

MINUTES - Final

Ohio EPA Labor Management Meeting

[held at OCSEA , Thursday, July 26, 2007, 10:00 a.m.]

Attending:

Mark Besel, Mike Bolas, Ken Dewey, Heidi Griesmer, Dave Hunt, Kelvin Jones, Natalie Oryshkewych, Craig Rehkopf, Don Starr and Pat Tebbe. Alauddin Alauddin facilitated the session.

Excused/Absent: Deborah Bailey, Craig Butler, Mariano Haensel, Jessie Keyes, Susie Marshall and Donna Waggener.

The meeting was delayed a few minutes, owing to traffic delays reported by some attendees. The first order of business was to update and accept the agenda. Alauddin had provided a meeting outline/agenda, with time, used for that purpose. There was several minutes discussing what the topics meant, inter-relationships and relative priority. The following were agreed upon, from the original "palette" of 10 items:

Agenda

- 1 Review Minutes
- 2 Subcommittee reports (Career Path, Training, Sick leave)
(tabled till next -Communications)
(tabled till next - Subcommittee Goal Setting; somewhat related to communications)
- 3 Approval process of committee efforts
- 4 Donated Leave
- 5 Voluntary Cost Savings
- 6 Part Time / Arbitration decision
- 7 Agency Policies / the process re same

1. The minutes - Minor updates and corrections were offered to both the 3-page and condensed versions of the minutes. Both were accepted with those refinements.

Subcommittee Reports

[The relationship of committee efforts, communication and ultimate progress to desired ends was discussed; the inter-relationship with a communications plan was noted. We tasked each sub-committee to develop and present some means to chart efforts. Included were: goals, deliverables, milestones, communication with stakeholders.

2a. Career Path Subcommittee Report - The sub-committee shared a draft, brief survey (requesting that it not yet be shared beyond the committee). It was not reviewed in any significant depth. It was noted that the Agency had a "Survey Monkey" account, coordinated via Cheryl Fields in the Director's Office. "Good" survey results noted to be about 10%; the Agency often achieves 30%. The possibility of a trial in SEDO was noted.

2b. Training Subcommittee Report - No reportable progress noted but a meeting was scheduled the following day.

2c. Sick leave Subcommittee Report; Members reported that significant input had been received, largely from bargaining unit members with emphasis on the proposed letter concerning low leave balance. There was confusion as to our process and policy.

The ongoing, somewhat cyclical need to have input throughout our efforts was reinforced. While there was no bottom line, there was general agreement to emphasize the efforts were “works in progress”. It was noted that possibly the bargaining unit members would not be party to the low leave notice due to the association with discipline. It was also noted that staff generally might not appreciate that zero leave is a cause for discipline. Such items might be included in any pending survey. Union meetings, brown bags or other forums were again noted as means to share information and gather input.

3 Approval Process of Outputs

There was significant discussion as to the committee’s ultimate development of any proposal and presentation of same to the Director and others with the authority to implement. These would vary with the effort. Members agreed that subcommittees, too, operated by consensus. We reminded ourselves that the committee agreed to operate by full consensus, that we all accept and commit to support committee recommendations. There was discussion to ensure that all “stakeholders” be identified throughout the process, whether by way of preliminary & casual efforts or more involved survey efforts. A cycle of ongoing and somewhat intensifying communication was cited. Ultimately one or more “process owner” would be identified to ensure implementation and - if appropriate - ongoing review and update.

Stakeholders include but are not limited to the Union, the Office of Collective Bargaining, the Director, and Chiefs. The positive “preliminary pulse” of the Director and staff are needed to start an effort. An implementation plan needs be developed to chart what needs happen when, somewhat of a critical path. This ultimately need include confirmation and participation of parties with the authority, willingness and ability to implement the action. The following table presents the basics of the flow. The group reinforced the desire to achieve results. (There was a concern regarding spooling in a loop vs making progress. There seemed to be an understanding that the bulk of the work was over by the time it got to the full committee, we did not was to then start over without good cause.)

Approval Process Progression

1 -Group Consensus 2 -Cover memo signed by all members 3 - Presentation to full committee	Sub Committee Proposal
1 - Group Consensus 2 - Cover memo to person w authority / resources to implement 3 - Address comments / secure OK 4 - MOU w OCSEA & Director or authorized rep (w OCB’s OK)	Full Committee Approval
5 - (maybe 4 too goes here) Director	Approval Agency / Union
	Director Sign-off

[Upon review of the minutes, there was discussion and general agreement to expand this, possibly developing a flow chart. No assignments nor commitments were made.]

4. Donated Leave (Addressed after #6 - Arb.)

There was significant discussion of and interest in pursuing donated leave. Don noted that Agency management had been in discussion for over a year. He relayed how it was done at ODNR, via a standard letter from employee services. He noted, too, that DAS appreciates there are "issues" when used with disability, due to the profile or awareness of the recipient, the information sharer, etc.

Mark noted his experience in the Agency, observing varied Agency efforts; the notification option not being limited to a Director or employee services; some information sharing by stewards or other BU representatives. Other facets noted: Some staff have been penalized - progressing to the 30% penalized leave - due to donations, at odds with DAS information. There are possibly new issues (+/-) due to OAKs. There is need for better information. Offer of donation vs ability to accept/utilize creates a "limbo", awkward to all involved. Staff exceeding allowable "vacation carry" lose time that might be otherwise beneficially used. Possibly DAS has no real buy-in (based on contract negotiations over time.)

Outcome / future:

The group did show an interest to pursue the matter in some fashion.

Don will check with Employee Services re OK to pursue via L/M CALMC effort.

Form subcommittee (open to all)

Do Homework - incl: OAKs limitations, DAS Policy & OEPA/OES policy (that is, those interested should educate themselves.)

5. Part Time / Arbitration (Addressed prior to #4.) Don noted that OCSEA/ BU Staff within the Agency won an arbitration concerning a part time employee not getting the "vacation dump". The employee's award was pro-rated based on hours worked. The State and OCSEA would be discussing implications.

6. Voluntary Cost Savings (VCS) (Topic remains for August session, too.) Don provided ODNR & OCB insight, noting that at ODNR the effort was due in large part to significant funding shortfalls. The general appreciation was that while in the contract, OCB was not interested in pursuing. Don will speak with the Director. (It requires mutual agreement to pursue.) Several BU staff will pursue with OCSEA (Kelvin, Dave, Pat & Mike).

7. Agency Policies - It was noted that a number of policies had been developed, modified or increasingly implemented with varying levels of awareness by staff. It was noted that as stake holders and representatives of all stakeholders, the L/M group desired to be more involved with or at least aware of such efforts. "The process of policies is an issue". We might look at the process of how policies are developed, publicized and implemented.

There was discussion of the ability and desirability to add new issues to the ones currently in progress. It was suggested that the time required for any efforts waned towards the conclusion and possibly rolling out new efforts could run concurrent with the wrap-up of existing. No consensus or resolution noted.

Next agenda

We did not regenerate an group agenda. I've taken the liberty to note the following items from the one Alauddin provided. (Kudos to Alauddin. That is a nice tool and I hope he is inclined to repeat. I especially liked the timing of items as a management tool.)

Proposed Draft Agenda (This was borrowed from Alauddin's agenda and is offered as a starting point.)

1. Review Minutes
2. Subcommittee report, including goal setting & time lines (Career Path, Training, Sick leave)
3. Communications
4. Approval process of committee efforts
5. Donated Leave
6. Voluntary Cost Savings
7. Agency Policies / the process re same

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Besel (draft shared 8/7/07; accepted w minor changes 8/30/07; finalized 9/7/07.)

MINUTES - DRAFT condensed / bullets

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Attending:

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

[Alauddin provided a roster / agenda, updated and endorsed by the group.]

1. Minutes - both complete and condensed - were accepted w minor revision.
- 2a. Career Path Subcommittee - Draft survey shared - internal at this time, Trial in SEDO noted as possible.
- 2b. Training Subcommittee - No significant progress noted; committee planned to meet the following day.
- 2c. Sick Subcommittee - Significant input re draft letters, primarily re low leave balance. BU input reinforced the need to note "in progress", not policy nature of efforts. Prompted discussion of need for dialogue and input throughout the effort and integration w communication plan(s). Draft/preliminary survey noted. .
3. Approval process of Outputs - Committee reinforced desire to accomplish and implement things. That requires identification and agreement of those with the authority, ability and inclination to implement. Discussed progression from subcommittee through full committee, both with full consensus. Homework - each subcommittee to chart and report goals, parties, milestones and deliverables for implementation and maintenance.
4. Donated Leave - Significant interest shown. Don noted ODNR issued notices/invitation to donate via employee services. Mark noted Agency/Lazarus experience, including Union notification of need, coordinated with agency management. Several problems cited, including 30% penalty imposed on donator, "limbo" of offer vs use and integration when disability in play. Don to check with Employee Services prior to pursuing. Interested members to do homework re Agency and OCB policies and OAKs limitations.
5. Part-time / Arbitration decision - An Agency staff member / OCSEA won a recent arbitration, awarding a pro-rated "vacation dump". Future ramifications tbd via OCSA & OCB.
6. Voluntary cost savings ("VCS" - also for next month) Don provided ODNR insight where it was implemented due to funding problems. While in the contract, VCS requires both parties to pursue. That still tbd.
7. Agency Policies - It was noted that development of new and implementation or new emphasis on existing policies was problematic for all involved and this body was a good tool to avoid or minimize problems. It was suggested that we might look at the process of how policies are developed, publicized and implemented. There was discussion of the ability and desirability of starting additional efforts without finishing existing. It was suggested that the introduction of new material would mesh well with the wrap up of existing. No resolution.

Next Agenda :

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Prepared by Mbesel; draft shared 8/7/07, accepted 8/30, finalized 9/7/07.