, a large cooler and water filtration and sanitization capability. The CET has four sources of power; 110v power from a land source, 12v battery power (limited application), the onboard generator and propane, and is equipped with three fire extinguishers. This year, we added a portable podium equipped with a microphone to assist speakers when they are making presentations and to provide a more polished and professional look to our events. There are still plenty of open dates in 2018 to take advantage of the CET, simply send your request to CUPE BC at [info@cupe.bc.ca](mailto:info@cupe.bc.ca).

The CET is operated by the Local Community Organizer Tina Meadows, supplemented by some trained CUPE members who are booked off the job if necessary.

## 2017 Community Events Trailer Activity Summary

April	CUPE BC Convention
May 3, 2017	Delta Local 454 Member Engagement
May 6, 2017	Chilliwack May Day Event
May 27, 2017	Port Coquitlam Public Works Day
June 15, 2017	Local 498 Port Coquitlam Barbeque
June 10, 2017	Local 403 Langley Barbeque/Picnic
June 22-24, 2017	VIDC Miners Memorial
June 30, 2017	Local 1816 Burnaby – Pacific Blue Cross Rally
July 8, 2017	Prince George Pride Parade
July 20-23, 2017	Vancouver Island Folk Festival
July 28, 2017	Local 1760 Burnaby – United Way Members Barbeque
August 6, 2017	Vancouver Pride Parade
August 7, 2017	Local 454 Delta – Sunfest Parade
August 19, 2017	New West Pride Parade
September 4, 2017	Labour Day Prince George Locals 4991, 399, 1048, 3742, 4951, and 3299
September 12, 2017	Local 403 Langley Family Picnic
September 14, 2017	Local 703 Pitt Meadows Members Barbeque
September 24, 2017	Local 391 Vancouver Word Festival
September 19, 2017	Local 1004 Vancouver – Steward Barbeque
October 16, 2017	Local 498 Port Coquitlam – Member Barbeque
December 1, 2017	Christmas in Williams Park – Langley (Societies and CUPE Locals)

The CUPE Events trailer is beginning to show its age as a result of its high use. It is important for us to be planning and saving for the next evolution to ensure we always have an events vehicle available to support CUPE members and Locals.

## Investments

Funds in the Defence Fund are held in both cash and equity investments. Investments are managed by Seamark Asset Management in a diversified portfolio reviewed by myself, and the CUPE BC Trustees. The averaged 2017 rate of return for Defence Fund investments was 4.96%; this includes an increase of unrealized market value of \$60,217, and realized investment income of \$29,066 for an increase of \$89,283.

Working with Seamark CUPE BC has led the growth of a family plan that allows locals to invest assets into the market and share a common management fee. Current assets are \$4,518,680 which includes four locals along with CUPE BC and the management

fee is currently 0.67%. There are an additional four local's onboarding in the near future which will increase assets to \$5,968,680 and reduce management fees to 0.58%.

### **The Elephant in the Defence Fund Room**

As mentioned before, the operational expenses of CUPE BC have outgrown the capacity of the General Fund and we moved certain expenses on to the Defence Fund. This started over 10 years ago by my estimates, and originally had little impact on the Defence Fund. But over the years the expenses have grown to become a very noticeable drain on the capacity of the Defence Fund. Below is the breakdown of the most significant expenses which I believe are operational expenses:

- \$160,000 Convention Expenses (technical and accessibility expenses)
- \$130,000 Committee meeting and projects.
- \$ 65,000 Events Trailer (costs have been as high as 85k in a year)
- \$ 63,000 Administrative Costs
- \$418,000 Total estimate of operational expenses in Defence Fund

Of the above expenses, Convention expenses and committee spending are the two fastest growing expenses. In the 2017 audit the expenses for Convention are found in the Action Program net of recoveries and events trailer's are found under cost sharing programs.

Using money from the Defence Fund to pay for operational expenses causes two significant problems:

1. It provides a false narrative of what is required to actually run CUPE BC.
2. It reduces the capacity to rebuild the Defence Fund after job actions and reduces the ability to run campaigns.

Resolving this issue isn't simple and will require significant investigation of options and honest conversations to ensure CUPE BC has the financial strength required to fight the battles ahead. To address this, I propose we hold off on increasing any operational expenses of CUPE BC for the immediate future; and following this convention we conduct a survey of locals on various options to resolve this issue.

## **Strike Pay**

In 2017 CUPE Local 1816 engaged in a brutal fight with an employer no one would have predicted would lock out their employees – Pacific Blue Cross. Members of Local 1816 held a picket line, 24/7 for months. CUPE BC provided \$335,930 dollars in strike pay to their members and provided various resources and the Community Events Trailer to support the members on the line. This lockout reinforces two critical items with the Defence Fund:

1. The unpredictability of job action, and
2. The importance of having resources on hand when locals need them

Strikes and lockouts test our members' resolve, and I want to share my admiration for the members, and executive leadership of Local 1816 for all their strength defending their collective rights.

## **Colleen Jordan Humanity Fund**

The Colleen Jordan Humanity Fund (CJ Fund) was created by delegates at the 2005 CUPE BC Convention. Looking back over the years and seeing the many ways the CJ Fund has helped people, here at home and across the globe, there is no doubt that the delegates in 2005 made the right decision. CUPE BC is a leader within CUPE, and the CJ Fund is just one of the many ways we demonstrate this.

Our total income in 2017 was \$193,638, of which \$163,674 came from per capita. Our total spending was \$142,933 which resulted in a year end surplus of \$50,705. This improved our asset position in the CJ Fund from \$1,323,602 in 2016 to \$1,374,307.

The balance of the net assets remains above the constitution trigger of \$1,250,000 found in Article 8. This constitutional trigger requires CUPE BC to divert 50% of the funds going in the CJ fund to the Defence Fund. Our goal was to use the diverted funds to pay down our debt to CUPE National. With the lockout of Local 1816 and amount of strike pay provided I held back making any additional payments to ensure we had enough funds in reserve to support striking CUPE members.

CUPE BC is required to administer the CJ fund in accordance with the Humanity Fund Guidelines (Appendix B of the CUPE BC constitution). These guidelines outline a formula for spending summarized as:

- **20%** of revenue to be reinvested to build the fund
- Up to **50%** for International humanity and development work
- Up to **30%** for Canadian Anti-Poverty Work

Some of the projects which we supported in 2017 include:

1. **CoDevelopment Canada** - \$65,000 in support of a variety projects in CUBA, Nicaragua, Honduras, Columbia and direct organization support.
2. **2017 AIDS Free World** – CUPE Global Justice Fund - \$12,500.
3. **Pivot Legal** - \$15,000 towards their work on a number of issues including missing and murdered indigenous women, homelessness, and equality.
4. **Hope in Shadows** - \$8,500 towards the production of calendars which low wage members of the public can buy for a discounted price, then sell to raise income for themselves.
5. **Protein for People** - \$7,000 towards ensuring food banks in BC have protein options like canned salmon.
6. **BC Wildfire Donations** - \$10,000.

I would like to highlight the donations for the devastating BC Wildfires. CUPE BC contributed \$10,000 to establish a special fund to help CUPE members impacted by the fires. We encouraged CUPE Locals to contribute, and the response was amazing. Over \$50,000 was raised to help CUPE members and their communities recover. Organizing this project has been one of the proudest moments of my time with CUPE BC.

A final note is the funds in the Colleen Jordan Humanity Fund are held in cash, term deposits and equity investments. Investments are managed by Seamark Asset Management in a pooled low volatility fund which averaged a 2017 rate of return of 4.31%.

## **Financial Statements & Auditors Report**

Following this report are the audited financial statements for 2017 and the Auditor's Report prepared by the firm of Matthews Campbell, Chartered Professional Accountants.

The Division has utilized Matthews Campbell for the last 13 years and is very satisfied with their high level of detailed work and professionalism. They continue to provide guidance to us on how to improve the controls on the Division's financial operation.

## **CUPE BC Trustees**

The work of our CUPE BC Trustees is very important, and too often overlooked. I appreciate the attentive and thoughtful approach that Sisters Laurie Whyte, José Van Berkel and Patti Price have brought to their work. In my time in the Secretary-Treasurer's office they have all been very supportive and an excellent resource. Their report can be found in the convention binder and will be delivered following my report.

## **Administration/Operations**

The Secretary-Treasurer is also responsible for the oversight of the administrative services of the office and staff. First I will review the membership of CUPE BC and second the internal operations of our union.

## **Membership**

According to statistics from CUPE National there were a total of 89,824 CUPE members in British Columbia as of January 1, 2018. This can be further broken down with 52,391 members being defined as full-time employees, and 37,433 as part time employees. These statistics come from CUPE National, and include the nine non-affiliated locals in BC.

## **Internal Operations**

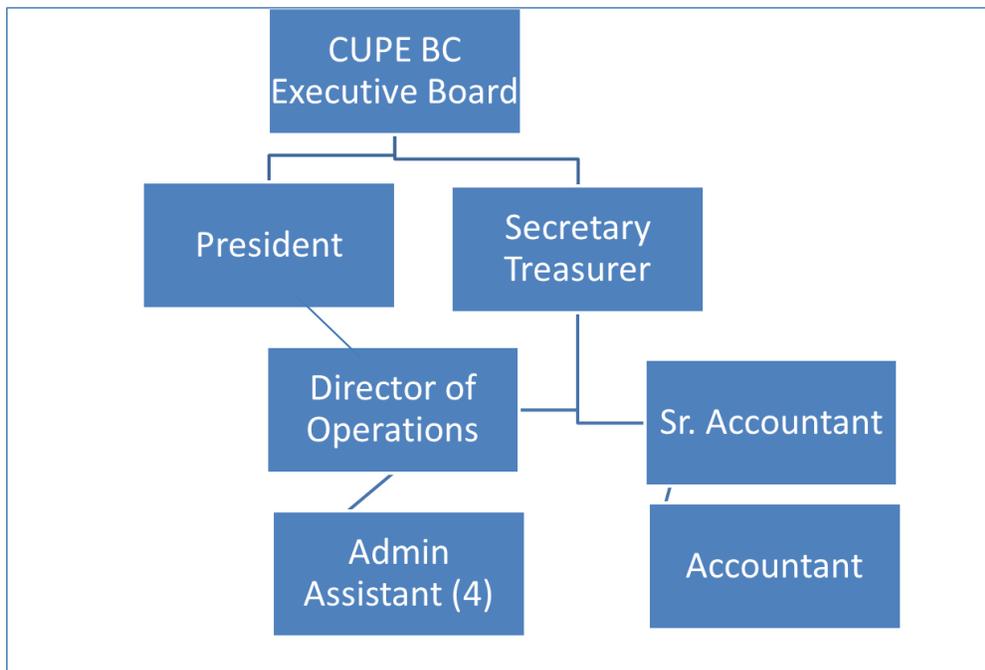
CUPE BC has a small office of dedicated individuals. Paul and I are the two full-time elected officers; we have an Executive Board that requires additional volunteer hours from member activists. For our staff, we have a very small group that gets an amazing amount of work completed each year. While amazing, the workload each staff member is required to take on has been identified as a significant issue that needs to be addressed to avoid overwork and burnout of staff. In an attempt to improve the working conditions I lead a reorganization of the CUPE BC office.

Sharon Prescott was reclassified from Executive Assistant to the President to Director of Operations; with the responsibility of office oversight and supervision. The Director of Operations reports to the President and Secretary Treasurer of CUPE BC. Lori Watt, Darci Schmid, Shirley Loftus and Kristi Bounegru have all been reclassified into a common Administrative Assistant classification and we have worked to better distribute work evenly among them. The four administrative assistants report to the Director of Operations. The accounting department was reorganized last year, but was formalized during the reorganization. Wendy Monkhouse is the Senior Accountant, and Jolanta Osowska holds the Accountant position. All accounting functions fall under the responsibility of the Senior Accountant who reports to both the Director of Operations and the Secretary-Treasurer.

This reorganization has been implemented to create a more efficient and organized office that is better able to complete the known tasks such as convention, executive board and conferences; which should increase our capacity to respond to emergent issues which occur throughout the year and cannot be planned for.

The better we are at accomplishing the task we know about, the better we can support members and locals when the unknown occur.

Here is a flowchart which outlines the new office structure of CUPE BC:



Another change which complemented the reorganization is the re-focus on the administrative/operational goal of CUPE BC. This goal is not a political statement, but an internal statement to help focus our office operations. CUPE BC's administrative goal is to become more efficient at accomplishing our known tasks, so we have more capacity to react to unknown events. Known events are items like Convention, Executive Board meetings, committee meetings, and conferences. Unknown are responding to emergent situations, such as a lockout or a government action.

The goal of becoming more efficient isn't simply a catchy phrase; but an absolute necessity. During my time in the office I have witnessed first hand the dedication our staff members have to CUPE members. I have also witnessed how the growth of our union, the growth of events like Convention, Executive Board, conferences and meetings have grown far faster than our staff support. Without intervention, CUPE BC will become trapped in a cycle of only having the staff resources to organize events, with little to no capacity to follow through with any outcomes from those events.

This can better be described by a summary of yearly operations:

From January to April CUPE BC is focused almost entirely on organizing Convention, Executive Board meetings, and our 21 committee meetings. We have little capacity to engage with depth on any other issue which comes up, whether it is a known event or an unknown.

May to July we shift to planning for items like the BC Library Association Conference, BCSTA receptions, the Admin Planning Session , Executive Board Think Tank, and usually a fall conference.

The fall is focused on Executive Board Meetings, the biannual One Big Committee Meeting and events like the Union of BC Municipalities convention and planning around events such as BC Federation of Labour Convention or CUPE National Convention.

The conclusion is we have filled up roughly 9 to 10 months of the year with work that is exclusively focused on organizing meetings or events. This leaves only 2 to 3 months of capacity for supporting actions following those events, or responding to new emergent issues.

This situation has motivated me to support all initiatives to find efficiencies for our staff, but further effort will be needed to find the right balance between organizing events, and working on actions which make real, tangible differences in our members' lives and communities.

### **Planning for the Future**

I continue to focus on modernizing CUPE BC to be the absolute best union in BC. I believe our members deserve that. The move to a new automated per capita program for CUPE BC and locals is on hold until there is capacity in the General Fund to invest in development of a new program. This issue remains very high on my priority list as it would make a dramatic improvement for CUPE BC and for locals on reporting and

tracking financial data. Our per capita system is very labour intensive and more importantly, the data from our financial reporting can help provide us with insight on strategic priorities such as the growth of precarious work, sector trends and the impact of new bargaining language on membership numbers. All of this data can easily be provided with a modern electronic per capita program. The importance of this strengthens my resolve to build capacity in the General Fund for research and development initiatives.

Last year I provided comments on the impact on automation and the need to prepare the union. The challenge with automation in CUPE worksites is predicting when it will result in reduction of jobs and the decline of membership. Should CUPE locals see a reduction in membership, we will collectively see a reduction in dues and financial resources available to defend our members. This is a dangerous trap of declining strength. To address this challenge I stand committed to researching and speaking about this coming challenge, and promoting the growth of savings and investment accounts for CUPE BC and CUPE locals. A second source of income provided from investment returns can reduce the risk associated with automation. A simple strategy is to look at the percentage of income which comes from dues and from other sources and to develop a plan to grow the percentage of revenue from sources other than dues.

In the event automation has no impact, CUPE BC and locals will be even stronger financially with the strategy outlined above; in the event automation does have a big impact, those alternative funding sources might just be the reason why CUPE survives when other unions fall.

### **Conclusion**

Over the last year our Division has done some remarkable work and has also been met with some tough challenges. Without the collective efforts of our CUPE family, we would not have had such a successful year. I honestly believe that, today, CUPE BC remains a strong and healthy provincial CUPE Division.

I would like to acknowledge each of the members of our Executive Board who have worked hard to strengthen our Division and our union in every corner of the province. I especially want to acknowledge our four General Vice-Presidents: Cindy McQueen, Karen Ranalletta, Michelle Waite and Tanya Paterson for being available to take on a task whenever called upon and I thank them for their solidarity and work.

I also want to express my sincere appreciation to local presidents and executive members from every CUPE local across BC. The work you do with and for your members every day is vital to the continued strength of our union. I know first hand what it takes to run a local union, as both a volunteer president and also as a fulltime officer, and you should be recognized and applauded for your efforts.

The same is true for CUPE National servicing representatives, specialists and support staff who do incredible work supporting our locals and representing our members. I would like to give a special shout out to the Strong Communities Working Group who works closely with the Division to fight for CUPE members in British Columbia. I thank them for their dedication to you, and for the additional support they provide to CUPE BC.

I would like to thank Regional Director Meena Brisard and Assistant Regional Director Rob Jandric, for their leadership and support of CUPE BC. I very much appreciate our working relationship, and I look forward to the new chapter in leadership of the CUPE BC Regional office.

It is a privilege to work with our National Union, especially under the leadership of Mark Hancock, and Charles Fleury. Their support for our Division is the reason why so many projects and campaigns happen in our great province.

My friend and our President Paul Faoro is worthy of a great deal of my thanks and appreciation. He is a strategic, determined and principled leader who always has CUPE members top of mind. He works an incredible amount of hours and spends countless weekends traveling to meet with members across our province. His dedication to our union shows every day.

We all know how much our work and volunteerism takes us away from our family. I want to thank my wife Kathryn for her love and support, and we are very excited to welcome an addition to our family this September. I want to thank my parents Jim and Diane who were members of the Telecommunications Workers Union and Hospital Employees' Union for instilling their labour values and encouraging me to work to make the world a better place. I thank my sister and brother-in-law Alison and Dwight, and their kids Mason and Ainsley. Also I would like to give mention and thanks to Kathryn parents, Don a retired member and long time Vice President of CUPE Local 50, Lori a current member of CUPE Local 2011, and my sister-in-law Kelly, a member of the Health Sciences Association. I am often obsessed with our financial position and policies and without my friends and family to ground me, I would have burnt out long ago.

We know that our work as trade unionists and labour activists will never end. There will always be another employer or government trying to take away the collective rights we have fought for over many years. Unions are more important now than ever. We must continue to renew our union, and to organize within our membership so we can face the challenges ahead and win.

I am proud to be a CUPE member, and I want to thank my home Local 374, for all their support. It is an honour to serve as Secretary-Treasurer for CUPE British Columbia and to work on behalf of 87,000 CUPE members across the province. There are a lot of challenges ahead, but by working together we can overcome any obstacle and continue to stand shoulder and shoulder as proud members of this great union.

In solidarity,

Trevor Davies  
Secretary-Treasurer  
CUPE BC Division

April 2018

