

September 15, 2022

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

In attendance:

For OPSEU:

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

For the Employer:

Donna Walton (Co-Chair)
Laura Aitchison
Carly Jones (Minutes)
Brian Locke
Stephanie Maragna
Jessica Williams (Observer)

Regrets:

Glenna Caldwell
Wesley Woods

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 Ministry is waiting for further direction from TBS (the corporate Employer) on when the OPS Employee Engagement Survey results are expected to be released.

DIPP requests continue to be filled and feedback has been positive.

3. Fixed Term Position Conversion/Seasonal Employee Statistics

Reports were provided to OPSEU.

Business Arising:

4. Classification/Compensation Discussions

a) Class Standards

No updates from the Parties.

b) Fair compensation/classification for members including Resource Technicians and special cases that were submitted by Conservation Officers and Aircraft Maintenance Engineers

No updates from the Parties.

5. Coronavirus

OPSEU believes that the return to the workplace is not being consistently applied throughout the province and requested that the Employer be flexible when considering employee requests.

Action Item: Change title of item to “Future of Work in the OPS”. The Employer committed to reminding management teams to be flexible with staff as we await the release of the Future Work Policy.

6. Managers/Outside Contractors doing OPSEU work and Vacancy Management

OPSEU had no updates to provide.

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

The Parties understand that the ministries are no longer merged.

Action Item: Remove item from the agenda.

8. Enforcement Uniform Policy in particular the wearing of steel toed boots.

Action Item: The Employer to follow-up.

9. Discussion on Organization Charts and Maintenance of InfoGO

The Parties discussed and OPSEU requested that this item remain on the agenda for

one more meeting.

10. National Standard for Psychological Health & Safety in the Workplace

The Parties understand that many aspects of the National Standards were embedded in policies already.

Action Item: Remove item from the agenda.

11. Seasonal employees going on temp assignment

Agenda Item: The Employer agreed to share a summary of Qs & As with OPSEU.

Action Item: The Union agreed to remove this item from the agenda following receipt of this information.

12. Intern positions classified under the Admin category vs the Tech category

OPSEU inquired about the number of interns in the ministry. The Employer provided OPSEU with the approximate number of interns in the ministry, as of August 31, 2022.

The Employer advised that JEIB is the sole authority for classifying positions.

Action Item: OPSEU to provide examples.

13. Does the Ministry have a plan in place in case monkey pox hits the workplace?

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

Action Item: Remove item from the agenda.

14. Does the ministry have/or are they working on a disconnect policy as per the requirements under Bill 27 2021?

The Employer advised that this part of the bill does not apply to the OPS.

Action Item: Remove item from the agenda.

New Business:

15. AFFES-Discussion in regard to Schedule A and fire rangers. Overtime concerns in how the rangers are paid out. Retention of seasoned crew leaders.

OPSEU raised concerns with lack of housing, compensation, retention and health and safety with Fire Rangers moving up the ranks too quickly, due to a lack of years of experience in the field.

The Employer recognizes OPSEU's concerns.

OPSEU raised concerns about the timing of overtime payouts.

The Employer advised that the overtime payout issue has been resolved.

16. Meeting Dates for 2022

The next meeting date is scheduled for December 8, 2022.

Original approved on October 27, 2022

For the Union	Elaine Bagnall	Date
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Original approved on September 28, 2022

For the Ministry	Donna Walton	Date
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