

NYS & CSEA STATEWIDE SAFETY AND HEALTH COMMITTEE

August 26, 2008

MEETING MINUTES

Attendees:

Management:	Chuck Vejvoda, Co-Chair	GOER
	Andy Barna	SUNY
	Scot Chamberlain	OMH
	Michelle Speanburg	OMH
	Nick Schkrioba	WCB
	Tony DeMarco	WCB
	Larry Enoch	OGS
	Brian Gibney	DOT
	Sue Ann Hart	OMRDD
	Debye Lurie	OCFS
CSEA:	Paul Blujus	DOH
	Frank Cosentino	Liquor Authority
	Deborah Downey	OMRDD
	Karen Maikels	OASAS
	Nicholas McKay	DEC
	Maryann Phelps	SUNY
	Virginia Stubbs	OMH
CSEA Staff:	Janet Foley, Co-Chair	
	Matthew C. Kozak	
	Monique St. Hilaire	
Partnership Staff:	Jeannine Morell	
	Peter Trolio	
	Yvette Malavé Diaz	
	Stephanie Rockmacher	
	Mark Stackrow	
Absences:	Valerie Ayers	SUNY
	Matthew Guinane	OMRDD
	Tito Seoane	OCFS
	John Suchy	DOCS
	Heather Spencer	Parks-CSEA
	Mark Stipano	CSEA Staff

1. Introductions and Opening Remarks

Janet Foley and Chuck Vejvoda, co-chairs of the committee, welcomed new and returning members of the committee. They explained that the main function of the committee will be to identify hazards faced by CSEA members and ways to reduce injuries through best practices. Committee projects will be assigned to sub-committees that in the past has proven to be the most efficient means to research, develop and complete assignments.

Jeannine Morell and Peter Trolio, co-directors of the Partnership, also welcomed the committee and explained that the Partnership will be involved in the committee's work by providing administrative and technical support.

2. Review of Contract Language

Chuck Vejvoda gave a brief history of the committee, which has emerged as a collaborative and task-oriented labor-management committee. He explained that the Side Letter to the collective bargaining agreement lists the agenda for the committee for 2007-2011. Copies of the Article 15 language for each bargaining unit and the side letter were distributed.

3. Safety and Health Committee Training

The Partnership provided an introduction to labor-management committee training. The committee was asked the following five assessment questions to gain insight from the committee on how they think it is currently working. It was the consensus of the committee members that they have good labor-management working relationships and need more labor-management structural training. This training will be given by the Partnership at the next scheduled statewide meeting. Committee members were encouraged to take the on-line course on *Labor-Management Committee Basics* before the next meeting. The course covers structural and procedural items that will be addressed at the next committee meeting. Instructions for taking the online course were distributed.

The committee members brainstormed on the following five questions. (A summary of the responses to these questions can be found at the end of the minutes).

- A. What are some of the challenges and issues you will face being part of this committee?
- B. If you had a magic wand and you could make this committee an ideal committee, what would it look like?
- C. What would be the most divisive issues this committee could face?
- D. What are your expectations for this committee?
- E. What is the history that may get in the way?

4. Review of Operating Agreement, Roles, Responsibilities and Ground Rules

The committee members were asked to review the existing Operating Procedures for the NYS and CSEA Statewide Safety and Health Labor-Management Committee and to make suggestions for changes at the next scheduled meeting. These procedures were originally developed in 2002.

The committee members were asked about what their role and responsibilities should be. The following were their responses:

- Study and research
- Attendance and participation in full committee and sub-committees meetings
- Suggest agenda items
- Serve as liaisons between CSEA and agencies on pertinent issues
- Foster and assist agency-level safety and health committees

The committee was asked to suggest ground rules to be used during meetings. The following were their responses:

- Report attendance/non-attendance to person responsible prior to scheduled meetings
- Be on-time
- Allow one speaker at a time
- Respect everyone's opinion
- Mute cell phones or put on vibrate
- Stay on task – no side-bar conversations
- Adhere to agenda time schedule
- Alternate plans in case of inclement weather–alternates, video conferencing, conference calling

Motions were made and passed to:

Locate all future meetings at the Partnership offices with option to change hosting location with notice. Schedule meetings on the 2nd Thursday of every other month with 8:30 a.m. refreshment and 9:00 a.m. start, conclude on or about 2:30 p.m.

2008: November 6 (1st Thursday)

2009: January 8th

March 12th

May 14th

5. End of Contract Report

Mark Stackrow referred to the summary report brochure of the 2003-2007 Article 15 statewide committee accomplishments and gave a summary of each sub-committee project and present status.

Elements of a Safety and Health Program: The sub-committee developed a 100-page document on implementing an effective safety and health management system. The proposal is in the Governor's office awaiting approval.

SUNY Pressure Vessel Safety: The sub-committee addressed causes of fatalities and injuries due to boiler/steam pressure vessel heating system failures at SUNY boiler plant locations and was in the process of developing training course outline that addresses potential hazards and precautions to take when dealing with system failures. The committee, when appointed, will continue to develop the needed training.

Imminent Danger: The sub-committee worked on a definition and was in the process of completing a training program.

Workplace Security: The sub-committee was involved in preparing guidelines for preventing violence in the workplace. During this time, the Employer Workplace Violence Prevention Law was passed but rules and regulations were not yet developed by the NYS Department of Labor. The sub-committee did not want to move forward on the project until DOL's regulations are finalized.

Ergonomics: The sub-committee produced a downloadable guide called the *Ergonomic Product Guide* that is a resource for state agencies, CSEA leaders and workers on addressing risk factors and reducing work related injuries through the selection and use of ergonomic products and equipment. The guide is geared toward workers in food service, maintenance, housekeeping, mail and supply. Alert cards and posters were distributed announcing its availability on the Partnership's website.

Workplace Environment: The sub-committee worked on two booklets on Extreme Temperatures. One was developed for supervisors and the other for line workers. After updating with information on the Sun Law, the booklets will be complete and can go to print and distribution. The sub-committee also has prepared an Indoor Air Quality Manual. The previous sub-committee initially reviewed the sections of the manual that had been completed by a consultant. The sections are now under copyright review.

Returning members of the committee were asked what they thought about working on the sub-committees under the last contract. It was the consensus that the sub-committee members had very good working relationships.

6. Side Letter Negotiations

Janet Foley reviewed the side letter topics that include:

Developing and maintaining agency level safety and health labor-management systems based on the Elements model;
Ergonomics in healthcare/benefits of safe patient handling, musculoskeletal disorders;
Imminent danger;
Pressurized heating systems;
Lock-out/tag-out; and
Employee identification

The committee brainstormed and came up with the following possible topics for committee training:

- Confined Spaces
- Mandatory Overtime
- Ergonomics
- Lock Out/Tag Out
- Asbestos
- Right to Know
- Other unions and their issues
- PESH overview
- Labor-Management Committees
- Dept. of Civil Service new reports

7. MOU for Safe Patient Handling Conference

Chuck discussed the terms of the memorandum of understanding between CSEA and the State which states that through negotiated money, they will pay for the \$100 registration fee for up to three labor and three management representatives per facility and that the State has provided for release time without use of accruals. The committee unanimously approved the MOU.

Meeting adjourned.

Safety & Health Committee Assessment Questions Results

A. ***What are some of the challenges and issues you will face being part of the committee?***

- 1) Trying to look at the issues from both a labor and management perspective
- 2) Waiting on the legislative process (regulations); two examples which have taken almost two years so far include:
 - a. Workplace Violence
 - b. Domestic Violence
- 3) Overcoming indifference for safety – statewide level and agency level
- 4) Need to measure the difference we make: measurable outcomes
- 5) Take successes and be able to expand the programs to other facilities and/or agencies
- 6) We have to sell our wares to the upper levels of management, both labor and management then we have to compete with other special interests when it comes to negotiated funds.
- 7) Time management
- 8) Getting everyone together
- 9) Money/budget issues
- 10) Sustaining the energy of the group
- 11) Getting people on the same page
- 12) Inviting management/CSEA program area specialists to be involved in sub-committees
- 13) Getting info/support to/from local level

B. ***If you had a magic wand and you could make this committee the ideal committee, what would it look like?***

- 1) Would look like this:
 - a. People work very well together/no divide
 - b. Mutual respect
 - c. Mutual goals
- 2) Have authority to implement, not just recommend changes/programs

- 3) Consistent attendance which keeps the work going
- 4) Have “big players” on committee
- 5) Representative of all employees/workers
 - a. Rainbow coalition of different people and ideas
 - 1) Have “guests” able to work on issues
 - 2) Communication “agencies ↔committee”
 - 3) Having representatives from non-committee represented agencies attend to communicate their issues
 - 4) Communication vehicle for all agencies/best practices
 - 5) Communication with other unions

C. *What could be the single, most divisive issue this committee will face?*

- 1) Effective implementation of programs and recommendations
- 2) Uneven utilization
- 3) Budget Constraints
- 4) During crunch time – most work is done by only a few members
- 5) Limited by the number of consultants on contract with little or no union/labor experience

D. *What are your expectations for this committee?*

- 1) Useable products that are used
- 2) Positive impact to the workforce across the state
- 3) Measure the impact of the product/system that is put into place so that it can be put into place across the board/statewide
- 4) Communication vehicle so that we can learn what the hazards are that the workforce faces (employee concerns)
- 5) Safer workplace for New York State employees

- 6) Zero lift (safe patient handling) success at other facilities
- 7) Split up time to develop projects in stages
- 8) Committee helps support agencies' safety and health departments to think outside the box
- 9) To provide a return on investment on implementing programs

E. *What is the history that may get in the way?*

- 1) History of Workplace Violence
- 2) Hurry up and wait!!!
- 3) Programs/ideas not brought to implementation
- 4) Agency not allocating enough resources
- 5) Outside interference from outside organizations (trying to do the right thing and other organizations tell you to stop)
- 6) Partnership provided mandated training
 - a. And now we are trying to put the focus on agencies to do that.