

## MINUTES OF THE RCEA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

**NRC Stone House  
Monday October 17, 2016  
5:00 p.m.**

### ATTENDEES:

<b>NRC:</b>		<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Fraser, Cathie	President, RCEA	√	
Zaluski, Marvin	1 <sup>st</sup> Vice-President, ICT, M-50	√	
Ly, Dao	Treasurer, M-54, HHT, Ottawa	√	
Van Den Bergh, Joan	Labour Relations Officer, RCEA	√	
Beasley, Jim	AERO, U-61	√	
Birt, Michael	AST, U-89	√	
Condie, Janet	Saskatoon	√	
Fletcher, Shaun	AERO, M-2	√	
Gallant, Jeffrey	Halifax	√	
Hewitt, Daniel	DFS, M-4	√	
Holbrook, Bernard	MSS, M-36	√	
Holmes, Gina	MSS, M-36	√	
Lévesque, Michelle	2nd Vice-President, Montreal	√	
Lowery, Mark	CONST, M-24	√	
Lussier, Steve	KM, M-55, AD Chair	√	
Macfarlane, Michelle	Oakville	√	
McDonald, Cathy	Halifax	√	
Pelletier, Cara	HHT, M-54	√	
Polvi, Sandra	Saskatoon	√	
Robertson, Sandra	AERO, M-13	√	
Toll, Floyd	EME, M-12, TO Chair	√	
Tom, Roseanne	Montreal	√	
Simard, R.-Michel	Saguenay	√	
Smith, Shannon	AERO, M-7		√
Zerhloul, Amal	CONST, M-23A	√	
<b>VIA TELECONFERENCE:</b>			
Benson, Vaughan	St-John's		√
Cloutier, Martin	Edmonton	√	
Desjardins, Véronique	Boucherville	√	
El Bahh, Bouchaib	Charlottetown	√	
Hoffmann, Anthony	Penticton	√	
Martin, Cédric	Fredericton	√	
Melnychuk, Geoffrey	Victoria		√
Moraw, Franz	Vancouver	√	
Raymond, Nathalie	Boucherville	√	
Santos, Nelson	London	√	

The meeting was called to order at 5 p.m., Cathie Fraser chaired this meeting.

1. **Approval of Agenda**

**MOTION:** Moved by D. Ly, seconded by J. Gallant.

*“That the Agenda be approved.”*

**CARRIED.**

2. (a) **Approval of the Minutes – September 13, 2016**

**MOTION:** Moved by D. Ly, seconded by G. Holmes.

*“That the minutes of the meeting held Tuesday, September 13 be approved.”*

**CARRIED.**

(b) **Business arising out of Minutes – September 13, 2016 – C. Fraser**

A discussion took place regarding RCEA office space. A committee was appointed to look at buying or leasing new office space.

But since then, C. Fraser has gone to speak to Frank Jefferies, the GM of ASPM, about our current lease of the Stone House. She advised him that she has been tasked by the Management and Executive committees and the auditors to find less expensive office space. Frank Jeffries indicated that he would contact the NRC Property Manager and the NRC President for their thoughts and input. He will let C. Fraser know whether NRC is prepared to reduce the rental costs.

On September 27, October 3 and 17, the RCEA office staff met with a realtor and went to look at rental spaces: in the National Association of Federal Retirees (NAFR) building on Sheffield Road and an empty building on Canotek Road. At NAFR the space was very small and quite expensive. The space on Canotek was one that we had previously viewed, and had also been looked at by B. Holbrook and D. Hewitt. It needs some work but it is a possibility. It has smaller offices than the Stone House, but the rent is considerably less than at the Stone House.

3. **President’s Report – C. Fraser**

I met the new NRC President, Iain Stewart, on September 14. He was very welcoming and talkative. I had a very good first impression. Although he is mandated to keep NRC as an RTO (Research and Technical Organization), I was pleased to hear that Mr. Stewart is very interested in bringing back research to NRC. I understand he has traveled to various locations across Canada to meet members, and is starting local visits as well.

The Joint Consultation Committee met on September 15. Joan and I both commented during this meeting that it was very cordial and friendly. We have not seen this in a very long time. Topics discussed included LLMCC, Phoenix, Probation, Personal and Volunteer leave, updated reports on staffing, security, on-boarding, staffing without competition, nursing employees and accommodations, Performance Improvement Plans, NINT update, new computer zones, signage at NRC. As you can see it was a very busy meeting.

Two points to tell you about. When I was told about new computer zones, called Blue and Orange, I became concerned about more problems for members. These two zones are both on the green zone. Blue is for business and corporate functions and Orange has 5 levels and are for research functions. Both of these zones have specific rules governing the data. NRC also told me that grey zone data should be returned to the black zone eventually.

The second is a question I receive all the time: what has happened to the NRC signs on building M-58 and at Uplands. NRC signage on M-58 should be restored soon. It will be LED lights. The NRC sign at Uplands, I requested, it should be returned as it is a symbol of NRC pride to the membership.

I had two days of meetings with the bargaining agents. Topics at the bargaining agent meeting mostly consisted of Phoenix issues, and service-wide occupational and health issues (SWOSH).

Michelle Lévesque, Marvin Zaluski, Joan Van Den Bergh, Laurette Ernst and I all attended the National Joint Council seminar on September 21. The NJC seminar was very well attended this year. I am chairperson of the Union Management Relations Committee that organizes this seminar. This year's theme was Consultation and Collaboration. The Clerk of the Privy Council spoke, telling us that Phoenix was here to stay. Speakers' topics covered building trust and collaboration, collaborative programs and training, and working together in the public interest. I also gave a talk at the seminar.

Laurette Ernst and I joined PIPSC at the annual United Way 5 km run on the Montreal Road campus on September 28. I think it was a great promotion for the RCEA. It is one of the first times that NRC has allowed the unions to participate in a government activity, on their premises. This is a positive start.

On October 6, I was asked to give a presentation at an NRC OSH Advisors meeting. My talk provided an employee and union perspective on NRC Corporate OSH. My talk lasted about 20 minutes, but it started a one hour discussion with the group. I had 4 areas I wanted to talk about:

- a) Mental Health in the Workplace
- b) eHOIR
- c) Canada Labour Code and NCOSH responsibilities and
- d) Local COSH and union membership

On October 13 Joan Van Den Bergh and I had a follow up meeting with NRC on the TO Generic exercise. We have been hearing about some Portfolios not following the guidelines and timelines from Corporate. Again, we do not know if there are problems unless the membership let us know.

4. **Treasurer's Reports, Nos. 2 and 3 and August/September Investment Reports – D. Ly**

D. Ly would like to thank Laurette Ernst for her help with the audit.

Notables:

- a) For Treasure's Report #3, Cheque #12038 contained a telephone/fax expense that covered the service for a two-month period.
- b) For Treasure's Report #3, Cheque #12044 was issued for a GIC investment.

Questions:

- a) The cost of the audit was raised. Given this high cost, have any other firms been considered? C. Fraser commented that Deloitte is a reputable firm and the RCEA is legally required to be audited by an independent firm. C. Fraser had looked into other auditors and Deloitte was the most competitive with the services they offered to the RCEA.

5. **Management Committee Report and Recommendations – C. Fraser**

The Management Committee members are volunteers just as the stewards are. The RCEA calls on this committee monthly or bimonthly (sometimes weekly) to help with office decisions and operations and attend meetings, including finance, JCC, NJC, etc. on behalf of the RCEA.

Policy #3, Honoraria for Management Committee Members was established.

Quote: "The Executive Committee may authorize the payment of suitable honoraria to be shared amongst the Management Committee, with the exception of the President, up to a limit of \$3000 total per annum, payable at the end of the calendar year."

**MOTION:** Moved by S. Lussier, seconded by S. Polvi.

*"That a \$3,000 honorarium be approved. The honorarium will be shared equally among the officers of the Association".*

**CARRIED.**

## 6. Annual Reports from Stewards

### a) Saskatoon – S. Polvi and J. Condi

We are looking forward to meeting all the representatives in Ottawa this fall. Attending the October Executive Meeting and AGM in person is an excellent opportunity for us to get to know the other reps and to discuss issues that affect us all. In Saskatoon, we represent just over 70 members from ACRD, ASPM, BMS, FB, HRB, and IRAP. As we are restricted from holding meetings in our workplace, it is more difficult to maintain contact with the members we represent. This past year, we have had one-on-one contact with members to help resolve their workplace issues, and to discuss more general issues such as the lengthy time between collective agreements, the potential loss of sick leave, and the impact of implementing the generic job descriptions for TOs. Thank you to Joan Van Den Bergh, Laurette Ernst and Cathie Fraser for all the support you provide to members of the RCEA. Happy 50th Anniversary RCEA!

### b) M-36, Ottawa – B. Holbrook and G. Holmes

The overall morale of RCEA members at NRC-MSS M-35/M-36 is moderate to good this year. There have been positive events happening such as significant new hirings, especially for administrative and TO positions.

The TO re-mapping exercise was not particularly well done at MSS. In many cases, TO's had limited input into their generic positions or levels.

Overall, we are pleased with the improved relations that the new federal government and NRC seem to be taking with RCEA members but there are still concerns that sick leave appears to still be at risk.

### c) Montreal – R. Tom and M. Lévesque

Since our 2015 AGM, we've had a frenetic year. Upon writing of this report we're saddened by the sudden passing of our HHT-Ottawa colleague, Dr. Mahmud Bani.

Before Christmas 2015, Julie Ducharme vacated her HHT-GM position. We acknowledge the enthusiastic managerial fervor that Julie brought to NRC-Royalmount during her 2.5-year tenure. We're certain that Bernard Massie will fill the GM role with the experience he's garnered since the early days of BRI.

The number of RCEA members hovers around 175. At this moment: 88% are members, 8% new hires, 4% RANDS. The membership composition is 80% TO, 17% AD/AS. About 65% of the workforce is HHT, followed by EME (15%), ACRD (8%), ASPM (5%). Members from HRB, BMS, ITS and KM make up 6% of the workforce.

The generic job description exercise for TO's in all portfolios was completed before summer break. Upon writing of this report, we weren't advised of the exact number of TO's who were up and retrograded.

Despite NRC management changes and outstanding negotiations, HHT, ACRD, and EME members continue to adapt, and strive for success in healthy, safer working environments. NRC must see that all work is not accomplished within a 37.5 hour week.

We collectively felt a lesser weight on our shoulders with the change in government last year. We've been telling our members that negotiations couldn't begin before the larger core sectors terminate theirs. We hope future bargaining sessions will reflect the government's attitude toward labour unions.

On behalf of the Royalmount membership, we acknowledge Cathie, Joan, Laurette, Executive and Management committees, for their thankless perennial work.

d) Vancouver - F. Moraw

Greetings to all from NRC Vancouver.

With 4 developed programs, Vancouver is starting to get busier, but work flow is still unstable (and EME's financial performance is still not to the level expected by NRC executives). This uncertainty, in conjunction with the appointment of a new President, has left some staff unsettled, but overall morale seems to be improved under the Liberal government. Some ROs/RCOs have been hired and some TO hires are planned, but the TO-RO ratio has changed little since last year.

Programs which have been approved are continuing to look for industrial partners with large dollars to invest in projects. It remains to be seen if these partners have the deep pockets NRC seems to think they have (particularly in the current economic environment). That being said, the programs are encouraging staff to propose projects of relevance to the new NRC mandate and staff are getting busier.

There were no grievances filed this year in Vancouver. There is a great deal of curiosity on the state of the union's contract negotiations, particularly in light of the new government.

Finally, some statistics: Vancouver has a total of 40 RCEA members and 1 RAND (there is some uncertainty with respect to these numbers, which will be rectified soon).

e) Charlottetown - A. Cattali

RCEA membership in Charlottetown currently stands at 17 members, soon to be 16, with one member about to leave for another portfolio (HHT-NRC Montreal) at the end of September. This will mark a decrease of 1 member versus 2015.

I've been RCEA rep for Charlottetown for 1 year. I have attended RCEA meetings via teleconference and I also sit on our Committee for Occupational Safety and Health.

Members are still voicing concerns about reduced sick leave benefits. Another issue has been the continual pressure for technical staff to reach 70% utilization on contracts/projects and meet corporate revenue targets, which for the most part, they have no control over. My conversations with members at other locations suggest that this is a widespread issue.

To conclude, I would like to inform you that I'm stepping down as Charlottetown's Steward, as I was recently assigned to an acting position at the supervisory level.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve my team in this capacity.

f) M-12, Ottawa - F. Toll

The M-12 EME portfolio in Ottawa has had more changes this year: we have had a change in team leads (I cannot keep track). We are now in a growing phase, as our managers call it, of hiring more personnel.

The EME portfolio at M-12 has purchased some new analytical equipment this year, most notably a new SEM microscope, which will be used for EME, clients, and other NRC portfolios.

The RCEA members' workloads of administrative duties are still a concern of many. Another concern is the lack of communication from the top down on decisions that affect our everyday ability to work. The generic job description is always a good coffee break topic of conversation, most asking about how it works. I could go on but we all have similarities in our concerns year after year that, for the most part, have not changed.

The announcement of the new NRC President has come with concerns from members since he was involved in the Jenkins report and was very much in favor. This leads me to believe NRC will not be changing its current ways anytime soon.

g) Construction, Ottawa - A. Zerlhoul and M. Lowery

Since the last meeting of the RCEA held on May 17, 2016, there were no significant activities to report on. The report for this period (May 17 to Sept 13, 2016) can be summarized as follows:

- NRC-Construction has two union stewards - Amal Zerhloul (M-23A) and Mark Lowery (M-24). We have 6 buildings to cover (M-20, M-23A, M-24, M-27, M-59 and U-96 in Almonte). We are both new to the union steward's role, so we have met on two occasions to discuss and clarify our roles and responsibilities.
- Union materials were posted in M-20 and M-24. There is no bulletin board in Building M-23A on which to post union information. It is possible the employees situated in M-23A (The Building Regulations (Building Codes) Group) may be moving to M-20 before the end of 2016. If this move does not occur, M. Lowery will assist A. Zerlhoul in erecting a display area for union material in M-23A. M-27, M-59 and U-96 have not been visited.
- The exercise to map current Technical Officer position classifications to the new TO generic job descriptions is at the fourth step (discussions with individual employees) of a 7-step process.

h) M-55, Ottawa - S. Lussier

As of September 6th, 2016, KITS at M-55 in Ottawa has 75 members. Of these, there are 10 AD, 6 AS, 57 CS, 1 OP and 1 TO. As well, there are 8 Rands and 16 “new” employees which we hope will complete the online enrolment form to become members.

Over the past year, many issues have arisen and I have counselled a number of members of M-55 and at other locations across the Ottawa campus. All issues were between employees and NRC management. Most of the problems/concerns arose from an interpretation to rules and our collective agreement and how they are implemented and others due to personality conflicts. Another concern was the future loss and restructuring of sick leave. Ongoing issues on budget cuts (perceived cuts to jobs), reclassification, etc. The outgoing Conservative government and the retirement of NRC President John McDougall have all contributed once again to an overall uneasy feeling in the membership at NRC and what possible new directions may or may not occur.

I would also like to thank the RCEA staff for all the hard work they do for all the RCEA members at NRC.

i) ASPM, Saguenay - R-M. Simard

We are pleased to attend this year's meeting. Saguenay now has 21 members, and no Rands.

Finally, thank you to the RCEA Executive, the office staff, the bargaining officer and the President for their hospitality and support.

General Comments

- ) Discussion on sick leave in collective bargaining for RCEA groups.
- ) Discussion on collection of members' home contact information. The RCEA has requested that the PSLREB issue an order that NRC provide home addresses and phone numbers. NRC has notified the RCEA that they will comply with the order. C. Fraser reminded stewards to encourage members to use the RCEA website to update their information online. Another suggestion was to use the bulletin boards to advertise the RCEA online member update option.
- ) Discussion on bulletin board use for RCEA within the workplace. According to Article 8 in all collective bargaining agreements of the RCEA groups, NRC must provide bulletin boards to post RCEA materials. S. Lussier noted that some bulletin boards are hidden or inaccessible behind locked doors. A. Zerhloul noted that there was no bulletin board identified in M-23A. C. Fraser commented that there shall be one bulletin board assigned for RCEA notices in every NRC building.

## 7. Grievance Committee Report - Joan Van Den Bergh

J. Van Den Bergh reported that there were no new grievances filed and we are waiting for decisions on grievances previously filed. The unfair labour practice complaint related to meetings on the employer's premises is scheduled to be heard on December 19, 20 and 21, 2016 at the PSLREB. The PSAC has recently received a favourable ruling in a similar case. C. Fraser quoted from the PSAC ruling. The PSAC case is under judicial review.

Discussions:

- ) December Shutdown: The RCEA is aware of issues related to December Shutdown for IRAP locations. The RCEA has surveyed the members in these locations and has received a fair response. Other issues identified include appropriate workload assignments and overtime.
- ) TO Generics: NRC has completed the TO Generic mapping exercise and members will soon be notified by individual letter. There may be changes in the classification levels for some members. Those members who disagree with their assessments or have been downgraded to a lower level are encouraged to contact the RCEA office.
- ) CTE: A discussion related to discrepancies between members and NRC supervisors' evaluations took place. S Fletcher brought up the situation when a member does not sign a CTE. J. Van Den Bergh noted that not signing a CTE does not prevent it from going on the personal file. She suggested that members should review the CTE process and attach their comments to the CTE, particularly if they disagree with the contents or the ratings.

## 8. Category and Group Committee Reports

### (a) Technical Category – F. Toll

The TO Bargaining Committee is scheduled to meet next month to review demands. J. Van Den Bergh noted that while NRC's mandate has not changed from the previous government, it has been agreed that a first meeting with NRC will be scheduled to exchange proposals. She suspects that there will be no mandate from NRC to settle until the core Public Service has settled. There was an additional discussion on the duration of collective agreements, sick leave credits, and rates of pay.

### (b) Admin. Support Group – S. Lussier

No report.

### (c) Operational Category – Joan Van Den Bergh

No report.

### (d) AS Group – Joan Van Den Bergh

No report.

(e) CS Group – Joan Van Den Bergh

There are enough volunteers for the bargaining committee. With the retirement of K. Foster, a new committee chairperson for the CS Group will need to be selected.

(f) PG Group – Joan Van Den Bergh

No report.

General Comments:

J. Van Den Bergh requested more member participation for the AD, OP, AS, and PG Bargaining Committees. More representation is required in order to keep the collective bargaining process separate for each of these groups.

9. **New Business**

Questions were asked about the use of NRC email or other equipment for union purposes. J. Van Den Bergh reminded stewards that they should not be sending emails regarding union business using their NRC emails. They should only be sent using their private or home email addresses. Representatives were asked to encourage their local members to provide the RCEA with home email addresses.

10. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.

Minutes prepared by M. Zaluski