

Minutes of April 25, 2019, Meeting of the Vermont Labor Relations Board

The meeting of the entire Board convened at 9:05 a.m. in the Vermont Labor Relations Board Hearing Room located at 13 Baldwin Street in Montpelier. Present were Chairperson Richard Park and Members Roger Donegan, David Boulanger, Alan Willard, Robert Greemore and Karen Saudek. Also present were Executive Director Timothy Noonan and Clerk Melinda Moz-Knight.

Status of Cases

Mr. Noonan provided a caseload status report. He reported that case filings have been average since the beginning of 2019. We have 40 open cases which is 40 percent above the average of 25 open cases. The Board discussed reasons for this including that more cases have gone to hearing than in the past.

Board Assignments

May 9: Park, Donegan, Saudek
May 30: Greemore, Saudek, Donegan
June 6: Park, Saudek, Boulanger
June 13: Greemore, Willard, Boulanger
June 27: Donegan, Willard, Park
July 11: Greemore, Boulanger, Saudek
July 18: Park, Donegan, Saudek
July 25: Greemore, Donegan, Willard
August 1: Boulanger, Park, Saudek
August 8: Park, Saudek, Donegan
August 15: Greemore, Willard, Donegan
August 22: Willard, Greemore, Donegan
August 29: Willard, Greemore, Donegan
September 5: Saudek, Greemore, Boulanger
September 12: Greemore, Boulanger, Saudek
September 19: Greemore, Donegan, Saudek

Budget:

Mr. Noonan discussed our budget and responded to questions.

Legislation: Mr. Noonan discussed the implications of S. 156, Binding Interest Arbitration for State and Municipal Employees. If this legislation passed the Board may not decide Last Best Offer cases. Mr. Noonan will be available to the legislature if they have any questions.

Conferences and Training Sessions:

Mr. Noonan asked who would like to go to the New England Consortium of State Labor Relations Agencies (NECSLRA) conference on June 21st as well as the Association of Labor Relations Conference (ALRA) being held from July 20th through July 23rd. The entire Board will be attending the NECSLRA conference. Karen Saudek and Alan Willard have expressed interest in going to ALRA.

The Board continued their discussion on hosting a conference at the Capitol Plaza in late fall 2019. Discussion on possible topics will occur at the next Board training which will be held on May 16th.

The one-day training sessions for union stewards and front-line supervisors at various locations in the State with the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service has been moved to taking place in the Fall. Mr. Noonan will be conducting the training sessions along with two federal mediators.

The Board discussed holding a case preparation and presentation training for attorneys. This would be a discussion between the Board and the participants focusing on what has been observed in the past and what could be improved in the future from both sides of the question.

Tim Noonan will be conducting his Unfair Labor Practice, Grievance and Unit Determination trainings in November and/or December of 2019.

Board Procedures and Practices

The Board discussed the process we should follow when granting a continuance as well as how to notify the parties of our timeframe for how long a case should take from filing to hearing. It was also mentioned that we may want to start asking how long parties feel a case could take so we can set aside the appropriate amount of time.

Mr. Noonan handed out a sheet detailing possible scenarios in which conflict of interest questions arise. This will be discussed further at the next Board training.

David Boulanger and Karen Saudek both expressed interest in being trained on how to chair a hearing.

Mr. Noonan checked with the Board that the way drafts of decisions were handled worked for everyone. Everyone agreed that the current policy was fine. It was suggested that we may want to try tracking changes when working on difficult decisions.

Mr. Noonan responded to questions on how Board members should be reimbursed. If a Board member is attending a Board meeting, hearing or training session they should charge the full per diem rate no matter how long the meeting or hearing lasted. They do not charge extra for travel time. The hourly rate applies to case preparation and Board deliberations. Travel time can be included if using the hourly rate.

The public meeting adjourned at approximately 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Melinda Moz-Knight