



Minutes/Actes:

Meeting No: 46/25
Date: 12 December 2019
Time: 13:00 - 14:30
Venue: Conf. Room A
Quorum: 11/19 Units

46th Staff Council – Meeting Minutes

The meeting was quorate with 11 Units present at 13:39.

Staff Council Chairperson Camille McKenzie chaired the meeting, later chaired by Kathryn Ktchenbrod, in the absence of the Deputy Chair.

Assistant-Secretary Sarah M'Bodji took notes.

Units present were: 13, 14, 18, 22, 24, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33.

Leadership: Patricia Nemeth, (President), Aitor Arauz Chapman, (Vice President), Francisco Brito (2nd Vice President)

EB Members: Jaime Garreta (Treasurer), Sarah M'Bodji (Assistant Secretary), Coralie Tripier (Rapporteur)

1. Adoption of the agenda

One item was added to the proposed agenda on "SMC Working Groups" before draft agenda item 7, and the agenda was adopted with 9 items.

The Chairperson referred to the previous week's meeting and suggested that the discussion could have been handled in a different manner. The President apologized for the previous week's meeting to those who attended.

2. Adoption of Council Minutes

The Council agreed to adopt the minutes which were just sent at the next meeting, in order to provide Council members time to review. Therefore, minutes for Council Meetings 21 (*the version revised by the 1st VP*), 22, 23, 24 as well as the Council's second emergency meeting remained pending.

3. President's Report

A council member brought up the DGACM Townhall hosted by the USG Abelian. One rep commented that publications seemed to be facing some changes and adversity and another responded by saying that the 4 duty stations in DGACM have always had competition and require management coordination.

A council member asked a question about new Chief of OIOS. The 1st VP Aitor Arauz Chapman reported that the meeting with her went smoothly and she seemed aware of many issues that the Union had addressed in the past. She seemed open to collaboration.

One council member addressed the ICSC session. The member suggested that we try to keep invited guests on track and on time. The council member stated that a similar situation occurred when the SRSG for Pension addressed the staff in the Fund's information session. The council member further emphasized that to make sure these sessions were useful and valuable to staff, they must allow for sufficient discussion time.

A council member commented that it was clear that the ICSC session created more questions than answers, particularly with regards to tax matters and the Staff Assessment.

Another briefly tried to explain that the system was based on the US taxation system, so that a local USA national would be equal to those they worked next to. The council member explained that the WG had discovered the system had not been reformed in 75 years and that the Tax Unit rarely employ staff whom must pay tax in the US.

The council member further explained that the money taken from non-USA nationals referred to as "Staff Assessment", was going into a fund that Member States use to offset their UN dues. A discussion ensued about taxation of pensions and those MS whom do not provide any type of Social Security or government benefits.

Another council member praised the work of the Second Vice President and the Staff and Tax Assessment Review (STAR-WG) and its members. The council member further underlined that this was a successful way to raise issues facing staff in a transparent manner.

DOS Townhall meeting was attended by the leadership in absence of the staff reps and Francisco Brito reported about the session he had attended that morning about emergency preparedness.

4. EB Report

A Council member asked about the water stations, filtration and cleaning, and short discussion ensued concerning the quality of water from the fountains.

The member stated that other Staff Union have interest in the Council's resolution on Pension investments and she requested that this be posted on the u-seek website.

5. UNSU Finances

The Treasurer stated that the financial statements would be shared at the next meeting, in the new year.

A staff council member reminded the Treasurer that the EB decided that there would be "*all donations welcome*" boxes and the Treasurer would have to lock these and count money and deposit it after the party.

A staff rep asked how much money was being spent on the Holiday party. The President answered that the budget was reduced to USD 7,000, without counting potential income from donations.

6. Winter Recess

The Council agreed to suspend its work for a winter recess from 16 December 2019 until 3 January 2020.

7. Membership of SMC Working Groups

There was a call by the First VP for Staff council volunteers for two SMC working groups: for the GSDM WG Yogesh Sakhardande had volunteered earlier via email. Karina Loktionova volunteered for the Performance Evaluation WG. Both were confirmed by the Council.

8. Reports by Units

One staff rep reported that a supervisor had emailed staff asking for uncertified sick leave to be submitted to prior approval. Other council member echoed the similar reports, while others mentioned that managers were trying to micromanage the use of USL.

One council member suggested the Union must try to tackle this issue, as there seems to be no consistency across Sections and Departments. She suggested a Union led

information session. The President suggested to include Medical and OHR for information about staff rules and regulations that govern this particular area.

The discussion turned to the way sick leave is recorded in UMOJA, including the difference between doctors' notes to justify absences and the need to provide a certificate after 20 days, which includes diagnosis. Questions were raised regarding confidentiality of "medical notes" and "medical diagnoses". There was a general lack of clarity and understanding by staff and supervisors regarding these rules and procedures. The Staff Council agreed to address the issue with the corresponding Departments and inform staff accordingly.

9. AOB

The First VP reported that a staff was facing challenges with NYSC, which she had signed up to under the UN promotion. She was being billed additional hidden charges. It was decided that the Union will remove the NYSC from the list of promotions on the website.

The Leadership had interviewed an intern for the office and had decided to bring the candidate on board. There are a few other candidates they will continue to interview.

The selected candidate for the G-5 position had obtained a more attractive post. Leadership is working on re-establishing a regular budgeted post, because TJOs were not usually attractive.

The meeting adjourned at 14:33 PM
