



Minutes/Actes:

Meeting No: 46/46
Date: 28 May 2020
Time: 13:20 - 14:48 PM EST
Venue: Virtual (MS Teams)
Quorum: 13/17 Units

46th Staff Council Meeting Minutes

The meeting was quorate at 13:20 PM EST with 13 Units present. Staff Council Chair Camille McKenzie chaired the meeting and Assistant Secretary Sarah M'Bodji, and Emmanuella René, UNSU Staff Assistant took notes.

Units present were: 06, 14, 17, 20, 21, 22, 24, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33.

All members of the leadership team were in attendance.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted with a suggested switch of order change adding item Report by Units to item 3 during the ongoing crisis.

It was clarified this was acceptable and in line with procedures from Robert's Rules of Order.

2. Adoption of previous minutes

The minutes for the 44th and 45th of the 46th Staff Council were tabled for adoption for next meeting, due to edits recently sent by a council member by email prior to the commencement of the current meeting.

It was stated the Meeting Minutes for the 44th, 45th of the 46th Staff Council Meeting would be recirculated for any additional comments.

The Assistant Secretary reminded Council members to send edits by email to facilitate more productive meetings.

3. Reports by Units

Yogesh Sakhardande (Unit 26) reported a future meeting with Under Secretary General (USG) of Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA).

Sarah M'Bodji (Unit 31) reported about supporting other Staff reps with creation of private Teams and offered her support for others whom may require 365, Teams, SharePoint and One Drive technical support. She reported on the ongoing work and meetings services on Future of Meetings Servicing Unit (WG-FMSU).

Coralie Tripier (Unit 30) reported on UN High level Financing of COVID-19 Ambassador hosted by the Secretary-General (SG) meeting today and Headquarters. She reported that the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM) Interpretation Services was on-site and off-site doing live interpretation in 6 languages. She also reported Staff concerns raised regarding family challenges with Visas, explained some were experiencing major delays within UN Visa office and Host Country offices.

Aitor Arauz Chapman clarified that visa issues and procedures currently for non-host Country G-4 Visa were challenging in current teleworking crisis, citing supply chain disruptions, challenges with delivery and shipping of documents as one a major source of delay. He outlined that G-4 Visa holders need to renew work permits as soon as possible based on current delays.

4. President's Report and Summary of Communications

Aitor Arauz Chapman thanked Emmanuella René for sending the report and clarified the new process was going well with her support.

Michelle Rockcliffe (Unit 6) again requested for upcoming week highlights and addressed some concerns in the report regarding meeting of the Joint Negotiation Committee (JNC). She asked for clarifications if there were any binding Joint Negotiation Committee (JNC) "agreements" reached.

Aitor Arauz Chapman replied that Joint Negotiation Committee (JNC) meeting was not labelled as an "agreement". He explained that the downsizing group is meeting every two weeks. He further elaborated that Working Groups are dealing with ongoing negotiations which have a lot of in flux. He explained that details may not be best way for communications.

He further discussed the framework for UNHQ return to the Workplace published last week along with Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) accompanying it.

Patel Noble (Unit 14) explained that he was concerned about inclusion and was supposed to be invited to Staff Management Committee meetings virtually. He was not included and asked for explanation. He underscored that council members required learning in these experiences for business continuity and other issues that may need to be addressed in the future in this forum.

Francisco Brito explained the Performance Management Working Group he has attended, and he reminded the council of the discussions. He reiterated that he has briefed the council every week.

Francisco Brito took responsibility for Sherif Mohamed (Unit 27) and Patel Noble (Unit 14) not being included based on challenges and that he was out on leave the previous week.

Michelle Rockcliffe (Unit 6) reminded the council that Staff Management Committee (SMC) and Joint Negotiation Committee (JNC) are most important that Council should be up to date and briefed, she further urged for more communication on these meetings and discussions.

Sergio Pires Vieira (Unit 24) asked for COVID guides for overtime for Professional staff and working hours and working week and challenges for staff in this category where they are essentially working at all hours in some cases.

Aitor Arauz Chapman agreed that the working hours indeed in current time, requires clarification and this should be raised at Directors or Under-Secretary General levels by staff reps in regular meetings. He discussed compensation.

5. Executive Board Report

There was no EB Meeting or report due to the holiday weekend.

6. UNSU Finances

Jaime Garreta (Unit 18) explained nothing to report.

7. 2021 Budget

Aitor Arauz Chapman explained the draft budgets are out. He updated the council of progress for a training on budget reading with the leadership. He will keep council abreast and meeting with each department's staff reps.

Francisco Brito explained he had some delays and will report back due to holiday week.

Ramona Kohrs commented that staff reps want this training for advice on reading these and for business continuity.

8. Rules of meeting Procedures

Ramona Kohrs shared her screen and she and Michelle Rockcliffe (Unit 6) gave a presentation on Robert's Rules.

9. WG Return to Office

Jesus Parado (Unit 33) reported on Department of Operational Support (DOS) return to office. Michelle Rockcliffe (Unit 6) clarified if he wanted to continue with the council his idea on a working group.

Michelle Rockcliffe (Unit 6) clarified that this was placed on the agenda by Jesus Parado (Unit 33) in effort to have a Working Group (WG) (?) in previous meeting. Jesus Parado (Unit 33) reported that he was working on this locally.

Patricia Nemeth clarified that there will be focal points for Headquarters (HQ) for each Department appointed for returning to office and will meet with Departmental Staff reps, she said she would share a list of the focal points so reps could facilitate local meetings.

10. AOB

Sebastien Cervantes (Unit 22) reported on an upcoming meeting with Under Secretary General of Department of Global Communications (DGC). He underscored having a unified council position on returning to work. He highlighted a concern amongst staff on any quick return to the office citing safety and the strength of the Union during this time to ensure that staff are kept as paramount and we as a Union capitalize on this newfound bargaining power the Union has acquired during our leadership in the current crisis.

Sarah M'Bodji (Unit 31) thanked Sebastien Cervantes (Unit 22) and asked if there was any updates on the Culinary and Catering Committee.

Aitor Arauz Chapman briefed about the Facilities Management Service (FMS) chief and Union whom service the Culinary, he suggested we communicate with the Union.

It was asked if there have been any further communications or positions taken regarding Culinary. Leadership suggested that we support and communicate with the members of the catering committee and support a transparent process upon their return.

Francisco Brito explained he has begun communicating with the members of the Catering Committee and he will report back.

Simona Chindea (Unit 24) raised a concern from staff whom are inquiring about retirement packages, and early age 55 years old for potential retirees. She asked for clarifications on potential post cuts, ages, and requirements with person in this case. She also raised staff concerns with current visa processing challenges and how we could support staff.

The 1st Vice-President highlighted that the United Nations given the current circumstances might not be able to facilitate any immigration assistance request on behalf of the Staff, all staff members are aware that they are living in the United States of America (USA) solely for work purposes and are required to go back to their home country upon the termination of their contract.

Jesus Parado (Unit 33) and Aitor Arauz Chapman clarified challenges and that there is no post reductions currently in any proposed Budgets.

Sarah M'Bodji (Unit 31) finalized the meeting giving positive feedback from her unit regarding their acknowledgement of Union work, its strength, social network, general support and events. She reiterated Sebastien Cervantes (Unit 22)'s early point regarding the proper use and care of this newly acquired collective strength and bargaining power.

The meeting adjourned at 14:48.