

MGEC / HR Meeting Minutes
December 11, 2008
1:30-3:00 p.m.
Conf Rm CO 421
(minutes revised: 1-2-09)

Present:

MGEC: Dana Wheeler, John Siekmeier, Joseph Pignato, Peter Buchen

HR Staff: Jodi Mathiason, Karin van Dyck, Mary Skarda, Mary Stohr, Theresa Johnson

Absent: Emma Corrie, Jolene Forman

Reimbursement for Safety Boots

As stated in the MGEC contract language, Article 16 – Job Safety, Section 2B – Employee Safety: *Any protective equipment or clothing shall be provided and maintained by the Agency whenever such equipment is required as a condition of employment either by the Agency, by OSHA, or by the Federal Mine Safety and Health Administration.*

Dana noted Mn/DOT has a limit of \$100 to reimburse employees for the purchase of safety boots and according to information found by researching the web sites of various safety boots vendors, this amount is not sufficient to buy good quality boots. Dana stated a manager from MN Public Safety brought up this same issue.

Karin stated that the limit on safety boot reimbursement is a statewide policy and Mn/DOT has no authority to reimburse more than the \$100 limit established by the state. Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) will post the policy on their web site. Dana reported the Department of Natural Resources is not following the \$100 cap for reimbursement of safety boots but Public Safety is following the policy. Karin said MMB is aware of this issue and suggested MGEC contact MMB for further discussion. Mary Stohr noted the safety boot issue affects multiple unions / employees.

Cross Training and Leadership Opportunity Development

Karin stated Linda Hinrichs, Mn/DOT – Arden Hills, is the contact to discuss all the existing leadership development opportunities within Mn/DOT. A sub-group, consisting of Peter Buchen, Mary Stohr, John Siekmeier, and Emma Corrie has been identified to begin working on this initiative, if needed. Theresa suggested Mary Prescott be added to the sub-group. Karin will meet with Linda Hinrichs to discuss existing opportunities and the subgroup can meet if there is the need for any additional program development.

- **To Do:** Karin will contact Linda Hinrichs to find out: 1) What's already in existence? 2) Job exchange / sharing? Karin will report back to MGEC to determine next steps.

360° Performance Reviews

Mary Stohr met with Val Svensson about how the 360° performance reviews are being handled within her division. Metro is not using this tool as part of an employee's evaluation. Metro continues to focus on coordination and communication aspects between managers and staff to provide development goals for individual employees. Joe noted the peer ratings comments were previously used in the performance review of one Senior Engineer at Metro.

- **To Do:** Dana will send a note to MGEC members and inform them Mn/DOT does not endorse the use of the 360° performance review as a component of performance evaluations. He will also suggest union members contact him directly if any future problems arise related to this issue.

Mary Stohr noted she should be contacted directly if there are additional problems or questions concerning performance reviews.

- **To Do:** John suggested Mary talk with Val Svensson again and discuss this issue at one of Metro's future staff meetings; Mary agreed to do so.

Mn/DOT Recruitment Process

Emma Corrie was unavailable to attend today's meeting but she provided Karin with a brief written update on the Mn/DOT recruitment process. Her note stated, in part: "I do not have much to report as yet to MGEC because we have been working feverishly on the TSS recruitment for the 40+ Metro maintenance hires. However, I will be in touch with Peter Buchen regarding the recruitment web site. We have updated the web site: www.dot.state.mn.us/careers.html."

Theresa talked about the Grad Engineer / Land Surveyor Trainee hires for fall. She stated she would get specific information from Jolene Forman about new hires and report it to the group.

- **Update:** Jolene provided the following breakdown of information regarding new hires –
 - Number of applicants – 96 eligible engineers; 12 eligible land surveyors
 - Number of vacant positions – 8 engineers; 1 land surveyor
 - Number of applicants interviewed – 36 engineers (6 declined / 2 no-shows); 8 land surveyors
 - Number of positions filled – 13 job offers made for engineers (1 declined); 2 job offers made to land surveyor trainees (both accepted)
 - Number of internal hires (Seeds / student workers / others) – 4 Seeds; 3 student workers
 - Diversity of candidates hired –
 - Grad Engineers: 7 Caucasian males; 1 Asian female; 1 Caucasian female; 2 African American males; 1 Asian male
 - Land Surveyor Trainee: 1 Hispanic male; 1 Caucasian female

Theresa also mentioned the MnCARRS (Mn/DOT's Community Advisors on Recruitment & Retention Solutions) program created to develop relationships with diversity councils within the Minneapolis / Saint Paul metro area. This community-based group has already met three times. The focus is to generate more interest in Mn/DOT jobs (focus on TSS series) to increase the department's diversity.

Peter asked if there are some specific examples of whom private employers view as companies that have embraced diversity and their workforce reflects that. Theresa invited MGEC members from this group to the next MnCARRS meeting on January 14, 2009. Theresa provided Dana with a calendar of all MnCARRS meetings to Dana.

Other Items?

Dana inquired about their request for payment of medical expenses for a D1 employee.

To Do: Labor Relations is still in discussion. Karin will update Dana as more information develops.

Dana noted about 60 MGEC employees took the tour of the new 35W Bridge site. He received positive comments from union members about the tour and stated it was very well put together and provided excellent information.

Dana asked about the procedure for presenting MGEC grievances if issues are in discussion. Karin suggested Dana submit the grievance to preserve any time lines.

**Next MGEC Meeting with HR Staff: February 10, 2009,
1:30-3:00 p.m., Conf Rm CO 360 (note location change)**