

January 29, 2020

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

**In attendance:**

**For OPSEU:**

Elaine Bagnall (Co-Chair)  
Helene Scott  
Christopher Bierman  
Roxanne Barnes  
Antonio (Tony) Crispino

**For the Employer:**

Peter Gray (Co-Chair)  
Laura Aitchison  
Carly Jones (Minutes)  
Ross Hart  
Rick Andrews  
Kerri Boyd

**Administrative Items:**

**Approval of Agenda**

Agenda was approved.

OPSEU added new items to the Agenda.

The Employer added an item to the Agenda.

**Standing Items:**

**1. MYP 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 Employee Engagement Survey have not been released yet. It is anticipated that the results will be available in late February or early March 2020.

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

The fixed-term conversion report was provided to OPSEU in advance of the meeting.

**Action Item:** OPSEU to provide follow-up questions to the Employer.

#### **Business Arising:**

### **4. 2010-10 – National Fitness Exchange Standard**

The Parties have signed off on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

**Action Item:** The Parties agreed to remove this item from the Agenda.

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

The Employer advised that the main Conservation Officer job spec review has been completed by the Job Evaluation Initiatives Branch (JEIB) but the job spec(s) with different language require additional time to update. The Employer will release the review results for all job specs at once.

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

OPSEU provided a follow-up question to the Employer's previous response, in advance of MERC, relating to the interpretation and application of the preamble in the RTS3 class standard. The Employer will provide a response to OPSEU when available.

OPSEU inquired why, with the change in job description, there are two separate classifications within the aggregate program, and where/why the positions were placed where they were. OPSEU also inquired how employees were chosen/assigned to the change in job duties/shift in responsibilities.

The Employer advised that employees moved laterally but not to a higher classification as a result of the job changes.

**Action Item:** The Employer to provide a response regarding the RTS3 class standard.

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

The Parties confirmed the following special cases to be heard at the MERC table:

- Aircraft Maintenance Engineer (AME)
- Accommodation Officer

The Parties agreed to hear the AME special case at the next MERC meeting. OPSEU requested that the review of the Accommodation Officer position be deferred.

**Action Items:** The Employer to follow-up on the Accommodation Officer position.

## **6. ERC Training**

The MNR/IAO MERC is attending ERC Training on January 30, 2020.

**Action Item:** The Parties agreed to remove this item from the Agenda.

## **7. Health and Safety – Thunder Bay**

**Action Item:** The Parties agreed to remove this from the Agenda.

## **8. Indigenous Cultural Competency Training**

The Employer is not physically tracking the completion of this training – tracking is being done by the vendor. The vendor is to provide information to Employer for tracking on the OPS training platform - LearnON.

**Action Item:** The Employer to follow-up on tracking.

## **9. Workload Issue – job spec changes**

OPSEU identified an issue with the amount of work that the employees are having to take on when others have exited the organization and indicated that stress is becoming a big issue in the field offices. OPSEU requested that the Employer provide direction at the staff level on what the priorities are, as necessary.

**Action Item:** The Employer to relay this message to the executive team.

## **New Business:**

### **10. 2020 Meeting Dates**

The Parties rescheduled the April MERC meeting date to May 26, 2020.

**Action Item:** The Parties agreed to remove this item from the Agenda.

### **11. Coronavirus**

OPSEU inquired about JHSC discussing the Coronavirus. The Employer advised that the Ministry of Health is the lead for providing direction and recommendations for OPS employees related to prevention. Q's and A's have been shared with OPS employees

and the Ministry of Health has a dedicated website related to the virus with status updates.

## **12. Involuntary Layoff Language**

OPSEU inquired about the use of the "no involuntary layoff" language that was included in the information share from the Regional Operations Division. The Employer advised that the language was used to alleviate any concerns of staff regarding involuntary job loss.

**Action Item:** The Parties agreed to remove this item from the Agenda.

## **13. LERCs**

OPSEU requested that the Employer send out communication asking for locations of LERCs and the membership contact information.

**Action Item:** The Employer to send out the request as noted above.

## **14. Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Directive**

OPSEU inquired about a process for approvals of overages of expenses through the Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Directive.

**Action Item:** The Employer to follow-up.

## **15. Schedule for Canine Conservation Officers**

The Employer advised OPSEU that they would like to change the Canine Conservation Officer schedule from 4-7 to Schedule A. The Employer advised that there will be no change in rate of pay or number of hours.

OPSEU requested the names of the members in the Canine Conservation Officer positions so they can ensure that the affected employees are in agreement with the change in schedule.

**Action Item:** The Employer to provide the names of the employees in the Canine Conservation Officer positions to OPSEU.

