

MEMORANDUM

OPSEU



SEFPO

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

TO: All Presidents with members in the Ministry of Community & Social Services
All Stewards in the Ministry of Community & Social Services

FROM: Brian Gould, OPS Supervisor/Negotiator

DATE: April 11, 2007

SUBJECT: **Ministry of Community & Social Services
ERC Minutes – December 5, 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.

AUTHORIZED FOR DISTRIBUTION:

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Leah Casselman
President

/jmh
att.


Brian Gould
OPS Supervisor/Negotiator

cc: MERC Chairs
Ministry ERC

Ministry of Community and Social Services
Ministry Employee Relations Committee
December 5, 2006

OPSEU

Roxanne Barnes (Co-Chair)
Liz Daubney
Stephen George
Shawn Lavery
Ron Strong

Management

Colette Kent (Co-Chair)
Brenda Au
Ernie Nelson

Also in Attendance:

Michelle Rose (Secretary)
Tony Magee (Employer Resource)
Ray Ladner (Employer Resource)
Pauline Barr (Employer Resource)

Regrets:

Barbara Nawrocki

The meeting began with Colette Kent as Chair.

Community Learning Program

The Ministry will participate as the lead ministry in a pilot program that allows staff to spend the equivalent of one day per year volunteering at a variety of community agencies. Employees must choose a registered not-for-profit agency which is aligned with one of the six participating ministries' mandates; however it is not necessary that the agency be funded by one of these ministries. Although the goal is to ensure flexibility, the activity must be linked to the employee's individual learning plan and be approved by the manager. The pilot program will run for one year from November 2006 to November 2007.

OPSEU enquired as to who was going to evaluate the program and how it would be monitored.

Action:

Marc Rondeau will be invited to the February MERC.

Thunder Bay LERC Referral – Backfilling for Employees on Union Leave

The discussion focused on the instances in which employees who receive backfill dollars for time spent on union leave, are not being backfilled. Management stated that the difficulty lies in the time lag associated with regions receiving reimbursement through the established process.

Action:

OPSEU will raise any situations that they become aware of regarding employees who feel pressure because they are not being backfilled while on union leave.

OSS – Retirees/Overpayment Schedule / Maternity Leave/Termination of Contracts

Management noted that the meeting with OSS had been rescheduled.

Action:

Management will update the MERC regarding the outcome of this meeting.

Record of Employment

OPSEU raised concerns that surplus employees who exit the DS facilities have not been receiving their Record of Employment (ROE) in a timely fashion. OSS had indicated previously the time required in order to prepare ROEs. The problem may be the result of employees who are out of sync with the scheduled surplus dates.

Action:

Management committed to raising this issue with OSS. Management will update the MERC regarding the outcome of this meeting.

Unclassified Lists

Management provided OPSEU with an update on the progress of the changes. Corrections have been made to the appointment status of employees at Huronia Regional Centre. Progress is being made to correct the 1950s continuous service dates of employees at Rideau Regional Centre.

Action:

Management will provide updates as available. Management will also look to clarify coding for managers at the facilities.

MERC Issues Tracking Sheet

The parties agreed to the format of the new tracking sheet.

Action:

Management committed to provide the Union with the updated tracking sheet approximately one week before each MERC.

MERC Terms of Reference

The parties discussed proposed provisions for the revised ERC Terms of Reference. OPSEU requested that Articles 7.10.2 and 8.6 be removed entirely and that Article 11.1.f be amended to include a provision for areas where there is no Local or Regional Employee Relations Committee (ERC).

The parties agreed to remove Article 7.10.2 and that the process for referring unresolved items to MERC belongs in each subcommittee's Terms of Reference.

The parties also agreed to amend the referral process to MERC as well as Article 11.1.f, to recognize that not all locations have Local or Regional ERCs. Management reaffirmed its commitment to encouraging the formation of LERCs and RERCs.

With respect to Article 8.6, OPSEU's position is that minutes should be subject to the grievance procedure. The Union also raised the concern that agreements made at ERCs may not be honoured following a change in government.

Management noted that this has been a longstanding provision in the MCSS ERC agreement and has been fairly standard across the OPS. Management also commented that an important purpose of ERCs is to encourage dialogue in the interest of building trust between the parties. Management's position is that allowing ERC minutes to be subject to the grievance procedure would actually discourage open discussion and interest based problem solving at ERCs.

Action:

Management will remove Article 7.10.2 from the Terms of Reference and amend Article 11.1.f as reflected above. OPSEU will consider its position regarding Article 8.6.

Update on FRO Subcommittee

Management noted that the 2007 meeting schedule has been confirmed. Item to be removed from the agenda

Developmental Services

Management provided the Union with Career Centre updates as well as updates on developmental opportunities offered through each respective facility.

Developmental Opportunities

Rideau Regional Centre (to November 2006)

→ Permanent Positions – 24

External to Facility – 6

Internal – 18

→ Temporary Assignment – 57

External to Facility – 15

Internal – 42

Huronia Regional Centre (to November 29, 2006)

→ Permanent Positions – 19

External to Facility – 17

Internal – 2

→ Temporary Assignment – 104

External to Facility – 61

Internal – 43

Southwest Regional Centre (to December 1, 2006)

→ Permanent Positions – 11

External to Facility – 11

Internal – 0

→ Temporary Assignments – 31

External to Facility – 31

Internal – 0

OPSEU raised concerns that unclassified employees continue to work full time hours while classified employees are being surplused. Management noted that unclassified employees are often used to facilitate developmental opportunities for classified staff. As surplusing continues, requests for developmental opportunities can be expected to increase.

OPSEU raised additional concerns regarding inconsistencies in the way surplusing was rolled out at each facility. The parties acknowledged the learning curve associated with the surplusing process as well as the need for additional union support. OPSEU raised concerns in regards to the ineffectiveness of the EAP.

Action:

The parties agreed to track any issues raised by employees regarding access to EAP supports.

REC Update

Management noted that discussions regarding the CO-Start agreement are continuing with MGS and Corrections. Management confirmed that employees who have been successful in the testing portion of the application process are able to continue in the process based on the operational needs of Corrections.

OPSEU requested that the ministry allow additional people to attend CO-Start training at the Bell Cairn facility since no one has been sent in recent rounds. The Union also requested that management arrange for additional onsite testing dates for facility staff.

Action:

Management agreed to examine the possibility of allowing additional employees to attend the training.

OPSEU Press Release

Management expressed concerns that the November 9th, 2006 press release on the OPSEU website inaccurately linked the lack of surplusing in December to the initiative falling behind schedule. OPSEU disagreed and commented that it was a positive story that needed to be shared with the membership. Management agreed to share the reason associated with any decision made not to surplus.

Action:

The Union agreed to discuss the issue with corporate OPSEU.

New Items:

Fragrances in the Workplace

Management noted that managers are still experiencing difficulties in implementing the suggestions made in the "Scented Products: Information for all Staff" document. Management requested OPSEU's cooperation in informing the membership.

Action:

The Union will look at including fragrance sensitivity information in various OPSEU publications and newsletters.

Plexiglass

The parties will continue to discuss the possibility of finding a collaborative solution as an alternative to arbitration.

Thresholds for Job Competitions

OPSEU inquired as to whether the level applicants are required to attain in the selection process is the same in every region. Management noted that although every selection panel is different, the level used should be consistent. Management confirmed that the Northern Recruitment Centre model would be rolled out in the future.

Rebuilding the Public Services

The Union is hopeful that the spring budget will address the commitments made by the McGuinty government during the election process to rebuild public programs.

Management noted the strides made throughout the OPS in the areas of talent management, recruitment, OPS survey, OPS Ideas campaign and within the Ministry itself, through the Thriving Communities document.

Action:

OPSEU will raise the issue at the next meeting with the Deputy Minister.

Ministry Agreements

Recently an agreement was signed between the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (TCU) allowing TCU job notices to be posted exclusively to job threatened staff in MOHLTC for 3 to 5 days. MOHLTC has agreed to pay for relocation costs. Currently TCU is expanding due to a transfer of positions from the Federal government.

OPSEU expressed concerned that MCSS has so far been unwilling to enter into a similar agreement to restrict postings to job threatened individuals at the three facilities. The parties agreed that opening competitions does not benefit facility staff because of the overwhelming response to "Open" competitions.

Management reaffirmed that MCSS is committed to providing developmental opportunities to facility staff but agreed that this issue should be reopened.

Action:

Management will present the idea to the Program Management Committee (PMC).

2007 Meeting Dates

The next MERC meeting has been scheduled for February 6th, 2007 from 10:30am to 2:30pm. The remaining dates are yet to be confirmed.

Huronia Regional Centre LERC Referral – Facility System Officer 2s and eOntario

OPSEU provided management with a copy of the Huronia Regional Centre LERC referral regarding the exclusion of facility SO2s from the eOntario process. In an effort to modernize government services and operations, eOntario will move a portion of systems officers to MGS and

the remaining systems officers to the Ministry's I&IT Cluster. OPSEU is requesting clarification and the rationale behind the decision to exclude facility systems officers from the process.

Action:

Management will follow up on this item.

New FRO model

OPSEU requested an update on the rollout of the new model.

Action:

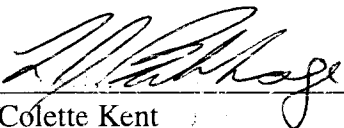
Management will arrange for update early in the New Year.

Next Meeting: February 6th, 2007
10:30am-2:30pm, 2 Bloor St. W, Room 24(A)

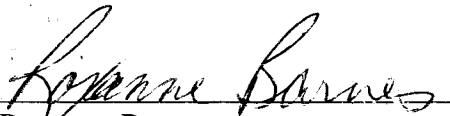
The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 pm.

Ministry of Community and Social Services

MERC Minutes of December 5th, 2006 approved on Feb 6, 2007 by:

for 

Colette Kent
Co-Chair, Human Resources Branch



Roxanne Barnes
Co-Chair, OPSEU