



CUPE LOCAL 3906

CANADIAN UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES - MCMASTER ACADEMIC & RESIDENCE WORKERS

Tel: 905-525-9140 ext. 24003 **Fax:** 905-525-3837 **Email:** staff@cupe3906.org

McMaster University, Kenneth Taylor Hall B111, 1280 Main St W, Hamilton, ON, L8S 4M4

General Membership Meeting Minutes

Date: November 19

Time: 3:00 pm

Executive Committee

President:	Oluwadamilola Babatunde (she/her)
Vice President:	Kusum Bhatta (she/her)
Vice President External:	Javad Emani
Secretary Treasurer:	Saba Khorasani (she/her)
Recording Secretary:	Rishav Jaiswal (he/him)
Lead Steward, Unit 1:	Zeinab Vosooghi (she/her)
Lead Steward, Unit 2:	Dr. Hamedhossein (Hamed) Afshari (he/him)
Lead Steward, Unit 3:	Dr. Bitra Pourbahari (she/her)
Lead Steward, Unit 4:	Mazen Afify
Health and Safety Officer:	Mahnaz Tajik (she/her)
Benefits & Advocacy Officer:	Shabnam Fadaei Chatroudi
Equity Officer:	Korede Ologun (he/him)
International Officer:	Samuel Ikueze (he/him)
Undergraduate Officer :	Elissa Cunningham (she/her)

Committee & Working Group Chairs

PAC Chair:	Vacant
Contract Action Committee:	Mitch Lupa and Caleb Smolenaars
Women and Gender Rights Committee:	Kusum Bhatta
Indigenous Solidarity:	Emily Howse-Hackl and Ayra Thomas
Communications Committee:	Vacant
Prisoners Solidarity:	Sonia Hill and Patricia Mills
OUWCC:	Kyle Morrison

Trustees

exp. Fall 2025 audit: Zahra Tootonsab (she/her)
exp. Fall 2026 audit: Camden Church
exp. Fall 2027 audit: Kyle Morrison

Staff

Staff Representative: Brad Walchuk (he/him); and Mary Ellen Campbell (she/her)
Administrator Coordinator: Francesca Brugnano (she/her)



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Kusum chairs the meeting

Agenda

- 1. Roll Call of Officers**
- 2. Land Acknowledgement Reading of the Equity Statement**
- 3. Approval of the Agenda**

Zeinab moves to approve the agenda.

Shabnam seconds

Brad: "Before we vote, I'd suggest moving two items - 13B Racial Justice & Human Rights Conference and 13E OUWCC Campus Rep - to appear before Nominations and Elections. Those motions logically need to be passed first."

Mitch moves that amendment.

Kyle seconded

Motion (Amendment) passes

Amended Agenda passes

Mary Ellen: "For context some of our committee and working group co-chairs (like ISWG and PSWG) aren't members of the Local. Technically, we need a motion to admit them into the meeting for their reports."

Mitch move the motion to welcome our guests and committee co-chairs

Bridget seconds

Motion passes.

Kusum: "Emily, Ayra, and Ila may now be admitted."

4. Reading & Approval of Previous Minutes

Kusum: "The minutes are uploaded on the website. Please take a minute to review."

Kyle: "The minutes aren't accurate at least two votes at the end didn't pass unanimously, but the minutes say they did."



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Kusum: "Thank you, Kyle. We can correct that by removing the word unanimously. For context, Rishav had to leave unexpectedly that day, so I took notes myself. I'll make the correction."

Samuel move to approve the minutes as corrected.

Zeinab Seconded.

Ayra: "I'm adding in the chat the exact motion ISWG passed last month it's summarized in the minutes, but please include our full motion text for accuracy."

Kusum: "Thank you, Ayra, we'll make sure that's reflected."

Previous minutes passes

5. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

6. Vice President Updates

Kusum: "Just a few updates from my end: We held our Unit 4 Strategic Planning Meeting, and a Women & Gender Rights Committee meeting on disability and intersectionality. From that discussion, I'm developing a monthly CUPE newsletter - short, visual, and accessible so updates reach members quickly. I'll present it to Exec in December for a test run."

7. Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Saba: "Thank you. I'll share my screen."

She presented the October 2025 Financial Report.

"Our deficit has mostly been resolved as dues stabilized post-October. Finances are trending positively, but we continue monitoring spending closely."

8. Communications and Bills

- a. United Way Halton & Hamilton's Holiday Helping Hand Program (Brad)

Brad: "United Way Halton & Hamilton reached out with their Holiday Helping Hand Program. There's no motion - just sharing the link for members to donate personally."



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- b. OmniCAN Report and the Financial Anxiety in Canada Fact Sheet-Available on request (Brad)

Brad: "They also sent a Financial Anxiety in Canada fact sheet. It shows rising financial stress across households. PDFs with local data are available if anyone wants them - I can forward those by email."

- 9. **Executive Committee Report** : can be found on GMM website, addressed in GMM only if necessary: <https://cupe3906.org/gmm-materials/>

10. Reports of committees and delegates - if applicable

- a. Steward Networks (**Chaired by: Zeinab Vosoghi, Hamed Afshari, and Bita Pourbahari, Mazen**)

Zeinab: "Most of our time went into organizing the upcoming Stewards Council Meeting on November 27. I followed up with stewards to ensure they're using their social night budgets and sending short reports. Many departments requested rooms, and most have now used their term budget."

Kusum: "Thanks, Zeinab."

Hamed (Unit 2): "No major updates - just a few grievances I'm following up on. Attending the strategic meetings as well."

Bitá (Unit 3): "We had a great Unit 3 stewards' meeting two weeks ago. We're planning the end-of-term postdoc lunch and discussing POSAC benefits."

Mazen (Unit 4): "Unit 4's been busy with bargaining and caucuses. I'm developing two initiatives: An anonymous feedback/concerns form for members and Virtual drop-in hours to improve accessibility."

Kusum: "Great work, everyone."

- b. Labour-Management Committee (LMC)

Kusum: "No updates. The November meeting was cancelled."

- c. Committee Updates - **if applicable**

- i. Bylaws **Committee (Chaired by: Vacant)**



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Mary Ellen: "The Bylaws Committee met recently, chaired by the President. We reviewed proposals from September, including creating a Communications Officer position and minor clarifications to the VP External role.

This meeting serves as notice of proposed changes; voting will occur at the next GMM."

Kyle: "I also submitted a bylaw amendment requiring purchases to be union-made. Was that discussed?"

Brad: "Apologies - it was missed unintentionally. We'll ensure it's included next meeting."

Kusum: "Thank you both."

ii. Equity Action Committee (**Chaired by: Korede**)

Korede: "We had a meeting today and are planning a book review of *The Skin We're In* by Desmond Cole. It's about racism and policing in Canada. We'll confirm venue and share posters soon."

Kusum: "Thank you, Korede."

iii. International Committee (**Chaired by: Samuel Ikueze**)

Samuel: "We launched the Food Pantry Program this month - supplies are stored at the office, and members can drop by to pick up what they need. It's open to all members, not only international students.

We're also organizing a drop-in session to connect with new members.

Our International Members' Symposium went well but exceeded budget, so I'll later move a motion for reimbursement."

Kusum: "Excellent work, Sam."

iv. Communications Committee (**Chair Vacant**)

v. Women and Gender Rights Committee (**Chaired by: Kusum**)

Kusum: "We met last Friday at KTH - 11 members attended, hybrid format. The theme was Disability and Intersectionality. We're planning an event for December or mid-January in collaboration with a local organization.

We also reviewed feedback from our last event and identified the need for larger venues and clearer communication. The newsletter project also emerged from this discussion."



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vi. Indigenous Solidarity Working Group (ISWG) (**Chaired by: Emily Howse-Hackl and Ayra Thomas**)

Emily: "Our next meeting is this Friday. Key updates:

Planning the Our Land is Kin Conference - keynote is Dr. Bonnie Freeman, an Indigenous social work scholar.

The call for submissions will open soon; we'll accept research, art, and poetry from Indigenous creators across Turtle Island.

We're also supporting Creative Natives in Waterloo by helping fund a water station for their studio. We'll join their Winter Solstice Feast in December; all are welcome."

Ayra: "That's all from us-thank you."

Kusum: "Wonderful updates, thank you both."

vii. Health and Safety committee (**Chaired by: Mahnaz Tajik**)

Mahnaz: "Following up on October incident reports to ensure cases are closed. New incidents for November are being logged. I'm also coordinating with the Joint Health & Safety Committee to plan a joint event."

Kusum: "Thank you, Mahnaz."

viii. Political Action Committee (PAC) (**Chair: Vacant**)

ix. Prisoners Solidarity Working Group (**Chaired by: Sonia Hill and Patricia Mills**)

Ila (for Co-Chairs Sonia & Patricia): "Our next organizing call is Friday, December 12, 5-6 PM on Zoom.

We co-hosted a Letter-Writing Night on November 8 with Certain Days for their calendar launch - 15 attendees, including CUPE 3906 members and community folks.

We're working on a resource mail-out and helping people navigate the bail process. Anyone interested can email pswg@cupe3906.org."

Kusum: "Thank you, Ila."



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x. **Contract Action Committee (Chaired by: Mitch Lupa and Caleb Smolenaars)**

Mitch: "The CAC and Strike Committee co-hosted a Bowling Night Sunday - it went great! We had Trivia in October, bowling this month; we might pause in December but resume socials in January. Bargaining continues."

Caleb: "Yes, two sessions were with the conciliation officer. We've reached agreement on several non-monetary articles, including seniority. Monetary issues like wages are ongoing, but we'll post a detailed bargaining update soon."

Kusum: "Thank you both."

xi. **Unit 4 Bargaining Committee**

xii. **Hamilton & District Labour Council (HDLC)**

Javad: "I'll be attending tomorrow's meeting on behalf of the Local. I'll report back next month."

Kusum: "Thank you, Javad."

xiii. **Ontario University Workers Coordinating Committee (OUWCC)**
(Campus Rep: Kyle)

Kyle: "No updates this week—our meeting was postponed due to the OFL convention."

xiv. **CUPE Council**

Rand: "CUPE Council doesn't require formal delegates - any four members who attend can vote. Usually, it's just me and one other.

We're planning an upcoming training session for members to understand union operations - details soon.

There'll be some executive openings in the new year, so reach out if interested.

Next meeting: Tuesday, January 20 at 6 PM, likely at the CUPE 7800 office in East Hamilton."

Kusum: "Thank you, Rand."



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11. New Business (PART 1)

To align with the amended agenda, two New Business items (Racial Justice Conference delegate motion and OUWCC Campus Rep motion) were moved before the elections.

a. Racial Justice & Human Rights Conference (Korede/Brad)

Brad: "We shifted this item earlier. I've put the motion language in the chat, though I can't move it. The internal discussion was to send three delegates to the CUPE Ontario Racial Justice Conference on Tuesday, November 25th, in Toronto. Happy to walk through it once it's moved."

Mitch moves it

Rishav seconded

Brad: "Budget originally planned for 2 delegates to Racial Justice and 2 to Human Rights (held back-to-back). Registration costs turned out higher than expected (late registration = \$170 each). Total cost for 3 delegates = \$510 of the \$600 budget line. No hotel required (one-day conference).

Local covers per diem + transportation (GO Bus/Train or TTC). Workshops and schedule details were shared."

Kusum: "If you work with equity committees or have QTBIPOC-related research, I encourage you to volunteer to go — it's a great opportunity."

Motion passes

b. Motion that the OUWCC Campus Rep be given first consideration to attend the 2026 OUWCC Conference as a voting delegate. (Kyle)

Brad: "This is former item 13E. It needs to come before elections because depending on results, we may not be able to follow it later. I'll turn it to Kyle."

Kyle: "Discloses conflict of interest — he is the current OUWCC Campus Rep. Conference rules require the Rep to be a member of a sending local."

Kusum Supports prioritizing the Campus Rep and raises concerns from last year: need to ensure equity-seeking delegates can access voting badges when necessary.

Mitch seconds

Motion passes



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12. Nomination, elections, or installations

a. Bylaw committee member

Brad: "This is one seat on Bylaws Committee. Honoraria paid. Responsibilities include reviewing bylaw changes, helping prepare amendments."

Nominations:

First call: Kyle self-nominates.

Second call: Mitch jokingly nominates himself "just to run against Kyle," then withdraws after Rand jokes: "Come on, man, we want to get out of here."

Third call: No new nominations.

Result: Kyle Morrison acclaimed to the Bylaws Committee.

b. Grievance Committee Member (1)

Brad: "This is a confidential committee, meets once a month, handles grievance review. One vacancy."

Nominations:

First call & second call: No nominations.

Third call: Mitch nominates Kyle → Kyle declines ("I'm already on the committee... do I get two votes?")

Precious self-nominates.

Result: Precious Gauthier acclaimed to the Grievance Committee.

c. Election of five (5) members to the 2026 OUWCC Conference.

Brad: "Conference is Feb 26 – March 1. We send four delegates. The Local covers registration, mileage, per diem. It's a multi-day event."

Nominations open.

Caleb: "I'd like to nominate myself."

Anna: "I'd like to self-nominate."

Dams (via Rishav): "Nominating Dams."

Mitch: "Self-nominate."

Shivam: "Self-nominate."

Kyle: "Quick question - will Dams be a CUPE member by the time of the conference?"



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Brad: "Membership at nomination time is valid, so we're good. If something changes, Local can address later."

Candidate Speeches

Shivam: "I'm a steward in Computing & Software. I want to grow my skills and support members. I've attended multiple workers' conferences and want to contribute."

Mitch: "I've been to CUPE National and CUPE Ontario. Very experienced. Confident that I can represent the Local well."

Anna: "This would be my first CUPE conference. I want to learn how CUPE works and bring that back to support my department."

Caleb: "I work in Residence Life, Unit 4, and they're newly unionized. I've attended OUWCC before. I want to represent Unit 4 and push for better working conditions. I'm Chair of the Unit 4 Bargaining Team."

Kyle (question): "Do you all agree that new people attending the conference alongside experienced members is good for the Local?"

Candidates: "Yes."

Brad: "This election will be done through Election Runner. You'll receive a ranked ballot — rank all five candidates; the top four will become delegates."

d. Election of three (3) delegates to the Racial Justice Conference

Brad: "Nominations open."

Precious: "I'll nominate myself."

No other nominations.

Precious acclaimed as delegate.

13. Unfinished (old) business



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14. New business (PART 2)

- a. Notice of bylaws proposed changes -more details on Appendix A (Brad)

Brad: “Two bylaw amendments (Comms Officer, procurement) — these are notice only. No discussion today. We'll vote at next GMM.”

- b. I (Bita) move to approve 1000 CAD for the end-of-term postdoc lunch (proposal attached as an Appendix B).

Bita: “Last year's lunch for postdocs was very appreciated. We'd like to repeat it. Requesting \$1,000.”

Bita moves, Mitch seconds

Motion Passes.

- c. Motion to approve \$1,000 to buy a table at the Nigerian Canadian Association Hamilton 2025 Gala happening on Dec 6, 2025. [[Link](#)] (Korede)

Korede moves, Precious seconds

Motion passes

- d. Motion to Approve Additional Funds – Women & Gender Rights Committee (Kusum)

Kusum moves, Shivam seconds

Motion passes

- e. Motion to Approve Additional Funds – International Committee (Sam)

The original amount was \$445, but Saba suggested rounding to \$500.

Zeinab moves

Rishav seconds

Motion passes

15. Other business

Caleb Reads full statement condemning Bill 33 as a threat to academic freedom and public education. Wants Local to publish statement and send it to Premier, Minister of Colleges and Universities, and Minister of Education.

Seconded: Kyle. Motion passes



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Rand: Announces Hamilton Encampment Support Network winter donation drive. Drop-off at MDCL 3500.

16. Good of the Union

17. Adjournment

Mitch moves, Korede seconds

Meeting adjourned at 4:50 pm.

Rishav Jaiswal

Rishav Jaiswal
Recording Secretary



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Appendix A

**** New Language** Proposed for 3(c)**

Ouwcc Campus Representative

In the event that the OUWCC Campus representative for McMaster is a Local 3906 member, that member shall:

- Automatically attend the OUWCC conference as a delegate.
- Be encouraged to attend the post-secondary sector caucus at CUPE National convention and CUPE Ontario convention if they are elected to attend the convention by the general membership
- Work with the executive committee to implement ongoing sector campaigns

Updated Language Proposed for Article 5 (k)

****for information purposes: proposed new language is **bold and highlighted** while proposed removals are struck through****

The VICE-PRESIDENT EXTERNAL shall

- i. Be the external liaison officer to the Local
- ii. **Automatically be** ~~sit as~~ **one of the Local's** delegates to the Hamilton and District Labour Council, Hamilton and District CUPE Council **(so long as they remain in the VP External position), and** where possible run for nomination as a delegate to conventions/conferences.
- iii. ~~They should~~ remain apprised to what is happening in the broader labour movement and where relevant report back to the executive committee and general membership



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Appendix B

Proposal for End-of-Term PostdocLunch Gathering

Proposed by: Bitu Pourbahari-lead stewardunit 3

Objective:

Organize an end-of-term lunch for postdocs at Phoenix CraftHouse, providing an opportunity to network, socialize, and strengthen the postdoc community at McMaster University. This will be the first postdoc gathering in over a year, offering a valuable chance for postdocs to connect, as few events specifically bring them together across the university.

Date & Location:

- **Location:** Phoenix Craft House & Grill, McMasterUniversity
- **Date:** TBD
- **Time:** 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Target Audience: Postdoctoral researchers.

Expected Attendance: Approximately 40 postdocs, ensuring an engaging and interactive environment for networking and socializing.

Menu & CateringDetails:

- **Cost per person:** 20 CAD (for a set menu or a selection of platters).
- **Total food cost for 40 people:** 20 CAD x 40 = 800 CAD
- **Platters:** A selection of platters will be provided to accommodate various dietary needs (vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, etc.).

Budget Breakdown:

- **Food cost (30 CAD per person):** 20 x 40 = 800 CAD
- **Tax on food (13%):** 800 CAD x 0.13 = 104 CAD
- **Total cost (food + tax):**
800 + 104 = **904 CAD**

Event Goals:

- **Networking:** Provide an informal space for postdocs from various disciplines to meet, share experiences, and form lasting connections.
- **Community Building:** Strengthen postdoc collaboration, support, and networks across departments.
- **Celebration:** Celebrate the end of the academic term, recognizing the contributions and achievements of postdocs in a fun and relaxed environment.

Event Promotion:

Invitations will be sent to all postdocs via email with event details, RSVP instructions, and dietary preferences.