

BWSR Meet & Confer Meeting Notes

Friday, March 10, 2023 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Virtual (Teams) Meeting

BWSR Meet and Confer (MC) Committee Chair Melissa King began the meeting at 11:30 am.

Introductions & Agenda

Melissa started the meeting and welcomed everyone. John shared that he will be going off of the committee now that the three division directors and Human Resources Director positions are filled. The three division directors will participate in BWSR MAPE meet and confer committee meetings moving forward.

Workload Form Update

Melissa asked for an update regarding agency utilization of the draft workload adjustment form as a tool in workload discussions and tool to more consistently document certain expectations regarding an employee's workload. John stated that the form could not be adopted as an agency-wide policy for something aligned with only one collective bargaining unit, however, MAPE membership could use this document as a tool. Melissa clarified initial intent with how the form was envisioned to be utilized (in instances to document work expectations) and asked the leadership team how MAPE meet and confer staff could convey to members on how they could expect workload changes to be documented?

Matt reiterated that the goal is consistency. Like our local government units, it would be beneficial to have something in place to document. Justin noted he would support use of the form and added that specificity is less important than just having something in place to make decisions clearer.

Dave noted the need to facilitate consistency - can be used, but there will always be some documentation of workload changes (i.e., changes to a work plan or position description). Suzanne shared that the MAPE meet and confer committee recently converted the form into a checklist, less "formal". Melissa noted that it was the committee's intent to share the form with BWSR MAPE staff as a resource for conversations with their supervisor. John shared that when there are changes to job responsibilities, that information is shared with staff in the form of a memo. Dave stated that having a checklist or talking points would be useful for staff and is not aware of all the talking points involved with reassigning staff. John stated that the agency has protocols and policies that cover most situations. Matt noted the recent process to adjust workload in the recent Board Conservationist vacancy went OK; the system is not broken, just seeking consistency.

Patty asked if have workload issues improved. Steve noted that it depends on section. John stated that staff can always communicate with Division Directors or Human Resources. Exec team members encouraged staff to reach out on any topic and that Division Directions could also be a sounding board for staff. Steve expressed that BWSR's culture of openness is a good thing, and that the checklist might help facilitate conversations. John shared that Andrea's position is uniquely set up so that she can field concerns or ideas that might not be HR concerns. Problem with remote work is that it's hard to make those connections on screen. Andrea is open for walking meetings. Patty shared that she is now doing a one-on-one orientation with new staff, which has helped and has found that this process helps new staff feel comfortable reach out on topics later.

Melissa summarized conversations and noted that the BWSR MAPE meet and confer committee will distribute the checklist to Patty to share with managers/supervisors and the committee with will share the checklist with BWSR MAPE members.

Supplemental Bargaining Update

Melissa shared that the meet and confer committee is interested in having a discussion with the agency on supplemental bargaining. MAPE staff have heard that MMB has delegated authority to agencies to begin discussions. The meet and confer committee is working to survey BWSR MAPE staff on interest in bargaining and to solicit ideas. Patty noted that she will look into supplemental bargaining timing.

Workload Mural

Melissa shared the workload mural and the group began walking through the information. The meet and confer committee discuss that some gaps in staffing were easier to fill without travel during the pandemic and there are currently concerns with balancing work with increased travel times. The issue of inconsistent review of position descriptions has been able to be improved and Dave noted that feedback from staff would be helpful. John noted that a position description is necessarily customized to an individual but rather to the long-lasting duties of the position. Patty noted that each job could have some unique duties in addition to the position description and shared that Carla is tracking to ensure that position descriptions are reviewed (required every 3 years). Melissa asked for clarification regarding position audits and frequency of audits. John shared there were fewer in the past and that the HR manager could manage the workload, however, now there is a push for more consistent and high-level descriptions. Patty also shared that an employee could ask for a position description review.

Meeting time expired and the meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm.