

Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 3550

Membership Meeting Minutes

April 7, 2026

Treaty 6 territory, is a traditional meeting ground, gathering place, and travelling route used by Indigenous peoples. This territory provided a home to the Cree, Dene, Blackfoot, Saulteaux, Nakota Sioux and many others.

The lands of Treaty 6 Territory are located within the Metis settlements and Metis Nation of Alberta regions 2, 3 and 4. Treaty 6 territory provides sites of natural abundance, ceremony, culture, travel, rest, and relationships of all Indigenous people.

Reading of CUPE National Equality Statement.

SWEAR IN NEW MEMBERS

1. Roll Call of Officers	QUORUM: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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President: Mandy Lamoureux (June 2027)
1st Vice President: Janice Kube (June 2026)
2nd Vice President: Michelle Bilodeau (June 2027)
Recording Secretary: Marianne Andresen (June 2026)
Treasurer: Amy Bernier (June 2027)
Chief Steward: Shelly Lavallee (June 2026)

Sergeant-At-Arms/Executive: Nicole Semchuk (June 2026)
Executive Board Member: Lindsay Willemse (June 2027)
Executive Board Member: Kyla Maertz (June 2026)
Executive Board Member: Patti Yachimec (June 2027)
Executive Board Member: Deanne Ruel (June 2026)
SLS Board Member: Charlene Chamberlain (June 2027)

CUPE National Représentative : Carlos Capurro/Jodi Learn

Trustees: 1 Year Trustee: Dagmar Harvey 2 Year Trustee: Gina Rose 3 Year Trustee: Jennifer Boutilier

Excused: Carlos Capurro

Absent:

Housekeeping

CUPE 3550 Bylaws

Appendix "A" – Rules of Order

- 12. Members are not allowed to speak about an issue for more than five minutes. Members can only speak to an issue once unless there is agreement by the members at a meeting, or where all those wishing to speak have had the opportunity to speak.
- 14. A member, while speaking, will speak only to the issue under debate. Members shall not personally attack other members. Members will refrain from using language that is offensive or in poor taste. Members will generally not speak in a manner that reflects poorly on the Local Union or other members.
- 15. A member that is called to order will stop speaking until the point of order is determined. If it is decided that the member is in order, then the member may continue speaking.
- All speakers must use a microphone when addressing the chair or have a question. Please introduce yourself with your name and job title.

Members who do not adhere to the established rules of order shall receive a formal warning. Continued noncompliance may result in the member's removal from the meeting.

2. Welcome to CUPE Local 3550

CUPE National Constitution 2017 B.8.2: Approval of Application

The names of applicants are read out at the first regular membership meeting after the application for membership has been submitted. Unless there is an objection supported by a majority of members present, the applicants are accepted. If an applicant is rejected, any fee will be returned to the applicant.

a) Reading of new member(s) names

Objections:

3. Additions to New Business/Approval of Agenda

a)

b)

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c)

MOTION: that the April 7, 2026, agenda be accepted as presented.

Moved by Marianne Andresen/Seconded _____/_____

4. Minutes

MOTION: that March 03, 2026, minutes be accepted as presented.

Moved by Marianne Andresen/Seconded _____/_____

6. Matters Arising from the Minutes

- a)
- b)

7. President's Report

- a) Guest Brad Lafortune – Public Interest Alberta
- b) EA Covering Breaks
- c) Reno Update
 - Phase 2 is now complete
 - Expected final walkthrough – end of April
 - Open house planned
- d)

Prize Draw:	Winner:
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8. Treasurer's Report: February

	February 2026	
Bank of Montreal Operating Beginning Balance		\$505,317.64
Bank of Montreal Savings Beginning Balance		\$246,373.70
Bank of Montreal National Strike Fund Beginning Balance		\$678,187.84
Bank of Montreal Savings Interest Earned		\$316.56
Bank Service Charges for BMO Operating Account		-\$212.08
Affiliations		
CUPE Alberta	\$3,321.50	
CUPE National Per Capita Tax	\$78,711.97	
Edmonton District Labour Council (EDLC)	\$1,533.00	
Total		\$83,566.47

Building Expenses		
Building Cleaning service (2 services)	\$900.00	
Direct Energy	\$494.64	
EPCOR	\$884.84	
Floor Mats	\$107.77	

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Light Replacement (Parking Lot)	\$2,900.10	
Rent	\$10,400.00	
Waste Management	\$392.92	
Total		\$16,080.27
Committees:		
Acknowledgements (1)	\$75.00	
Alberta Education Employee Committee (AEEC)	\$20.00	
Building Society	\$20.00	
Bylaws	\$120.00	
Communicators	\$880.00	
Edmonton District Labour Council (EDLC)	\$64.00	
Education	\$292.00	
Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA)	\$52.00	
Indigenous	\$120.00	
OH&S	\$40.00	
Social (Bowling)	\$3,418.80	
Total		\$5,101.80
Donations:		
Winhouse	\$500.00	
Total		\$500.00
Education/Conferences/Convention		
Canadian Labour Congress	\$286.12	
CUPE AB All Leaders (2 Executive Members)	\$1,286.02	
CUPE AB Convention	\$500.00	
CUPE AB Education	\$80.00	
Total		\$2,152.14

Executive Board		
Per Diems (12 Executive Members)	\$3,085.11	
Book offs for Seconded full time executives	\$39,805.13	
Books off for 1 Executive Member (February)	\$2,257.31	
Total		\$45,147.55

Financial Review		
Trustees	\$60.00	
Accountant Fees (T4's/Audit protection)	\$624.75	
Total		\$684.75

Meetings – Membership		
Hall Rental	\$157.50	
Total		\$157.50
Office Operations		
Phones/Internet	\$315.55	
Shredding	\$164.24	

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Xerox/Division Printing	\$285.36	
Total		\$765.15
Payroll Expenses		
Administrative Assistant (2 pay periods includes all deductions)	\$5,539.63	
Total		\$5,539.63
Cleared Bank Expenses: Cheques/Payments Total		
Cleared Cheques and Payments – BMO Operating		
Uncleared Transactions		-\$33,924.24
Dues from EPSB		\$198,808.71
Bank Ending Balance		\$488,219.70

Bank of Montreal Savings as of February 28, 2026	\$246,690.26
Bank of Montreal Operating as of February 28, 2026	\$488,219.70
Bank of Montreal National Strike as of February 28, 2026	\$678,187.84
WFG as of December 2025	\$79,335.91

MOTION: That the February report be accepted as presented.

Moved by Amy Bernier/Seconded _____/_____

9. Communications & Correspondence

Treasurer:

From	Description	Amount
Edmonton Public Schools	Statement of Account for Customer; Jan 31, 2026	\$63,665.25
Scotiabank	Notice of Arrears for account; Feb 12, 2026	(\$14,442.63)
Bank of Montreal	Compensation Statement: Treasury Services and Domestic Payments; Feb 11, 2026	\$212.08
CUPE Local 4625	Cheque: Payment for 15 Oil Kings Tickets; Feb 21, 2026	\$315.00
CUPE Local 4625	Cheque: Payment for 15 Oil Kings Tickets; Feb 21, 2026	\$315.00
Telus	Monthly Bill: Business Security Services for period of Feb 27 to Mar 26, 2026	\$132.75
WFG Securities	Account Statement for Oct 1, 2025 to Dec 31, 2025	\$79,335.91
iA Clarington Investments	Account Statement for Jan 01, 2025 to Dec 31, 2025; Summary of Capital Gains & Losses for 2025	\$7,266.16
iA Clarington Investments	T3 Statement for 2025; Statement of Securities Transactions	\$2,064.56
City of Edmonton	BUILDING SOCIETY Information Request for Assessments for the 2027 Tax Year; Feb 27, 2026 (SUBMIT BY MAY 5, 2026)	N/A

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Scotiabank	Visa Statement for Feb 03, 2026 - Mar 02, 2026; Mar 02, 2026	\$0.00
Scotiabank	BUILDING SOCIETY Statement of Business Account: Jan 30, 2026 to Feb 27, 2026	\$13,422.04
Scotiabank	Statement of Business Account: Jan 30, 2026 to Feb 27, 2026	\$14,568.62

General:

From	Description	Addressee
Oilers Entertainment Group	2 Tickets to the Mar 31 Edmonton Oilers Game (vs Seattle Krakens)	Michelle
EPSB Distribution Centre	Distribution Centre Order: Black binder clips (small, medium, & large), copy paper, & file boxes	Office
Edmonton & District Labour Council	Document Package for Mar. 16th Monthly General Meeting; March 9th, 2026	Office
Member	Membership Applications	Office
Member	5 EFT Authorization Forms	Amy

MOTION: That correspondence be accepted as presented.

Moved by Amy Bernier/Seconded _____/_____

10.Executive Committee Report
<u>MOTION: M/S/RECOMMENDED</u> The following Motion(s) as recommended by your Executive Board are brought forward for the membership's discussion and vote: No recommendations

Prize Draw:	Winner:
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11.Reports of CUPE Local 3550 Committees
Acknowledgement Awareness/Public Relations Building Society (Elected) Bylaws Communicators Education Grievance/Stewards Membership OH&S Political Action Resolutions

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Social
 Young Workers
 GSA
 Indigenous Council
 Job Action

If you would like to join a committee, please email
committees@cupe3550.ca

•	<p>Acknowledgment: Marianne Andresen (Chair) Mandy Lamoureux</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 acknowledgements • 0 arrangement • 0 donation made • 1 gift basket <p>3550wecare@gmail.com</p>
•	<p>Awareness/Public Relations: Janice Kube (Chair), Shelly Lavallee, Amy Bernier, Mandy Lamoureux</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No report <p>Next Meeting: TBD</p>
•	<p>Building Society: Amy Bernier (President), Dawn Mullen (Recording Secretary), Patti Yachimec (Treasurer), Cheryl Quintero (Executive Board Member), Heather Jones (Executive Board Member); Mandy Lamoureux (Member at Large)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Banking - New Treasurer now has signing authority on the Building Society Bank account ➤ We are now in the process of assuring a Loan for renovations ➤ Security companies ➤ Executive has agreed to pay for the installation of the security system of Austin Security and not renew contract with Telus (motion below) ➤ Renovations ➤ Updates given on renovation ➤ Budget shared with Executive ➤ Quotes are being collected for a new sign of our Logo to go behind reception. ➤ Grand Re-Opening will be held on June 6 from 1 – 3 pm ➤ Grand Re-Opening of the office will take place on Saturday, June 6th between 1pm-3pm ➤ A committee of 4 executive members was created to come up with a plan and organize the event <p>Next Meeting: April 8, 2026 virtual, May 7, 2026 in person</p>
•	<p>Bylaws: Deanne Ruel (Chair), Janice Kube, Shelly Lavallee, Michelle Bilodeau, Amy Bernier, Patti Yachimec, Nicole Semchuk, Jodi Learn, Mandy Lamoureux</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If you want to join this committee, please email: committees@cupe3550.ca ➤ Honorariums vs out of pocket – moving to honorariums next year so we will be getting T4A's next year ➤ Went through section 10 of the bylaws. ➤ Reviewed the latest response from the NPO on the last amendment of bylaws. 2 changes needed to be made as per the NPO recommendation, and the bylaws are now complete and ready to post on the member website. <p>Next meeting: March 2, 2026, at 6:30pm</p>
•	<p>CUPE Communicators: Nicole Semchuk (Chair), Shelly Lavallee, Mandy Lamoureux,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No report <p>Next meeting date with all Communicators/Stewards:</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">● CUPE Education-Union Development/Conventions/Conferences/Special Committee: Amy Bernier (Chair), Marianne Andresen, Shelly Lavallee, Patti Yachimec, Mandy Lamoureux <p style="text-align: center;">Information Regarding Education Funding Applications Access the Education Funding Form here!</p> <p>Please submit the above form to express interest in attending a course, conference, or educational event.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Local 3550 covers the full cost for members attending sponsored education, whether virtual or in-person.● Please review Section 15 of the CUPE 3550 Bylaws for specific regulations regarding delegates.● If the education requires time away from work, you must secure approval from your DU prior to submitting your funding application.● Members are encouraged to participate in workshops hosted through CUPE National. You can view available online workshops at cupe.ca/mrm-union-education/events. <p>Education Committee met on February 2, 2026 @ 5:00pm</p> <p>2 applications received 0 approved for CUPE AB Convention</p> <p>2 applications to attend CUPE AB Convention, March 18-20, 2026 Both applications were denied but if there is a cancellation of a member, member can attend.</p> <p><u>Available Education</u> If you take any education classes, please email Janice as they are recorded in Union365: 1vpr@cupe3550.ca</p> <p><u>The following Education is available for members.</u></p> <p>2026 Alberta (Gender Identity and Sexual Alliance) GSA Conference Saturday, April 25, 2026, Edmonton, AB University of Alberta North Campus</p> <p><u>REPORTS:</u> Shelly Lavallee – CLC Winter School Next Meeting: TBD</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Grievance/Stewards: Shelly Lavallee (Chief Steward), Janice Kube, Mandy Lamoureux<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ 9 active investigations➤ 1 active grievance resolved➤ 12-15 RTW cases➤ Lots of members feeling burnt out and going on stress leave with Support Staff and SLS teams <p>Next Meeting: As needed</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Membership: Sergeant-At-Arms: Nicole Semchuk (Chair), Janice Kube, Mandy Lamoureux<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Total Active: 3708➤ Card Carrying: 3326➤ Rand: 324➤ Membership Application received: 58➤ In attendance tonight ____ <p>Next Meeting: TBD</p>

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•	<p>3550 Health and Safety (OH&S): Wes Kube (Chair), Janice Kube (Co-Chair), Shelly Lavallee, Michelle Bilodeau, Amy Bernier</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No Report <p>Next Joint Meeting: TBD Next Meeting: TBD</p>
•	<p>Political Action/Social Justice/Pensions: Vacant (Chair), Janice Kube, Shelly Lavallee, Mandy Lamoureux</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No Report <p>Next Meeting: TBD</p>
•	<p>Resolutions: Mandy Lamoureux (Chair), Janice Kube, Shelly Lavallee, Marianne Andresen, Amy Bernier</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All resolutions we wrote for CUPE Alberta have passed <p>Next Meeting: TBD</p>
•	<p>Social: Michelle Bilodeau (Chair), Shelly Lavallee, Janice Kube, Mandy Lamoureux, Marianne Andresen, Patti Yachimec, Nicole Semchuk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bowling was a great event; we achieved an 81% sell-through rate for attendance. We only had 75 unfilled spots. Cost of the event was \$3,668, plus or minus minor adjustments like the SignUp Genius subscription. The consensus is that people would like to repeat this event and host more events like it in the future. ➤ Zoo will take place on May 8, from 5:30-8:30. Tickets are limited to 6 per member at \$5.00 each. Children under 2 are free. We are using SignUp Genius again for ticketing. They must show their email confirmation as their ticket. ➤ Retirement planning is fully under way with many decisions made regarding flowers, decor, entertainment, and photography. ➤ Date for retirement is Friday, June 5, 2026 at The Polish Hall. All members are invited <p>Next meeting: April 9, 2026</p>
•	<p>GSA: Justine Lowery (Chair), Shelly Lavallee, Mandy Lamoureux</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The GSA committee talked about a couple exciting events coming up in the 6 months. ➤ The 2026 GSA Conference is coming up on April 25th. Registration is free. It was highly encouraged for as many people (within the committee, executive board members, and general membership) to attend to increase their knowledge on 2SLGBTQIA+ rights, issues and how to best support queer students with the anti-trans legislation we find ourselves navigating. ➤ The pride parade is on August 22, 2026. We are officially registered as our local. *More details will come closer to the time. ➤ We also discussed what we would like to see happen for the rest of this school year. Ideas (not solidified plans) included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Having SOGIE speak at an educational meeting for all members who wish to attend - Updating our educational pamphlets - Planning a rally for the end of Pride Week - Holding a social event such as a tie-dye night, a different historical walk, a drag event, etc. <p>Next Meeting:</p>
•	<p>Indigenous Committee: Lindsay Willemse (Chair), Amy Bernier, Mandy Lamoureux</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Land acknowledgement research on the land we are on. ➤ Upcoming event at the River Cree, Edmonton Commonwealth Walkway ➤ Upcoming events: Would like to share with members different Indigenous events in the city ➤ Who oversees social media, Indigenous fashion week, powwow west glen, all indigenous committee members to Fort Edmonton Park for the Indigenous experience extend to include the social committee members April 18. (date to be changed) ➤ Membership invite- Edmonton Commonwealth walkway date in May for members with their family is coming up in May 5th, can we do a book off for a couple of people to attend

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	Next Meeting:
•	Job Action Committee: Mandy Lamoureux (Chair) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No report Next Meeting: TBD

Motion to move the committee reports as presented.

Moved by _____/Seconded _____/_____

Prize Draw:	Winner:
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12. Reports of Joint/Advisory Committees with Edmonton Public Schools Administration	
a)	<p>Job Evaluation: Meeting Feb. 24, 2026 at the CFE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Brief recap of the January 19, 2026 meeting ➤ Explore ideas for joint fact sheet and/or communications regarding how job evaluation works to support communications and build understanding ➤ Further explore Physical Sensory Demands & Working Conditions in current context ➤ Continue review of job clusters – Food Prep F, began AA Position descriptions <p>Next Joint Meeting: April 22, 2026</p>
b)	<p>Division Health and Safety: Division OH&S Meeting: Shelly Lavallee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No report <p>Next Meeting: April 16, 2026</p>
c)	<p>Workplace Safety Committee: Mandy Lamoureux, Janice Kube, Michelle Bilodeau, Carlos Capurro Meeting February 23, 2026</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The team continues to consider the strategic plan for the work ➤ Current focus in moving ahead is gathering information and obtaining the employee voice to better understand lived experiences. (especially if verbally and physically abused or sexually assaulted) ➤ Our work is purposeful, the intent to inform us of our action plan. <p>Next Meeting: May 4, 2026</p>
d)	<p>Joint Support Staff Training and Advisory Committee: Mandy Lamoureux, Janice Kube, Shelly Lavallee,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We reviewed action items: Ergonomics and safe lifting and transfers professional learning, toileting etiquette. ➤ The Division shared the 2025-2026 upcoming professional learning <p>Next Meeting: April 22, 2026</p>
e)	<p>Staffing of Bargaining Unit Vacancies and Parent/Community Involvement: Mandy Lamoureux, Carlos Capurro</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lots of calls from members about parent volunteers in schools ➤ No date has been set yet <p>Next Meeting: TBD</p>
f)	<p>Negotiations SLS: Mandy Lamoureux (co-spokesperson), Carlos Capurro (CUPE National Representative and co-chair)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The bargaining committee met with the employer on February 25 and March 5 to continue negotiations. ➤ During these sessions, we had productive discussions on job postings and successfully signed off on language to establish a Union Liaison Committee. This is an important step toward strengthening communication between the union and the employer and creating a formal space to address workplace issues collaboratively. ➤ We also began discussions on Salary Administration, which includes how wages are structured, how employees move through the salary grid, and how pay is managed across classifications. These

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	<p>conversations are an important part of ensuring that compensation practices are fair, transparent, and clearly defined for members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We have a scheduled check-in with the mediator later this month and are continuing to work with the employer to secure additional bargaining dates. ➤ Mediation to start on March 25, 2026 <p>Next Bargaining Dates: April 21 & 24, 2026</p>
g)	<p>Certification: Meeting Feb. 20 and March 10, 2026, at the CFE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The second and third meetings were productive and included engaging discussion ➤ The Terms of Reference for the committee’s work have been finalized ➤ Phase 1 & 2 of the project plan were reviewed, and work began in these phases ➤ Future committee meetings have been scheduled ➤ The committee remains committed to moving forward with this complex and collaborative work. <p>Next Meeting: April 7, 2026</p>
h)	<p>PUBLIC BOARD MEETINGS (Meeting is Webcast and archived on EPS website)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No Report <p>Next Board Meeting: April 14, 2026</p>
i)	<p>Working Together/DLM: Mandy Lamoureux</p> <p>Working Together (staff groups meet with Division):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Started a conversation about the complexity teams. ➤ 202 EA Intern positions will be created from May 2026 to the end of the school year 2027. We want them to be permanent positions and anyone can apply on them. Need job descriptions for each. ➤ I have asked to meet with the Division to clearly ask how these jobs will be moving forward ➤ Need to revisit the LOU EA Internship program <p>DLM (District Leadership Meeting):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 202 EA jobs will be created and 101 Teacher positions for the new complexity teams ➤ They would like to place the EA interns into these positions ➤ Division budget increase from the government: SLS will receive a 3% increase ➤ Workplace safety team: working on a new action plan will include strategies to help prevent and respond to workplace safety incidents, reduce incidents of student-to-staff workplace violence and more <p>Next DLM: April 2026</p>
<p>Motion to accept Joint CUPE Local 3550 committee reports as presented.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moved by _____/Seconded _____/_____</p>	

Prize Draw:	Winner:
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13. Reports of AEEC/CUPE Alberta/EDLC/ALEC	
a)	<p>Alberta Education Employee Committee (AEEC): Vacant (liaison), Shelly Lavallee, Michelle Bilodeau, Heather Jones, Mandy Lamoureux, Daniel Campbell (Alternate)</p> <p>No report</p> <p>Next Meeting: TBD</p> <p>Next Meeting: CUPE AB AEEC: May 2 & 3, 2026 3550 AEEC Delegates: TBD</p>
	<p>CUPE Alberta Division Executive – Janice Kube (Edmonton and Area VP), Shelly Lavallee (Alternate Edmonton and Area VP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No Report <p>Next Meeting: TBD</p>

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b)	Edmonton District Labour Council (EDLC): Deanne Ruel (liaison), Lynn Davis, Shelly Lavallee, Tara Clelland, Tamara Hodgess, Michelle Bilodeau, Daniel Campbell (alternate), Mandy Lamoureux ➤ New VP and executive members elections Next Meeting: March 16, 2026
c)	Alberta Library Employee Committee (ALEC): Kyla Maertz (Chair), Mandy Lamoureux ➤ No Report Next Meeting: May 23 & 24, 2006 in Red Deer
d)	Public Interest Alberta (PIA) ➤ No Report Next Meeting: Conference May 8 & 9, 2026

14. New Business	
a)	
b)	
c)	

15. Good of the Union	
➤	Congratulations to Wesley Kube, winning the CUPE Alberta OH&S Award
➤	
➤	

Draw:	Winner:
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Motion to adjourn @ _____ pm: Moved by _____/Seconded _____/_____

MEETING DATE INFORMATION

Membership	Executive	EDLC	Public Board
Tuesdays – 6:00 PM	Tuesdays – 5:00 PM	Mondays – 7:00 PM	Tuesdays – 1:30 PM
Tentative	Tentative	(Usually 3rd Monday)	
April 7	April 21	April 20	April 14
May 5	May 19	May 19	April 28
June 2	June 16	June 15	May 12
Elections June 9			May 26
			June 9
			June 23

Reports:

ARBITRATION: To Go or Not to Go

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I attended the CLC Winter School in Harrison Hot Springs from January 25 to January 30, 2026. It was an excellent and intensive week of learning and professional development.

We had four instructors, two arbitrators/mediators and two lawyers. The course was both intense and highly engaging. The days were full, often extending into the evenings, and we covered a significant amount of material.

One key area of learning was legal research. We were introduced to three main legal research resources: CanLII, QuickLaw (LexisNexis), and various Court and Tribunal websites. These tools are extremely useful for researching case law and arbitration decisions.

A major focus of the course was understanding the arbitration process. We learned that mediation precedes arbitration and is a critical step in the process. Arbitrators will often attempt to resolve matters through mediation because of the time and cost associated with formal arbitration. It was emphasized repeatedly that maintaining a constructive working relationship with the employer can go a long way in resolving disputes efficiently and saving significant time and money.

We discussed the Labour Relations Code, the requirement to bargain in good faith, and the duty of fair representation. Timelines were highlighted as essential to properly representing members and ensuring grievances are handled effectively.

We also spent considerable time on member-to-member conflict and the importance of supporting all parties without bias. It was stressed that representatives must remain neutral and fair while ensuring proper representation.

The instructors emphasized that sometimes the discipline imposed does not fit the misconduct. In those situations, we must work with the facts available and advocate for a more appropriate outcome. We also discussed handling difficult grievors, remaining alert to potential human rights issues, and being open and honest with members throughout the process.

An important reminder was that the union owns the grievance. Members should not decide whether a matter proceeds to arbitration; rather, they should clearly understand the union's role and responsibility in making that determination.

Key concepts discussed throughout the week included remedies, sunset clauses, culpable and non-culpable discipline, and estoppel. We reviewed the main types of grievances—individual, group, policy, and hybrid grievances—and discussed best practices, including avoiding video recording meetings, as it can negatively impact working relationships.

Overall, it was an informative and valuable week that strengthened my understanding of arbitration, representation, and effective labour relations practices.