

MEMORANDUM

OPSEU



SEFPO

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

TO: All Presidents with members in the Ministry of Northern
Development and Mines

All Stewards in the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines

FROM: Terry Baxter, OPS Supervisor/Negotiator

DATE: September 27, 2004

SUBJECT: **Ministry of Northern Development and Mines
ERC Minutes – June 17, 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.

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AUTHORIZED FOR DISTRIBUTION:

IN SOLIDARITY,

Leah Casselman
President

Terry Baxter
OPS Supervisor/Negotiator

/cm
att.

cc: MERC Chairs
Ministry ERC

Ministry of Northern Development & Mines
Ministry Employee Relations Committee

June 17, 2004
159 Cedar Street, Deputy Minister's Boardroom
Sudbury

IN ATTENDANCE

For the Union:
Norm Trowell
Michel Lavoie
Sylvie Valcourt
Stephen George

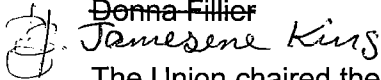
For the Ministry:
Cleo Degagne
Jonathan Barrett
Ross Kelly

Guests:
Ed Debicki
Sue Lepage

Regrets:
Fred Lalonde

Recording Secretary:

~~Donna Fillier~~

 Jamesene King

The Union chaired the meeting that was called to order at 9:10 a.m.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The Union requested the following be added:

Under Business Arising from Previous Minutes:

- Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Policy
- IT
- Training and Development

Management requested the following be added:

Under Other Business:

- Toronto Counters Project

2. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

Health & Safety Policies for "Small" Offices – The Union felt that in the past two to three years, the Ministry has not emphasized health and safety enough. There used to be a dedicated person in Human Resources that dealt strictly with health and safety issues, but now because there is no dedicated resource it seems to take a long time to get resolution. The Union stated they would like to see a communication come from the Deputy to all staff on the importance of health and safety. Management replied that there is a lot of work that goes on behind the scenes that perhaps the Union is not aware of. The health and safety representative, Sue Lepage, has spent considerable time reviewing existing policies, contacting managers and health and safety committees for input on various issues.

Sue Lepage gave out a guideline she produced called "MNDM Remote Small Office or Secondary Location Health and Safety Considerations" and gave a brief overview. This document was sent to all Joint Health and Safety Committees and all comments received have been incorporated. This guideline is a final document and will be made available to all staff. There will be a compliance audit done in the form of a questionnaire. The Union asked if there was any timeline for the audit of offices. Sue indicated that there will probably have to be face-to-face meetings and will try for September to implement. The Union stated they did not see anything in the document referring to security in small offices. Staff are concerned as they now deal with more revenue and some Client Service Advisors work alone. There is also the issue of having to make deposits at the bank. The Union suggested that perhaps the Ministry could make arrangements to have Brink's pick-ups. They feel this needs to be given some priority.

Action: Management agreed to look into the option of having Brink's pick-ups and report back.

The Union asked if Management was planning any training sessions for staff regarding the guideline. Management replied that managers are accountable for informing their staff. The Union pointed out that we would have no way of knowing if, indeed, staff are being informed. It was suggested by Management that this be brought to HRMC to issue a directive to managers to ensure employees are informed by way of staff meetings, orientation, etc.

Action: Managers will be reminded of the obligations to their staff.

The Union stated that they were under the impression that the guideline would be brought back as draft. Even though it is a final document, it will have to be brought to the Union for review. Management indicated that was acceptable as this is a living document.

Wilderness First Aid Training – Ross Kelly reported that he took the proposal to a Mines & Minerals Divisional Senior Manager's meeting. The outcome was that all field geologists would take the advanced training. It has been narrowed down to two providers and we should have a decision within a month.

Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System Training (WHMIS) – Management is now reviewing the process and a training policy that has been drafted. This policy will be circulated to the Joint Health and Safety Committees for comments. It was agreed that enhanced record keeping would become a priority for the future. A review of the Health and Safety Website has been completed and a new one will be launched which will have links to all pertinent information.

Geological Field Trips Led by Ministry Staff – Legal services has a waiver to review. Guidelines were also sent for their review and hope to have both documents back for the next MERC meeting. These will be made available to staff.

WDHP Training – It is the Union's understanding that not all on-call employees have been trained and asked how management plans on proceeding. Managers are looking at the best way to deliver the training, which may have to be by teleconference. A presentation has been added to the student orientation package to ensure they are covered. As for interns, they are MBS employees and would be trained by them. The Union felt the Ministry should consider paying on-calls to come in for training. This is mandatory training and on-calls are employees of the Ministry, therefore, just as much importance should be placed on ensuring they are getting the appropriate training. The Union takes this very seriously and expects the Ministry to treat this issue as high priority. Management is dealing with on-call staff in the most efficient manner possible.

IT Unit – No new information

Training and Development – Information to promote training and development was put in the April newsletter. A new website will be launched which will be more user friendly.

The Union raised a concern that there is still the perception that staff are not getting the opportunity to apply for Training and Development opportunities (T&Ds). Recently, a manager from SSB approached managers in this Ministry asking if they had any contract staff that would soon be finished and may be interested in a contract with SSB. This was communicated to staff and then the position was advertised instead; why canvass if there is no intention of following through? This causes anxiety for staff looking for advancement.

The Union made a suggestion regarding training and development specifically for OAGs that a couple of other ministries have tried. They have “Lunch & Learns” or “Munch & Movies” that teach them how to market themselves. The OAG staff seem to be very receptive to this.

Neureka at WGMC (Health & Safety Issues) – The issue has been deferred to Sue Lepage, Health and Safety Coordinator. Ross Kelly and Sue are trying to set up a meeting with ORC and Neureka to address the various issues.

Geoscience Labs – Amalgamation with “Central Analytical Facility” – The Union indicated that what was thought to be a minor item at the last meeting seems to have grown. Lab staff have come to the Union with their concerns and had a list of questions. Ed Debicki stated the only thing that has changed since the last meeting is that we have now involved staff. Staff were asked to list things that should be considered in the agreement, as management may not be able to think of every detail. Also, the ADM has been asked to consider inviting one staff member to attend management meetings regarding the amalgamation.

The ADM would like to see a Memorandum of Understanding signed. There will be a formal governance agreement, but this could take months as we have to ensure everything has been addressed. It would also have to go through Legal Services. The Union asked if the governance agreement would impact staff directly. Ed replied in the negative, that this agreement would deal strictly on how the two parties will operate together. He does not anticipate anything on staffing being included. Once the governance agreement is signed there will be 2-3 years to solidify the workings of the facility. The intention is to develop a facility that is world class. It was suggested that it would be a good idea for the Committee to meet at the Willet Green Miller Centre for the next meeting and schedule some time for a tour of the lab.

The Union also identified the issue of Laurentian taking over the non-tax revenue. Ed Debicki replied that there had been some discussion around that issue.

It was suggested by the Union that Management have monthly bulletins, information meetings or Q&A sessions to address fears and rumours.

The Union felt that Human Resources should have a copy of the staff's concerns and also questioned how they would be addressed. Ed will have another staff meeting very soon and work through each item. Ed also expressed his disappointment that the staff felt this way as he feels he has been very open in sharing information and asked for their help because he values their opinion and expertise.

Action: Ed Debicki will forward concerns to Management Co-Chair.

3. **Status of MNDM Library** – There has been a rumour that our Library may merge with Laurentian University. Management Co-chair stated that this is clearly a rumour without foundation as there is no plan for such action.
4. **Huntsville Office** – Staff felt things could have been handled better in terms of notification and that management seemed more concerned with lease cancellation than the human side. Management gave an overview of the events subsequent to the budget announcement and future action. Staff want to know if they are losing their jobs, but that can't be answered until the program issues are sorted. A union rep has visited employees and HR will do so shortly to give an overview of the Collective Agreement with regard to transition rights and explain the process. Staff have been provided with several updates and a teleconference to date with HR. Management is working diligently to get a final answer for staff as soon as possible.

The Union wanted to insure that appropriate disclosure occurs. It was indicated that once the situation is clearer this will happen. All that is definitely known right now is that the boundaries have changed. A request was made by the Union to be extended an invitation to attend the face-to-face meeting.

5. **Staff Day** – Staff day has been postponed to September in order to accommodate field crews.
6. **Building Problems at WGMC** – There has been a problem with sewer smells in different areas of the building. . The process for filing a complaint is being followed but we are not getting the service from ORC we should be getting. Management stated they are just as frustrated as staff. It was suggested that there may be an opportunity to address this at the meeting with Neureka as ORC will be there. The OPSEU representative stated that there may be cause to bring in the Ministry of Labour.

Action: Norm Trowell and Ross Kelly will take this back to ORC and report back before the next meeting.

7. **Re-organization Plans at WGMC** – It has been rumoured that there will be changes in the near future in Senior Management and may result in a re-organization. Management replied that there are no planned changes in the reporting structure. There was talk of some physical moves but everything is on hold because of budget constraints.
8. **Geoscientist's Problems with ETEC** – In the past geologists were able to pick up expenses for students by including them with their own. When the expenses were sent in they were told they could not be processed, so the geologists had to pay the students themselves then get reimbursed. No one was made aware that they could no longer include student expenses with their own.

Action: Management Co-Chair will look into this matter.

9. **Other Business**

Toronto Counters – Looking at moving the front counters of Macdonald Block (seven ministries involved). A project team has been assembled and our Ministry is on the team. Information will be provided as it is known.

Co-Chair for Next Meeting – Michel Lavoie will act as the Union Co-Chair at the next MERC meeting.

10. **Next Meeting** – September 23, 2004


Norm Trowell, Union Co-Chair


Cleo Degagne, Management Co-Chair



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"/> Enforcing the Contract | <input type="checkbox"/> Contract Interpretation |
| <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

