

NS Area Council 1
March 12, 2026, 6:03pm
In-Person/Zoom
Minutes

Present:

Rob Silver (President – UCTE)
Derek Forbes (1st VP - UNDE)
Leslie Campbell (2nd VP - AGRU)
Tracy Kempton (Secretary - UTE)
Zack Branscombe (UHEW)
Susan Enta (UVAE)
Lori Walton (PSAC)
Stephanie Coffin (UNDE)

Invited Guests:

Leslie Nasmith (Mainland NS SP)
John Woolaver (Cape Local 201)

Regrets:

Gisele Weingartshofer (Treasurer – GSU)

Rob Silver welcomed the group of attendees to the in-person/zoom call. A round table of introductions were completed.

Rob Silver conducted land acknowledgement.

Adoption of the Agenda:

Rob requested to add an item to the agenda:

Motioned by Rob Silver
Seconded by Susan Enta
Motion carried

Rob stated that Olga (PIPSC member) reached out about PIPSC and CAPE doing joint activities with PSAC Area Council 1. There is a

WhatsApp group that has been started with some members of the three groups (PSAC Area Council 1, PIPSC and CAPE). Where we all seem to have similar issues of finding volunteers to attend events, they would like to work together to show support. With having access to a larger group of volunteers/activists, we can then reach out and secure more volunteers/activists to attend the various events planned. PSAC Area Council one had planned to do a postcard event at the ferry terminals and did not have enough volunteers/activities to proceed. Therefore, having access to more people, from the three groups, would ensure events are not cancelled.

Rob advised Leslie Nasmith (Mainland NS SP) and John Woolaver (Cape Local 201), would speak and then leave, once finished.

Adding discussion with PIPSC/CAPE on the Agenda.

Motioned by Rob Silver
 Seconded by Derek Forbes
 Motion carried

John Woolaver and Leslie Nasmith spoke about their personal work history with their unions and their experience as activists. They emphasized the importance of members supporting one another and noted that some past events were not successful due to low member engagement. They suggested that working together and encouraging greater participation is key to getting the attendance needed and to supporting one another during union campaigns. The discussion also highlighted the idea of strength in numbers and the importance of members getting involved and participating as a group. They have been speaking with Rob and would like to connect.

Rob – any ongoing/future ideas, we will use the WhatsApp.

A thank you for attending was given and John Woolaver and Leslie Nasmith left the Area Council meeting.

Tracy Kempton presented the PSAC harassment statement.

Review of previous minutes:

No previous minutes available at his time. Were previously sent out via email. Will be provided at next Area Council Meeting.

President's Report:

Since our last meeting on January 15, I have continued to be active supporting our members, advocating for workers' rights, and continuing our political engagement across the region.

As many of you know, we recently marked the 10th anniversary of the Phoenix Pay System fiasco, which unfortunately remains unresolved with between 233,000 and 383,000 outstanding faulty transactions. On February 25, I was able to get out and support our brothers and sisters from UTE at a plant gate they held bright and early, 0645 to be exact, at their Hobson Lake offices. It was great to see familiar faces and just as important to meet new members I hadn't yet had the chance to connect with.

I also recently travelled to Miramichi, New Brunswick, making a five-hour round trip drive combined with a three-hour round trip bus ride to visit and support our brothers and sisters working at the Public Service Pay Centre. These workers are doing incredibly demanding work trying to correct the government's Phoenix failures. The workers there seemed genuinely appreciative that we took the time to show up, support them, and thank them for everything they do to navigate through the disaster that is Phoenix. It was important to show that their work is recognized and that they are not alone in dealing with the fallout of this system.

Continuing our commitment to labour solidarity, earlier today, March 6th, I attended the CUPE Local 3912 picket line to stand with academic workers fighting for fair wages, respect, and better working conditions. These workers have not received a wage increase in over a decade, which makes their fight for fair compensation even more important. With all the labour turmoil the region's universities have created with their unions, I honestly don't know why anyone would pursue a career in education other than for the simple fact that they truly love what they do. It is always important that we show up for other unions when they are on the line, because when

workers stand together across unions, we strengthen the entire labour movement.

We had hoped to hold a postcard campaign at the Halifax Harbour ferry terminals to engage the public and raise awareness about issues impacting our members. Unfortunately, we were unable to get enough volunteers to make the event happen. While disappointing, it highlights the importance of continuing to build engagement and participation so we can successfully carry out these kinds of actions in the future.

On the political advocacy front, I currently have a meeting request in with the office of MP Darren Fisher to discuss issues impacting our members, including the ongoing problems with Phoenix, the importance of meaningful consultation with unions before the federal government proceeds with the rollout of any new pay system, and the concerning cuts to the public service sector that risk weakening the essential services Canadians rely on and expect from their government. I would also like to note that Leslie and Lori are currently planning an event to support the workers at the Nappan Research Farm, the oldest research farm in Canada. Once the details are finalized, I hope folks here and those joining us online will be able to attend and bring friends to help show additional support.

I have also recently been invited into a WhatsApp group with representatives from our fellow federal public sector unions, PIPSC and CAPE, where we are discussing ways we can collaborate on actions and events. The goal is to strengthen solidarity across unions and ensure we can bring more people out to support campaigns, rallies, and workplace actions when they occur.

I am also pleased to report that our Area Council budget has been approved by the REVP office, and while we didn't receive the full \$2000 we had hoped for we received a cheque in the amount of \$1,800, which I have deposited into our Area Council bank account.

The Area Council will continue to support locals, other committees, and regional mobilization efforts whenever possible. If your local has events, campaigns, or actions where the Area Council can assist, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Looking ahead, we will continue planning member engagement activities and political advocacy initiatives throughout the year, including

collaboration with other PSAC committees in Nova Scotia to maximize participation and resources.

I want to thank all of the members and activists who continue to show up, support one another, and fight for fairness and respect in our workplaces.

In solidarity,

*Rob Silver
Chair
PSAC Nova Scotia Area Council 1*

Discussions or questions:

Zack had a concern about the activism at the ferry terminal event that was planned and cancelled. He asked how the request for volunteers was done as he did not receive any information. He was not advised about it and works near the terminal and could have provided the necessary bodies, for us to have a successful event. Rob apologized to Zack for not reaching out. Rob said he is working on building his contact list. Rob said going forward, he will do better.

Motioned by Rob Silver
Seconded by Susan Enta
Motion carried

Treasurer report presented by Rob Silver:

Balance today \$2247.19

Discussions or questions:

Derek Forbes stated he would be bringing a \$100 donation from his local.

Motioned by Rob Silver
Seconded by Derek Forbes
Motion carried

Budget talk for events (based on previously proposed budget):

April 20th, day of mourning, two wreaths needed. Leslie is ordering them. Leslie will present a wreath at the Kentville event and Rob will present at Province House. Leslie is currently planning the Kentville event and will let us know the details once planned. All welcome to attend.

Money set aside for membership appreciation for a bowling and BBQ event. More information to come once planned.

Discussion on lobbying expenses. Leslie is coming to town for a meeting with Darren Fisher and Rob. Rob reminded Leslie to keep track of her mileage as we can cover. Leslie, Rob and Chris DiLiberatore to attend.

Discussed the \$600 for political action. Focus is to be on the various PSAC campaigns and Lori gave a few examples such as return to work, WFA's, Mayday, cutbacks.

- Rob spoke with Zack about doing a campaign at/near his office. Spoke about challenges of members being able to attend, traffic and parking is very congested. Lori suggested to be successful, we need to be focused on one topic and be prepared. Leslie suggested we start with remote work first at the ferry terminals. Suggestion to have it on Mayday. Zack suggested the following week to get to more people vs doing it on a Friday when a lot of people are off and since this is not a Mayday event, we can plant gate anytime. Decision to have it on May 5th with a rain date of May 6th. Idea is to have minimum two people at each terminal. Need six minimum. Idea is 730-930am. Time off for this would be on your own. Stephanie stated having an info grab would be ideal to pass out to those with people's common complaints and how it would affect non-unionized members. We need to show the benefits and we need to be prepared for pushback or negativity from the public. Lori stated that PSAC has lots of information on pretty much everything so we can easily get some talking points from the PSAC office (Laura) so that the public can understand what the ask is. Wear swag, if you have it.
- Nappan farm closure, there will be a letter writing campaign. Sent for translation. Two week campaign. Has its own funding from PSAC. Need support. More to come when ready.

- Labour Day is September 7, 2026 from 11-2pm. Lori said the idea is to engage with the public and be prepared to speak about the campaigns that we have on. We will have information at the table and also bring clipboards to make it easy for us to walk around. Leslie will be organizing the Kentville Labour Day and requested that someone from Area Council attend. Rob to attend. Derek will attend the Halifax Labour Day event. Tracy attending the Halifax Labour Day event with UTE.
- Remembrance Day wreath. Leslie to order them through the legion. One in Kentville and one in Halifax.
- Apple Blossom Parade is May 30, 2026. Leslie said all are welcome to attend with their flags and wear union swag. Reception at the Labour Council office, following the parade. All are welcome.

Round Table:

Rob Silver (President – UCTE)

- On leave from his work for six weeks.

Derek Forbes (1st VP - UNDE)

- Derek mentioned his workplace had lots of questions about WFA. Need to work on communication to make area Council successful.

Leslie Campbell (2nd VP - AGRU)

- Asked if there were any plans about organizing an event for Mayday. Idea is to network and socialize to mark the day. Coffee, tea, juice, finger type foods. Could do a food bank drive, period products. Decided on Friday May 1, 2026 from 4-6pm at the PSAC office. Discussion between food drive vs period products. Decided to go ahead with the food drive as the women's committee does assist with period products. Leslie to find a speaker for the event from her contact with Mayworks and create an invite. Lori suggested we could also show a video about Mayday. Lori will also have the PSAC admin create a registration form, so we have their information in case we

cancel the event but also have their information on file to invite for other events. All hands on deck needed for set up/clean up.

Tracy Kempton (Secretary - UTE)

- All good.

Zack Branscombe (UHEW)

- Re-elected as President at his local (Congratulations, Zack!!!!!!)

Susan Enta (UVAE)

- All good.

Lori Walton (PSAC)

- Impasse for PA, CRA and EB groups. SV group is bargaining this week and will know if making any progress by the weekend. SV group also decided to go to binding arbitration as opposed to choosing strike options. Not sure if the TC group is set to go back to the table but still in bargaining. PSAC Atlantic School at the Westin this weekend. Convention coming up the end of June. Two education sessions for convention prep (one day in April) and convention procedures (1.5 days in May). Lots of campaigns. Odeisa Stewart is the new regional education officer.

Stephanie Coffin (UNDE)

- All good. Happy to be here and to get involved.

Upcoming Meeting Dates (virtual and/or in-person):

- Thursday May 14, 2026 @ 6-8pm PSAC Office
- Thursday September 10, 2026 @ 6-8pm PSAC Office
- Thursday November 12, 2026 @ 6-8pm PSAC Office

Meeting Adjourned:

Motioned by Rob Silver
Seconded by Susan Enta
Motion carried
7:20pm