



Minutes/Actes:

Meeting No: 46/73
Date: 28 January 2020
Time: 13:15 - 14:30
Venue: Virtual
Quorum: 10/17 Units

46th Staff Council Meeting Minutes

The meeting was quorate at 13:30 with 09 Units present. The Deputy Chair Ramona Kohrs chaired the meeting and Secretary Sherif Mohamed took notes. Units present were: 06, 14, 17, 21, 22, 24, 26, 27, 29, 31. The leadership team was in attendance.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted with 9 items, with a new item on pension fund as agenda item 3.

2. Adoption of previous minutes

Minutes for the 69th meeting were adopted. Minutes for the 72nd meetings remain pending.

3. Pension Fund

Michelle Rockcliffe (Unit 06) continued explaining the issue with the investments in “derivatives instruments”, among other issues. She also continued explaining the draft resolution paragraph by paragraph.

4. Reports by Units

Karina Loktionova (Unit 29) inquired about the possibility of having long service awards this year, in light of the COVID-19 situation. She also raised inquiries about the possibility of buyouts.

The President Patricia Nemeth mentioned that the issue was discussed with the Office of Human Resources last year, with the intention to have the awards ceremony, which didn't work out. Efforts to have the ceremony again were undergoing and updates in this regard will be reported timely.

Regarding the buyouts, The President explained that buyouts are usually offered on a case-by-case basis and depending on the budget of each department. For instance, she

mentioned that the Department of Safety and Security offered a few packages on some Security staff last month and that some other cases were pending. Answering a question regarding the role of staff reps in this regard, the President advised the staff representatives to represent their constituents who wish to avail the opportunity of a buyout and mentioned that Security staff representatives usually help their constituents handling such matters.

Winryck Ford (Unit 22) updated the Council on the situation at the Yearbook Unit and described it as stable at the moment, however, it was important to keep an eye on this matter. He also thanked the Deputy Chair for her invaluable efforts in this regard, and that no progress would have been achieved without her involvement.

5. President's Report and Summary of Communications

Karina Loktionova asked about the meeting with the Controller and the news about a better financial position this year, including the possibility of lifting the hiring freeze and asked whether this information could be shared with constituents.

The President explained that the Controller was planning to have a townhall on this matter. The 2nd VP Francisco Brito explained to the Council members how the process of executing the budget takes place starting from the instructions from Controller's office to all heads of entities with specific budget execution plan for each department.

Regarding the preparation of the budget, the Deputy Chair called for the staff representatives to insist to be included in consultations regarding the budget drafts before they were finalized and submitted.

Michelle Rockcliffe inquired about the HLCM meeting mentioned in the President's report and called for the Leadership to inform the Council about any discussions regarding Pension Fund matters. The President explained that the meeting only covered the flexible working arrangements and had nothing to do with Pension Fund matters.

Sergio Pires Vieira (Unit 24) asked for more information regarding the paragraph in the President's report that describes the proposals made in the context of flexible working arrangements (FWA) as well as their risks.

The President thought that communications, for instance, was declining as a result of the FWAs and that she highlighted the different issues with communications, in addition to other issues, during that meeting. She also referred to the different applications of FWAs between different departments. She further highlighted the need to resources to support the implementation of any long-term FWAs and listed the initiatives taken by other UN entities and the lack of similar initiatives in the UN Headquarters.

The Deputy Chair thought it was the Organization's responsibility to provide the necessary accommodation needed for FWAs, as long as they were imposed by the Organization.

Michelle Rockcliffe inquired about the interim report of the task force on "performance management". The 2nd VP updated the Council on the proposals made by management regarding performance management and the cautious reaction of the Unions in this regard.

The Assistant Treasurer Yogesh Sakhardande thought that the assumption that staff members were saving money by working from home was false and gave a lot of examples why the staff members' cost of living increased with the introduction of FWAs.

6. Executive Board Report

Nothing was raised.

7. UNSU Finances

The Council members were invited to direct their questions about the budget to the Treasurers at the Council's next meeting.

8. Consultation on Phase 3 "Next Normal"

The President and 1st VP updated the Council on the preparations of the intended "dialogues" and the Council members discussed the different ideas that they hoped would emerge from these dialogues.

9. AOB

Michelle Rockcliffe inquired about the date of the upcoming G to P examinations and thought the Council should be proactive and look for mentors/courses to help staff members prepare for these examinations.

The Deputy Chair informed the Council that the G to P was underway, yet she did not the exact details of each exam. The 1st VP promised to check the status of this matter and report back to the Council.

Simona Chindea (Unit 24) asked whether she can use the MetLaw legal plan to hire an attorney for a personal dispute with her child's school.

Michelle Rockcliffe advised Simona Chindea to reach out to MetLaw and check whether they cover this kind of disputes.

The meeting adjourned at 15:10.