

February 4, 2021

**Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and
Ministry of Indigenous Affairs
MERC Minutes**

In attendance:

For OPSEU:

Elaine Bagnall (Co-Chair)
Helene Scott
Glenna Caldwell
Antonio (Tony) Crispino
Christopher Bierman

For the Employer:

Donna Walton (Co-Chair)
Laura Aitchison
Carly Jones (Minutes)
Kerri Boyd (regrets)
Ross Hart (regrets)
Brian Locke

Administrative Items:

Approval of Agenda

Agenda was approved.

Standing Items:

1. MYPP Disclosure/Reductions and Vacancy/Surplus/New Position Listings

The Employer advised that there are no updates.

2. Employee Engagement/Inclusion/Accessibility/Diversity

The Employer advised that the 2021 Employee Experience Survey is currently scheduled for early March 2021. The Survey explores new and relevant areas of interest (i.e., mental health and supports, ethics, remote work, productivity, accommodations, barriers for persons with disabilities, discrimination and enhanced demographics) in the context of the current environment, the pandemic and changing needs of OPS employees.

The Employer advised that the next inclusion café is scheduled for February 10, 2020. This café (Café Five) focuses on “Conversations on Anti-Racism and Anti-Black Racism”.

3. Fixed Term Position Conversion/Seasonal Employee Statistics

Reports were provided to OPSEU.

Action Item: OPSEU to provide any questions to the Employer.

Business Arising:

4. Classification Issues

a) 2017-02 Conservation Officer Job Specs

Disclosure was provided to OPSEU on February 3, 2021.

Although OPSEU acknowledged that the Employer followed the proper process in the evaluation of the revised Conservation Officer job spec it was expressed that there was anticipation for a classification change.

b) Class Standards

OPSEU advised that their question regarding the preamble of the class standard was not answered by CERC.

OPSEU raised a new question regarding the licensing and approvals components of the Aggregates work. The Employer advised that they are looking into this new question.

Action Items: OPSEU to follow-up with the OPSEU CERC Co-chair for further discussion regarding the preamble question.

The Employer to respond to the Aggregates work inquiry prior to the June MERC meeting.

c) Appendix 7 – Special Cases

The AME special case has been referred to the Appendix 7 Sub-Committee.

5. Coronavirus

The Employer advised that they encourage staff to continue to have dialogue with their managers should they require any items from the workplace or to effectively work from home.

6. LERCs

OPSEU continues to reach out to its Local Presidents to determine which areas of the ministry have active LERCs and expressed an interest to have the Employer communicate with its management staff encouraging them to set up LERCs in their locations.

Action Item: The Employer to consider OPSEU's request.

7. Schedule for Canine Conservation Officers

Action Item: Remove item from the agenda.

8. King Air Pilots

The ministry continues to provide meaningful work for the King Air pilots to perform.

Action Item: OPSEU inquired about the name of the successful bidder of the King Air aircraft. The Employer will look into OPSEU's request.

9. T2200

The Employer advised that managers have been advised of their obligation to sign forms, should employees request.

Action Item: Remove item from the agenda.

10. Mandatory Course and Certification

The Employer advised that the Strategic Human Resources Business Branch (SHRBB) sends out a Mandatory Learning List and memo to all MNR staff at the beginning and end of each Fiscal Year.

Action Item: The Employer to look into how LearnON can be utilized to manage role-specific mandatory courses.

11. Separate meeting for presentation on the employee engagement survey results

OPSEU advised that they are aware of groups at a local level that have been formed to address the survey results.

12. Budget – is there going to be a restraint/cut on the ministry budget

The Employer advised that there are no updates at this time.

13. Mandate Letter for the MNRF and IAO

The Employer advised that they are not in a position to share the mandate letters at this time.

New Business:

14. 2021 Meeting Dates for MERC

Meeting dates have been scheduled for June 3, October 7 and December 2.

15. Administrative Assistant Job Spec (South Porcupine)

OPSEU advised that the job spec was written in 2014 and additional duties appear to warrant a review and potential changes to the spec.

The Employer advised that there have been discussions at the local level and management believes the work is appropriately captured in the current job description.

16. Managers/Outside Contractors doing OPSEU work

OPSEU expressed concern with management doing OPSEU work such as pre-flight inspections and driving parts from Sault Ste. Marie to Dryden.

Action Item: OPSEU to provide details of specific situations for the Employer to look into.

18. Next Meeting Date

Next meeting is scheduled for June 3, 2021.

Jennifer Barton, ADM of the Regional Operations Division will attend the beginning of the next MERC meeting, for an introduction.

Approved on March 22, 2021

For the Union

Elaine Bagnall

Date

Approved on March 22, 2021

For the Ministry

Donna Walton

Date