

Supplemental Bargaining - Meeting Minutes

Date: 04/24/2023

Hybrid In-Person and Virtual Teams Meeting

Ramsey Conference Room

Time: 12:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Minutes prepared by: Kriystauhl Fitchett

Attendance

Present In-Person: Mathew J. Begansky (MMB), Sandi Arvin (HR Director), Ashley Shanley (HR Consultant), Dan Englehart (MAPE), Kriystauhl Fitchett (CCLD), Debra Heisick (ADR), Dave Skovholt (Labor Standards), Alexis Lohse (Construction Misclass)

Present Teams Virtual: Kristy Swanson (Assistant Commissioner), Shoua Tran (HR Consultant), Frances Li (ADR), Cyndi Benjamin (OSHA), Vicki Sanders (MNOSHA), Alexis Lohse (Labor Standards), Bonnie Frisk (Labor Standards)

Points of Discussion

Proposal #1 – Workload Retention: D. Englehart presented discussion to adopt the proposal for two identified employee groups, OSHA Investigators and Industrial Hygienists. The proposal would offer unlimited classified employees an additional \$2,500 for work conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic. Adoption of the proposal would match the agreement secured by MDH who successfully confirmed the one-time bonus for all its employees (not including temporary unclassified staff) that would receive the payout sometime during December 2022 and within four (4) pay periods. Englehart also stated that all state agencies across the board were encouraged to utilize supplemental bargaining as a means to secure the benefit.

Proposal #2 – Probationary Period Check-Ins: D. Skovholt introduced a discussion to update language for the current policy that would secure a documented formal mid-point review conference for all new hires. Skovholt pointed out that currently, some mid-point reviews do not happen and the word “*practicable*” allows for inconsistency between the departments’ leadership and denies a new employee, their right to a performance evaluation that could identify any deficiencies and could include additional training. While senior leadership will maintain the right to non-certify, the session would offer the new employee worker protections that could include the employees’ decision to transition to another opportunity.

Proposal #3 – Tuition Reimbursement: D. Heisick presented the employer-sponsored tuition reimbursement program that would offer employees 80% for the letter grade “A”, 70% for the letter grade “B” and, 60% for the letter grade “C”. No reimbursement for a letter grade of “D” and below. Students who receive a “Pass” would receive 80%, no reimbursement to accompany a “Fail”. Books, supplies, and other resources would be the students’ responsibility.

K. Fitchett presented examples of state agencies that currently provide a tuition reimbursement program as a benefit for their employees to acquire higher education (i.e. MNSCU, Dept of Admin, Dept of Transportation, and state Judicial Branch). The committee conducted a survey of all DLI employees to determine employee interest in an employer-sponsored reimbursement program.

The survey revealed the following of all who participated:

- **63.54%** - feel student debt negatively impacts the decision to further their education
- **77.32%** - believe an employer-sponsored tuition reimbursement program is an important employee benefit
- **63.54%** - believe the program would provide an opportunity to advance their education
- **65.63%** - would access the employer-sponsored tuition reimbursement program
- **60.00%** - feel an advanced degree or specialized certification would provide them with the credentials to fill vacant positions within the state
- **63.54%** - believe that additional education would advance their career and/or help them perform their job better
- **82.47%** - believe a tuition reimbursement application process would help them take advantage of the program

In addition, Fitchett shared a recent communication distributed from the Governor Walz Administration. The survey revealed that of all state of Minnesota participants who receive grants for higher education, 48% enrolled in a two (2) year degree-seeking program and 52% enrolled in a four (4) year degree-seeking program, while nationally, Minnesota ranked 18th among all other states in financial aid spending.

Proposal # –4 Work Out of Class: K. Fitchett proposed all-employee access to work-out-of-class (WOOC) positions as a means to create diversity training opportunities. The proposal would adopt the same language used to post and fill all other positions. Employees within DLI would have an opportunity to advance the skills that are necessary to acquire leadership roles within the Department. In addition, the WOOC could help to establish career pathways; provide additional employee training opportunities; and help the agency fill long-standing vacancies with trained qualified employees. Fitchett shared current WOOC vacancy advertisements from the Veterans Affairs, Dept of Corrections, Dept of Employment and Economic Development, Dept of Natural Resources, Lottery Commission, Dept of Higher Education, and the Dept of Administration.

Most vacancy advertisements called for all employees who desire an opportunity to advance their skill level to better serve Minnesota constituents. DLI would seek approval from their appointing authority in partnership with Human Resources, to serve in a temporary classification to gain the additional skills.

Proposal #5 – Supervisor Review: Frances Li introduced the proposal for DLI employees to provide anonymous feedback through a survey to be conducted annually by Human resources which could be adopted to coincide as part of the annual supervisor performance review. The benefits of the survey could help supervisors gain additional insight into their leadership strengths and weaknesses that impact the employees they oversee. The feedback could also strengthen interrelationships, impact

diversity, and inclusion by providing different perspectives, and bridge partnerships among departments to reach common agency goals. Li identified the Dept of Higher Education, Dept of Human Services and the Dept of Employment and Economic Development as agencies that currently conduct annual and semi-annual surveys.

Proposal introductions concluded for an hour for the parties to caucus over lunch

Human Resources responded to the proposals as follows:

I. Proposal 1 – Workload Retention

There is currently a proposal at master bargaining regarding incentive language. This language would allow DLI to create our own guidelines and programs. If the incentive language does not move forward at master bargaining, we can then examine whether a memorandum of understanding makes sense to pursue.

Of note, a number of OSHA safety and industrial hygiene staff received an achievement award for their work during COVID. Those achievement awards were granted in June 2021.

II. Proposal 2 - Probationary Check-Ins

III. Proposal 5 – Supervisor Review

HR is presenting training on performance reviews to managers and supervisors on May 4, 2023. The importance of completing mid-point and the end of probation reviews will be included. HR Consultants have started reaching out to managers to remind them to complete and submit mid-point and end of probation reviews for their direct reports that are on probation.

HR is also looking into starting a workgroup to develop one performance review form for staff and one for managers/supervisors. We plan on developing a process for staff to provide direct feedback that can be incorporated into the manager/supervisor form.

Our goal is to have a new performance review forms and process in place by the Fall of 2023.

IV. Proposal 4 – Work out of Class

The DLI has on average of 2 work out of class opportunities each year. DLI HR plans on developing a guidance document on when it is appropriate to post work-out-of-class opportunities. The goal would be to have the guidance document finalized this summer.

V. Proposal 3 – Tuition Reimbursement

DLI currently has a training and employee development policy similar to those presented by MAPE during our meeting on April 24, 2023. See attached.