

MEMORANDUM

OPSEU



SEFPO

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: February 9, 2006

SUBJECT: **Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs
ERC Minutes – December 2, 2005**

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.

AUTHORIZED FOR DISTRIBUTION:

IN SOLIDARITY,

100 Lesmill Road,
Toronto, Ontario
M3B 3P8
e-mail: opseu@opseu.org
www.opseu.org

Leah Casselman
President

/jm
att.

cc: MERC Chairs
Ministry ERC

100 chemin Lesmill,
Toronto, Ontario
M3B 3P8
courrier électronique
opseu@opseu.org
www.opseu.org

Tel: (416) 443-8888
Fax: (416) 443-9670
Ontario:
Toll free: 1-800-268-7376
TDD:
(416) 443-9898
or
1-800-663-1070

Terry Baxter
OPS Supervisor/Negotiator

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

December 2, 2005

Room 205, 1 Stone Road West, Guelph

For Management:

Dave Antle (Co-Chair)
Mike Toombs (Regrets)
Jim Felker

For OPSEU:

Doug Peebles (Co-Chair for the Meeting)
Emily Hitchcock
Bob Lowry

Resources:

Marilyn Everingham
Bev Rawn

Resource:

Stephen George

Doug Peebles opened the meeting at 9 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
Additional Agenda Items	Human Resources: Ministry Forms Meat Inspection: Petryshen Award New Items: Parking Rates	
<u>STANDING ITEMS:</u>		
Ad Hoc Meetings	<p>Sept. 13, 2005 Doug Peebles - memo to staff from Deputy Minister regarding temporary hold on new and current competitions.</p> <p>Sept. 14, 2005 Doug Peebles – memo to staff regarding assistance with relief operations due to Hurricane Katrina.</p> <p>Sept. 16, 2005 Doug Peebles – email being sent to Fergus staff regarding the removal of asbestos at the Fergus office.</p> <p>Sept. 23, 2005 Doug Peebles – report back on: Security Tags Spending Freeze Access Card</p>	

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
	<p>Sept. 30, 2005 Report back Couriered OMAFRA Wellness information to Stephen George.</p> <p>Oct. 7, 2005 Doug Peebles – provided information on ministry realignment adjustment.</p> <p>Oct. 20, 2005 Doug Peebles – memo from Tony Dean to staff regarding the earthquake in South Asia.</p> <p>Oct. 21, 2005 Doug Peebles – memo to staff regarding flu clinics.</p> <p>Oct. 24, 2005 Doug Peebles – regarding potential strike at the University of Guelph.</p> <p>Oct. 24, 2005 Emily Hitchcock – memo to staff regarding workforce planning process.</p> <p>Oct. 25, 2005 Doug Peebles – regarding tentative deal reach at the University of Guelph.</p> <p>Oct. 25, 2005 Doug Peebles – disclosure on the transfer of Rural Affairs to the Ministry. Report back on conversion.</p> <p>Nov. 8, 2005 Doug Peebles – memo from the Deputy Minister to all staff regarding conflict of interest.</p> <p>Nov. 10, 2005 Doug Peebles – regarding a meeting with Human Resources Administrative staff to provide information on the HR Service Delivery Transformation project.</p> <p>Dec.1, 2005 Doug Peebles – shared Unclassified and Vacancy reports</p>	
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 3 employees on the surplus list (all on hiatus).	

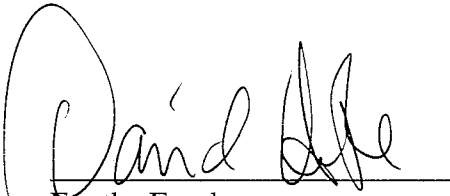
AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
<p>Human Resources: Transformation</p> <p>Unclassified Staff</p> <p>Ministry Forms</p>	<p>The Union inquired as to the status of the OPS Human Resources Transformation project.</p> <p>Management replied that the OPS project for a one enterprise concept for human resources services is moving forward. Information about the prototype model was shared with human resources staff in November. Implementation of the model is expected to begin in the fall of 2006 with a final completion time of spring 2008.</p> <p>Reports on the status of full time unclassified staff and unclassified Meat Hygiene Officers were provided at an ad hoc meeting.</p> <p>The Union requested that the Unclassified reports be expanded to include the length of continuous service for all part time unclassified OPSEU staff in addition to full time staff.</p> <p>The Union inquired as to the confidentiality and use of an OMAFRA form used to request employee health information rather than a standard OPS form or a standard Physical Demands Analysis form.</p> <p>Management replied that an OMAFRA form is used in addition to the standard Request for Health Information forms to request specific additional information from medical practitioners relative to work restrictions and limitations to assist with providing health related employment accommodations. Management added that every effort is made to maintain the confidentiality of employee health information.</p>	<p>Management to investigate and report back.</p> <p>Management to investigate and report back</p>
<p>Meat Inspection: Harmonization</p> <p>Conversion</p>	<p>Management reported that work regarding the harmonization of meat inspection standards is ongoing and that there was no new information to share since the last meeting.</p> <p>The Union requested a list of all headquarters plants for all meat inspection staff including unclassified staff.</p> <p>The Union requested information about all unclassified Meat Hygiene Officers employed over 18 months including a breakdown of inspection hours, travel time and overtime hours for analysis of potential conversion to classified status.</p>	<p>Management to investigate and report back to the Meat Inspection Employee Relations Committee</p> <p>Management to investigate and report back.</p>

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
<p>Haines Report</p> <p>Petryshen Award</p>	<p>Management reported that no new information was available since the Meat Inspection Employee Relations Committee meeting of November 10, 2005. An external audit to assess the implementation of the Haines Report recommendations is underway. The Union asked when the audit would be complete.</p> <p>The Union advised that they were reviewing the meat inspection settlement of the OPSEU Bargaining Unit Integrity Grievance by Vice-Chair Petryshen of the Grievance Settlement Board.</p>	<p>Management to advise when the audit would be complete and share audit information when publicly available.</p>
<p>I.T. Cluster Update – I&IT Horizontal Review</p>	<p>Management reported that the Baseline Review of the project has been completed. Next steps include analysis of the data following Ministry sign-off on the Baseline Review.</p>	
<p>WDHP</p>	<p>Management reported back on evaluation materials from WDHP training sessions. Feedback has been positive from employees and managers. Training will be ongoing with plans to include Ontario Disabilities Act information for field offices.</p>	
<p>Terms of Reference</p>	<p>The Union reported that final edits have been made to the Terms of Reference document and that it is ready for signatures from both parties.</p>	<p>Management to review.</p>
<p>Results Based Planning</p>	<p>Management reported that the 2006-07 Results Based Planning document has been completed and submitted to Management Board.</p>	<p>Management to share public plans when available.</p>
<p>Hiring and Spending Freeze</p>	<p>Management reported that all ministries must operate within their budget allocation. The previously announced hiring freeze has changed to a process of workforce planning within the ministry to manage ministry FTEs and recruitment.</p>	<p>Agreed to remove this item from the next meeting agenda.</p>
<p><u>HEALTH AND SAFETY</u></p>	<p>Management provided an update of incident statistics at an ad hoc meeting.</p> <p>Wellness Program: Management reported that the ministry's wellness program has included a number of activities including a Wellness Fair during the week of October 24, 2005. Two Flu Clinics were held in November with over 2000 people attending.</p> <p>The Union commented that there is a need to review the ability of field staff to participate in wellness activities as well as the flexibility of time allowed for staff to attend activities.</p>	<p>Management to review and report back.</p>

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
<u>NEW ITEMS:</u>		
Ministry Realignment	<p>Management reported that the ministry realignment adjustment has been completed and in response to a Union question, no physical relocations related to the realignment within 1 Stone Road are planned at this time.</p> <p>The Union also inquired about planned movement of budgets as a result of realignment.</p>	<p>Agreed to remove item from next agenda.</p> <p>Management to investigate and report back.</p>
Travel Policy	<p>Further to discussion at MIERC, the Union raised the issue of personal vehicle use for ministry business in light of increasing gas prices, particularly within the meat inspection program. Consistent policy applications were discussed.</p> <p>The Union asked how discretion will be applied regarding personal vehicle use if travel is less than 200 kilometers.</p> <p>The Union asked management to have their principles review the kilometer rate policy.</p>	<p>Management to investigate and report back.</p> <p>Management to relay message regarding kilometer rates.</p>
Mailroom Relocation	<p>Management reported back on the structural safety of the mailroom at 1 Stone Road and that the relocation of the mailroom is complete.</p> <p>The Union asked what emergency procedures and evacuation plans are in place related to the mailroom.</p>	<p>Management to investigate and report back on procedures.</p>
Rural Affairs	<p>Management reported that the Rural Development Division has transferred to the ministry from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.</p> <p>The Union raised the issue of classification differences between administrative positions in the Rural Development Division and OMAFRA. Job descriptions have yet to be provided from MMAH.</p> <p>Management responded that with the arrival of the Rural Development Division the ministry would need to review administrative processes.</p>	<p>Management to disclose job descriptions when received from MMAH.</p>

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
Successor Rights	<p>The Union asked Management to convey the message to their principles that Successor Rights be restored before the term of the current government ends.</p> <p>Management commented that successor rights was not an issue that could be resolved at the MERC level.</p>	<p>Union request for Successor Rights to become a standing item on future MERC agendas until resolved.</p>
Parking Issues	<p>The Union reported on information received from the 1 Stone Road Building User Committee that parking rates for the complex are to be increased in three phases over the next year by the Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC).</p> <p>The Union asked that Management convey a message back to their principles to reconsider the rate increases.</p>	<p>Management to report back.</p>
Minutes	<p>The Union requested that when the finalized MERC minutes are posted on Charlotte an announcement be placed on the Welcome Centre as to the availability of the minutes.</p>	<p>Management agreed to highlight the posting of MERC minutes.</p>
Next Meeting Date:	<p>March 10, 2006 Room 205 June 9, 2006 Room 205 September 8, 2006 Room 205 December 8, 2006 Room 205</p>	<p>Agreed to move the date of quarterly MERC meetings date to the second Friday of the month.</p>


For the Union


For the Employer