

OPSEU



SEFPO

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

MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: Terry Baxter, OPS Supervisor

DATE: August 19, 2004

SUBJECT: **Ministry of Agriculture & Food
ERC Minutes – June 4, 2004**

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 our 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,

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Leah Casselman
President

Terry Baxter
OPS Supervisor/Negotiator

/ms
att.

cc: MERC Chairs
Ministry ERC

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**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD
 MINISTRY EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE (MERC) - June 4, 2004
 Room 406, 1 Stone Road West, Guelph**

For Management:

Don Taylor (Co-chair) (Regrets)
 Mike Toombs (Co-chair for meeting)
 Jim Felker

Resources:

Marilyn Everingham
 Bev Rawn

For OPSEU:

Doug Peebles (Co-chair)
 Emily Hitchcock
 Mitch Nagel

Resources:

Stephen George (OPSEU Representative)

Observer:

Robert Lowry

Mike Toombs opened the meeting at 9:30 a.m. with introductions of meeting members.

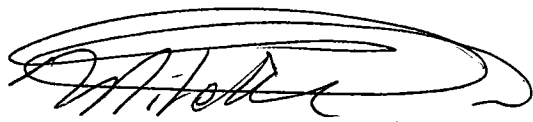
AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
Additional Agenda Items	Payroll Deposit Delay Update	
<u>STANDING ITEMS:</u>		
Ad Hoc Meetings	<p>March 22, 2004 Mitch Nagel - regarding the Agriculture & Rural Division regional staff transferring to Municipal Affairs and Housing on March 31, 2004</p> <p>March 22, 2004 Mitch Nagel - regarding surplus notice</p> <p>March 30, 2004 Doug Peebles - regarding letter to Compliance Officers regarding the transfer to Ministry of Environment on April 26, 2004.</p> <p>April 1, 2004 Doug Peebles - regarding OPS Energy Conservation Awareness Campaign</p> <p>April 2, 2004 Doug Peebles - regarding SARS litigation and information being sent to all staff from the Deputy Minister</p> <p>April 6, 2004 Doug Peebles - regarding possible displacement</p> <p>April 19 & 20, 2004 Doug Peebles - regarding surplus notice</p> <p>April 22, 2004 Mitch Nagel - regarding the April 23, 2004 - 20 Minute Toronto Makeover Event for Toronto staff in relation to Earth Day</p> <p>April 26, 2004 Doug Peebles - regarding Bee Inspectors</p>	

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
	<p>April 30, 2004 Doug Peebles - regarding report back items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAIS - Use of I.T. consultants • OPS Spirit - liability coverage • Max Merit payouts • Bargaining Unit Inclusion <p>May 5, 2004 Doug Peebles - regarding possible displacement</p> <p>May 14, 2004 Doug Peebles - regarding information being sent to all staff re mould removal at 77 Grenville St.</p> <p>May 18/19, 2004 Doug Peebles - regarding surplus notice</p> <p>May 21, 2004 Emily Hitchcock - regarding information being sent to all staff regarding West Nile Virus.</p> <p>May 28, 2004 Doug Peebles - regarding unclassified conversion of two staff in Food Industry Division.</p> <p>June 1, 2004 Doug Peebles - regarding surplus notice - regarding unclassified and vacancy reports</p> <p>June 3, 2004 Doug Peebles - regarding direct deposit payroll delays - regarding Meat Inspection issues – Travel Time and the application of CTO</p>	
Surplus Update	Management distributed the updated report on the status of surplus employees. Currently there are 3 employees on the surplus list. One employee is active; two employees are on hiatus.	
Canadian Farm Income Stabilization (CAIS) Program	<p>Management provided an update on the CAIS program. The application deadline for farm applicants has been extended to June 30, 2004. Over 12,000 of the expected 35,000 applications have been received by June 1, 2004. The program continues to recruit staff to process applications.</p> <p>The Union raised a question regarding the representation rights of bargaining unit members acting in management positions should grievances occur.</p>	Management to report back on the status of acting managers relative to grievance representation.
Human Resources:	Management provided information about unclassified staff seniority via an ad hoc meeting and reported that two staff had been converted from unclassified to classified status since the last meeting.	
Meat Inspection	<p>Management reported that the recruitment process for hiring an additional eight unclassified Meat Hygiene Officers is almost complete.</p> <p>A Meat Inspection Employee Relations Committee (ERC) is to be established to address operational issues.</p>	

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
	<p>Further to the ad hoc meeting discussion regarding meat inspection travel time, compensating leave and travel time for classified and unclassified staff was discussed. Detailed operational questions for meat inspection staff will be discussed at the meat inspection ERC.</p> <p>The Union offered to meet with management regarding the Union's recommendations submitted to the Justice Haines Meat Inspection Review.</p>	
I.T. Cluster Update	<p>Management reported that no further decisions have been made regarding the I.T. Land Resource Cluster program reviews and cluster governance discussions.</p> <p>The Union raised a question about service level response times at the I.T. Help Desk with responsibilities for new ministries resulting in increased call volumes.</p>	Management to investigate and report back.
Nutrient Management	<p>Management reported that the transfer of the Compliance Unit to the Ministry of Environment has been completed. One Nutrient Management Technician has been hired since the last meeting.</p> <p>The Union reported on meetings with compliance staff and the MOE regarding the successful relocation of staff connected with the transfer.</p>	Agreement to remove this agenda item from the next meeting.
WDHP	<p>Management reported on future WDHP training for the ministry. Training will be offered quarterly to new employees and managers including the CAIS and Meat Inspection programs. Training for existing managers and staff will begin in the fall of 2004 with refresher courses offered every four years. A WDHP awareness memo will be sent to all staff on an annual basis. All training will be mandatory.</p> <p>The Union asked about the inclusion of I.T. materials with the general training. Management responded that the 1/2 day sessions would cover both areas. The Union offered to provide feedback on the training materials.</p>	
Terms of Reference	This item was deferred until discussion with the full committee could occur.	Item deferred.
Business Plan 2003-04, 2004-05 Results Based Planning	<p>Management reported that the 2003-2004 plan was not published due to the change in government.</p> <p>Management provided an update on the 2004-05 business planning that is under the new title of Results Based Planning. Approvals from Cabinet have not been received for the 2004-05 plan.</p> <p>Copies of the Ministry's Strategic Plan are being shared at the current Staff Dialogues.</p>	Management to share a copy of the public plan when available.

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	The Union raised a question about the government's plans to investigate "horizontal" cooperation between ministries as well as between levels of government.	
Hiring and Spending Freeze	Management reported that there has been no change to the previously announced expenditure reductions and hiring freeze.	
<u>HEALTH AND SAFETY</u>	<p>Management provided an update of incident statistics for the 1st quarter of 2004. Information from the previous meeting was provided via an ad hoc meeting.</p> <p>Avian Flu: Management reported that the Canadian Food Inspection Agency has the lead role in responding in the event of an outbreak. The Union asked about training for staff in recognising the disease. Management agreed to investigate and report back.</p> <p>West Nile Virus: Management reported that information about the West Nile Virus had been distributed to all staff including electronic links to public health web sites and links to specific information for staff who do outdoor work. Students working for the ministry for the summer have also been provided with information.</p>	Management to investigate staff training regarding Avian Flu recognition.
<u>NEW ITEMS:</u>		
Meet with the Minister	The Union has requested an opportunity for the Minister to meet the MERC members at the next meeting. An alternative date of September 20 was suggested to accommodate the Minister's schedule.	Management to invite the Minister to the next MERC meeting.
Max Merit	Information requested regarding delays in awarding max merits following successful performance reviews raised at the previous meeting was provided at an ad hoc meeting.	
OPS Spirit Campaign	Information requested about liability issues for volunteers participating in the OPS Spirit Campaign activities was provided at an ad hoc meeting. The Union asked about how staff are being informed about personal liability. Management to investigate and report back.	Management to investigate and report back.
Bargaining Unit Inclusion	<p>Information requested from the previous meeting was provided at an ad hoc meeting. The Union raised a question about corporate disclosure on a specific issue. Management to investigate and report back.</p> <p>The Union requested that the MERC Co-chair be informed of bargaining unit reclassifications. Management agreed.</p>	Management to investigate and report back.
Inspections, Investigations and Enforcement (II&E)	The Union raised a question about the ministry's involvement with II&E initiatives. Management reported that an interministry group is reviewing opportunities for cooperative training and dealing with common issues across ministries and legislation. A report is expected this fiscal year.	To be included as an update item for the next agenda.

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
Update on 77 Grenville St., Toronto	<p>Management provided an update on the removal of mould from the building located at 77 Grenville Street, Toronto. Management Board Secretariat is the lead ministry at this location and is coordinating the remediation of the building. The Joint Health and Safety Committee continues to receive communications about the remediation work.</p> <p>The Union raised a question about the safety of staff located at the facility. Management responded that conditions on the 11th floor do not pose a health threat to staff. Management reported that exterior repairs were complete and that expected dates for interior work would be known in the near future. The Union asked to be advised of the dates of remediation work and the date of completion.</p>	Management to advise of dates for remediation and completion of work.
Update on Payroll Deposit Delay	<p>The Union requested an update on the delay of the June 3, 2004 payroll deposit. Management reported that the Royal Bank (RBC) had experienced computer problems earlier in the week that included delays in customer deposits and transactions including payroll direct deposits to other financial institutions. Information is being provided to staff as it is known.</p> <p>The Union asked about responsibility for financial penalties against individuals not having sufficient funds. Management replied that RBC has publicly declared that it will cover individual costs related to the payroll deposit delays with other financial institutions.</p>	
Staff Orientation	Management reported that staff orientation days continue to be offered quarterly and are well attended. The next session is available in August.	
Staff Dialogues	Management reported that Staff Dialogue meetings with senior management are currently offered to staff. Seven meetings are planned across the province. The meeting theme is Transformation.	
Next Meeting Dates:	September 2004 date and location to be arranged Friday December 3, 9:00 a.m. Room 203	



For the Union



For the Employer



FOR MERC ACTION

Strategic Action from Local Employee Relations Committee
(to be used when an issue is not resolved at LERC table)

Ministry:

Workplace Location:

Local #:

Please use a Separate Form for Each Unresolved issue.

- ✓ Please include the specific details about the issue.
- ✓ Provide any documentation that may assist the discussion at your Ministry Employee Relations Committee (MERC).

Is the issue related to (please ✓):

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Job Security and Article 20 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Reasonable Efforts - Divestment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Employer's Corporate Initiative and work re-organization | <input type="checkbox"/> | Contract Interpretation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Enforcing the Contract | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Health and Safety | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other: (please identify) | | |

Statement of the Issue:

The Resolution sought by your Local Employee Relations Committee (LERC):

Date Issue was declared unresolved by your LERC:

Is the Relevant material attached? Yes No

LERC Minutes dated:

Correspondence. Please list:

Local ERC Member Contact

Name:

Home #:

Address:

Work #:

FORWARD to: **OPSEU Job Security Unit**, 100 Lesmill, Toronto, Ontario M3B 2P8
Fax: (416)448-7462

