

**MEMORANDUM**

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

**FROM:** Ruth Hamilton, OPS Supervisor

**DATE:** June 9, 2011

**SUBJECT:** **Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs  
ERC Minutes – June 6, 2011**

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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,



Warren (Smokey) Thomas  
President



Ruth Hamilton  
OPS Supervisor

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att.

cc: MERC Chairs  
Ministry ERC

**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS  
MINISTRY EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE (MERC)  
June 6, 2011  
OPSEU Regional Office, 400 Speedvale Ave. West, Guelph**

For Management:

Karen Chan (Co-Chair, for the meeting)  
Jim Felker  
Brent Kennedy (regrets)

For OPSEU:

Mavis Vet (Co-Chair)  
Earl Yantzi (Vice-Chair)  
Emily Hitchcock

Resources:

Marilyn Everingham  
Bev Rawn

Resource:

Stephen George

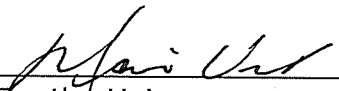
Karen Chan opened the meeting at 12:40 p.m.


| <b>AGENDA ITEMS</b>                                    | <b>DISCUSSION</b>  | <b>ACTION REQUIRED</b> |
|--|--|------------------------|
| <b>Welcome and Introductions</b>                       |  |                        |
| <b>Additional Agenda Items / Changes to the Agenda</b> |  |                        |
| <b>STANDING ITEMS:</b>                                 |  |                        |
| <b>Ad Hoc Meetings</b>                                 | A list of ad hoc meetings was provided prior to the meeting. See attached Appendix.  |                        |
| <b>Surplus List</b>                                    | Management distributed a report on the status of surplus employees. Currently there is one employee on the surplus list (on hiatus). |                        |
| <b>Temp Agencies / Staff</b>                           | Management reported on two temp agency staff in the Ministry.  |                        |
| <b>Fixed Term Staff Reports</b>                        | Management provided Fixed Term staffing reports prior to the meeting.  |                        |


| <b>AGENDA ITEMS</b>   | <b>DISCUSSION</b>   | <b>ACTION REQUIRED</b>  |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Conversion Report</b>  | Management reported that two Fixed Term staff have been converted to Regular status since the last meeting.   |   |
| <b>Bill 168 The Occupational Health &amp; Safety Act (Violence &amp; Harassment in the Workplace)</b> | Management reported that 34 locations have Threat Risk Assessments completed. Five locations have final reviews to be completed by June 10. Final Threat Risk Assessments are to be shared with Joint Health and Safety Committees.   |   |
| <b>Orientation sessions for new employees</b>   | <p>Management reported on the initial ADM-hosted quarterly meeting for staff to discuss broad Ministry directions.</p> <p>The Union inquired about ensuring that staff have time to complete the on-line orientation information. Management reported that the quarterly meeting is an opportunity to remind staff to complete the on-line orientation. A follow-up with managers will occur following the quarterly meeting.</p> |   |
| <b>Diversity</b>  | <p>Management reported on the launch of the Quiet Room on April 28, 2011. A tracking system has been initiated to assess the use of the room.</p> <p>The Union commented on potential safety concerns regarding the location of the Quiet Room on a public floor.</p>   | Management to review safety and security features for the Quiet Room. |
| <b>Results Based Planning</b>   | Management provided the Union with confidential local disclosure regarding staffing impacts in Results Based Planning for 2011- 2012 to 2013-2014 fiscal years following corporate bargaining agent disclosure.   |   |
| <b>Health And Safety</b>  | Management reported that the Management Co-Chair has retired. A replacement Co-Chair is to be identified.   |   |
| <b><u>OLD BUSINESS:</u></b>   |   |   |

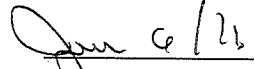
| <b>AGENDA ITEMS</b>                     | <b>DISCUSSION</b>   | <b>ACTION REQUIRED</b>   |
|---|---|--|
| <b>HR Communications</b>                | <p>Management reported on a standard HR Ontario icon on computer desktops directing staff to MyOPS pages relating to human resources and pay and benefits information.</p> <p>The Union commented on issues with OSS referrals of staff to consultants regarding retirement information. The Union recommended a tip sheet for staff to direct them to human resources services.</p>  | <p>Management agreed to provide feedback to OSS regarding processes and staff interaction regarding Life Events and referrals made to specific individuals.</p> <p>Management to review the establishment of links on the Ministry's Intranet site regarding retirement information.</p> |
| <b>Conflict of Interest Training</b>    | <p>Management reported that meat inspection staff training continues to be scheduled.</p> <p>The Union commented on conflict of interest issues with Meat Hygiene Officers and employees operating farm businesses. The Union inquired about specific scenario with Appointed Veterinarians.</p>  | <p>Management to review and follow up with the meat inspection program area regarding Appointed Veterinarians.</p>   |
| <b>Attendance Management Program</b>    | <p>Management reported on the implementation of the program in April 2011. The program has been simplified with one OPS threshold of 9 days. The intent of the program is to allow managers and staff to understand attendance issue and develop plans to address attendance issues.</p> <p>The Union's position is that the program is not a more benign program than the previous program particularly because it puts the onus on staff to monitor their own attendance.</p> |  |
| <b>Telework/work at home agreements</b> | <p>The Union commented on employment health accommodations that could include work at home arrangements may not have adequate protections for workers.</p> <p>Management replied that protocols for appropriate office spaces and practices for work at home are expected in the corporate Flexible Work Strategy that is</p>   | <p>Management to review and report back.</p>   |

| AGENDA ITEMS  | DISCUSSION  | ACTION REQUIRED   |
|---|---|---|
|   | being developed in the OPS.   |   |
| <b>Training and Development</b>                             | <p>The Union inquired about uptake on Centre For Leadership and Learning (CFL) courses.</p> <p>Management reported that 5,485 OMAFRA CFLL registrations occurred in 2010.</p>   |   |
| <b><u>NEW ITEMS:</u></b>                                    |   |   |
| <b>Additional FTE Reductions as Announced in the Budget</b> | <p>The Union inquired about the recent budget announcement regarding FTE reductions</p> <p>Management replied that to date no plans are in place to address the announcement.</p>   |   |
| <b>Job Ad Postings for Multiple Work Areas</b>              | <p>The Union inquired about the process for advertising similar jobs in different program areas.</p> <p>Management reported on information gathered from the Recruitment Centre on the selection process utilizing a drop down menu for selecting the desired position.</p> | Management agreed to provide feedback to the Recruitment Centre on including candidate position selection in the job ad in addition to the application process. |
| <b>Dates for 2011 MERC meetings</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September 15, 2011 (Earl Yantzi to chair)</li> <li>• December 2, 2011 1:00 p.m.</li> </ul>   |   |

  
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 For the Union

  
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 Date

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 For the Employer

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

**Ad Hoc Meetings for MERC  
June 6, 2011**

| <b>Date</b>    | <b>Provided To</b> | <b>From</b>            | <b>Information Provided</b>   |
|----------------|--------------------|------------------------|---|
| March 24, 2011 | Mavis Vet          | Bev Rawn               | Post-MERC Follow up and report back re <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fixed Term Reports and Conversions</li> <li>• Bill 168</li> <li>• HR Communications</li> <li>• Conflict of Interest</li> <li>• Telework / work at home</li> </ul> |
| April 5, 2011  | Mavis Vet          | Bev Rawn               | New Job spec disclosure   |
| April 7, 2011  | Mavis Vet          | Bev Rawn               | New Job spec disclosure   |
| April 11, 2011 | Mavis Vet          | Jim Felker             | Info share re Form 1 – Notice of Termination, Employment Standards Act to be posted in all workplaces.<br><br>Change in reporting Relationship of 1 employee in the Environmental Management Branch.  |
| April 28, 2011 | Mavis Vet          | Bev Rawn               | Quiet Room Launch   |
| May 3, 2011    | Mavis Vet          | Bev Rawn               | Strategic Policy Reporting Change   |
| May 11, 2011   | Mavis Vet          | Bev Rawn               | New Job spec disclosure<br>Reporting relationship change<br>New Job spec disclosure<br>Increased security in the Simcoe Office  |
| May 18, 2011   | Mavis Vet          | Bev Rawn               | Fixed Term Staff Reports for next MERC Meeting  |
| June 1, 2011   | Mavis Vet          | Bev Rawn<br>Jim Felker | Pre –MERC Agenda review<br>Shared Ad Hoc Meeting Report and Current Surplus List  |
|                |                    |                        |   |
|                |                    |                        |   |