

# MINUTES

Ohio EPA Labor Management Meeting

[held at Ohio EPA - Lazarus, Tuesday, March 27, 2007, 10:00 a.m.]

## Attending:

Deborah Bailey, Mark Besel, Mike Bolas, Craig Butler, Ken Dewey, Heidi Griesmer, Mariano Haensel, Dave Hunt, Kelvin Jones, Jessie Keyes, Natalie Oryshkewych, Craig Rehkopf, Don Starr, Pat Tebbe and Donna Waggener. CALMC Trainers and Moderators Jim Cowles and Meredith Porterfield moderated the session. Potential facilitator Beth Hahn, attended in part

## Excused/Absent:

Susie Marshall

## Agenda

1. Director's Meeting [rescheduled to 1:00]
2. Review Minutes
3. Subcommittee reports
  - a. Career Path
  - b. Training
  - c. Sick leave
  - d. Subcommittee work time
4. Communications - How should information be communicated?
5. Facilitation
6. New Business Items
7. Next agenda

The meeting started with a round of introductions, as Don had recruited Beth Hahn as a potential facilitator. Beth indicated interest but was not available for the entire session. The Director scheduled his time with us at 1:00. We reviewed prior discussions and redefined / condensed our somewhat formal plan to "short, sweet & casual". I.e., brief self-introductions and maybe brief statements from Don & Mike. No Power Point, no formalities. (Heidi had obtained our printed mission statement which was displayed at the front of the room. OCSEA representatives and Bargaining Unit officers reported that they had met with the Director.)

**1 Meeting With Director (this at approx 1:00)-** The Director joined us as members were working in subcommittees, some at the break-area tables. We reassembled to the meeting room. The Director walked around the table, individually greeting all. We noted that we had been working with CALMC in a facilitated environment and with WFD funding. Also, that the bargaining contract specifically provided for such a forum and that in the recent contract the Agency had an agency-specific appendix, reinforcing some of these efforts. The Director noted that he was delighted that such a forum exists. His philosophy was "lead, follow, or get out of the way". Also, "Please advise if I can help", noting that he was not a fan of "face time for the sake of face time". He noted that in his experience, problems were often due to misperceptions and communication gaps. He encouraged dialogue. (The session was approximately 10-15 minutes.)

**2. The minutes** - The February 21, 2007 minutes were reviewed and approved with minor changes. There was brief discussion to reduce the minutes to bullet points and minimize the use of individual names. Mark noted that he might prepare a dual version in the next notes.

**3a. Career Path Subcommittee Report** - Work group members noted that discussion included:

- Incentives were lacking for advanced degrees or professional licensure (P.E, being noted.)
- A mechanism was desired to be able to learn about other programs. A possibility being some intranet site with table of organization, expanded to include what the jobs are, what the positions do, what the minimum qualifications are, etc.
- The diversity even among ES2s is significant. The fodder/discussion/types of information shared at college type job fairs might be useful in-house, too.
- There was brief discussion as to other agencies utilizing the ES2 series (ODNR, Commerce/BUSTR.)

**3b. Training Subcommittee Report** - The team noted they had revisited their purpose statement, ultimately generating “ No consistently applied training curriculum exists to ensure that employees have equal opportunity for professional development.” The group brain-stormed the following areas:

- Specific training identified and offered,
- Specific guidelines to ensure adequate funding and equity in opportunity,
- Training is applied and shared,
- Framework to identify basic skill sets and training needs for all positions,
- Consistent training opportunities to encourage and promote professional growth and development.

[Training committee brainstorming options are included as attachment to minutes.]

**3c. Sick leave Subcommittee Report;** Members reported that we had developed several draft information letters concerning sick leave balances:

- an annual blanket letter re how leave works with brief discussion of relevance and working of disability, FMLA, zero leave and leave abuse (w information in NewsSource, too);
- “Used 32 sick leave” prompt letter, to be a heads-up re transition to the reduced pay 40 hours;
- “down to 24 available” prompt letter as a heads-up to supervisor and employee
- with this was a “talking points” for supervisor/employee to help ensure awareness of resources, rules and possible discipline
- survey
- (Subcommittee future discussion to include call-offs and “penalty”).

The subcommittee reporting led to additional discussion. Considerations shared include:

- importance of and inclusion of such matters in both the training and evaluation of supervisors,
- need to integrate donated leave into the mix

Sick leave general discussion continued

- general emphasis that the policy as implemented seems to hit working women harder - noting maternity leave and sick children
- Existing TAS has significant, apparently under-appreciated capabilities to generate reports, including leave use by type and over time,
- It was noted that some divisions/districts track leave use rather tightly, others - unknown with suspicion that apparently not at all
- [discussion resumed after visit by the Director] The need to share with and ensure buy-in from the Chiefs was noted.
- The development of brief talking points to further communication was noted

General discussion noted that options need be developed along with standards for evaluation. Mutual benefit, workable, cost effective and measurements for effectiveness being considerations.

**4 Communication** - Don requested input as to the desirability or acceptability of sharing the minutes on the internet instead of intranet. The Office of Labor & Safety was updating its web site. Limited discussion seemed generally favorable.

**5 Facilitation** Jim updated members concerning two upcoming CALMC training efforts via OCSEA, mentioned consideration of a shared pool of facilitators similar to the current mediation program and shared that he understood that Steve Loeffler of OCB was supportive.

**6 New business,**

**a. CALMC training for SWDO** - Discussed - Southwest District had not reached a consensus. What would be the subject matter of their efforts? Would it be better to "shadow" the State efforts prior to requesting separate training. Discussion w no resolution. There was general apparent consensus that a limited number of passive visitors would be welcome to visit us.

**b Poll-worker leave time** - tabled; for April

**7 Next agenda** [next meeting is 4/17/07- at Polaris, then 5/15/07- EPA-Laz.]:

- 1 Review Minutes
2. Subcommittee reports
  - a. Career Path
  - b. Training
  - c. Sick leave
  - d. Subcommittee work time
3. Communications - How do we communicate?
4. New Business - a) poll worker relief
5. Future Agenda items - Vol Cost Savings - Aug '07
6. Next Agenda

follows:            abbreviated version of notes / bullets  
                         Training subcommittee brainstorming notes

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Besel (draft shared 4/11/07; approved 4/17/07; finalized 4/23/07 )

# MINUTES - condensed / bullets

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Agenda/ Notes re same (Director meeting - item 1 - was early afternoon)

- 1 Met with Director - He is glad we are functioning - His philosophy is "lead, follow or get out of the way." He does not want to meet for the sake of meeting, but invites us to call upon him if needed.
2. Minutes - Reviewed and accepted with minor changes. Discussion to further abbreviate.
3. Subcommittee reports
- 3a. Career Path; continues to meet; note incentives lacking for personal development such as advanced degrees or professional accreditation. Consider use of intranet to further awareness of and requirements for internal opportunities.
- 3b. Training; continue to meet, noted refinement of subcommittee purpose - "No consistently applied training curriculum exists to ensure that employees have equal opportunity for professional development" and five agreed upon components/items; [Training committee brainstorming options are attached.]
- 3c Sick leave; The committee met, developing draft information letters concerning leave use. Included: Annual (or more) article in NewSource or other resource; situation prompt letters, triggering on annual use of 32 hours of sick leave and reaching/approaching only 24 hours available leave.

(Subcommittee work time was both before and after Director's meeting.)

4. Communications - Discussion about placing notes on internet vs intranet of Office of Labor & Safety web page. General positive comments, input invited.
5. Facilitation - Additional CALMC training is ongoing; Statewide agency facilitation pooling considered. OCB is supportive.
6. New Business a) CALMC training discussed for SWDO without SWDO consensus. SWDO staff would be welcome to passively shadow our efforts; b) Poll worker relief/leave - tabled till next session
7. New Business Items (Vol cost savings tabled until August 2007)
- 8 Next agenda:

- 1 Review Minutes
2. Subcommittee reports
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  3. Sick leave [format problem - "3" vs "c" a function of software]
  4. Subcommittee work time
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Mark Besel (draft shared 4/11/07; approved 4/17/07; finalized 4/23/07 )  
accompanying / follows: Training subcommittee brainstorming notes

[w thanks to Heidi]

## Brainstorming Options - Labor-Management Committee Training Subcommittee

### Specific Training Identified and Offered Resources

- federal sources
- grant resources
- other state agencies
- local/internal resources
- local universities
- private trainers
- professional groups

### How to ID training needed

- survey employees
- benchmarking with other agencies that do similar work
- surveying stakeholders
- ID skill sets needed for each position
- performance evaluations important tool - annual (feedback more often as needed)
- identify tools used in each position (i.e., technology, software, hardware, GPS)
- identify division-specific training
- cross-program training in districts
- government accountability
- professional accreditations

### Funding Guidelines: How do we define when money can be used and from which sources?

- funding sources
- performance evaluations
- agency dictates per person budget for training
- policy to ID candidate selection process
- CEU funding needs to be consistent
- policy dealing with Agency funds v. personal funds (including WD)