

MEMORANDUM

OPSEU



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Syndicat des Employé·e·s
de la Fonction Publique
de l'Ontario

TO: All Presidents with members in the Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs
All Stewards in the Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs

FROM: Terry Baxter, OPS Supervisor/Negotiator

DATE: November 17, 2006

SUBJECT: **Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs
ERC Minutes – September 8, 2006**

Attached, for your information, are the minutes of the above captioned meeting.

Please post or otherwise make them available to the members in your workplaces.

Also attached is a MERC referral form which should be used when referring unresolved local issues to the ministry level. The referral should be sent care of the Job Security Unit with all the supporting documentation, (e.g. minutes, correspondence, etc.), with any referrals.

PLEASE NOTE: THESE MINISTRY MINUTES WERE PREPARED BY THE EMPLOYER.

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Leah Casselman
President

/jm
att.

cc: MERC Chairs
Ministry ERC

Terry Baxter
OPS Supervisor/Negotiator

**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS
MINISTRY EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE (MERC)**

September 8, 2006

Room 205, 1 Stone Road, Guelph

For Management:

Dave Antle (Co-Chair for the meeting)
Mike Toombs
Jim Felker

For OPSEU:

Doug Peebles (Co-Chair)
Emily Hitchcock
Bob Lowry (via teleconference)

Resources:

Marilyn Everingham
Bev Rawn

Resource:

Stephen George

Dave Antle opened the meeting at 9 a.m.

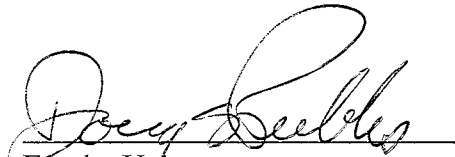
AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
Additional Agenda Items	Article 1.4 OPS Divisionals Employment Accommodation Policy OPS Ideas Campaign	
<u>STANDING ITEMS:</u>		
Ad Hoc Meetings	July 10, 2006 Doug Peebles – changes being made to Sheep Flock Improvement program; reporting relationship changes July 13, 2006 Doug Peebles – staff email regarding Strategic Priorities Project July 20, 2006 Doug Peebles – collection of migratory birds for the Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Health Centre August 2, 2006 Bob Lowry – regarding conversion August 10, 2006 Doug Peebles – staff email re job advertisements on the blue pages August 16, 2006 Doug Peebles – message to staff regarding kilometer and meal rates August 25, 2006 Doug Peebles – Meat Inspection reorganization August 28, 2006 Emily Hitchcock – regarding conversion September 6, 2006 Doug Peebles – Strategic Priority Project update	

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
Surplus Update	Management distributed a report on the status of surplus employees and the amount of remaining notice period for each employee. Currently there are three employees on the surplus list. (Two active and one on hiatus)	
Human Resources: Transformation	Management provided an update on the HR Transformation project. The business case for the project is in the approval process. Implementation plans following approval are expected to begin in the fall of 2006.	
Meat Inspection: Conversion	<p>Management reported that seven part time Meat Hygiene Officers were converted from unclassified to full time classified status in August. Four additional conversion cases identified by the union are under review. Management also reported that an ongoing process to monitor conversions is being developed.</p> <p>The Union requested a meeting to discuss the ongoing process and to review conversion models from other ministries.</p>	Meeting to discuss conversion process to be arranged.
I.T. Cluster Update	Management reported back on the status of a position transferred with the Business Solutions unit from OMAFRA to the Ministry of Natural Resources host ministry of the Land and Resources Cluster. Management confirmed that funds and an FTE for a Systems Officer 2 position to provide support related to the inclusion of Rural Development Division with OMAFRA was transferred with the Business Solutions group and has been filled temporarily by the Cluster.	
Terms of Reference	<p>The Union requested that Article 2.3 of the Terms of Reference be removed. The Union's position is that MERCs are established in the Collective Agreement and as such, any violation of the Collective Agreement is grievable.</p> <p>Management replied that further direction on the inclusion of the article would be required.</p>	Management to investigate and report back.
Results Based Planning	<p>Management reported that the 2005-2006 public document is not yet available and will be distributed as soon as it is released.</p> <p>The Union reiterated their offer to provide input to Results Based Planning documents at the development stages rather than comment on implementation.</p>	

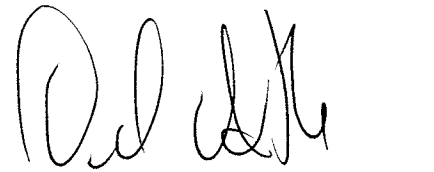
AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
<p><u>HEALTH AND SAFETY</u></p> <p>Emergency Measures Preparedness</p>	<p>Management provided an update of incident statistics at an ad hoc meeting. The Union requested that in future statistics be broken down by Division rather than provided as a ministry roll up.</p> <p>Management reported back on information regarding the ministry's orientation program with a printed version of material found on the ministry's Intranet, Charlotte.</p> <p>Dave Nodwell, Manager, Emergency Management joined the meeting to provide an outline of OMAFRA's emergency measures preparation. He outlined the legislative background to emergency measures coordination, the ministry structure and support teams. The ministry plays a support role for a number of potential emergencies and works closely with Emergency Measures Ontario and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. Simulations and Emergency Plan testing was discussed.</p> <p>The Union inquired about whether front line OMAFRA staff were involved. Management replied that CFIA staff provide a front line role while OMAFRA provides a communications and logistics role.</p>	<p>Management to investigate and report back.</p>
<p><u>NEW ITEMS:</u></p>		
<p>Mailroom and Print Shop</p>	<p>The Union and Management reported on the ad hoc meeting held August 23 with the Director of Service Management Branch regarding the disposition of mail and print service staff. Responses to outstanding questions from the Union are being prepared.</p>	
<p>Compressed Workweek (CWW) Agreements</p>	<p>The Union commented on inconsistent use of CWW agreements across OMAFRA Divisions.</p> <p>Management replied that the ministry is supportive of CWW arrangements and encourages managers to be receptive to flexible and alternate work arrangements.</p>	<p>Management to provide copies of communications to managers regarding Compressed Work Weeks.</p>
<p>Strategic Priorities Project</p>	<p>The Union inquired as to the nature of the Strategic Priorities Project.</p> <p>Management replied that the ministry Intranet site has been updated with status reports from Project sub-committees. The Union was provided with printed copies of the committee reports. Staff input will be part of the process.</p>	<p>Item to be included with Standing Items on next meeting agenda.</p>

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Cost of Auto Operation	The Union reported that an agreement had been reached with management at CERC to increase the per kilometer reimbursement rate for the cost of operating personal vehicles for OPS business as well as meal expenses reimbursement policy.	
Collective Agreement Article 1.4	The Union asked that management review its internal processes for disclosing new job descriptions with regard to timing of disclosure, proper signatures and disclosure prior to recruitment.	Management will provide job descriptions to meet timelines..
Employment Accommodation Policy	<p>The Union inquired whether changes had been made to the Employee Injury, Illness and Accommodation Policy and asked for a copy of the policy.</p> <p>Management replied that a current copy of the policy would be provided and that current materials are posted on the ministry Intranet site under Health and Safety.</p>	Management to provide a copy of the Policy
OPS Ideas Campaign	<p>The Union inquired about the process for submitting and reviewing staff ideas for the OPS Ideas Campaign.</p> <p>Management replied that the recent announcement referencing the Ideas Campaign was related to the release of the OPS Employee Engagement Survey. Staff comments or suggestions about employee engagement and the results of the survey can be fed into the Ideas Campaign for consideration. Campaign suggestions are reviewed centrally by the Ministry of Government Services and redirected to applicable specific ministry coordinators.</p> <p>The Union requested information about Campaign ideas and results related to OMAFRA.</p>	Management agreed to investigate and report back
Job Evaluation Project	Management reported that five ministry OPSEU staff and their managers have been contacted to participate in focus meetings to evaluate the OPSEU Job Evaluation Project model.	Add as a Standing Item to next Agenda
OPS Divisionals	<p>The Union reported that Divisional elections are due to occur this fall for OPSEU MERC representatives. Doug Peebles announced that he would not seek re-election to the OMAFRA MERC.</p> <p>Dave Antle thanked Doug for his participation and cooperation as the MERC Co-Chair for the past number of years.</p>	

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
Next Meeting Date:	December 8, 2006 Room 205	



For the Union



For the Employer