

**National Council on Federal Labor-Management Relations
38th Public Meeting
November 18, 2015**

The National Council on Federal Labor-Management Relations held its 38th meeting at the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., on November 18, 2015. Co-chairing the meeting were Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Acting Director, Ms. Beth F. Cobert, and Mr. David Mader, Acting Deputy Director for Management, Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The following Council members also attended the meeting:

Council Member	Title
Mr. William R. Dougan	National President, National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE)
Mr. David Holway	National President, National Association of Government Employees (NAGE)
Mr. Gregory Junemann	President, International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE)
Mr. H.T. Nguyen	Executive Director, Federal Education Association (FEA)
Ms. Patricia Niehaus	National President, Federal Managers Association (FMA)
Ms. Carol Waller Pope	Chairman, Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA)

The following individuals sat in for absent Council Members:

- Ms. Candace C. Archer, Ph.D., Labor Management Relations Specialist, American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), for Mr. J. David Cox, National President, AFGE;
- Mr. Jason Briefel, Senior Executives Association (SEA) Legislative Director, for President, SEA;
- Ms. Catherine Emerson, Chief Human Capital Officer at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, for Mr. Alejandro Nicholas Mayorkas, Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security;
- Gina S. Farrisee, Assistant Secretary for Human Resources & Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, for Mr. Sloan Gibson, Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs;
- Ms. Paige Hinkle-Bowles, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Civilian Personnel Policy, for Mr. Robert O. Work, Deputy Secretary of Defense; and
- Mr. William P. Milton, Jr., Senior Advisor, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration, for Ms. Krysta L. Harden, Deputy Secretary of Agriculture.

The Designated Federal Officer, Mr. Tim Curry, OPM Deputy Associate Director, Partnership and Labor Relations, was present, as were 35 members of the public and two media representatives.

Agenda Item I: Welcome

At 10 a.m., Mr. Curry opened the meeting. Mr. Curry began the meeting by thanking participants for their attendance, and welcoming them to the fifth and final National Council meeting for 2015.

Mr. Curry made an administrative announcement prior to beginning the meeting agenda. He stated that the National Council operates as an advisory committee under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, or FACA. Time had been set aside on the agenda for comments from members of the public, and others who are not members of the Council.

Mr. Curry also noted that before moving to the agenda, there was some Council business to address concerning the minutes of the previous meeting of September 2015, which had been shared in advance with members of the National Council. He noted that all edits or corrections had been adopted by OPM, and recommended that the National Council approve the minutes of the prior meeting. There was a motion and second from members of the National Council that the minutes be approved, without objection. Mr. Curry then stated that the September 2015 meeting minutes had been approved. Mr. Curry then turned to the co-chairs for their opening remarks.

Ms. Cobert welcomed everyone to the last meeting of the National Council for 2015 and noted that the year had been eventful. She then began an update on cybersecurity, the processes being used to notify those affected by the data breaches, and the efforts being made to improve the security of OPM systems. She reported that Mr. Cliff Triplett, who would be reporting directly to her, had been hired as a new senior advisor on cyber and information technology. Mr. Triplett brings a wealth of experience, having worked as the CIO for global enterprises with cyber issues, and that he had focused on cyber protection and modernizing systems to make them more secure. She noted his U.S. Army experience and that he was a graduate of West Point. She said that he comes to his new role with passion, energy, and expertise. Ms. Cobert noted that he is already working closely with the Chief Information Officer (CIO) team at OPM, and as well with OPM's Department of Defense (DOD) colleagues, on a whole range of topics including the ongoing notification process. With regard to notifications, Ms. Cobert noted that OPM had been mailing letters for the past months via the U.S. Postal Service to individuals affected by the background investigation breach. As of the meeting date, OPM had mailed 10.4 million letters. She noted that there were more to go and that the pace had accelerated, despite having to update addresses. She noted that she had received her own letter, and the letters came with a 25-digit pin number needed to enroll for services, and that you can enroll through the call center or on the web. They are also in the process of setting up a new call center and an additional web site for individuals who think they should have gotten a letter, but they haven't. Or, for individuals who have lost their pin. OPM will be turning that call center on in the coming weeks. She noted that she had asked Mr. Curry to set up an agency and a union call in a couple of weeks, and that OPM would be reaching out shortly. She noted that OPM wanted to get the details right, so that

participants' time was used most effectively. OPM planned to walk agencies and unions through how the call center process will work. Ms. Cobert also noted that materials would be provided to agencies and unions which could be posted on their web sites since people go to lots of different places to get information. OPM wants to be sure that agencies and unions are as informed as they can be. Meantime, OPM continues to update the cybersecurity center which is at the OPM.gov website under cybersecurity. It will also point to the new verification center when it opens. She asked Council member help in spreading the word about the services being offered through ID Experts. As of the meeting, 642,000 individuals had enrolled which is about a 6% take up rate. That percentage speaks to how well members had succeeded in telling people what is available, and that people have taken advantage of services to their minor dependent children.

Ms. Cobert thanked Council members for their feedback and to keep it coming because hearing about individual experiences had helped OPM to make changes to adapt to that feedback. For example, folks at the meeting had asked about posting samples of the letters on the OPM website where you now can go to see a shot of two versions of the letter, one for individuals whose fingerprint had been taken in the breach, and one if they weren't. That way, when they get the letter, they can go to the website to determine if it is what they received is a valid letter. She noted that OPM had also added a log in button on OPM.gov as a result of feedback so that users can access ID Experts through that site. She asked that the Council members who had reached out to Mr. Curry with respect to individuals who are having challenges continue to do so, and that there was an OPM team to assist those individuals. She then turned to Mr. Mader for his opening remarks.

Mr. Mader began with an apology, noting that he had to leave the meeting at 11 am to cover a meeting for the OMB Director. He also noted that 2015 had been eventful. He said the Administration had negotiated a two year budget with Congress which had been hard work, and he noted that it would also be hard to get the appropriation bills through Congress by December 11, 2015. OMB was working hard with House and Senate appropriators to make that a reality in order to have a budget in place for the balance of the current fiscal year. He expressed optimism that issues could be worked through, but hoped that extraneous and irrelevant riders would not be attached to the bills. He then reflected on a matter related to budget discussions. Currently, budget discussions often come down to what is the dollar maximum the Federal government will spend in any given year, but he thinks that is the wrong debate. Instead, the discussion should be about what services need to be delivered here and around the world. He reflected on two recent news events. First, he noted the fantastic news that the Ebola crisis had been contained and was down to a few new cases. He expressed gratitude for the commitment of the United States and of employees across the government, including those in the Department of Defense, who heard the call, picked themselves up, left their families, and who made contributions that prevented a pandemic. Second, he reflected on the violence in Paris the prior Friday afternoon, and on the men and women who work so hard to keep us safe, both here and around the world. In thinking about the budget, we should keep them in mind.

Mr. Mader then turned to Mr. Curry, for his introduction of the next agenda item.

Agenda Item II: Hiring Excellence

Mr. Curry stated that for the first presentation the Council would hear from Ms. Kim Holden, who is the Deputy Associate Director for Recruitment and Hiring in OPM's Employee Services. Ms. Holden leads efforts to recruit and develop America's best and brightest to meet the challenges of the 21st century government. He noted that Ms. Holden will be sharing a report on the Hiring Excellence campaign, which supports the President's Management Agenda.

Ms. Holden thanked Mr. Curry. She explained that as Deputy Associate Director for Recruitment and Hiring she had responsibility for matters related to Federal government hiring. She began by noting that OPM and OMB were collaborating on a new vision of what excellence in hiring should be, called "Hiring Excellence." This initiative is not a mandate requiring agencies to do certain things, but to use existing tools, flexibilities, and authorities to achieve hiring excellence. Over the last several months, OPM had made an effort to socialize this initiative with the President's Management Council (PMC), the Chief Human Capital Officers' (CHCO) Council, and with the Federal Executive Boards. She was presenting at the meeting because OPM viewed those present as partners and key stakeholders. Referring to slide 2 of the Power Point presentation, she pointed out that OPM's vision is to make sure the government can attract and hire highly qualified and diverse applicants. Key components are empowered and engaged hiring managers supported by skilled HR staff.

She noted that OPM's first objective for the "Hiring Excellence" campaign is to promote close cooperation between hiring managers and HR staff. This goal will be achieved three ways. The first is getting hiring managers more fully engaged in the hiring process. The second is bolstering the skills of HR specialists so that they can effectively advise and partner with hiring managers. The third way is to raise awareness of the full range of hiring authorities available to meet hiring needs. The second objective is to support agencies in leveraging the full range of assessment options. The third objective is to attract individuals from all segments of society. This will be achieved through data-driven decisions that inform outreach and recruitment, and by improving the applicant experience through an enhanced USAJOBS website. Strategies described by Ms. Holden for each of these objectives is: 1) outreach and education of HR specialists and hiring managers, supported by robust tools and guidance, targeted to begin in January 2016; 2) supporting effective applicant assessment through improved policy, guidance, tools, and education; 3) expanding access to applicant flow data and analytics about how to use data to inform outreach and recruitment decisions; 4) enhancing the USAJOBS website to provide an improved user experience and new tools to search for talent. Two pilots have been planned, one with the Social Security Administration in Baltimore, and the other in Los Angeles.

Ms. Holden then discussed the focus areas for the "Hiring Excellence" campaign which had been determined by using data input from hiring managers and Chief Human Capital Officers (CHCOs). The goals are to identify government-wide hiring focus areas to attract highly qualified talent from all segments of society, and to engage with agencies to assist hiring managers and HR specialists to attract, recruit, and hire talent in agency defined targeted areas. One focus area is the IT Management (2210 series) because overall manager satisfaction with the quality of hires is low, and because there is a need to better assess applicants to determine the right skill-match for the job. A second focus area is cybersecurity because there is an identified government-wide skills gap. The third focus area is better use of the Pathways program to be sure that the government is building a talent pipeline for the future with diverse talents and

unique perspectives. The last focus area will be on the development of supervisors, not necessarily hiring new ones, to ensure they are equipped to perform in their position.

With regard to next steps, Ms. Holden then described a plan for the January kickoff. Some focus groups have already been held, and campaign materials are on hand including myth busters, fact sheets, an online hiring toolkit, and assessment tools. Time will be spent in fifteen targeted states, and cities within them. This work and visits will be coordinated with Federal Executive Boards (FEBs). Ms. Holden then asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Dougan asked what, if anything, was being done to address the primary hiring barrier, the length of the process. He observed certain targeted groups would not be held in limbo by the process, but will go elsewhere. How is OPM going to address the gap through this initiative? Ms. Holden responded that the time it takes to hire is a priority. The goal is to streamline processes in order to expedite them. Once hiring managers determine that they have a position to fill and that they have a classified vacancy, the goal is knowledge of where their talent pool resides, and knowledge of recruiting strategies. Streamlining would include clear and concise job announcements that will attract needed candidates.

Ms. Cobert thanked Ms. Holden and asked if there were any other questions. She noted that this effort was a long term partnership with OMB. In cooperation with the CHCO Council, OPM will be doing a pilot session at SSA to test what is possible and to promote collaboration between HR and hiring managers. There is a lot of opportunity to work together. She remarked that Mr. Dougan's comment about time was an important one, and that OPM needed to do this right, and in accordance with merit principles in order to attract a talented and diverse workforce and to get them excited about working for the Federal government. She noted that the reason for going on the road was the amount of talent outside Washington, D.C. You have to find people where they are and where the hiring managers are. Ms. Cobert stated that they would be happy to come back to this group in coming months with an update. She then thanked Ms. Holden and her entire team, and she encouraged Council members with questions or ideas to reach out to Ms. Holden because they would be open to them.

Agenda Item III: Report of the Problem Resolution Subcommittee

Mr. Curry announced two presentations from the Problem Resolution Subcommittee on the use of PDI in space management and on metrics. He noted that the first presentation would be on space management, followed by questions and discussion from the Council, and then they would move on to the second presentation. Welcoming Ms. Julie Clark, General Counsel for the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA), Mr. Curry noted that she would be the first presenter and that she would report on some recent training.

Ms. Clark then briefly outlined her presentation and update. As Ms. Clark spoke, a PowerPoint presentation titled, "Problem Resolution Subcommittee" was displayed. Her update focused on a pilot training recently offered by the Space Management PDI Working Group, supported by the General Services Administration (GSA), the FLRA, and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS). She began by noting that by fostering employee morale and engagement there is a positive impact on mission accomplishment. The pilot focused on hands-on activities. Based

on feedback from the pilot, one of the most appreciated features was the opportunity to tour space that benefitted from PDI. Based on that feedback, GSA has identified four locations where there are space tour possibilities, and based on the feedback, the FLRA was in the process of organizing four regional presentations. Ms. Clark expressed the hope that training dates could be announced very soon. Ms. Clark updated on a webinar recently offered which focused on OMB's "Reduce the Footprint" initiative, which applies to Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Act agencies, and which provides PDI opportunities. The webinar was supported by the FLRA, FMCS, GSA, and NFFE. The initiative requires that agencies have their space design standard policies in place by March 2016. The webinar had excellent participation and the FLRA was working to get a recording posted. The last page of the webinar slide deck included online resources as well as individual technical experts willing to share their contact information. Ms. Clark then invited questions from the Council.

Mr. Mader noted that one of his responsibilities is to chair the Federal Real Property Council which is driving the space design effort. The working group's efforts have been well received by all of the agencies that sit on that Real Property Council. Ms. Clark then gave a shout out to FLRA's agency and union partners.

Mr. Curry thanked Ms. Clark and introduced the next presenters, Ms. Candace Archer of AFGE and Mr. Todd Dickey, a Cornell graduate student and Department of Interior intern. He said that Ms. Archer and Mr. Dickey would be providing the Council an update on the analysis of metrics data from 2014, and they would also provide the Council an opportunity to ask questions and to offer guidance.

Mr. Dickey noted that the last update of the Metrics working group had been in May, 2015. Referring to Slide 3, of the "Metrics Working Group," PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Dickey explained the areas of interest to the working group as forum level information about metrics and the metrics reporting process. The working group had decided that interviews of forum participants were a good way to learn about things from the ground up, and that in October the working group had just finished interviews of three forums based on 2014 metrics reports. He noted that the working group wanted Council input, even though the working group had time to analyze interview result. Transitioning to Slide 4, Mr. Dickey noted the working group's interest was in the metrics development process and who was involved, especially from the union perspective. In the future, they will report on the timing of the reports. Second, he explained they are very interested in the existing categories of metrics. The subject matter of the three working groups were a potential furlough, a space move, and one involved a quality issue, and the working group was eager to report back on the different approaches the forums employed. Mr. Dickey's "aha" moment was that parties dealt with meaty issues in their forums, and that issues drive metrics, not vice-versa. He is interested in the value proposition of this.

Referring to slide 5, Ms. Archer then noted feedback from the interviews which included lack of knowledge about the National Council, what it does, and the tools available to the parties in working through difficult decisions, and questions about further information. The working group was interested in learning where this gap in knowledge comes from. There was also a sense from the interviews that the metrics reports were a box to be checked off, and there was a perception that no one read them, so there was surprise from those interviewed that the working group read

the reports, and was asking questions about them. The working group hopes to complete their analysis in the near future, and will be developing a plan to move forward. Ms. Archer then asked if there were any questions.

Ms. Cobert also asked if there were any questions or discussion. She noted that the Council spends lots of time pulling together communications materials in order to reach people, and making them accessible and usable. She said the questions the working group is putting together were about how to reach people, what's getting through, what's not, and will be really helpful in determining how to spend resources and time. Mr. Curry then added something for Council consideration. He noted that metrics reports are being collected for fiscal year 2015, and that they are due at the end of December. One item the working group is discussing is whether to try a different approach to gather data from the forums. There is an existing online tool called the labor-management forum reporting tool, and one thing being discussed is to allow forums to submit reports directly to the Council by using that tool, instead of funneling it through a consolidated report from the agency. He asked for Council's input on that possible course of action for future years' reports.

Ms. Pope said she would be interested in the use of prior metrics reports. Have they been used in reports to the President? Mr. Curry noted that the results of metrics reports have been used to form working groups and to develop new tools and resources, when needs are identified by the reports. Ms. Cobert added that people will be more likely to participate if they think the information is being used. And, Ms. Archer offered that forums will likely feel differently about reports as a result of being interviewed, but that the question was how to accomplish that result without visiting each forum, site by site. Mr. Dougan agreed that it is necessary to do work with individual forums in relation to metrics, so that they can see the value for themselves, and that this wasn't about data. Otherwise, it will just be checking a box, with no connection to the work they are doing. Mr. Dougan offered that one missing piece is that forums need to analyze the results of their reports, also. Mr. Dickey agreed, and noted that "participant action" includes participant action in the analysis. The working group has been discussing how to do this, and he will take Council feedback to the group. They can try to change the process from a one-way arrow, to a full circle, where the information reported informs the continued work of each forum. Ms. Archer added that the working group is trying to figure out the things forums could follow up on, and what information they needed to collect. Ms. Pope also added that she thought the first metrics reports were useful, and those results ultimately spawned the Problem Resolution Subcommittee. She suggested that the Council could do more to communicate how it has used those metrics.

Agenda Item IV: U.S. Department of Transportation and National Association of Government Employees' Labor-Management Forum Success Story

Mr. Curry introduced the next agenda item, a labor-management success story. This presentation will provide an example of how labor, NAGE, and management, Department of Transportation, worked together at the National Transportation Systems Center in Cambridge, Massachusetts and effectively used PDI to tackle issues which had a positive impact on employee engagement. He introduced Mr. George Hebert, President of NAGE Local R1-195; Ms. Sue Connors, Director,

Office of Human Resources; and Mr. Michael Osakowicz, Branch Chief, Employee and Labor Relations. He welcomed the presenters, and thanked them for travelling to Washington, D.C.

The Power Point being presented was titled, "Pre-Decisional Involvement, Our Success Story, NAGE Local R1-195 & Volpe. Ms. Connors began by thanking Mr. Phil Roberts of the FLRA. The agency and union then began to share keys to their collaborative relationship. With slide 2 on the screen, entitled "About Volpe," Ms. Connors shared facts about Volpe's history and pointed out that history often drives an agency's culture and mission. In 1969, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) announced its intention to close its electronics facility in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Mr. John A. Volpe, a former Massachusetts governor and Secretary of the Department of Transportation (DOT), convinced Congress to transfer NASA's facility and staff to the DOT which then created a center focused on all modes of transportation. One stipulation in the transfer was that the center would not receive direct appropriations, but must operate on a fee for service basis.

Volpe is now a major employer in the area, and Ms. Connors noted that Volpe has some famous neighbors such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Microsoft, and Google, amongst others.

Volpe has addressed some major transportation problems. For the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Volpe's largest customer, Volpe has developed aircraft spacing criteria for airport departures and arrivals. At the Memphis airport, in one month's time, this resulted in a 19% increase in capacity and \$1.8 million in savings. Another example of major problem solving by Volpe was their work to reduce injuries at railroad grade crossings where 95% of rail injuries and fatalities occur. In collaboration with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), another of Volpe's major sponsors, there has been a reduction in injuries at railroad crossings by 80%. A final example of problem solving was the work of a team of engineers at Volpe in developing a maritime safety and security system which resulted in an Innovation in Government award from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

Referring to Slide 3, "Volpe Center Organization," Ms. Connors noted the achievements are mirrored by the assignment of seven members of the Senior Executive Service (SES) to their location who ensure a focused, efficient, and successful operation. Moving to Slide 4, she said that Volpe's talent draws customers and that talent is drawn to Volpe because of the work they do. Talent stays at Volpe, in part, because of the partnership with NAGE. Talent is also retained because of the wide range of workplace flexibilities offered by Volpe such as a daycare center, a mothers' room, a quiet room, and a recently established work/life office.

Displaying Slide 5, Ms. Connors noted that Volpe engages its staff. For example, in 2011 they launched a strategic planning effort in collaboration with NAGE. Planning, focus groups, surveys, and action teams came up with recommendations that were endorsed and implemented. The collaboration with NAGE resulted in this less hierarchical approach. Slide 5 also shows that Volpe's statements of "Purpose," "Mission," and "Values," are aligned with the preamble to the NAGE collective bargaining agreement. Transitioning to Slide 6, Ms. Connors noted that this common vision has positioned Volpe well, and is reflected in scores on the Federal Employee

Viewpoint Survey (FEVS). There was a measurable bump in satisfaction and employee engagement scores.

One final example of collaboration was the creation of a labor-management team focused on training and workforce development which resulted in a 45% increase in the training budget and an increase in the number of training hours per employee by an average of 25 hours. One final example of collaboration was meeting the need of employees for more transparency in the performance management system by annually posting the distribution of ratings and the number of underway performance improvement plans.

With slide 7 displayed on the screen, Mr. Hebert, NAGE local union president, began his presentation noting that he wanted to give the Council perspective on why PDI is important to NAGE and the Volpe Center, and what works for them. Transparency, communication, and joint problem-solving help them to get things done. As a fee for service organization, PDI has helped them to be effective and efficient, and that is important to meeting customer needs. PDI was born with the NASA closing “bomb” which made employees want more transparency, and that same year the NAGE bargaining unit was established. Volpe’s success story is NAGE’s success story. Whenever they have problems, they use PDI to work through them. Over time, some original staff from the NASA facility became managers at Volpe, and 45 years later, some are still on site, in part because of the mutual respect of the parties. Representatives of labor and management meet bi-weekly and discuss a broad range of topics working through issues until resolution. The parties have two standing committees, one for space management, and one for safety. With regard to space, they have a space allocation policy used when it is necessary to change space assignments. Second, they have a safety committee which discusses anything that impacts the staff. Labor-management work groups are assembled as necessary, and their work can lead to new policies such as for changes in duty station. For example, they recently looked at whether team leads could be used instead of adding more managers. This led to a pilot, and the labor-management team assessed the results of that pilot.

Mr. Hebert then described the union’s “meet and greet” efforts with every new supervisor with respect to goals and expectations. He noted that the union attends the Director’s monthly managers meeting where managers communicate what is going on in their organization thereby supplying the union with pre-decisional information. He also described the Volpe Center Director’s noontime open door exchange with staff. This gives employees a unique opportunity for one-on-one interaction with the Director and it gives employees a sense of buy in, and it gives the Director feedback. The union also has monthly meetings for its members, which are free and open, and which give Mr. Hebert a chance to be in sync with them. Mr. Hebert noted that Volpe uses surveys extensively which are first vetted with the union and which sometimes result in “golden nuggets.” Then, the Union is involved in action planning based on the survey results. He then spoke about the open door policy, and explained that Volpe and the union have an expectation that workers who have concerns will share them with management and the union. This is just a means of communications, and it doesn’t impact the union’s representative role. Mr. Hebert then transitioned to Slide 8, which describes an example of PDI that occurred around performance management. In 2011, the DOT released new guidance on performance management. There were a number of issues that needed to be addressed and which are described in slide 8, such as performance cycle alignment. To address these issues, a labor-

management team was assembled and developed recommendations for the Center Director. Those recommendations were then implemented, and the union had input into the training provided to the workforce on this topic. Mr. Hebert referred to the benefits of the collaboration which are listed on Slide 8.

Referring to Slide 9, Mr. Hebert noted that it referred to the Volpe Safety and Health Committee which he has been on for 10 years, and which is another example of PDI. The Safety and Health Committee began as a result of a smoky kitchen fire at the facility. The alarm and sprinkler system did not work the way they had expected. The Committee agreed to invite an inspector from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to inspect the facility accompanied by labor and management teams who traveled every inch of the campus. This highly visible inspection resulted in upgrades being made to the existing systems. It also demonstrated to staff that management valued their safety and this has been reflected in very good FEVS scores.

Mr. Hebert explained that what he had described was the Volpe Center formula for success, but it is not unique to them and should work virtually everywhere. He then said he hopes the Council members appreciate the collaborative work over 45 years. He finished by thanking the National Council for the invitation to speak, and he singled out various individuals who contributed to the presentation.

Mr. Holway then said he had some additional historical context to provide. NASA's space center was supposed to be in Boston, but on President Kennedy's death, President Lyndon Johnson changed the location to Texas. The famous saying could have been "Boston, we have a problem." The labor-management relationship at Volpe was not always so good. He noted that the Volpe Center sits on valuable land, attractive to developers. His job over the years was to keep it from being sold to them. Because of collaboration, the Center now has bids out for a developer to come and transform the Volpe Center. The new design will be state of the art, will retain jobs, and will include affordable housing. His task is to make sure this happens.

Ms. Cobert thanked Mr. Holway and the presenters for their comments, and for sharing their experiences. She summarized take-aways which included that it was important to have a mechanism for building trust and communication, both formal and informal. Ms. Cobert then asked the presenters how they came to a shared understanding of what PDI meant to them, since other parties have disagreed about it.

Mr. Hebert indirectly answered by noting that the common understanding of PDI was now engrained between the parties. Not a day goes by without some employee engagement. The union has filed grievances, and there are disagreements with management, but the issues are resolved without going to arbitration. The parties have spent zero dollars on arbitration in the last ten years. DOT suggested PDI after Executive Order 13522 was issued. Mr. Osakowicz said that having a workforce that consists of problem solvers with problem solving skillsets is helpful to DOT.

Ms. Archer remarked that success stories are always encouraging. She remarked that the presenters had built a culture of collaboration, and she thanked the presenters for bringing their

story to the National Council. Mr. Hebert responded that it has helped that they have NAGE National President Holway standing behind them because it isn't easy to build a collaborative relationship.

Ms. Cobert then noted that success story presentations have always been her favorite part of these meetings. To which Mr. Hebert expressed his thanks for the opportunity.

Agenda Item V: New Business

Mr. Curry noted that Council members had received a projected Council meeting schedule for 2016. The recommended schedule is that the Council keeps the same type of schedule as in previous years, with the meetings on the third Wednesday of odd-numbered months. This schedule would place the next Council meeting on Wednesday, January 20, 2016, from 10 a.m. to noon at OPM. Mr. Curry noted that, since the Council is a FACA committee, advance public notice of these meetings must occur. His goal is to have a notice published by the end of December, or in early January at the latest. Mr. Curry asked if there were any questions or comments from the Council. He added that since not all Council members had the chance to review the proposed schedule he could send the proposed schedule to them, by email, and request any feedback within one week. Mr. Curry then asked if anyone on the Council wished to raise any new business.

Ms. Archer remarked that she learned last evening that the Secretary of Defense was going to make an announcement the afternoon of the meeting related to "Force of the Future (FOF)" proposals. Ms. Archer reminded the Secretary of Defense about transparency, and she reiterated AFGE's continued concerns about FOF. She said the union would like to have continued involvement in this process. Ms. Hinkle-Bowles agreed that the Secretary of Defense was planning to make an announcement in the afternoon, and that she did not want to get ahead of him. She thanked the unions for their input, which included written comments and verbal feedback at "roundtables." Ms. Hinkle-Bowles noted union input resulted in changes to proposals. She said she looks forward to more discussion with the unions, at their next meeting.

Agenda Item VI: Acknowledgement/Receipt of Public Submissions

Mr. Curry then stated that, as a FACA Committee, the Council offers opportunities for members of the public to make brief statements to the Council. He asked if any member of the public wishes to make any brief statement to the Council. There were no public comments.

Ms. Cobert then thanked everyone for joining the meeting today. She looks forward to discussions in the new calendar year, and will be keeping her fingers crossed that there will be a budget. She wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving, and said she would see them in the New Year.

Agenda Item VII: Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:28 a.m.