

October 19, 2020

Trustee Report, Fiscal Year ending February 29, 2020
Secretary-Treasurer's Response

I want to begin by thanking the Trustees for their hard work in auditing our finances. This is a complex and arduous task, made even more difficult by the current pandemic, but it serves as an important accountability mechanism. It is vital to the ongoing financial stability of the union, and so I thank the Trustees for their efforts. We recognize that all elected officers have an obligation to conduct themselves in a way that is consistent with the Bylaws and Constitution of our union and with the principles of union democracy.

The Trustees met in the CUPE 3906 office on October 17 and 18 to conduct two separate audits of our financial records; one covering the period from March 2019 to February 2020, and another covering the period from March 2020 to August 2020. They reviewed transactions, meeting minutes and motions, account balances, and they revisited the recommendations from the previous audit of the books which covered the period from March 2018 to February 2019. A number of those recommendations were implemented over the course of the following year to the satisfaction of the Trustees, but a number also remain outstanding. In addition, the Trustees have made new recommendations for the union to consider.

The most pressing of the outstanding recommendations is the need for the union to implement some kind of secure off-site or virtual storage of financial documents. Digitizing our documents, which constitute thousands of pages from the past seven years, will be a tremendous amount of work and we will have to see if we have the resources to take on such a project. However, the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent remote working protocols have forced the union to adopt increasingly digitized financial practices which will make the work of storing all of our financial records in more than one location as a failsafe much easier going forward. By the end of the Fall 2020 term, I hope to review the recommendations included in these audits in more detail with the Finance Committee and produce some policy changes for the membership of the union to consider.

Attached to this letter is a line-by-line response to each of the recommendations contained in the Trustees' report for the fiscal year ending February 29, 2020.

In solidarity,

Chris Fairweather
Secretary-Treasurer
CUPE Local 3906

Recommendations

1. The local has previously tried to use SeaFile to store meeting minutes and financial data. The local has been looking to find a more secure email service, and was planning to consider secure storage options through whatever provider we ultimately

decide to go with, but in the meantime the Finance Committee will investigate options for encrypted cloud storage as suggested by the Trustees, even if it is just for a short term fix until the email situation is resolved.

2. As under point 1, the local has been investigating secure storage for minutes and financial data along with securing our email system, and this will include developing a system for maintaining all these records electronically. Following the previous audit, we attempted to implement a motion log to maintain a hard copy of all spending motions, but as all of our meetings have moved online and access to the office is limited, we will develop an electronic motion log where committee Chairs will be able to document their financial motions.
3. We will create a shared folder on the Google drive where digitized vouchers can be securely stored, and we will look into creating a fillable PDF version of the voucher that can be electronically signed. We will also make sure that whatever storage solution we pursue following from the recommendation in point 1 will also allow us to have such shared drives.
4. We agree that the Trustee Checklist should be revised to include gender neutral language, and we will follow up with the appropriate people in the National office to see that this recommendation is heard.