

October 7, 2021

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

**In attendance:**

**For OPSEU:**

Elaine Bagnall (Co-Chair)  
Helene Scott  
Mike Grimaldi  
Antonio (Tony) Crispino  
Christopher Bierman

**For the Employer:**

Donna Walton (Co-Chair)  
Laura Aitchison  
Carly Jones (Minutes)  
Brian Locke  
Wesley Woods  
Brianna McGahey

**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 results of the survey should be released from TBS this week and next week from the ministry.

OPSEU raised concerns on the length of time it takes for the results of the survey to be released. The Employer acknowledged OPSEU's concerns and will strive to release the results sooner in the coming years.

### **3. Fixed Term Position Conversion/Seasonal Employee Statistics**

Reports were provided to OPSEU.

#### **Business Arising:**

### **4. Classification Issues**

#### **a) 2017-02 Conservation Officer Job Specs**

The Employer advised that discussions at Appendix 7 concluded that there would be no change in the classification of the Conservation Officer position. The results of these discussions were communicated to OPSEU at the Appendix 7 meeting in April as well as during CERC in May.

**Action Item:** Remove item from the agenda.

#### **b) Class Standards**

**Action Item:** OPSEU to Refer item back to CERC.

#### **c) Aggregates**

**Action Item:** Remove item from the agenda. Discussions to continue with local management.

#### **d) Appendix 7 – Special Cases**

There are no further cases to be discussed at this time.

**Action Item:** Remove item from the agenda.

### **5. Coronavirus**

The Employer advised that they are following the guidance and direction of TBS. The Employer encourages staff to continue to have dialogue with their managers. The Employer advised that they will continue to be responsive and flexible as the situation evolves and regular communications will be sent to staff reminding them of the ongoing review of health and safety recommendations.

### **6. LERCs**

OPSEU encourages management to continue to promote the establishment of LERCs.

**Action Item:** Remove item from the agenda.

## **7. King Air Pilots**

The Employer advised that all pilots have been placed in alternative positions through the reskilling MOA.

**Action Item:** Remove item from the agenda.

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

**Action Item:** Remove item from the agenda.

## **9. Mandate Letter for the MNRF and IAO**

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

**Action Item:** Remove item from the agenda.

## **10. Administrative Assistant Job Spec (South Porcupine)**

**Action Item:** The Employer to provide an update following this meeting.

## **11. Managers/Outside Contractors doing OPSEU work and Vacancy Management**

OPSEU advised that there are still reports of managers performing OPSEU work.

The Employer advised that they continue to ensure that positions are being filled efficiently.

**Action Item:** The Employer to review and remind management of their obligations under the Collective Agreement in terms of staffing.

## **12. National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the workplace – looking to the National Standard implemented within the Ministry**

The Employer confirmed that the psychological standard was looked at when incorporating the mental health element into the Ministry's OHSMS. Some of the wording from the Standard around managing change for example was included. Communications about the new mental health element in the OHSMS were in the June H&S newsletter which went out to all staff.

**Action Item:** Remove item from the agenda.

## **New Business:**

### **13. Merger with MNDM – What is currently happening? When is it expected to be completed?**

The Employer advised that there are no updates at this time however, there are ongoing conversations.

**Action Item:** The Employer to advise when new information on the merger becomes available.

### **14. Enforcement Uniform Policy in particular the wearing of steel toed boots. Does the ministry have a badge for Sikhs to wear on their turbans with their dress uniform?**

OPSEU inquired about why Conservation Officers are required to wear steel toed boots at all times.

**Action Item:** The Employer to look into further and provide a response.

### **15. IAO new unit (Residential Schools Unit) – How many positions will be created? How many OPSEU? Contract or full-time?**

The Employer confirmed that the unit has been established with one (1) manager and six (6) temporary AMAPCEO-represented positions. It has not been confirmed at this time whether there will be OPSEU-represented positions in this unit.

**Action Item:** The Employer will provide an update at the next MERC meeting in December 2021.

### **16. Discuss RT3 position – Where is the ministry going with this position?**

OPSEU confirmed that this question pertains to the Resource Management Technician positions in ROD classified at the RT3 classification level.

**Action Item:** OPSEU to provide further details to the Employer. The Parties to discuss at the next MERC meeting.

### **17. Schedule changes of seasonal staff during emergencies – working days that were scheduled days off, days were converted to regular days. Overtime was converted to regular pay (AFFES).**

**Action Item:** OPSEU to provide further information to the Employer.

### **18. How does testing for another language other than French take place? (i.e. CO specs)**

**Action Item:** Defer to next MERC meeting.

**19. Live minutes**

Live minutes were taken at the meeting.

**Action Item:** Live minutes to continue for future meetings. Remove item from the agenda.

**20. Next Meeting Date**

Next meeting is scheduled for December 2, 2021.

*Originally approved on October 7, 2021*

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For the Union

Elaine Bagnall

Date

*Originally approved on October 7, 2021*

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For the Ministry

Donna Walton

Date