

Minutes – HRM Pension Plan
Training & Education Sub-Committee
May 13th, 2013
IAFF Union Office – Corner of Robie St. & Lady Hammond Road
2nd Floor Boardroom
10 a.m. – noon

In Attendance:

Audra Abbott – Chair
Dan White – IAFF Voting Member

Mike Sampson – Management Voting Member
Sherry Hilchey – NUREA Alternate

1. Approval of Agenda

Approved as circulated.

2. Approval of Minutes of April 19th, 2013 and these minutes (May 13, 2013) approved via email May 22, 2013 to ensure the Committee has timely background for decision making on recommended changes.

Approved as circulated.

3. Business Arising:

3.1 HRM Pension Plan Annual Education Session (hereinafter, "AES")

Audra sent out a survey to all Committee members/alternates/participating employers to see how we did this year. As surveys are received Audra is forwarding them out via email to this committee vs. waiting to go over them at a meeting. So far, there has been very positive feedback. No need to change anything at this point for next year's AES.

3.2 Update: Introduction to Carver Model for Inclusion with New Appointment Package

Sherry conducted online research of the Carver Model to come up with an introductory letter that could be included with the Welcome Letter to new members/alternates appointed to the HRM Pension Committee. Mike volunteered to tweak the wording of the document to make it more 'reader friendly' to Committee members and to contact Sherry for whatever footnotes are required for the document. Mike did not get this done in time for this meeting.

Action: Mike to tweak the wording of the Carver Model document to make it more 'reader friendly' to Committee members and will then contact Sherry for whatever footnotes are required for the document. The document will then be circulated via email to the T&E sub-committee for approval and subsequent recommendation for acceptance to the Committee.

Action: Audra to recommend to HRM Pension Committee, on behalf of the T&E sub-committee that this document be incorporated into the Welcome Package for new members/alternates joining the HRM Pension Committee once approved by this sub-committee.

3.3 Update of 'My Pension Education Checklist'

Based on last meeting's discussion, Dan and Audra updated the Checklist to reflect the recommendations being made. More discussion took place surrounding whether or not alternates should be encouraged to attend 'introductory' Wharton training by taking the cost for attending out of the 'general' training budget as well. Other changes to the 'Checklist' include:

- Page 1, after 'Mandatory Requirements', add '(Core Training)' as this is what it is referred to in the Policy
- Line 1a., replace 'when appointed' to 'prior to my first pension meeting.'
- Line 1b., remove the word 'MANDATORY'
- Insert new Line 1c. reading 'I received my certification for the Trustee Development Program (TDP) – Basic sponsored by Humber College OR the Foundations of Trust Management Standards (FTMS) Program sponsored by International Foundation.'
- Line after 1c., replace 'Committee members and alternates are expected to familiarize themselves with the Orientation Manual' with 'Once the above training has been completed, you will be allocated a personal budget.' This was removed from the Checklist and Policy where the review of the Manual now takes place during the Orientation session with the CEO/Co-Chair. In the 'Additional Ongoing Education' section, next to the heading '(will come from personal budget)' will be added.

- Delete 2c. as this has been moved up to the 'mandatory' section above
- In 'Recommended Reading' section, after 1., in 2nd line, replace 'the Annual Pension Education Session' with 'Core Training'
- In 'Recommended Reading' section, 2a., after 'John', add 'H.' and replace 'Annual Pension Education Session' with 'Core Training'
- In 'Recommended Reading' section, 2b., replace 'Excellent' with 'Excellence'
- Re-title 'Ongoing Education' section 'Additional Ongoing Education (paid for out of personal budget)'
- In line after 'Additional Ongoing Education' section, 1st line, insert 'Core' prior to 'Training'
- In 'Additional Ongoing Education' section, 1) replace 2nd and 3rd sentences to read as follows. I understand that my attendance at 75% of Committee meetings is expected in order to make use of my personal budget and that I must sign the 'Code of Conduct'. Attendance at 'no charge' training is **always** encouraged.'
- On Page 2, 2), in last line replace 'the Annual Pension Education Session' with 'Core Training'
- On Page 2, in line after 2), insert title 'Additional Ongoing Education'
- In the same section, 1st line, delete 'Note: waived for those who earned an ATMS certificate previously.'
- In the same section, 2nd line, replace current wording with 'TDP Basic or FTMS (*only 1 was required as mandatory*)'
- In the same section, 3rd line, delete 'Basic'
Replace lines 4 – 7 with 'Advanced Trustee Management Standards Series (ATMS)'
Session A and Session B are 2-Day courses
Full Program is a 4-Day course
Note: FTMS is a pre-requisite to attend this course
- In column to the left of the above wording insert new wording
Session A _____
Session B _____
OR
Full Program ___'
- Insert new line after the above as follows 'ATMS Quality Series – For those who have completed ATMS'
- Insert new line before 'Canadian Pension & Benefits Institute (CPBI) Regional Conference' and insert title '**Other:** Networking Opportunities and Further Education in Pension Trends'
- In this section, 5th line, delete 'Carver Workshop'
- In 'How do I obtain an Advanced Financial Literacy Competency' title, replace 'an' with 'the'
- In line following 'How do I obtain an Advanced Financial Literacy Competency' title, replace 1st sentence with 'At least six (6) voting members will endeavor to attain the 'Advanced Financial Literacy' competency.'
- After 2nd sentence in the same section, add '**Note:** one 'Introductory' course will be paid for out of the 'general' training budget for voting members & alternates and one 'Advanced' course will be covered for voting members.'
- Within list of courses in this section, 3rd course, after 'Wharton', insert 'Advanced'

Action: Audra to recommend to HRM Pension Committee, on behalf of the T&E sub-committee that alternates also be exempted from having to pay for one (1) Wharton Introductory course along with voting members. Sherry and Audra will work on a power point presentation to walk the Committee through the changes being recommended and the reasons for them.

Action: Audra to recommend to HRM Pension Committee, on behalf of the T&E sub-committee that changes to 'My Pension Education Checklist' be approved

3.4 Review Personal Budget Amounts

A in depth discussion took place regarding personal training budgets. It was noted that in 2012, only 20% of the T&E Budget was spent. After a review of individual training records, it was also noted that members/alternates require more encouragement to attend educational events. There's a possibility alternates and voting members feel 'constrained' by their current budget amounts of \$2500 & \$5000 respectively as many certificate courses/conferences exceed these limits when airfare, hotel, etc. are included. This committee feels that by paying for mandatory and 'strongly encouraged Financial Literacy Training courses (1 introductory for all and 1 introductory and 1 advanced for voting members) will assist both members and alternates attending these certificate courses along with another annual event or course in a year or over 2 years respectively. We are recommending an increase in personal budgets to \$6000/\$3000 for voting members and alternates respectively.

It is important to note that the sub-committee felt that based on last year's budget spending and even including the current increase in participation at training events thus far in 2013, the overall budget, (referred to in the policy/checklist as 'general' training budget) can adequately absorb the cost of the mandatory and strongly recommended training as outlined in the recommendation from 3.3 in these minutes and 4.2 in April 2013's minutes.

Action: Audra to recommend to HRM Pension Committee, on behalf of the T&E sub-committee that budgets be increased for voting members and alternates to \$6000/\$3000 respectively.

3.5 Update 'Training & Education Policy' (include 4.1 & 4.4 below)

To ensure the T&E Policy and Checklist are consistent and to ensure references to the website are updated to reflect it is now up and running, the following changes were required to be made to the Policy.

- Page 1, change 'revised and approved' and 'review' dates to 'June 2013' and 'March 2014' respectively.
- Page 2, immediately after Orientation Manual contents, delete 'Committee members and alternates are expected to familiarize themselves with the Orientation Manual' and move the 2nd sentence 'The Orientation Manual supplements the education program; it does not replace it' to the end of (i) on the same page.
- Page 3, in 'Ongoing Member/Alternate Education & Training' delete 'Ongoing'
- In first line in this section, delete 'In addition to the Annual Education Session'
- In '(i)' of this section, in 2nd paragraph, after '**Employers**' add '**followed by certification in either:**
Foundations of Trust Management Standards (FTMS) – sponsored by International Foundation
OR
Trustee Development Program (TDP) Basic – sponsored by Humber College
- Page 4, at end of first paragraph on page, add '**Note:** Core Training and one (1) 'Introductory' course outlined in the 'Advanced Financial Literacy' section (listed in the table on page 5 of this Policy) will not be paid for out of personal budgets. For voting members, one (1) 'Advanced' course outlined in the 'Advanced Financial Literacy' section will also not be paid for out of personal budgets. Where these certification courses are required and/or strongly encouraged for attendance by members to attain set out levels of competency, a general budget is available to cover the costs associated with attendance.'
- Page 4, at the end of the 3rd paragraph, add the wording ' A passing grade is required to obtain funding from the general training budget.
- Page 4, replace (xi) wording to read as follows 'The Pension Office maintains each Committee member/alternate's training calendar and they are available on the HRMPP website. Members/alternates are encouraged to review their training calendars for accuracy on an annual basis.
How to access the website:
1. Browse to www.hrmpensionplan.ca
2. Click on the link at the bottom, "I am on the Pension Committee"
3. Consult Pension Office for User ID and password
- Page 5, replace first paragraph with 'The Pension Office provides Committee members/alternates/ Participating Employers with an Annual Events Calendar via the Member section of the Pension Plan website. The calendar contains all training/conferences available, links to session content and is updated throughout the year as additional training opportunities become known.' The last sentence in this paragraph remains the same.
- Page 5, delete 2nd paragraph commencing 'The Pension Office will provide...'
- In 'Guideline for Attendance at Educational Opportunities' table, in 'Basic Pension Plan' column, after 'Annual Education Session' add 'Plus certification in one of the following: Trustee Development Program (TDP) Basic OR Foundations of Trust Management Standards (FTMS)'
- Page 5, in 'Year 1' after 'Session', add 'PLUS become certified in one of either Trustee Development Program (TDP) Basic or Foundations of Trust Management Standards (FTMS)
- Page 5, in 'Year 2', delete 'Note: Pre-requisite waived for those who earned an ATMS certificate under the previous curriculum.
- Page 6, first paragraph following 'Year 4 & Onwards' section, 1st line, delete 'It is to be recognized that'
- Page 6, at end of same paragraph add 'Note: The Deviation form may be found on the HRMPP website.
- Page 6, in second paragraph following 'Year 4 & Onwards' section, replace with this wording 'Referring to the Guideline for Attendance at Educational Opportunities above, at least six (6) voting Members, will endeavour to attain the 'Advanced Financial Literacy' competency. A member is deemed to have attained the 'Advanced Financial Literacy' competency once they have attended one (1) introductory and one (1) advanced course

as denoted in that category above. The Pension Office will advise the Training & Education Sub-Committee if/when less than six (6) voting members have this competency

- Last bullet point on page, make the 'R' in 'Review' small cap

Action: Audra to recommend to HRM Pension Committee, on behalf of the T&E sub-committee that changes to the Training & Education Policy be approved.

4. New Business:

4.1 New Member/Alternate Attendance at Meetings in First Year Requirement

There was a review of the attendance to 75% of meetings requirement for new appointments to the Committee. With the current mandatory requirements (Orientation session + attendance at AES) this was allowing members to have a training budget they cannot use because they have not attended 75% of meetings in the last 12 months. A 'Deviation' was approved for one such member to attend an upcoming conference. It was decided that should the Main Committee accept the recommendation to make TDP Basic or FTMS mandatory training as well that this will no doubt make this situation redundant as it wouldn't be too likely a newly appointed member would be able to complete all three mandatory training requirements in less than a 12 month period. This will be re-visited if it persists in being an issue.

4.2 Making Changes to Flight/Hotel After Already Booked

Donna Bayers has advised that although she has only had to change flights 3-4 times in the last 5 years, she feels there should be something in the policy that is clear. Reps need to be fully aware of the Policy as well. The penalty to change flights is usually \$50 plus tax and then there could be a fare difference which in the last instance was around \$150.00. Penalties differ depending on hotel. If you are adding a night, you simply pay the extra night if available. If you are cancelling a hotel, it depends on their cancellation policy but they usually don't give you your money back. She does not think it is worth paying for any kind of insurance or a higher fee as it doesn't happen that often. We just need to clarify the Policy and ensure new members are being provided with an in depth review of their Orientation Binder during their Orientation Session. There was some discussion as to the nature of what should be considered a reasonable excuse to cancel a flight such as having the attendee re-book the flight themselves or have the difference, if it is higher, come out of their personal budgets or their own pocket. The sub-committee is not suggesting additional wording for the Expense Policy at this time. It is understood that emergencies or unavoidable changes in plans (i.e. HRM operational requirement, death in family, etc.) will happen from time to time. There will be some education around the costs for these changes provided during the next report to the Main Committee which should be sufficient to address this issue.

Action: Issue to be brought to the attention of the Main Committee.

4.3 Reimbursement for Expenses When Driving – What Expenses Can Be Claimed

Donna Bayers has advised that we use HRM's mileage rate and that we reimburse those wishing to drive to conferences up to the amount of what the most inexpensive flight for that particular trip is at the time. She then follows the expense policy for the rest of the expenses. She also noted that some attending training/conferences end up extending their stays and in some cases advise that they do not require all hotel nights that would normally be required to attend the conference. We are assuming that in these cases, the attendee is staying with nearby family or friends and this saves the Plan money. There are other times that an attendee has a 'hotel of choice' and does not wish to stay at the conference hotel. The Plan would still pay for the # of nights that would be required to attend the conference but, up to an amount that does not exceed what the conference hotel is charging. In some cases, attendees may travel regularly and enjoy lower hotel rates through participation in a specific hotel chain's Rewards Program. This saves the Plan money where attendees are reimbursed by receipt only for accommodations. In essence, this sub-committee recommends that the Plan never reimburse for more than the number of hotel nights 'required' to attend a conference and not reimburse money to attendees for hotel nights if they are not going to be staying in a hotel. Accommodations are reimbursed by receipt only if they are not paid for by the Pension Office directly.

Action: Audra to recommend to HRM Pension Committee, on behalf of the T&E sub-committee that the Plan never reimburse for more than the number of hotel nights 'required' to attend a conference and not reimburse money to attendees for hotel nights if they are not going to be staying in a hotel. Accommodations are reimbursed by receipt only if they are not paid for by the Pension Office directly.

4.4 Deadlines for Requests for Training to Executive Assistant

Donna Bayers requested that the sub-committee review whether or not there should be a requirement for members/alternates to contact her directly and in a timely manner for registrations.

Notification to Donna by an 'Early Bird' deadline was suggested as a means to ensure timely requests for registrations. 'Early Bird' deadlines are noted in the training calendar for each course/conference approximately one (1) year in advance. During the T&E review, it was noted that by registering early, the Plan may save up to \$1k in registration fees alone. Registering too

close to the session date may result in more expensive flights and/or losing out on obtaining discounted conference hotel rates (Session Sponsors reserve blocks of rooms for attendees for a specified period of time). Members & alternates can still submit a deviation form for consideration should they wish to do so. Mike did not feel comfortable requiring members/alternates to provide notice to the Executive Assistant by the early bird deadline. However, the remainder of the sub-committee agreed to bring forward the recommendation to the Committee for their consideration.

Action: Audra to recommend to HRM Pension Committee, on behalf of the T&E sub-committee that members/alternates with training requests do so via email to the Executive Assistant before the 'early bird' date indicated on the training calendar (if one).

4.5 Review: Evaluation Form Submitted by New Alternate from Orientation Meeting

One survey was received recently and the appointed alternate reported satisfaction with the Orientation Session. Audra spoke with another recently appointed alternate who reported they were satisfied with their meeting as well.

5. Standing Items:

6. Added Items

None

7. Adjournment & Next Meeting Date

Meeting adjourned at noon. The next meeting has not been scheduled.



Audra K. Abbott, Chair T&E Sub-Committee

May 22, 2013

Approved