

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Presidents and members in Ministry of Natural Resources
All Stewards in Ministry of Natural Resources

FROM: Ruth Hamilton, OPS Supervisor

DATE: February 25, 2011

SUBJECT: **Ministry of Natural Resources
ERC Minutes –June 9, 2010**

Attached, for your information, please find the minutes of the above captioned meeting(s).

Please post or otherwise make them available to the members in your workplaces.

You will also find attached a MERC referral form which should be used when referring unresolved local issues to the ministry level. We request that you provide the Job Security Group with all supporting documentation, (i.e. 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

/pb

att.

cc: MERC Chairs
Ministry ERC

**Ministry Employee Relations Committee
OPSEU Regional Office
31 Wellesley St., Toronto, Ontario**

**Wednesday, June 9, 2010
9:30 – 3:30**

Present for OPSEU:

Elaine Bagnall (Co-Chair)
Dave Fluri
Pierre Verhelst

Present for the Ministry:

Pat Freistatter (Co-Chair)
Joel English
Martha Baldwin
Kevin Smith
Dave Payne
Jay Nichols

Regrets:

Cameron Walker
Peter Wall

Standing Items:

1. RbP/Transformation and Budget Update

The Employer reported that there was currently no update to provide regarding Results Based Planning (RbP), however corporate disclosure of the RbP was forthcoming. The Employer confirmed that transformation work, specifically regarding budget allocation, was also pending finalization.

The Employer reported that it continues to work on its FTE reduction plan, per the direction from the Central Agency (MGS). As each ministry was given 5% target over the next two years (April 2010 to March 2012), MNR will look at options to achieve the target through existing vacancies, retirements and the potential for the reallocation of work. The employer is committed to look at areas with the least impact on existing staff, where ever possible.

The Employer to look into bringing a guest to talk about phased retirement

2. Employee Engagement

The Employer reported that as a result of the Employee Engagement survey, there continues to be work done. Staff dialogue on the revised "Our Sustainable Future" begins in Fall of 2010.

The Employer reported that it has a new employee recognition program (the Most Valuable Resource Award). The naming of the new program and award nominations were driven by Ministry Employees. The formal recognition ceremony will be held June 22, 2010 in Peterborough. Video Broadcasting (iCast) technology will be used to ensure the participation of Ministry employees who reside outside of Peterborough.

Further, the Employer reported that regionally based Diversity teams have been established and work continued to evolve. In addition, efforts are ongoing with respect to the development of a Ministry-wide Diversity Mentoring Program; a program that will provide for the participation of any employee across the Ministry. The Employer reported that it is currently seeking Deputy level endorsement of this program

3. Ministry File Review Committee (MFRC)

OPSEU confirmed that there was nothing new to report from the MFRC table, however a statistical report will be provided to MERC by the committee at the end of June 2010. The Employer and OPSEU discussed the current grievance tracking approach of both OPSEU and the Ministry.

OPSEU requested for the Employer to share data related to an understanding of the number of Stage 2 grievances that have been filed within the Ministry since the inception of MRFC (December 19, 2009) and which have been resolved at Stage 2.

Action Item: Employer to follow up.

4. Vacancy/Surplus New Positions Listings

The Employer understood that new position lists have been shared with OPSEU

Action Item: Employer to research vacancy/surplus list issue.

5. Unclassified Position Conversion/Seasonal Employee Statistics

The Employer confirmed that it has provided the current list of unclassified positions to OPSEU.

Action Item: Employer to follow up on the correct process for disclosing the conversions of positions within the Ministry and confirmation as to whether the HR Regional Service Delivery Centre has been disclosing conversion (offer) letters according to the established process.

6. Schedule for Towers in Parks

The Employer reported that there was currently no further update to provide.

Business Arising

1. Pandemic Planning

No update to provide. Parties agreed to remove this item from the agenda.

2. Results to Resources Exercise for North East

The Employer provided a demonstration of existing survey, including an explanation of the components of the online survey and rationale behind each section. The Employer reinforced the intent of the survey is to determine from the employees' perspective, where the work priorities lie and where more resources and training may be required. The Employer expressed its appreciation of the opportunity to have dialogue and input with OPSEU. Further OPSEU had the opportunity to ask questions and recommend points of clarification.

3. Enforcement Branch – Pre-Employment Testing & Final DCO Policy

The Employer confirmed that there was no new update to provide on the ongoing work to pre-employment testing at this time.

The Employer confirmed the current CPIC process for background checks within MNR; a process which occurs at the point of hire and has been in place for many years within the Ministry.

The Employer also addressed the follow-up requested by OPSEU regarding the Health and Safety of volunteers within the Ministry. The Employer confirmed that the Ministry recognizes that they are accountable for the health and safety of volunteers as much as they are for Ministry employees and therefore high level standards are adhered to in order to ensure adequate protections are in place.

4. Workload Issue

The parties agreed that this item will be removed from the agenda.

5. Student Pay

The Employer clarified that all regular MNR students who are employed in Ontario Parks are paid at the Level 2 student rate. Further, all SEP (MGS) students are paid at the SEP student rate per the collective agreement, when employed during the course of their SEP contracts. The Employer clarified however that when SEP students complete training in advance to the SEP contract, they are compensated at Level 1 regular student rate, as they are employed for MNR training purposes and therefore are hired and paid by MNR solely.

6. Ontario Ranger Camps

The Employer explained that the Ministry had applied for federal infrastructure funding towards the completion of capital initiatives within its ranger camps. The Ministry confirmed that it received Federal approval for this funding in Feb. 2010 and as a result, consultation with the field level to initiate formal processes towards the capital rebuilds.

Ministry confirmed that it will focus on Killarney and Round Lake Provincial Parks and then Esker Lakes and Cedarbrough

In addition to capital money received, the Ministry is also devoting funds to various maintenance efforts within the camps. These camps will include Dividing Lake, Kiosk, Machesney, McCreight's, Mink Lake, Moose Lake, Sandbar, Sleeping Giant and Wade Lake. In total, the Employer estimates that maintenance dollars to be devoted will total approximately \$95,000. The focus of maintenance efforts by the Ministry stems from identification of potential Health and Safety concerns.

7. Vessel Master Classification

Per the request of OPSEU for a presentation on general classification, Angela Sullivan, Manager of the Enterprise Classification Unit (ECU) of HROntario (MGS), provided a presentation regarding the role of the ECU and the general classification process within the OPS.

Parties were able to ask questions regarding the process of classification when a job requires a particular license. It was clarified that in understanding the requirement of a license for a particular job, it is not the mere fact that the license is required which determines the level of classification, but that the level of classification is based on extent of knowledge, degree of expertise and most importantly, how the knowledge is used in the job and why; all of which are considered within the context of the work that is performed in the program area.

8. Conservation Officer and Provincial Prosecutors

The Employer provided OPSEU with a job specification for the Provincial Prosecutor and clarified that the Provincial Prosecutor is not a conservation officer appointment.

Parties agreed to remove this item from the agenda.

9. Missing Receipt Affidavit

The Employer confirmed that this receipt affidavit is no longer being used in the East Fire Region as it is recognized that it is not necessary to duplicate the comments section in iExpenses.

Parties agree to remove this from the agenda.

10. Re-imbusement of Lost Equipment

The Employer confirmed that section 13 of the Employment Standards Act (ESA) is applicable to the Crown as an employer. While there is a full recognition that accidents do occur, if staff are found to be willfully negligent in the care or control of the equipment, they may be asked to pay for the replacement of the equipment, however in these circumstances wages are not garnered, instead staff may be asked to provide a written cheque to the Minister of Finance for the reimbursement. It is clear that management discretion must come into play for consideration on a case by case basis of whether reimbursement is appropriate.

Parties agreed that this item can be removed from the agenda.

11. Seasonal Fire Management Positions in NW Fire

The Employer clarified the rationale behind the creation of these seasonal Fire Management Technician position and confirmed that these seasonal positions have not replaced existing classified jobs, but serve to address the need for succession planning to ensure support is in place.

Action Item: Management to follow up on the timelines around the filling of any vacant classified Fire Management Technician positions.

12. CWW Agreement in North West Fire

The Employer confirmed the removal of article 4.2 from the CWW Agreement in North West Region of the Fire Management Program.

The parties agreed that this item can be removed from the agenda.

13. Update LERC List

The Employer provided a list which reflects a snapshot of LERCs within the Ministry; information which was gathered via request for LERC identification at the local level. OPSEU assisted in developing this list further.

14. Ministry Health and Safety Workplace and Bill 168 Implementation

The Employer confirmed that the Centre for Employee Health Safety and Wellness (MGS) is currently providing direction and support towards the implementation of policies and processes regarding Bill 168 obligations. Efforts are continuing towards the assessment of workplaces in the identification of potential risks of violence. Commitment is in place to ensure assessments are completed as soon as possible. The Employer confirmed that progress is going well towards meeting established deadline.

Further, work continues on the revision of the WDHP policy with respect to Workplace Bullying and Violence. Training sessions are forthcoming for employees and management.

As part of the ongoing efforts towards the development of a project plan for the Ministry Healthy and Safe Workplace project, the Employer highlighted some of the consideration towards best practices, which research has identified. There is a commitment towards ensuring staff input occurs throughout the organization, into the development of the plan.

Senior Executive level approval is being sought and the goal over the next year is to have a two year plan in place.

New Business

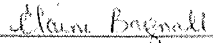
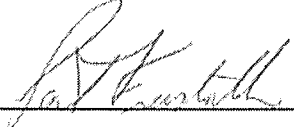
1. Ontario Parks: Group 1, 3 and 4 Position Postings

OPSEU expressed concern that seasonal positions in Ontario Parks are not always being posted and filled via competition.

Management reported that in Ontario Parks, it is encouraged as a best practice that all seasonal positions are posted for competition. The Employer spoke to circumstances where the ability to ensure positions are filled in a timely manner to meet seasonal operational demands is challenged. Current practices are done in accordance with the Collective Agreement and with an eye towards transparency for existing staff. Consideration is underway towards appropriate options for addressing the challenges.

Parties agreed that this item would be removed from the agenda.

Next Meeting Date: October 26, 2010

For the Union	 Elaine Bagnall	Dec 13/10 Date
For the Ministry	 Pat Freistatter	Dec 15/10 Date