

# MINUTES

Ohio EPA Labor Management Meeting

Wednesday, April 2nd, 2008, 9:30 AM, at OCSEA/Polaris

## Attending:

Deborah Bailey (delayed), Mark Besel, Mike Bolas, Craig Butler, Ken Dewey, Heidi Griesmer (excused early), Kelvin Jones, Craig Rehkopf, Ryan Sarni, Don Starr and facilitator, Alauddin Alauddin.

(Excused/Absent: Mariano Haensel, Dave Hunt, Susie Marshall, Natalie Oryshkewych, Pat Tebbe and Donna Waggener.)

The first order of business was adoption of agenda, as follows:

**Agenda** [Alauddin e-distributed a two-sided version, this a recap; committee reviewed and adopted. ]

- 1 Identify Action Items / Recorder
- 2 Review Minutes/Action Items/ Agenda
- 3 Subcommittee reports
- 4 Communications Report Out
- 5 Sick Leave - Letter #3 (Low Leave)
- 6 Policies Update
- 7 Union Log
- 8 Set next Agenda (April 30, 2008 @ Ohio EPA/Lazarus)

1 Craig Butler agreed to recap action items.

2 The 1/23/08 **minutes** were reviewed and approved with minor corrections. The **action items**, summarized by Mike Bolas and condensed here, were reviewed:

- ID of non or incorrectly linked TO-PDs (still pending)
- Share draft e-mail for Agency re TO-PDs (still pending)
- Share info re IT's progress w sick-leave calculator (done)
- BU to discuss Sick leave letter #3 (done - partial)
- check with constituents re committee priorities (done - partial; ongoing)
- subcommittees @ develop info for NewsSource (done - partial)
- LRO/OCB to discuss & determine OCB policy re L/M time accounting (done)

The committee suggested that the co-chairs (Mike & Don - unofficial contacts) conduct a mid term "tickler" to action item designees to help ensure completions.

3 **Subcommittees -**

3a **Training** - There was a brief recap of past efforts leading to somewhat of a stall, due to opposing views over specificity. There was significant dialogue, clarifying that the training officer's "specificity" was to ensure a program with universal participation, not to dictate and track specific training. (That left to the Division/office and ultimately the supervisor/subordinate relationship.) Members reported that the Agency Training Officer was making annual recommendations to the Director, possibly including the goal of broader training participation. There has been discussion that the committee may present our thoughts & recommendations at the Chiefs' Mtg., possibly in concert or coordination with Rod Spain. It is appreciated that our efforts might well assist Rod.

The integration of needs/skills/gap assessments and ongoing training and development was noted, with the Agency's IT efforts specifically cited by BU. (CNA and ZenWorks being two examples.) There was dialogue as to the spectrum of training, including position specific mandatory training; work unit,

office or Agency enriching training; and, employee enriching training. Mgt reinforced that the agency would pay for all mandatory training and would generally be open to any win-win efforts, possibly including utilization of resources such as employees Education Trust benefits (previously WFD). There is an appreciation that an employee's professional development is a valid workplace consideration. There are some significant misunderstandings or gaps, citing training vs expectation incongruities.

3b **Career Path** - Somewhat on hold, pending coordination with related "training".

3c **Sick Leave** - Addressed as part of item #5, below.

4 **Communications Report-Out** Members recapped efforts in the last month. Craig R. noted enthusiasm for anticipated additional clarity about training expectations and means to accomplish them. Kelvin noted staff concern for Governor's travel restrictions and impact on free and needed training. Mark noted dialogue at Lazarus Stewards and DAPC monthly meeting. There was some interest in both sick leave tracking and access to Pds. PD information surprised multiple staff. Craig B. noted sharing updates and both managers' and all district meetings with interest & support. Heidi noted multiple discussion at weekly PIC meetings, w staff noting interest in mitigating the 30% penalty and addressing confusion and inconsistencies with the 30% penalty with inpatient vs outpatient hospitalizations. Mike reported similar concerns and interest in NEDO. (Multiple physicians and confusing paperwork noted.) Kelvin noted this matter possible fodder for the Joint Healthcare committee. Carol Bowsier is the OCSEA lead. Ken noted that the attention to training seemed to be especially welcome and appreciated, reinforced by several involved staff.

5 **Sick leave, letter 3** - There was discussion of the three letters being a fall back to a pilot, possibly "make whole", re the 2<sup>nd</sup> 40 hour sick leave penalty. There was discussion and general agreement that a committee endorsed letter would be stronger and better received. Multiple BU staff emphasized the sensitivity of being part - even remotely perceived as being part - of discipline efforts possibly resulting in termination. The semantics and situation specific appreciation of "information", "notification", "perception", "interpretation", etc, were noted. All present provided input . (Kudos to our facilitator for ensuring such.) All present agreeing to following:

*The Ohio EPA Labor/Management committee recommends that the Director, directly or by way of Employee Services, notifies employees of low leave balances. (This a slight grammatical tweak to the prior reading.)*

There was significant discussion of minor modifications to a draft memo proposed from employee services to the supervisor of a low leave individual (dropped below 24 hours). Ultimately the committee determined not to endorse the letter in either the original or revised versions.

[The following items not all addressed in the order presented, but as per agenda. Some being somewhat of a "best fit" as to placement in the notes. ]

6 **Policy updates -**

- We reminded ourselves that this section is for updates of new and revised Agency policies or other related matters of interest.
- The Governor's **Travel restrictions** were noted as a hindrance to training opportunities - DERR & Superfund training specifically cited. There was discussion and acknowledgment that perception of efficiency or cost savings was sometimes at odds with the realities. There was no resolution nor recommendation.
- There was additional discussion of the confusion and inconsistent application of the "**hospitalization overnight**" waiver of the 2<sup>nd</sup> 40 hour sick leave penalty. Confusing paperwork, often multiple participating medical providers and facilities (traditional and out-patient) were cited. Management and staff appreciated the problem. It was noted that a Joint Health Care Committee existed, again, with Carol Bowshier as the prime OCSEA contact. No specific action was taken.
- Management noted that the Chiefs provided the Director comments in response to the discussions concerning **phone coverage and flex time**. They specifically noted referring the matter to this committee for input as an option (1 of 3).
- It was noted that no new policies or significant updates have occurred since the last meeting. Don did note two recent health & safety related policies, also mentioned in the February 27<sup>th</sup> minutes. These are fodder for the Health & Safety Committee, and would be covered in more detail there.

7 **Union Log**; Don and Ryan discussed the "Union Leave Request Log" with OCB management to ensure awareness of current expectations. A copy of DAS's "Accounting for Union Leave/Activity" clarification letter # 07-06-01, from Steve Loeffler, dated 7/13/07, was shared and copied for all. (See also 3.11 of the Contract.) There was brief discussion regarding the need for stewards, an instance of perceived excessive steward-time coding, and sensitivity of BU staff to additional requirements. While there was no summary, per se, the gist seemed to be that Don's requests for a log stood. Such matters were implemented at the supervisor/subordinate level, similar to other leave use.

In the wrap-up, we tasked ourselves to consider how to integrate new efforts into ongoing. (The BU Assembly elections were snow delayed until 5/31/08.)

8 **Next Agenda** (April 30, 2008 at Ohio EPA/Lazarus):

- 1 Identify action items/decision recorder
- 2 Review Minutes/Action Items/ Agenda
- 3 Subcommittee reports (Career path, Training, Sick Leave)
- 4 Communications Report (our collective homework)
- 5 Policies update
- 6 Future Projects (incl. Policy Process)
- 7 Set next agenda (5/28/08 -OCSEA/Polaris)

Minutes:

Prepared by Mark Besel (614/644-4834)

Shared draft 4/4/08; approved 4/30/08; finalized and distributed 5/9/08

# MINUTES - condensed

Ohio EPA Labor Mgt Mtg - at OCSEA, Wednesday, April 2, 2008, 9:30 AM

## Attending:

Deborah Bailey, Mark Besel, Mike Bolas, Craig Butler, Ken Dewey, Heidi Griesmer, Kelvin Jones, Craig Rehkopf, Ryan Sarni, Don Starr and facilitator Alauddin Alauddin.  
(Mariano Haensel, Dave Hunt, Susie Marshall, Natalie Oryshkewych, Pat Tebbe and Donna Waggener were excused/absent.)

## **Agenda** (Formatted agenda e-distributed by Alauddin prior to the meeting.)

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1 ID Action items / Recorder           | 5 Sick Leave Letter               |
| 2 Review Minutes/ Action Items/ Agenda | 6 Policies Update                 |
| 3 Subcommittee Reports                 | 7 Union Log                       |
| 4 Communications Report-out            | 8 Next Agenda (4/30/08 - Lazarus) |

- 1 Craig B. to take and note action items (see his 4/3/08 e-mail)
- 2 The **action items** reviewed, several still pending; **minutes** were reviewed and approved w tweaks;
- 3 **Subcommittees** -
  - 3a **Training** - Recap of past efforts, noting concerns re specificity; clarification that the goal is to ensure more universal participation, not to dictate and track specific training - that via programs and ultimately the supervisor/subordinate relationship. It is appreciated that our efforts might well assist Rod, possibly including joint presentation to director & chiefs. Ultimately some integration of needs/skills/gap assessments needed in some areas. E.g., agency's IT efforts. Most staff appreciated diversity of training - required, desired, enrichment, etc. Utilization of Education Trust (prev. WFD) is at employees' discretion.
  - 3b **Career Path** - Somewhat on hold, pending coordination w training.
  - 3c **Sick Leave** - See item #5,
- 4 **Communications Report Out** - Diverse efforts noted. Interest reinforced with sick leave - tracking and mitigation from penalty, appreciation for TAS tracking; enthusiasm for training policies and opportunities; concern with the erratic application of sick leave penalty if hospitalized; concern with Governor's travel restrictions & free training. Appreciation and some surprises w Pds on the web.
- 5 **Sick leave letter #3** - Complete agreement:  
*The Ohio EPA Labor/Management committee recommends that the Director, directly or by way of Employee Services, notifies employees of low leave balances. (There was significant discussion re low leave, < 24 hrs, letter, but it was not endorsed in either original or revised form.)*
- 6 **Policy update** -
  - This item to share recent items of interest;
  - Governor's travel restrictions problematic but a fact of Government;
  - Issues exist w implementation "hospitalized overnight" penalty waiver;
  - Chiefs suggest L/M committee as an option for input re coverage/flex;
  - No new or significantly revised policies since last meeting.
- 7 **Union Log** - expected via DAS's "Accounting for Union Leave/Activity" clarification letter # 07-06-01, 7/13/07; copy shared; see also 3.11 of Contract.
- 8 **Next Agenda** (4/30 Lazarus; note action items, dvlp agenda, end 1:45ish:)

1 ID action item/decision recorder;	5 Policies update
2 Review Minutes	6 Future Projects
3 Sub-committee reports	7 Next agenda (5/28 - OCSEA)
4 Communications Rpt	

Minutes by Mbesel, distributed draft 4/4/08, approved 4/30/08, distributed final 5/9/08.

