

Minutes - 111th JCC June 22nd 2022

DATE: June 22nd, 2022
TIME: 9:30 AM
LOCATION: ZOOM Videoconference

IN ATTENDANCE

Chairperson:

Stephan Grosse, RO/RCO Group Executive

Representing NRC:

Jean-Francois Houle, Vice-President, Engineering
Emily Harrison, Vice-President, HRB
Amy Campbell, Director Labour Relations and Compensation, HRB
Ben Nadeau, Labour Relations Officer, HRB

Representing Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada (PIPSC):

Cathy Cheung, President RO/RCO Group
Stephan Grosse, RO/RCO Group Executive
Pat Loder, Steward, Atlantic Region
Dejan Toncic, Employment Relations Officer, PIPSC (absent)
Marie-José Laforest, LS Group
Tracy Minkus, President LS Group

Representing Research Council Employees' Association (RCEA):

Catharine Fraser, President
Debbie Cooper, ED of Labour Relations
Marvin Zaluski, 1st Vice-President
Michelle Lévesque, 2nd Vice-President

ITEM	111 th JCC - MINUTES – DISCUSSION	ACTION
111.1	<p>Approval of Agenda</p> <p>The agenda was approved following a few requests for follow-up from the RCEA and PIPSC as well as a concern from the PIPSC Chair. The RCEA requested follow-ups on 108.5 Accommodations for Nursing Mothers and 110.9 Update on STEM. PIPSC requested an update on the Legacy Network.</p> <p>The PIPSC Chair addressed concerns with requests for Agenda Items by the JCC Secretary that are not in keeping with the JCC Terms of Reference.</p>	
111.2	<p>Minutes of the 110th Meeting of the JCC</p> <p>Minutes are still in draft and comments are requested by end of day June 30th 2022, as previously requested by the Secretary. Minutes will then be translated and re-circulated for final approval.</p>	

	RCEA requested to resend the 109 th minutes for final approval.	Ben
111.3	Follow-up Action Items of the 110th Meeting	
	<p>110.9 Update On STEM</p> <p>A document (Recruitment and Retention of Women at the NRC) was shared just prior to JCC that outlined 9 recommendations the organization should pursue in order to support the recruitment and retention of Women in STEM. Amy invited members of the JCC who had questions to reach out to her and she could address them.</p>	
	<p>110.6 Vaccination Policy – Union Dues</p> <p>During the 110th JCC the RCEA raised a question with regards to the processing of union dues for employees who are on Administrative Leave Without Pay (LWOP) as a result of the NRC vaccination policy.</p> <p>Amy Campbell consulted with the Manager, Compensation, Monique Melbourne who confirmed that an employee away for any type of LWOP does not pay union dues for the duration of their absence, nor are there any arrears when they return, and the dues start the month of the return (no deficiencies).</p>	
	<p>109.6 – Standardised test</p> <p>Amy Campbell acknowledged that a meeting with Staffing, Emily, and the Bargaining Agents should have been scheduled. The RCEA indicated that Debbie Cooper and Sumeeta Narula should be consulted on this topic. PIPSC noted that they would also like to have Cathy Cheung and Stephan Grosse in attendance for that discussion.</p> <p>Amy will commit to set up a 45 minute meeting with all parties identified in the coming weeks.</p>	A. Campbell
	<p>108.5 Accommodations for Nursing Mothers</p> <p>Amy Campbell addressed that she believed the list should have been posted shortly after the last JCC understanding that it had been going through the National Committee on Occupational Safety and Health (NCOSH) and that building Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) advisors should have the lists in hand at this time.</p>	
	<p>109.10, RT.1 – TO Purchasing Cards</p> <p>Amy provided the update with regards to the comments and concerns raised at the 110th JCC and a subsequent conversation with Johanne Diotte, Director General, Finance and Procurement Services. Amy shared that Finance and Procurement have a variety of resources on MyZone to support as well as an email address to contact, should the TO community require additional support. The JCC Secretary provided the email address.</p> <p>The RCEA advised that while it is good to have a contact email where requests for assistance can be sent, they suggested that perhaps a “one pager” to</p>	

	capture the process and information would be most helpful. Michelle Levesque, RCEA, suggested that she could provide an example of a “one pager” to share it with Finance.	
	New Business	
111.4	<p>Telework Updates</p> <p>Dale MacMillan, Vice President, Corporate Services and Chief Financial Officer, returned to the JCC to share updates on the Telework Policy and the roll out of Telework Agreements. Dale highlighted that the Policy did come into effect April 1, 2022 and that various presentations have taken place including several Telework Q&A's with support for staff and managers. Participation at French sessions was very light, though there was still good conversations and engagement. Dale shared that in some research centers the vision has been shared with staff, while in others, Management is still considering the vision for the Center. The CBI's need to be the ones who communicate what truly fits for the CBI with regards to functions and presence. Dale noted that it's important to ensure that employees understand the flexibility of the telework agreements and that they can change over time based on preferences and/or operational needs.</p> <p>Dale highlighted that she has heard from employees of the perception that there are advantages and disadvantages of being onsite vs off site. Some are concerned that opportunities may not be made available to them, or that they may be incurring costs that they would not otherwise be incurring through their work. Some employees have also raised issues of being asked to perform tasks that are not elements of their regular jobs while on site, in order to support work for employees off site. Dale share that the organization is ensuring that these points are being clarified with managers to correct perceptions and expectations and that employees need to remember that they need to get themselves back to the worksite as required by their work. Some employees have moved far from the worksite and we are working with management teams on these issues.</p> <p>PIPSC enquired how to manage telework schedules that seem fixed, when employees may be required to travel. How should employees capture these details in a telework agreement? Dale explained that in the hybrid model it is important not to view the telework schedule as prescriptive but rather to have a mutual understanding that it can change based on operational needs, such as travel for business.</p> <p>PIPSC raised a concern with language in the agreement pertaining to the storing of files locally: some employees fear being the subject of an administrative investigation for what is a common practice. With recent cyber-intrusions – those with locally shared files were able to continue the work and those who had files stored properly were the ones penalized. Dale confirmed that when working remote we have a greater risk of devices being compromised and therefore it's important to capture that information and the revised agreement form has been shared. Digital Technology has helped craft</p>	

the revised language in the new annex. The policy is also heavily guided by TBS and while we have flexibility we need to be more thoughtful about these things with remote work. PIPSC further highlighted specific language in the form that refers to “Nothing is to be shared on the local hard drive”. Dale shared that the essence of the language is to ensure that folks are thinking about how they work. Antonietta Testa, Executive Advisor, VPO Corporate Services indicated that revised language has been shared the week prior to the JCC and the new form and revised language is being uploaded to MyZone soon.

RCEA brought forward a concern with regards to free form text fields and how they have been challenging. These free form text fields have led to an increase in discussions as various perceptions of what to include and can be approved in those fields is slowing down the process. The RCEA enquired if there can be standardized preapproved text that can be shared so it can be cut and pasted into these free form fields. Dale clarified that most of the information we would have anticipated there is around onsite vs offsite presence. Certainly, looking into Q&A could help guide employees in completing those sections a little more consistently. Amy Cambell, Director, Labour Relations and Compensation added that it’s about doing what we can to document key parts of the discussions.

The RCEA added that some questions they have received have been about what is a reasonable time frame for reporting to the worksite. Amy confirmed that the nature of the work or project certainly allows for some customized text with regards to that portion. Dale added it’s important that we are cognisant that some events may occur causing employees to have to come back on site to get work done.

Amy added that some of this guidance is captured within the playbook that is posted on MyZone. RCEA added that in Royalmount they have established a team charter with clear direction surrounding when onsite presence is required. Dale asked if Michelle Levesque, RCEA, could share the charter because Dale has asked for some of these examples and none had yet been received. Antonietta highlighted that some generic examples of charters have been posted on MyZone as well.

RCEA added that some members are hearing that if no telework agreement has been received by August 1, 2022, then as of September you are not going to be approved for telework. Dale clarified that we have been advising that August 1, 2022 was the date to have these in place and the default if not completed is onsite. Telework is an employee driven process and therefore employees need to be requesting an agreement. Also, a telework agreement or modifications to an existing agreement can be requested at any time by employees. As a follow-up PIPSC asked what would be done with those agreements that are pending DG approval on August 1? Dale confirmed that it would be in effect once it’s approved. Given the lack of clarity around who initiates the telework request PIPSC asked if something can be put into Echo because staff in some RC’s are waiting for management to engage the staff. Dale confirmed that it has been communicated a lot that it’s on the employee,

M.Levesque

	<p>and that Dale would appreciate help from bargaining agents to communicate that message as well to which Amy echoed that in the past few weeks we know almost all CBI's have been having those discussions and we expect the number of completed and approved requests to increase.</p> <p>RCEA enquired if a communication could be placed on their website to increase the awareness surrounding Telework. Dale indicated that it would be fine and that Cathie Fraser should work with Amy to draft the communication. PIPSC suggest that perhaps a blast email would be best to get the word out to members.</p> <p>Emily took the opportunity to confirm that we are not shifting to an onsite posture as of August 1st. August 1 was a soft timeline, when we do confirm a decision as to posture moving forward we will confirm at that time that if no telework agreement is in place at the time we shift to the onsite posture then the employee would be expected on site.</p>	<p>A.Campbell</p>
<p>111.7</p>	<p>111.7 Concerns over Conflict of Interest (COI)</p> <p>Erin Skrapek, Executive Director Corporate Secretariat was invited to attend the JCC to speak to concerns being voiced by PIPSC members over the roll out of the new COI Policy. In particular PIPSC shared that the training is being rolled out currently at IRAP and a number of questions and concerns have been raised such as concerns surrounding financial disclosure for investments for self and spouse; information requested on personal and volunteer activities, intrusive on personal lives; concerns with the implementation of COI communications, and other voluntary disclosures; as well as post-employment conflicts - employment with NRC clients.</p> <p>With regards to financial disclosure, PIPSC have heard that it's being presented by managers as a black and white scale and not an understanding that it can be flexible. One example shared was one where an employee divested themselves of all of their shares in one organization as a result of an interpretation of the Policy.</p> <p>Another concern is surrounding personal and volunteer activities and the way these things are being explored is feeling to some employees as intrusive and they feel they are being dealt with quite severely.</p> <p>Post-employment conflicts is another area of concern with regards to IRAP staff as it's a natural career progression of someone leaving IRAP to be going over to the client and the way the policy is being interpreted and understood by various parts of the organization seems inconsistent.</p> <p>PIPSC specifically raises the concern that the role-out is just a little too overwhelming, suggesting that perhaps we need to take a pause and scale it back a bit. At this time we have 400 plus employees making declarations and PIPSC suggested that the Corporate Secretariat must be overburdened by the increased volume. One question in particular has to do with interactions with other government organizations and that is primarily what IRAP does. Also</p>	

	<p>specific challenges are being experienced by employees as it relates to the Inventions Act.</p> <p>In response, Erin advised that her office has brought in several advisors to handle the backlog. In particular knowing the extensive amount of work specifically generated by IRAP, as specific advisor was hired by IRAP to support and work with the COI office.</p> <p>Erin acknowledged the amount of information to be considered, though more importantly employees should ask themselves about possible conflicts to create self-reflection but it is not intended to make them feel overwhelmed. As for the Inventions Act, Erin advised that some of the interpretation rests within National Programs and Business Services (NPBS) and specific questions can be taken back to the NPBS team.</p> <p>Shannon Quinn, Secretary General, shared that the COI Office had expected a surge of COI forms and we can work on getting more support to IRAP to help process the forms. In addition Shannon added that the plan is to roll out the COI information in a way that adds support for activities that NRC employees want to do while keeping in the good standing of the NRC. Shannon believes that the information shared by PIPSC provides a chance to review the intention of the training and Policy.</p> <p>Erin added that the COI team can build on the information shared today when delivering the training and emphasize that we want to facilitate and work with employees to manage their level of risk with regards to outside activities.</p> <p>Erin suggests to set up an offline discussion with the PIPSC bargaining agents to discuss what has been heard so far and recalibrate the information going forward.</p> <p>PIPSC asked how the COI office handles the variety of information provided on the forms. Erin advised that we are doing live sessions to work through the processes of the COI, then staff get an invite to get into the form and make their declaration.</p> <p>PIPSC requested to know if there could be a pause on the deadlines within IRAP until we can get back to the guidelines and revise the process. Erin advised that she will reach out the IRAP advisor and discuss timelines.</p>	<p>E. Skrapek</p>
<p>111.6</p>	<p>Travel and Security Branch</p> <p>Item brought forward by PIPSC and the reason for the discussion surrounds increased Security Branch activities surrounding employee travel, now that travel restrictions are easing. Previously there was limited involvement from Security Branch, providing general guidelines about best practices and protecting NRC assets and information. Now, the traveller has to attend a pre-travel security briefing covering that information, then more questions about the specific travel details and upon return, there is another long list of questions that Security Branch asks in order to "close the file". The scope of the</p>	

questions being asked is of concern, as is the fact that there's a "file" that's being opened for each trip.

PIPSC had additional concerns surrounding the details about where the employee will be staying what they will be doing. These questions are a little intrusive. Despite having DG approval to travel with an NRC device why are there so many personal questions to close the "security file". The PIPSC representative asked if this amount of questioning is really required.

Amy confirmed that Security Branch only recently implemented the post trip briefing. Security Branch has seen an increase through the pandemic of devices travelling outside of Canada and Security wants to know where the device will be.

Amy enquired specifically which questions are of concern to the employees? PIPSC shared questions like, "who is travelling in your group", PIPSC believes that this may be referring to other NRC employees, though it is not clear. Also if the travel has been approved by the DG it seems redundant to be asking questions regarding the purpose of the travel

Amy advised that she would share the concerns with Security Branch and enquire about travel to specific countries.

PIPSC further enquired about the process by which a device "pings" and how those situations are addressed with the employees. In addition the representative enquired as to statistics that may be available on the number of devices "pinging" and files, as well as, the types of devices. Amy responded that while we do not have any specific numbers to share, the matters are investigated and it's a combination of cell phones and laptops that have been found to access VPN's outside of Canada.

Emily shared that Security Branch has had to investigate several incidents where the NRC device was stolen from a parked car or rental vehicle. She included that it is a significant challenge for the organization to understand what information may have been on those devices and how to address the corrective actions the organization needs to take regarding personal information

The RCEA suggested that a message could be shared by Security Branch with regards to the "what" and "why" of important information with regards to travel. PIPSC shared that in many cases the travel with NRC device actually happens on personal travel as researchers still have important deadlines to meet with regards to publications etc.

The RCEA echoed that they have certainly heard of situations where following business trips, employees extend leave for personal travel to other countries. The RCEA representative advised that KITS has some travel computers available that staff should be requesting.

A.Campbell

111.8 BMC Governance Transition

Maria Aubrey, Vice President of the Biologics Manufacturing Centre (BMC) attended the JCC to share an update on the accomplishments of the BMC and next steps with regards to the transition of the BMC to a not for profit (NFP).

VP Aubrey shared that the facility requires a very specialized skill set and many of the processes are very complex, and undergo very rigorous standards and practices. In addition she shared that existing employees today and future employees will be required to follow all Occupational Health Monitoring Program (OHMP) procedures. Staff coming from this sector are used to these procedures and everything being undertaken is standard.

She advised that a town hall was being held June 23rd with regards to next steps. VP Aubrey highlighted that all staff were hired on contract and all current contracts come to an end in March 2023. Now that we decided to move forward with a NFP and an organization structure will be put in place and current management functions will continue. The intent is to have all current employees transition into continuing positions with the NFP and funding to support the NFP has been secured through the NRC.

The RCEA advised VP Aubrey that they have been receiving a lot of questions about the NFP and some concerns about the NFP not being a government organization. A basic set of frequently asked question was shared prior to the JCC that are meant to address common questions about the transition. Maria indicated that as the transition moves forward there is consideration for the type of organization/co founder to create a NFP. Also, it would be hard-pressed to get this type of skill set without offering benefits and it therefore needs to be built into the creation of the NFP and in discussion with the Co-Founder. Maria further indicated that the NRC has to make sure that we structure an organization that is comparable to industry and the BMC remains competitive and keeps skilled resources.

VP Aubrey shared that potential organizations have until August 1st to signal their interest in being a co-founder, and a committee would review the proposal of a possible co-founder against criteria that is established based on industry best practices. The RCEA asked if Maria foresees current NRC members being part of the board of directors of the NFP. Maria responded that in fact she does foresee some NRC members staying on the board as the NRC is ensuring funding for the NFP.

The RCEA asked what type of industry clients are in the same sector as the BMC. Maria responded that most universities such as McGill, McMaster, and a number of NFP's that are doing this and supporting such as CCRM, 3CI Montreal. Maria added that at this time the BMC is not being considering research activities though it could be considered in the future to support a variety of pharmaceutical products.

<p>111.9</p>	<p>Probation</p> <p>Two reports were shared prior to JCC. The first report was regarding the number of term employees who are currently on probation and the second with regards to the number of continuing employees who are currently on probation.</p> <p>PIPSC shared that the reason to make this request was in preparation for negotiations, but the report was helpful.</p> <p>Amy advised that she had reviewed the information and let the bargaining agents know that more information needs to be reviewed to truly determine when the probationary periods came into effect. A further review of the reports would be completed and additional information shared with the bargaining agents.</p>	<p>A.Campbell</p>
<p>111.10</p>	<p>TO Acquisition Cards - 109.10, RT.1,</p> <p>Amy provided a breakdown during the 109th JCC of the decisions that were made with regards to providing acquisition cards to TO's in various CBI's to allow them to make low value purchases. The RCEA expressed that from their perspective the administrative processes surrounding the use of the acquisition cards and the reconciliation of those purchases is quite burdensome. RCEA also indicated their view that support to the use of the credit cards is not sufficient and asked that appropriate training and possibly in the form of a one-page cheat sheet, could be made available.</p> <p>Amy responded that she discussed the matter with Johanne Diotte, Director General, Finance and Procurement, who indicated that support is available to the TO community if they require assistance with the reconciliation and purchasing through the acquisition cards. A link to the email address where support can be requested was shared during the JCC.</p>	
<p>111.11</p>	<p>Update Vaccination Policy</p> <p>Amy shared that as announced in the last week the policy has been suspended and we have had our HSE staff contacting employees with rapid testing and temporary accommodations to advise them of the changes.</p> <p>In addition, Amy shared that staffing will be reviewing the language on posters with regards to the COVID Policy to clearly outline that the Policy may be revisited in the future and could come back into force.</p> <p>Furthermore, Amy advised that any grievances filed with relation to the Policy will continue through the regular channels.</p>	
<p>111.12</p> <p>111.12 RT.1</p>	<p>Round Table</p> <p>The RCEA had requested prior to the JCC to have a presentation regarding the CTE process. They also asked if it would be helpful for others and PIPSC echoed that they would be interested in that presentation as well and would like to include performance management and the promotion process.</p>	

<p>111.12 RT.2</p>	<p>Amy offered to have the presentations coordinated and scheduled outside of the JCC.</p> <p>PIPSC inquired if the NRC is getting any feedback on “Long COVID” as some staff are affected by it and are experiencing some challenges.</p> <p>Amy shared that to date no discussion have been had at Business Management Support Committee (BMSC) and from an Labour Relations (LR) point of view we are aware that some staff are being accommodated with information from physicians. PIPSC asked to keep this on the radar to get information to support staff with workers compensation etc.</p>	
<p>111.12 RT.3</p>	<p>The PIPSC Chair requested to have an Agenda item for the next JCC to be an updated from KITS regarding the actions being taken with the Legacy Network following the last IT Breach in March.</p>	
<p>111.12 RT.4</p>	<p>PIPSC also enquired about having future JCC’s on site. Emily responded that we could consider on site JCC when we are back to an in person posture, and that the organization is taking a careful look at the need for in person meetings. Possibility would be to consider a mix of both.</p>	
<p>111.12 RT.5</p>	<p>PIPSC raised issues with regards to concerns in cafeterias, whereby staff are feeling that the commissionaires are watching them closely and members/employees feeling treated as though they are in kindergarten. They are feeling that it is ridiculous and needs to be looked into for some additional flexibility. Emily will pass the message onto Ronalda Rino, HSE, and team.</p>	
<p>Meeting adjourned at: 2:40 pm</p>		

