DOL LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 8, 2011, 10:30 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 205, LABOR BUILDING

Attendees: Commissioner Berry, Tina Morris-Anderson, John Baldwin, Kevin Beauregard, John Bogner, Jack Brinson, Art Britt, Tim Childers, Gina Cullen, Mike Daniels, Cliff Dautrich, Jane Gilchrist, Jack Given, Jennifer Haigwood, Alberta Hall, Phil Hooper, Felicia Hoover, Wanda Lagoe, Tiffany Lathan, Allen McNeely, Mike Morrow, Robin Odom, Dolores Quesenberry, Frank Seiber, Steve Sykes, Nick Vincelli, Anne Weaver and Lee White.

Commissioner Berry said the Legislature is back in session and there has been a power change in leadership. So far, in the budget process, the legislators have allowed the department to decide what cuts to make to the Department of Labor's budget.

Safety Awards season begins March 30th. The Commissioner is scheduled to attend all 30 of the Safety Awards banquets. In addition, she will be attending ceremonies and presenting awards for Sharpe, STAR and million hour awards throughout the year.

Commissioner Berry welcomed Jane Gilchrist to the department. Jane is General Counsel for the department and director of the Legal Affairs Division replacing John Hoomani.

Commissioner Berry stated the 2010 Annual Report is completed. She thanked team members and their employees for all the hard work showcasing the accomplishments contained in the report.

The Governor's budget recommended cuts of 11.2% which was part of the 5, 10 & 15% cuts. Commissioner Berry said the department continues to operate in a cost effective way. She stated Art and Jennifer continue to defend our budget to the legislature; however, the 11.2% may not be the final requested cuts.

Tiffany Lathan gave an EEO Update. Tiffany provided team members with a handout explaining the Department's current EEO status. The EEO Plan is complete and was sent to the Office of State Personnel (OSP) March 1, 2011. Once approved by OSP, the report will be posted on the internet. Tiffany asked Allen McNeely and Andy Frazier to provide two volunteers each to serve on the Department of Labor's EEO committee. OSP will be conducting audits and the committee should be in place before April 15.

Allen McNeely gave an OSH update. OSH has been in negotiations with Jon Helberg, OSHA Express Program, which has been successfully implemented in Minnesota and South Carolina state programs. The OSHA Express program will collect North Carolina Safety and Health data that the feds require and make it usable to us immediately. Presently OSH has to rely on Federal OSHA Information System (OIS) which is collected on a national data base and is not as accessible. If we can make OSHA Express happen we will have more control over our reports and data and have the information immediately available to us. The OIS has been delayed until fall 2011.

In January State Plan states met in Indiana for the OSHSPA meeting. Federal OSHA is reassessing their agenda in light of the 2010 elections. The Injury & Illness Prevention Program (I2P2) is still high on the agenda however the Small Business Association is weighing in heavily on this and other initiatives.

April 28 is Worker's Memorial Day. With OSHA turning forty this year, there should be national and state press.

The Corrective Action Plan for last year's EFAME is due today, March 8. Allen stated they will read the suggestions and decide if they need to make changes in the way they operate or just say no to the changes.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Ergo Center is up for review. Allen, Hollis Yelverton, our liaison with the Ergo Center, and Legal Affairs will quantify what our relationship with the Center will be.

Allen said there have been some violations in the National Recordkeeping NEP. Four out of five investigations are complete. Some areas of concern were found. Fatalities are low so far this year through February, 3 in 2011, 8 in 2010 and 5 in 2009.

Monday, March 14 Allen, Kevin Beauregard, Tim Childers, Art Britt and Jennifer Haigwood will be meeting with Carolinas AGC employees. OSH has an alliance with the Utility Contractors Association.

OSH helped create two new media information sheets; Hazardous Chemical Release and Confined Spaces. ETTA received national attention with its Forklifts and Material Handling Hazard Alert.

OSH staff will be meeting March 10th with Acting Area Director Bill Cochran in ORB 3rd floor conference room.

Jack Brinson gave a Budget Update. He provided a handout to team members entitled Report on Status of 3.50% Reduction by Fund on 2/28/2011. Jack told team members they were on target and doing a great job of managing their budgets. Kevin Beauregard asked if there would be an increase in mileage rates since gas prices are on the rise. Jack stated the mileage rates would probably be decreasing but NCDOL will look at options.

Dolores Quesenberry gave a Communications Update. Dolores said Communications has been working with Legal Affairs to launch a Facebook page for Apprenticeship. They will be testing the Facebook project to see if it is a viable tool in promoting Apprenticeship.

Art Britt gave a Legislative Update. Art told team members John Baldwin appeared before the NER legislative subcommittee February 23 and gave a presentation on the department's budget. Representative Julia Howard will be sponsoring an omnibus bill for the Department covering EDB, Boiler, OSH and Elevator.

Jennifer Haigwood said she and Art will be tracking other legislative issues affecting the department, one being regulatory reform to look at rules.

John Baldwin told team members 23.9 positions will be abolished which will be handled through loss of existing vacancy positions. The proposed retirement incentives of $10,000 with full benefits and $20,000 with reduced benefits will have to be approved by the General Assembly. He stated some employees who are eligible to retire had inquired of HR if their positions would be Rifd. Employees who are eligible to retire will not be Rifd.

Art Britt said the General Assembly leadership was not supportive of the proposed employee retirement incentive program.

Art Britt said State Construction has a contract to replace and upgrade the fire escapes on the back of the Labor Building. In Phase I of the project, the fire escape on the side of the building next to the Agriculture Building will be replaced completely. In Phase II, the fire escape on the Wilmington Street side of the building will be upgraded. Hollis Yelverton and Jiles Manning will be overseeing any safety and health issues on this project. Wanda Smitherman, Sandra Hamm or Art will also be available to answer questions regarding this project.

Tina Morris Anderson said the Department received an award from the State Employees Combined Campaign for contributing more than the previous year's total. The award is displayed in the Labor Building lobby.

Robin Odom told team members Apprenticeship is planning an Earn While You Learn Conference funded by a DOL grant to be held April 6-8. The Lineman's Rodeo is scheduled May 21 at the State Fairgrounds. Apprenticeship will participate in a webinar event entitled All About Apprenticeship. An Action Clinic also funded by USDOL is planned for May 18-20.

Frank Seiber said he appreciated everyone's patience as they continue to work on a replacement for File Net. Gary Franks is working with the vendor to address the Lake Boone Trail network issues.

Jack Given thanked Steve Sykes for his help with the Boiler audit. He thanked Cliff Dautrich for his hard work with the review.

Felicia Hoover said the OSH Review Commission has opened 26 new cases.

Gina Cullen told team members over 170 people attended the 17th Annual Gold Star Growers luncheon held February 2 at the Governor James G. Martin Building, State Fairgrounds.

Mike Morrow said Wage and Hour's reorganization is moving full speed ahead. The case load backlog is coming down.

Lee White stated HR is updating the department's Return to Work Policy and Overtime/FLSA policy. These policies should come out soon.

Mike Daniels asked team members to let employees know the US Postal Service is now charging 50 cents for each piece of mail returned to the department. Addresses should include name, street name and number, state and zip code.

John Bogner said the Safety Awards season begins at the end of March. Federal OSH will begin their audit of Consultative Services Bureau April 4th.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45.