

May 26, 2020

**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

For the Employer:

Peter Gray (Co-Chair)
Laura Aitchison
Carly Jones (Minutes)
Kerri Boyd (Observer)

Regrets: Ross Hart

Christopher Bierman

Administrative Items:

Approval of Agenda

Agenda was approved.

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 Experience Survey have not been released and a release date has not yet been provided. The anticipated timeline of when the results will be available has not been determined.

3. Fixed Term Position Conversion/Seasonal Employee Statistics

Reports were provided to OPSEU in advance of the meeting. If OPSEU has any concerns, please let the Employer know.

Business Arising:

4. Classification Issues

a) 2017-02 Conservation Officer Job Specs

The Employer advised that they do not have an update at this time and will provide an update when available.

b) Class Standards

Action Item: Agenda item deferred to the next meeting.

c) Appendix 7 – Special Cases

The Parties agreed to hear the AME special case at the next MERC meeting.

Action Items: The Employer to provide the class standards for the Accommodation Officer position.

5. Indigenous Cultural Competency Training (ICCT)

To date, 2217 MNRF employees have been registered in this training. Records of ICCT completions are currently uploaded into LearnON through the vendor.

OPSEU inquired if an Indigenous person is required to take the training.

Action Item: The Employer to review and respond to OPSEU's inquiry related to participation and provide number of OPSEU employee completion of training once the numbers are available.

6. Workload Issue – Job Spec Changes

The Employer relayed OPSEU's concerns to the ministry's Executive Steering Committee.

New Business:

7. Coronavirus

OPSEU inquired about MERC being included in return to work discussions. Specific items for discussion include employees who live with individuals who are more vulnerable, fear of returning to work, use of public transit, etc.

OPSEU also inquired about:

- Accommodations for employees who are working out in the field
- Employees whose job-related certifications are expiring
- Capital investments such as additional fleet vehicles

The Employer noted OPSEU's concerns. Further discussion of these questions will resume once a return to work protocol has been released.

8. LERCs

OPSEU requested that the Employer include messaging about the value of LERCs when doing a reach out to determine locations with active LERCs.

Action Item: The Employer to initiate a reach out to determine building locations within MNRF with active LERCs.

9. Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Directive

The Employer advised that in very limited and exceptional circumstances (e.g., health or dietary considerations) where a meal expense is higher than the meal allowance rate, the actual cost of the meal may be reimbursed. Where these circumstances are anticipated, prior approval is required. Where these circumstances have not been anticipated and prior approval has not been obtained, Deputy Minister or CAO approval for reimbursement of the expense is required. Where there is a claim for a meal expense higher than the allowance, the claim must be accompanied by an itemized receipt and a documented rationale for exceeding the rate. Approval is subject to managerial discretion and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Action Item: Remove item from the agenda.

10. Schedule for Canine Conservation Officers

The Employer provided OPSEU with the names of the affected Conservation Officers prior to MERC.

OPSEU advised that they are working to contact the affected Conservation Officers to ensure they are in agreement with the schedule change from 4-7 to Schedule A.

11. Next Meeting Date

Next meeting is scheduled for July 16, 2020 at 31 Wellesley St. E.

	Elaine Bagnall	08-Jun-2020
For the Union	Elaine Bagnall	Date

Original signed June 9, 2020

For the Ministry	Peter Gray	Date
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