

Standing Committee Meeting Minutes

October 26, 2021 at 2:00 PM

Present: Rachel Stefan, Alexandra Carter, Andrew Generous, Darcy Lanes, Naminder Sharma, Scott Watson, Ben Ruether, Glen Barker, Cam Leeson, Warren Dagenais

Follow up:

1. Qualified operator for lockout

Unifor: Where did we get to on this issue?

CPP: I'm not really sure that we knew exactly what you wanted from that. Maybe you could refresh me?

Unifor: I can't remember if there was a grievance...

CPP: Was it Wayne and Angelo?

Unifor: Wayne wasn't qualified for the area and was used for a lockout. The lockout was done wrong, they hung on the door instead of the disconnect. The question is: what is a qualified operator for that lockout? We posed that at the last meeting, and you were going to get back to us.

CPP: Well there's a couple things around it. I was thinking we should write something down, so we have it captured. I don't want to just say something off the top of my head. Can we talk about it next time?

Unifor: Absolutely, I just want it clear so people understand. So that's good.

CPP: Ok.

2. CRE coverage issue

Unifor: I haven't heard anything, and it's been hard for us to get together. If you want to still talk about that we can try to set up a meeting date. Is it still an issue?

CPP: Yes it is. We talked a bit last meeting and we discussed training. Chad finished CRE 1, and Jayme Brinkert is being asked to start his training so that will happen soon. Tim will also start as well on the recovery and Evaps. That's the plan for now. The issue is when people get vacation and these guys cover, then the deficiency comes up. We are not that comfortable. We have higher headcount because of upcoming retirements, Bryan Dumaine for example. Other issues come up affecting training. We have a plan but still there's issues.

Unifor: 36 people... did you add one person per crew?

CPP: Yes the plan was to accommodate for upcoming retirements. It isn't forever, we wanted to recruit ahead of time so we could train. Plans are in place, but coverage is still an issue for us.

Unifor: What's your normal complement? 8 per crew?

CPP: Yes.

Unifor: So one extra to be training?

CPP: Not exactly. We do have people training up, though. The goal is one person training on each crew. Keith Law, Phil Ransome, Mark Bishop have been training... we also still organize other people to complete their field engineer training.

Unifor: If you still want to meet about that, could you send us some dates that work for you?

CP: Maybe we can have a first meeting to get ideas on it? How about November 1st week?

Unifor: We're in negotiations all next week.

CPP: Later in November?

Unifor: Second week in November is fine and the fourth week.

CPP: How about fourth week then?

Unifor: Is the power boiler outage till happening? So November 29th?

CPP: I'm ok with that.

Unifor: Lets go with the 30th.

CPP: Ok that is fine.

Unifor: What time? 11:00?

CPP: Sure.

New Items:

3. 21-06 Chad Klassen

Unifor: I'm assuming John gave you these grievances last week?

CPP: Yes he did.

Unifor: No resolve at 1st step? We've had a policy or practice based on qualification and seniority for when people could move to CRE position. Up until this issue it's been based on having your 3rd class ticket and being the senior person. The Company is saying we aren't going to do this because we are going to look at their company-based training. The union has a problem, the guys aren't buying it. If you're not understanding or you're going in a different direction, maybe you can tell us how that is supposed to work moving forward.

CPP: As you said, the ticket and qualification still hold. Without training the person isn't qualified to operate the panel. Chad wasn't qualified at that time. He got his ticket in June and then he received the training. He immediately started training but when this transaction came up, he wasn't fully trained to work at CRE.

Unifor: Ok so here's the problem. What is your policy then on when... how would you administer this moving forward? People with the seniority and qualifications bid on the position to operate the panel

but they also need training? And you administer the training, so it depends on when they can get the training. We want to work with you on this, but we need to know how it works.

CPP: What we are saying is interrelated. People should be proactive. They get time ahead to get their ticket and we try to train as soon as possible after that.

Unifor: But the Company schedules the training.

CPP: But we can't train someone if they don't have their ticket.

Unifor: It's gray area.

CPP: No, on June 22nd he got his ticket, he gave it to supervisor on June 23rd, and then he received the training books on June 30th.

Unifor: By the time the bid came up he had his qualifications.

CPP: He wasn't trained though.

Unifor: In the past they got the position and it was held until their training was up to date. If we go down this road with you, how does this work? How does this give anyone certainty moving forward?

CPP: Similar to qualified operator... Would it help if Nimmi wrote up a policy on that? Can we chat about it?

Unifor: We would be open to that.

CPP: Just as a discussion point.

Unifor: Just something we can take to the floor; seniority rights can't be mucked with. There are too many manipulating factors right now. I don't want to take this to a battle, but we will. The guys on the floor just want to know where they stand.

CPP: When you say in the past... can you give me some examples?

Unifor: You can talk to guys on the floor. Chris Norman is a good one to talk to. Shawn could be helpful in examining what happened in the past.

4. 21-07 & 21-08 Dane Jacobsen and Eric Boesem

Unifor: Can we talk about these together? I think everyone is familiar with situation I guess maybe I'll ask the easiest question. What are you trying to tell us in this discipline?

CPP: The point is... everyone has the facts. It was not properly secured. I want people to properly secure their lockouts. The Company treated this seriously like we have in the past. We need to consider the quality of the job. Giving the written warning is a softer side, but people need to do their duty and properly secure their lockouts.

Unifor: Here's one thing... when you say it was secured poorly, that was in whose mind?

CPP: It was secured poorly...

Unifor: But where'd that come from? These people had questions and they asked their supervisor. The supervisor told them to wrap the cable and do a variant and they're good to go. Then they ask the supervisor to check it and he says it's fine. Then it gets critiqued later by maintenance. Bottom line is: did they not do what they were supposed to have done?

CPP: Two ways to look at this, it's the operator's responsibility to make sure their lockout was proper.

Unifor: Where did they go wrong?

CPP: They did not secure it properly. There is discrepancy between what you are saying and what the supervisor did.

Unifor: I have to push back on this a bit. What you think is a secure lockout is very questionable at this mill. There are CPP panels, 120 v panels, even some breakers with no handles and if you wiggle it the wrong way it will fall off. With the hardware we have it's no possible. I cannot comply with your wishes. That's the kind of hardware we're working with. They're working with something missing a handle and somebody after the fact says what you guys on the floor did was wrong. The message going to the floor is that you can't trust your supervisor.

CPP: That's the one side you're telling me but listen to your supervisor.

Unifor: We can only do what we can do. We can't change the fact that there's no handle. They can't do lockout on that. So if you stick to that we can't do this shutdown tomorrow because those lockouts aren't possible. This discipline is so bad it has everyone asking whether they should listen to their supervisor. The whole lockout policy is based on listening to their supervisor.

CPP: The example you gave me, nothing like that happened.

Unifor: They went to the supervisor twice and he told them to do the job. Should they have told him they couldn't have secured it at all with no handle there? So their mistake was that when they tried to secure the cable and when they asked their supervisor to check it and he said it was fine, they should have dragged him down there?

CPP: I think there's a discrepancy between who was told what.

Unifor: So what are you guys hearing?

CPP: I understand they told him that there was no handle, and they went and basically dropped the cable on the valve. Whether there were multiple conversations, that's not what I understood.

Unifor: We need to get this down. They have a problem, there's no handle, they drain the pump and thought it had good integrity. The instruction was the wrap the cable and put a variance on. They told him to look and make sure it looks good.

CPP: We haven't heard that part.

Unifor: I don't know what the safety investigation said...

Unifor: That's not finished yet.

CPP: There's been lots of discussions and there's been some other things coming out of it, but what we were told was that they said there was no handle, the supervisor said to wrap a cable and do a variance, and then they went and hung the cable. We didn't hear that they asked him to check it again.

Unifor: That's what I'm being told and that's what their statement reflects consistently. They didn't just do it and walk away. The variance was put because of the valve missing a handle? Doesn't that tell you that they were trying? This is a real tough one. Maybe you have a different story. We gotta get this right. This is a problem for us. I don't want to get the message out that you can't listen to your supervisor because that's a mess.

CPP: It seems like there were different communications.

Unifor: The operators are bringing it to the Company, and they get the message and try to follow the instructions given. Are they not trying to comply? I don't see a lot of your responsibility. Hopefully we can learn and grow from this. Discipline comes from a message. What's the message we're trying to get to these people? It's gets a little confusing. Discipline needs to be clear. That's what we're asking for.

5. Disciplines sent to Union

Unifor: Mr Stobbe is saying he hasn't received a discipline letter from the Company?

CPP: They need to go to Glen as well?

Unifor: We mean the Unifor email address.

CPP: I'll send any outstanding ones.

6. Marty Sportak

Unifor: So we know this has been referred to arbitration down the road, but we still have Marty being penalized. Is there a plan to move him back to his carded position?

CPP: No, I think we had a discussion before, but you guys said you were just moving it to arbitration.

Unifor: What are you referring to?

CPP: What we talked about last time with Jeanette.

Unifor: You said for a year...

CPP: We didn't have a time frame, you asked to change it to 30 days and Jeanette said no it was likely more like 6 months to a year that he could demonstrate he could work safely. You said no, it was 30 days or arbitration and that's where I remember it ending.

Unifor: Hm. So just because it's going to arbitration doesn't mean it should stop the Company from doing the right thing. I'm sure some point along this he can get back, unless you're saying Marty is forever barred from taking that bid position. It would seem unreasonable that there's no path for him to get back to his carded position.

CPP: I'm not aware of a path. We started to talk about that, and it didn't go anywhere.

Unifor: We always thought that was unjust. You were saying it would take some time and he had to prove he could be responsible, and he had to build our trust.

CPP: Yes if he is to do that it would take time.

Unifor: Is there a path for him to get back to his position?

CPP: I think that's a discussion to take back to Jeanette. Do you guys have any ideas on that?

Unifor: He's been working safely.

CPP: That speaks to the effectiveness of the move. He hasn't been making mistakes. That means it was a good move. He has a job and he's not hurting himself, he's highly supervised compared to before. He's not making mistakes. This is a success. I understand there's a difference in money but he's safe. That was our goal.

Unifor: He worked in that old job safely for many years.

CPP: Yes he did.

Unifor: We want him to be moved back.

CPP: So if he were to move back to his less supervised job what does that look like to you when he makes another unsafe mistake?

Unifor: We can't play that game.

CPP: We have to. We need people to be safe and go home.

Unifor: We believe he's corrected his behaviour. We want him to go back to that position.

7. Light Duty assignments

Unifor: We all know that we have a light duty policy. It didn't come easily when it was crafted. It was to try to minimize the amount of time people are off work. It was a cooperative effort to fix that. We're finding in a number of situations that agreement isn't being followed and we're wondering what the problem is?

CPP: I need an example to answer that, I want to know what you're referring to?

Unifor: Consulting with the Union representation when it comes to light duty assignments. The Union needs to and wants to be included in bringing people back to work. If the return of the employee was between the supervisor and the employee then we don't want to be involved, but as soon as management or HR has been involved then we need to as well.

CPP: I thought it was in moving between departments.

Unifor: No. I don't understand where you got that idea.

CPP: Can you send me a list of people who don't feel they were represented properly?

Unifor: I don't want to look backward; I want us to do that moving forward.

CPP: So if someone is only off for a week but it gets to HR then the Union is to be involved?

Unifor: Yes it's at a higher level at that point. The Union wants to be there to ensure it's fair for all involved.

CPP: Was there an incident saying they weren't treated fairly?

Unifor: Yes. Ryan Fusaro for example wasn't supposed to be in work boots for a week. He got a new form and that was the first time he's seen that. There were a few incidents where we were learning about people coming in and being arranged by HR folks.

CPP: Yes Megan was involved because she's involved in anything safety related, but his supervisor and Norm came up with the tasks.

Unifor: If Norm is involved then the Union should be.

CPP: I know there's some specific wording. We had that meeting where we went over this new form, do you remember when that was?

Unifor: Yeah that was a while ago.

CPP: Yes we have a meeting about Adam Henson tomorrow so that's good. Maybe we should all sit down, and we can talk about responsibilities on both sides... so Cam you're the person to talk to about that?

Unifor: Yes.

CPP: Yes on the Ryan thing we were trying to avoid him losing time, so it was rushed.

Unifor: So you want to sit down with the Union, I would suggest you review the light duty section in the collective agreement. If there's problems. We're coming in negotiations and maybe we can shore that up so the agreement will be reflective of our practices. I would say Cam is going to have to bring someone with him. The only way we can change is in standing committee.

CPP: Yes for sure that works.

8. Scheduling Standing Committee

CPP: We had talked about a second Tuesday of every month for standing committee, but I was thinking we would just keep doing this the way we've been doing it in the past until negotiations because the collective agreement doesn't reflect what we're doing anyway. There's no sense in spending time figuring out a whole new plan because it'll still be outside of the agreement. It didn't work for you guys.

Unifor: I don't think we said that. It's just the schedule that needs to work for both parties...

CPP: Let's just call it when we have things to talk about.

Unifor: What I'm saying is it took a long time to get the schedule. I wasn't totally against it... Rachel's right. But if you think negotiations is going to solve our issues, that's wrong. A possible solution is pre-setting them.

CPP: I'm fine with that but your response was that it doesn't work. You guys can send me intervals that work for you.

Unifor: We need time to review the minutes before 3rd step.

Unifor: That wouldn't work with us going into negotiations now though... I don't see us doing that until after Christmas. If there's nothing on the agenda then we can cancel the meeting. I think that works and we just need to get the interval right. Two weeks would be good for us.

CPP: Let's use the assumption that minutes are out within two days and 3rd step is within 2 days as well.

Unifor: We need to talk to the membership about moving from 3rd to 4th. It should be minimal for 4th step.

CPP: So standing committee then two weeks later we'll do 3rd.

Unifor: Just put the dates down on the memo.

CPP: Maybe standing committee on one Tuesday then 3rd two weeks after that.

9. Early start time for maintenance

Unifor: [Warren passes around data] We had 54 people which is about 74% interested in the 7 am start. We had 10 people on the 8 am start so about 14% and the rest are indifferent. This is the second time I've taken the opportunity to talk to everyone about this. I think last time we were about 81%. At the end of the day is if I'm wondering if the Company will consider talking about moving to a 7 am start. Looking at numbers right now, it's a good opportunity to boost morale. I think people would stay later. I think it'd be a good way to get people on board because we have such a great schedule. This could add to that.

CPP: So John and I have talked about that. You guys talked to me about it before. I've discussed it with this group a bit. We're stuck by the fact that I don't know when we can have everyone starting at the same time again. I doubt it'll be soon. As we mentioned we're going into negotiations as well. We talked about the fact that we're already off our contract because some people start at different times. So I think it's worth exploring. There are some challenges. Coordinators, supervisors, planners. I think you guys have done really good work on getting this information and it's a great way to start discussion.

Unifor: I realize this isn't a decision we can make right now. We thought it would be good to bring it to this meeting. I think there's a lot of added value there. So moving forward so hopefully we can discuss that. If you need more information, let me know. Personally I think it would just affect start and stop time.

CPP: Even right now the way we have to do timecards. There's some WorkSight things we'd have to work out. The system needs to be able to work with this. There's some logistics, but those are solvable issues. It's worth discussion with this many people.

Unifor: If there's any more I can do on this I can take care of that.

CPP: Thanks for doing all that work on this. There are more questions to ask but you did a lot, so we appreciate that.

10. Recruiting

Unifor: I see there's two apprenticeships up right now, are you still hiring an Electrician?

CPP: No, we tried though! We made it to the offer, and he turned us down thinking he was applying at Hinton. We're going to keep looking. We're down a couple millwrights and an electrician. We have more people leaving... a machinist. We can't seem to fill the gaps. We've talked about this and I like apprenticing people if we have the space to do so. It's just a pain for these guys [Production & Steam Plant] because we steal their people. It's hard enough keeping Production staffed up as well. We have to cross the boomer threshold at some point...

Unifor: Looks like people are having trouble all over.

CPP: Yes it's industry wide. It's getting harder to entice people into some of the roles we have. Some people really like living in Quesnel but not everyone.



Alexandra Carter
Cariboo Pulp and Paper



Ben Ruether
Unifor Local 1115

signatures on file