

**National Council on Federal Labor-Management Relations
28th Public Meeting
November 20, 2013**

The National Council on Federal Labor-Management Relations held its 28th meeting at the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) on November 20, 2013. Co-chairing the meeting were Ms. Katherine Archuleta, OPM Director, and Ms. Beth Cobert, Deputy Director for Management, Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The following Council members also attended the meeting:

Council Member	Title
Ms. Carol Bonosaro	President, Senior Executives Association
Mr. William Dougan	President, National Federation of Federal Employees
Mr. Michael Filler	Director of Public Services, International Brotherhood of Teamsters
Ms. Krysta Harden	Deputy Secretary, Department of Agriculture
Mr. Seth David Harris	Deputy Secretary, Department of Labor
Mr. David Holway	National President, National Association of Government Employees
Ms. Colleen M. Kelley	National President, National Treasury Employees Union
Mr. H.T. Nguyen	Executive Director, Federal Education Association
Ms. Patricia Niehaus	National President, Federal Managers Association
Ms. Carol Waller Pope	Chairman, Federal Labor Relations Authority
Mr. Rafael Torres	Acting Assistant Secretary, Office of Human Resources and Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs

The following individuals sat in for absent Council members:

- Mr. David Cann, Director of Field Services and Education Department, American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), for J. David Cox, President, AFGE National;
- Mr. Chris Cumiskey, Acting Under Secretary for Management, Department of Homeland Security, for Mr. Rand Beers, Acting Deputy Secretary for Homeland Security;
- Mr. Faraz Khan, International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), for Mr. Gregory Junemann, President, IFPTE; and
- Mr. Frederick E. Vollrath, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness and Force Management, for Mr. Ashton B. Carter, Deputy Secretary of Defense.

The Designated Federal Officer, Mr. Tim Curry, OPM Deputy Associate Director, Partnership and Labor Relations, was present, as were 2 media representatives and 40 other members of the public.

Agenda Item I: Welcome

At 10:06 a.m., Mr. Curry began the meeting with, “Welcome to the last National Council meeting for 2013. Before we begin today’s Council meeting, I would like to make one administrative announcement. This Council operates as a committee under the Federal Advisory Committee Act or FACA. To facilitate opportunities for those of you who are not members of the Council and any other members of the public to address the Council directly, we have set aside time on the agenda for you to make brief statements to the Council. If you wish to address the Council regarding any topics presented today or any other matter, we request that you wait until the appropriate time on the agenda when we ask if any member of the public wishes to make any brief statements to the Council.”

Mr. Curry continued by saying, “We will take some time to make introductions. As you know, this is the first National Labor Council meeting with our new co-chairs. To my right, I would like to introduce Ms. Katherine Archuleta, recently confirmed as the Director of the Office of Personnel Management and Ms. Beth Cobert, recently confirmed as the Deputy Director for Management for the Office of Management and Budget. I will now turn it over to Ms. Archuleta to make some opening remarks, followed by Ms. Cobert. We then will go around the room for introductions.”

Ms. Archuleta addressed the Council with, “Welcome everyone. I am so glad to see folks I knew before and new friends.” She mentioned how she looks forward to working together over the next few years and spoke to the new co-chair leadership for 2014 saying how she and Ms. Cobert started one week apart – Ms. Archuleta was on day 12 and Ms. Cobert was on day 5. Ms. Archuleta continued by saying, “I am excited to be working with this Council. The work you all do here is a critical part of how the government delivers services to the American people. As the President stated in his Executive Order that created this Council, federal employees and their union representatives are an essential source of ideas on delivering the highest quality services to the American people. The work you do here is significant and leads to good conversations. We need to walk away making sure the work is done well.” Ms. Archuleta recognized that the Council has accomplished a great deal, but that there is more to be done to ensure there is more efficiency in the government. She encouraged good conversation at every meeting and continued, “It is critical that we provide the approximately 2,000 bargaining units across the executive branch all the necessary tools to be successful in carrying out the goals of the President’s Executive Order.” Lastly, she expressed that the ideas of the bargaining unit members are heard through this Council and engaging ideas need to be cultivated moving forward.

Ms. Cobert then addressed the Council by saying, “It is a pleasure to be here...I am grateful for the chance to join you today.” She explained to the members how, before working at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), she served nearly 35 years in the private sector at McKinsey & Company as Director and Senior Partner. Here she held multiple leadership roles in people management including recruiting, training, development, and performance management of staff. She knows the importance of having an engaged and committed workforce throughout all situations and said, “I learned it is critical to foster partnerships

between labor and management.” Ms. Cobert concluded her opening remarks by stating that she looks forward to continuing to engage with this forum as the Council moves forward.

Finishing up with introductions, Ms. Archuleta invited Council members to introduce themselves, “Let’s go around the room as an opportunity for us to meet everyone.” Mr. Curry followed up with, “Colleen, let’s start with you.”

Each Council member went around the room stating their name and title. The order was as follows: Colleen Kelley, Krysta Harden, William Dougan, Seth Harris, David Holway, Chris Cumiskey, Patricia Niehaus, Carol Waller Pope, Michael Filler, Carol Bonosaro, H.T. Nguyen, Rafael Torres, Faraz Khan, Frederick Vollrath, and David Cann. When Ms. Waller Pope introduced herself she added, “It’s my seventh day on the job after a ten month hiatus,” and gave accolades to Julia Clark, FLRA General Counsel, and her staff for their contributions to the mission of the agency in her absence. Additionally, when Mr. Khan introduced himself he added, “I am here on behalf of Greg Junemann (President, IFPTE). He regrets not being here. He values the relationships in this room and thinks they are critical.” Lastly, when Mr. Cann introduced himself he noted that he was attending the meeting on behalf of J. David Cox (AFGE National President).

After the introductions were complete, Ms. Archuleta continued by stating, “I know I speak on behalf of my co-chair when I say I am committed to improving the diversity of talent in the federal workforce. Inclusion means engaging in conversations – meaningful conversations and dialogue. I am a champion of federal employees because I think we all need to champion the incredible work the men and women of the federal government do every day, especially in challenging times – the government was just shutdown for 16 days and hundreds of thousands of employees were furloughed. This is a hard time for employees. I know members of this Council and other labor leaders campaigned to end the shutdown and I want to express my thanks for your commitment to federal workers and the work they do. I don’t have to tell you the effect three years of pay freezes, sequestration, and required furloughs has taken on the federal workforce.” She continued that, despite this, the dedicated men and women work and perform for the American public every day – they ensure their safety. “It is in this context that our first agenda item today will address the Employee Viewpoint Survey results.”

Before hearing from the first presenter, Mr. Curry informed the Council that the draft minutes of the previous meeting included all of the Council’s edits to date, and provided an opportunity for the Council to suggest additional edits. The Council unanimously approved the minutes without further revision, and proceeded with the meeting agenda.

Agenda Item II: 2013 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey Results Presentation

Ms. Archuleta opened the discussion of the Employee Viewpoint Survey (EVS) by informing the Council that this topic and employee engagement were discussed at last week’s Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO) Council meeting. “It is really important that this Council has an opportunity to discuss that survey as well.” Ms. Archuleta informed the Council that the CHCO Council was asked to pick some very specific objectives with respect to engagement

and morale and to determine ways where the CHCO can make significant and measurable change across the government. She explained that this Council's role on engagement and partnership means that it is important that they have dialogue and conversations like she and Ms. Cobert had with the CHCO Council. Ms. Archuleta stated "this Council has critical voices on it that must help guide us in these discussions."

Ms. Cobert continued the discussion by stating that "the Employee Viewpoint Survey is a valuable tool to help capitalize on the best of the American workforce. The Office of Management and Budget takes the results seriously." Ms. Cobert said that the three-year pay freeze, furloughs, and reduction in training all underscore the importance of labor and management working together to mitigate these issues. She also spoke to the fact that the President plans to end the pay freeze and that they want to make progress on 2014's 1 percent pay increase in 2015. Then Ms. Cobert went back to addressing the EVS saying that it is a very important tool to sharpen our focus on what is working, things that we can learn from, and how to use the results in a way to focus on customer satisfaction. Lastly, Ms. Cobert mentioned that she was eager to hear the Council's perspective on this topic.

Mr. Curry introduced the second agenda item: "Today's presentation will cover the 2013 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey results. Please welcome Ms. Rose Miller from OPM's Office of Planning and Policy Analysis. After Rose discusses the governmentwide EVS results, we will open it up for Council questions and discussion. Welcome Rose!"

Ms. Rosemary Miller, Personnel Research Psychologist, OPM, began her presentation saying, "I am here to present the governmentwide results and give a brief overview." Ms. Miller stated that the EVS is a critical tool for change in agencies and explained that most employees do not interface with senior leaders who influence agency change. Therefore, a good response rate is critical – the 2013 response rate was 48.2 percent. Ms. Miller stated that the survey was distributed during the period of April through June 2013; a time where employees have experienced a three year pay freeze, furloughs, a reduction in training opportunities, and overall sequestration cuts.

Ms. Miller stated, "Of the 71 items (work/life statistics not included), 29 items had a positive rating of 65 percent or more. This included things like 'I'm committed to do a good job.' This is a strong message that despite tough times employees are still engaged and ready to work for you. People are engaged, but governmentwide responses did not improve as 0 items increased by 2 or more percentage points since 2012. Eight items had negative ratings of 35 percent or more. These are red flags. These items centered on awards, promotions, and pay." Lastly, Ms. Miller explained that 34 items decreased by 2 or more percentage points since 2012. She said this is very telling because these items included questions on job satisfaction such as 'Would you tell your neighbor to come work with you at your agency?' "These are things we have to think about. We have a strong committed workforce, but we need to think about this."

Next, Ms. Miller transitioned into speaking about the HCAAF (Human Capital Assessment and Accountability Framework) results for the EVS. To guide agencies in creating better working environments for their employees, OPM created the HCAAF which guides

governmentwide efforts to support agency mission results with strong human capital strategies by focusing on component systems, standards, and metrics, as required by the Chief Human Capital Officers Act of 2002. The EVS provides one source of information for evaluating success in three essential HCAAF systems.

1. First, Ms. Miller discussed the Leadership and Knowledge Management section of the HCAAF results which she explained evaluates how employees view their senior leaders. Referring to the chart on slide 4 of her PowerPoint presentation, she said “The purple line in the middle is the average. The top line is the highest scoring and the bottom line is the lowest.” The 2013 results are down 1 percentage point governmentwide and have 24 percent variability.
2. Second, the Results Oriented Performance Culture section of the HCAAF results were discussed, which Ms. Miller said answer the question of “Does the organizational culture promote improvement?” Governmentwide these scores went down 1 percentage point and there was a 20 point space between the highest and lowest agencies in 2013.
3. Third, the Talent Management section of the HCAAF results were discussed which Ms. Miller said answer the question of “does your organization have internal talent to achieve organizational goals?” Further she explained that these results are down 3 percentage points since 2012 and that the governmentwide index is made up of several items so it takes a lot to move the score. Also, there was a 26 point spread. The overall percentage is down 3 percent from the 2012 survey results.
4. Fourth, the Job Satisfaction section of the HCAAF results were discussed. Ms. Miller said that these results answer the question “How satisfied are federal employees with their jobs?” An example of this that she mentioned was pay satisfaction. These results decreased by 2 percentage points since 2012.

Next, Ms. Miller discussed results from the Employee Engagement Index of the EVS results. She said, “What is engagement? It is the extent to which employees commit to someone in their agency – how excited they are to come to work, for example, is a condition on the employee engagement index.” Ms. Miller pointed out that these results are down 1 percentage point since 2012. Lastly, Ms. Miller discussed the Global Satisfaction results from the EVS which include categories such as job satisfaction, pay satisfaction, organization satisfaction, and willingness to recommend. She explained to the Council that 4 items are down between 3 and 5 percentage points since 2012.

Ms. Miller concluded her presentation by stating, “The takeaway here is that federal employees are dedicated. 29 items [from the 2013 EVS] had 65 percent or more with employees agreeing they want to do their job better. We have a dedicated, committed workforce that wants to work and perform their jobs better. However, the past three years have taken a toll – job satisfaction, pay satisfaction, and willingness to recommend have all gone down. These are trends we need to change. There is a bond between agencies, but no

two are alike and one size does not fit all. These survey results are a tool to use for improvement and continued success.” At the end of Ms. Miller’s presentation she told Council members that the EVS results can be found on OPM’s public website.

Mr. Torres asked for clarification on the elements of the employee engagement index. Ms. Miller responded by reiterating the factors, two of which were how leaders lead and intrinsic work experience.

Ms. Bonosaro said, “48 percent is a high response rate. How do you match this up demographically against the universe?” To this Ms. Miller replied, “The more the better with the response rate. 48 percent is good, but people are missing an opportunity to speak to their senior leaders.” Ms. Bonosaro then asked where the 52 percent non-response rate fell. Ms. Miller replied that it varies by agencies adding that the response rate is provided to agencies, so OPM has no way of finding out the make-up of the 52 percent.

Mr. Vollrath then asked whether there is any difference in the responses from junior and senior employees and whether the GS-grade level of the employee had any effect on the outcome of the response. Ms. Miller answered that OPM weighs the data: “For example, managers responded at higher rates than those below. The weighting is complex – we need to make sure that the area with lower responses is weighted heavier so it overall charts the government statistics.”

Mr. Cann asked if the 52 percent of employees who did not respond was taken into consideration when analyzing the data. Ms. Miller replied that it was not: “We can only deal with who we have – out-of-office replies, for example, are pulled out of the denominator.”

Mr. Harris indicated that the Department of Labor is unhappy with their results and that they are working with their three unions to improve: “We have asked our staff to deconstruct the results. It would be helpful if we could get an understanding of how we do the weighting process – we are currently working with our agency statisticians.” Ms. Miller directed Mr. Harris to call OPM and that OPM would be happy to help. Mr. Harris then mentioned discussions he has had in other forums about employee engagement directly being linked to agency performance. He said that this hypothesis is supported by research. He then asked Ms. Miller if the federal government has research to validate the relationship between employee engagement and an agency’s performance. Ms. Miller responded that there was none, but what he raised would be worthy of a white paper on the subject. Mr. Harris agreed that a larger study would be helpful and that Department of Labor would be willing to help by providing statisticians to work with OPM’s statisticians.

Ms. Archuleta continued the conversation by saying, “The past 11 days have offered me the opportunity to meet with different councils such as the Closing Skills Gaps Council and the Diversity Council. The theme within all the council meetings was ‘How successful are we with employee engagement?’ There is an incredible number of statistics about how engagement raises the level of satisfaction. I hope that today we can continue to discuss employee engagement. I would love to hear ideas from labor and management because I am

certain that at the agencies the same discussion is going on. I'd like to open the floor and have an idea exchange on the ways we can improve part of the labor-management relationship."

Mr. Dougan followed with, "We are facing enormously large challenges with continued decreases in satisfaction, which we have been talking about for years now. It is not getting better. It is getting worse. If it is important to the mission of the government, we need to take it head on. Take training for example – how will we give employees the resources to get the job done? It seems to me that the only way you can deliver goods and services to the nation is to engage the workforce. We have to deal with less resources and there is no better people to talk to than those employees doing the work. We need to walk the talk on this in a meaningful way." Ms. Archuleta then asked, "Do you have an example of where you have seen that work well?" Mr. Dougan replied with an example of the Department of Defense's Moonshine project in Honolulu, which he noted was before Ms. Archuleta's time. This was a success story presented in the September 19, 2012, Council meeting. He said this employee driven project reduced the amount of time submarines spend in dry dock, which saved millions of dollars. Further, Mr. Dougan added, "We need to create an environment where employees feel safe talking. Labor does not want to offer ideas and then have it turn into a reduction in force."

Ms. Kelley then said that she has a long history with the survey that was initiated for the EVS: "We believe the front line employees have ideas about work that are smart and better than other employees. I saw over a period of time how it changed in terms of collaboration with the union and in the last few years I did not see much done with the survey. It is important for those using the survey to understand the impact of the pay freeze – on the 20,000 foot level – but understand that the heads of agencies also have no control. Agency heads deal with the daily work-life of the agency. However, the EVS is not used for the daily work. We have fewer employees now, but the same amount of work. I would like to turn the corner. What I see in the agencies is that leadership constantly changes at the top. We need something stable to drive. I am not sure if it should be the CHCOs, but the commitment from the top has to be constant. We are missing this. In good conscience I cannot ask my employees to take the EVS because they will say to me, 'I took it like you told me to and nothing changed.' We tell employees to take it, don't trash it, and we will try to get movement. But, all employees see is take it and nothing changes." She told the co-chairs that they inherited this – that they were "dropped into a movie and it is not good."

Ms. Cobert responded by saying that through her experience over these last few weeks she thinks that the EVS is a valuable tool. The question is: "How do we make this actionable?" She continued saying that with the same example of constraints on their pay, she feels that front line employees are engaged, but her concern is how well they can deliver in these constraints. Ms. Cobert mentioned that her arrival at OMB coincided with the release of the EVS scores: "I heard an increased level of engagement that I think has become more visible. This is an important commitment. We [Ms. Archuleta and Ms. Cobert] both share in this commitment. I know we need to deliver. We need to work to transfer the results into action."

Mr. Holway then referenced the Global Satisfaction results of the survey pointing out that at the highest scoring agencies and the medium scoring agencies the scores both decreased by 12 percent. He continued, “This is a slippery slope. We have a President who values the federal workforce. Notwithstanding support of the President, something else is going on. People are going to leave the workforce for the private sector.” Mr. Holway also mentioned that talking to naysayers has a drastic effect.

Ms. Archuleta said, “Being new means that I come with a blank slate, which is a positive. OPM and OMB have a very important relationship. I have had meetings with OMB on the impact of budget restrictions and performance needs and what they mean together. Beth and I are talking seriously about the impact on our offices and governmentwide. We are trying to figure out what we should do differently. We will make recommendations to the President’s Cabinet on what the survey is telling us. To Colleen Kelley’s point, how does the EVS inform us to do better? At OPM we are looking at why people stay. We are dedicated to public service. How do we build on this? Where employees are not satisfied, we need to take both pieces of information. I do not know what happened in the past, but you have two people here who are committed to help going forward. Us. We, the Cabinet, and our allies are committed to using this information in a way that it is meant to be used.”

Mr. Cann then said, “We may possibly be reading this wrong. If 52 percent did not respond, it is incorrect for us to treat them as white noise. This is an opportunity to talk to those who chose not to respond.” He went on to say that there are internal and external problems: “The Labor Management Council and Executive Branch are in the posture to say, ‘Together we have the mobilization to attack’ and this is a good forum to do this.”

Mr. Vollrath echoed the sentiment saying that this is not a new concern and agreeing with Ms. Kelley that the co-chairs walked into the middle of a movie: “What we discuss at this table keeps me up at night thinking about can we keep the workforce we have or will there be replacements when it comes to an end. This survey is a perfect storm. Corporations say people leave because they do not like their boss or the work. This is the perfect storm when pay plummets. At DoD our pay is down. Through the survey results, we are not sure that people like their job or leaders. How do we stop this slide? At the federal level we need to improve the look of service. Employees need to know: ‘We value you.’ ‘Without you, citizens suffer.’ We need to fill in the ‘buts’ – ‘We can’t pay you, BUT ____’” Mr. Vollrath then gave an example of if General Motors cannot pay their employees and they are laying people off, people will not apply for any of their jobs. He continued, “We need to recognize federal employees publically and take it on! I’d rather have a subgroup from the Council take this on. We cannot bury our head in the sand anymore.”

Mr. Nguyen agreed with Mr. Vollrath saying, “The Job and Global Satisfaction charts [from Ms. Miller’s presentation] confirm what we have been saying on the Council these past few years. Federal employees are attacked and not appreciated. On this Council we can work on solutions to improve morale. We can come together. My fear is that some solutions are beyond the Council’s control to address. For example, furloughs, cutting budgets, and shutting down the government have a direct impact on morale. Pretty soon we will find

people do not want to be federal employees. Worse yet, we can't recruit them. People do not feel that public service is a good profession to be in."

Ms. Archuleta chimed in saying, "We have several good ideas here and this is exactly the dialogue needed on this Council. Colleen [Kelley] addressed the forum and said that ideas need to be listened to in a meaningful way. David [Cann], your point on the external threats we are facing and using these documents for good change. Fred [Vollrath], you spoke about improving the face of the federal workforce – we all need to be champions. H.T. [Nguyen], you spoke about morale. I think we need to understand who did and did not fill out the EVS. How do we use this Council to help Beth, myself, and the Cabinet Secretaries? Are there other meaningful ways? Other subgroups needed? Should we be working with the CHCOs? We need to make sure the work of this Council has an impact."

Ms. Cobert added saying that she feels that this conversation is worth coming back to so that the Council can think about how to engage this group and others at the different levels: "There is an important message here, I concur. After the shutdown George Washington University published a poll asking 'How do you feel about federal employees?' Perceptions rose. When the work of the federal government does not happen, the public feels it."

Mr. Torres spoke about engagement again saying, "When you look at engagement as an employee problem you come to a different solution. Really this is a leadership problem. We need to start the business case for leadership and support to improve engagement. Through engagement, employees will accomplish the mission of the agency. Working with the CHCOs to hold managers accountable is a good initial approach." Ms. Archuleta asked Mr. Torres if he felt that working with the CHCOs is a good start because the CHCOs are made up of HR managers. Mr. Torres responded that he thinks so: "At the VA we are having a lot of discussions on engagement and are bringing the Secretary and CHCO together to help bring attention to this. Again the question is 'what is wrong with employees?' The employees see that we do not practice what we preach. This is a management issue."

Mr. Dougan said it goes beyond this and that employee satisfaction is part of the solution: "If employees are looked at as equals there will be a change to the team concept. All need to work together to do the job and accomplish the mission. It is different across the board in terms of management's willingness to talk to employees – this needs to change and you will see positive changes in terms of morale. Because we cannot offer financial incentives, we need to be smart and look for other ways."

Ms. Archuleta then asked "Would anyone be willing to sit on the CHCO Council to have this conversation." To this question, the group answered "yes." Ms. Archuleta then directed the group to tell Mr. Curry who said: "We will send out an email asking for volunteers."

Mr. Curry informed the Council that "We are behind schedule so I have asked the Problem Resolution Subcommittee to shorten their presentation. The Labor Management Reporting Tool will skip today and we will hold that presentation for January. Bill Dougan is an active

participant on the Problem Resolution Subcommittee and will introduce today's subcommittee briefing."

Agenda Item III: Report of Problem-Resolution Subcommittee

Mr. Dougan began speaking with: "For the benefit of those new at the table, the primary function of the Problem Resolution Subcommittee is to identify and develop means to assist labor and management in establishing forums and helping existing forums. The subcommittee has created multiple subgroups with different assignments." He continued telling the Council that the group they would hear from are the Tool Kit Working Group led by Julia Clark, FLRA. Mr. Dougan praised the working group saying they have done a wonderful job providing tools for the Council. He concluded saying, "I'll ask Julie to introduce her team at the appropriate time."

Ms. Clark began with: "The subgroup was created at the beginning of the year and has benefited from the leadership here today." She explained that the tools this Subcommittee determined were critical to focus on stemmed from the focus on Pre-Decisional Involvement (PDI) within Executive Order 13522, Establishing Labor Management Forums to Improve Delivery of Government Services. This was further emphasized within the guidance memo from OPM and OMB dated January 19, 2011, and is "the way we do our business" as explained by Ms. Clark. She continued that the tools the subgroup is working on are publically available, short, and provide an opportunity to be accessed/viewed if someone is on a coffee break, for example. The three different focuses of the subgroups are:

1. How to deal with PDI and confidentiality. Ms. Clark said, "The norm is just to discuss this among management, but if the union is in the room you can have a meaningful conversation." This subgroup is staying on track for their deadline.
2. The relationship between PDI and collective bargaining. Ms. Clark said, "PDI is not as familiar to the front line supervisors, so this group is working to address this and help those who are newer to the playing field."
3. Metrics, which Ms. Clark noted are focused on engaging and improving mission performance.

While referencing slide 12 of the PowerPoint presentation, Ms. Clark gave a brief overview on the work of the PDI & Confidential Information subgroup indicating that they are on track to meet their December 2013 deadline. The presentation then transitioned to Mr. Phil Roberts, FLRA, Ms. Terry Rosen, Labor Relations Specialist, AFGE, and Ms. Heather Butler, FMCS, who spoke to the PDI & Collective Bargaining subgroup.

Referencing slide 13 of the PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Roberts explained that, covered in the reporting tool, is the misunderstanding about PDI and what it is used for. He continued that this group is trying to address the extent to which there is not a full understanding of PDI and the duty to bargain. He addressed the fact that there currently is a quick tip on the Labor

Management Council webpage (<http://lmrcouncil.gov/>) and that the group is working on developing five web-based modules addressing different aspects of PDI and collective bargaining. At least one of the modules is “just about ready. Four of the five modules should be available by January 2014. The final module will encompass success stories in PDI and will be made available as participants are identified and content developed.” Referencing slide 14, Mr. Roberts then spoke to Module 1, which he explained to the Council is a Frequently Asked Questions document: “This provides technical questions and detail about PDI and answers questions such as, ‘What is it?’”

The presentation transitioned to Ms. Rosen who spoke to Module 2: “One person on our committee has had a long standing relationship with union and management and has been instrumental in the checklists we are developing...” which she said will help with the planning stage of PDI generally. The goal is to give a shared understanding so you know what will come out of the process. It is a bit daunting and we do not want to scare people off.” Referencing slide 15, Mr. Roberts addressed Module 3: “The third module is models of PDI. Not everyone does PDI a certain way, but lots do it successfully, so this model differentiates for different models based on the level of authority of the people engaging and the difference in level of recognition. The models are comprehensive depending on the situation you choose.” Ms. Rosen then spoke to Module 4, Success Stories, to which she opened it up to the Council saying that their group would welcome if any Council members wanted to share stories. She explained that this type of module allows people to say ‘Now I understand it.’ Additionally Ms. Rosen told the Council, “We found B I Pilots are great PDI success stories because they came to a better solution more quickly.”

Moving to slide 16, Mr. Roberts discussed Module 5 explaining, “The last module is outcomes. You have successfully done PDI and now what?” He introduced Ms. Butler explaining that their group has developed material to make it less boring. Ms. Butler gave a short demonstration of the outcomes tool explaining that it gives an interactive decision tree on PDI. She walked the Council through an example showing how one can delve deep into the process and that it will be helpful for those who say ‘now what?’ Lastly, Ms. Butler said the PowerPoint will be easy to get on the web.

Finally the presentation transitioned to Ms. Temple Wilson, FLRA, who reported out for the Metrics subgroup while referencing slides 18 through 20: “Thank you for the tremendous help received from Michael Filler of the Teamsters and DoD. We are trying to put together a Quick Tip because we have found from the Labor Management Forums that they are afraid of metrics because there are no statistics. This will be a simple guide and will provide quick bites to develop and report metrics.”

Speaking to slide 18 of the PowerPoint, Ms. Wilson continued that the group is currently finalizing a storyboard for a recorded webinar and that FMCS Conversion to Adobe Captivate will be used for the slides. The narrators will be Teresa Briley from DoD and Deborah Kleinberg from the Seafarers. “The projected completion date for the quick tip is early December 2013. The emphasis is on simplicity and engagement – we really believe it is an opportunity for folks at the ground level to show what they are doing and the progress that is

being made. Conveying the spirit of Executive Order 13522 and the Council guidance on metrics is not new information. We do not want to scare parties, but instead let people know it is easy. The Quick Tip will cover such things as: What does Executive Order 13522 say about metrics? What are metrics? Once you find out, how do you develop metrics? How do you use your metrics? The Quick Tip will provide emphasis on each of the Council's three objectives of mission accomplishment, employee satisfaction, and labor-management relations. You might work on one issue, but it might have an effect on all three areas. It will also include a discussion of available resources, including who the Agency Performance Improvement Officers are – it may be the CHCO within the agency. Our goal is to put this in the tool kit." Lastly, Ms. Wilson said that the metrics reports are due on December 31, 2013, and that a reminder letter to agencies went out on November 5, 2013: "We are hoping to get good reports this year and we hope our drill down topics are more concentrated."

Mr. Curry then introduced the final presentation. He stated that "for the final presentation today, we have representatives from the labor management forum between the USDA Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services (FNCS) and National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU). They will be discussing their efforts to expand the use of telework. Please welcome Mr. Frank McDonough (FNCS) and Ms. Eve Epstein (NTEU)."

Agenda Item IV: Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services and NTEU Labor-Management Forum Success Story

Mr. McDonough and Ms. Epstein provided a PowerPoint overview of the Extended Telework Pilot. Mr. McDonough began by presenting an overview of their presentation and stating that in the spring of 2012, following discussions in the FNCS LMF, FNCS and NTEU revamped their existing Article 20 (telework). The goal was to enhance an already vibrant and productive program; bring the collective bargaining agreement into compliance with the Telework Enhancement Act of 2010, USDA policy and OPM guidance; provide a full-time telework option for those in field offices that were slated to be closed; and expand and clarify the terms of and opportunities for telework arrangements generally. Mr. McDonough stated that "telework is compliance and the reality is that we are closing field offices. We worked out an arrangement where we opted for full-time telework. With collaboration with NTEU we did it."

Ms. Epstein continued, "The pilot was carefully developed by the parties as an informative experiment – designed to provide information on how best to structure and support telework arrangements for the future. Its terms were contained in an MOU signed in early May 2013. The MOU had jointly developed documents including remote work understanding and a survey to ensure what the participant and management were expecting over the course of the year." Mr. McDonough added that the pilot was brought into compliance with the law.

Ms. Epstein continued by referencing slide 6 of the presentation, the Telework Profile. She explained that the maximum pre-pilot telework frequency is 6 days per pay period and that all teleworkers must have agreement or they have to opt out. In October 2013 there were 35 employees who were ineligible and 107 employees opted out. 617 employees planned to

telework 3 or more days per pay period, 236 planned to telework 1 to 3 days, and 331 planned to telework ad hoc. Currently, 630 are regularly teleworking at least 1 day per pay period. So, she explained, more than 55 percent of FNCS employees are teleworking at least once every 10 days and most pilot participants teleworked at least 4 days per pay period.

Mr. McDonough explained that the maximums were discussed for the life of this pilot – the employees suggested how much they want to exceed the maximum by. But, that all of this is premised on the needs of the agency and whether it is verifiable – do they have a robust case for telework going forward.

Ms. Epstein discussed the pilot eligibility requirements referencing slide 8: “Eligibility for the pilot is limited to those who (1) have worked in their current position for FNCS for more than one year; (2) have fully portable work for each of the days requested, i.e., work that requires no in-person interaction with others in order to maximize effectiveness and efficiency, as verified by the supervisor and affirmed by the supervisor’s boss; and (3) have a most recent performance rating of ‘Superior’ or ‘Outstanding.’” Like any study, this pilot has a limited number of participants. Here, each of the six NTEU-represented Regions was limited to 6 participants, whereas the Headquarters was limited to 14 employees – one thing that also had to be considered was the fact that the work might be different at Headquarters. Thus, the maximum number of participants was 50. However, the pilot currently has 46 people and is up and running. All employees selected to participate in the Expanded Telework Pilot Program were notified in late August 2013. All participating employees had to revise an existing Telework Agreement with their supervisors.

Ms. Epstein echoed this sentiment reiterating the pilot is up and running. She mentioned that they addressed the communication challenges later on – for example, if you are out of the office, how are the needs of the agency communicated?

Mr. McDonough said that supervisors, employees, and customers were identified as stakeholders and surveyed because they wanted multiple perspectives on what was working and what was not working. “We are currently looking at the data at impediments to success and causes of any snafus or failures. We are looking at nature of the work, nature or size of the work team, numbers or types of demands from customers/stakeholders, location within or outside the organization of customers/stakeholders, experience of participants and supervisors, their willingness to address issues as they crop up, and managerial support/resistance at higher levels.” Ms. Epstein continued that surveys will be conducted on a quarterly basis. To allow NTEU and FNCS to evaluate the Pilot results, the parties have retained a company, Survey Monkey, to administer surveys on a quarterly basis to employees, supervisors, customers, and stakeholders to ascertain their perceptions on productivity, satisfaction, work quality, responsiveness, collaboration and connectedness. The survey will be completed by September 2014 when the Pilot ends.

Mr. McDonough continued by saying at USDA Secretary of Agriculture, Mr. Tom Vilsack, wants to reduce the footprint: “Telework fits in nicely to this program. As expressed by Colleen Kelley, you adopt workplace flexibilities if you can do that.” Ms. Epstein told the

Council that the pilot will be completed in September 2014. Referencing slide 14 of the PowerPoint she then stated that the criteria for the success of the pilot includes employees' productivity, availability, accuracy, and whether or not communication remains frequent and positive. Mr. McDonough then wrapped up the presentation reiterating to the Council that the pilot has just started, "There will be challenges, but we are excited for what is to come. We wake up every morning excited to go to work." Both presenters ended their presentations by indicating their willingness to share their experiences and work with others.

Ms. Cobert then asked the presenters "Is there anything at this point that has surprised you?" To this question, Ms. Epstein replied how quickly the pilot rolled out, but caveated this with the fact that it was going quickly until the shutdown of the federal government.

Mr. McDonough added that his surprise is the commitment of the midlevel supervisors and how they are eager to engage in the pilot without any preconceived notions, "I am pleased folks engaged without pre-judging the outcome."

Mr. Cann asked the presenters if they could share a copy of the MOU with the Council. Mr. Curry responded saying that presenters could share the MOU with OPM and that OPM would then distribute it to the Council members. Ms. Archuleta said, "This is a terrific example of where labor and management can work together with a goal of improving work life for employees and, most importantly, an eye towards improving productivity. I am excited to hear about the outcome of increased use of telework. Very good."

Agenda Item V: New Business

Mr. Curry transitioned the meeting saying, "Before we ask about new business, we sent out as a read ahead a proposed schedule for 2014. It is also included in your handouts today. We are proposing to continue the same schedule for meetings – every other month for next year, starting in January, on the third Wednesday of every month. We will send out an email after this meeting with the proposed meeting dates for 2014 and if anyone has any issues, concerns, or questions, please let us know."

Mr. Curry asked whether Council members had new business to raise. Hearing none, he opened up the floor for public comment.

Agenda Item VI: Acknowledgement/Receipt of Public Submissions

As promised at the beginning of the meeting, Mr. Curry provided an opportunity for public comment: "As a FACA committee, we offer opportunities for members of the public to make brief statements to the Council. Does any member of the public wish to make any brief statement to the Council?" Hearing none, he turned the meeting back to the co-chairs.

Agenda Item VII: Adjournment

In her closing remarks, Ms. Cobert stated that she was looking forward to hearing more examples of success and addressed the Council saying that they are getting to the tangible work: “Employee engagement gets at the mission. We need to move forward and make a difference day to day.”

Ms. Archuleta said, “I am looking forward to bringing the work of this Council to the CHCO Council. PDI and telework make me think about the role of this Council as advisors, which is important.”

Mr. Nguyen stated that he sends his “best wishes” to the new co-chairs as they work together to address challenging issues faced by federal employees. To this Ms. Archuleta joked that she and Ms. Cobert are twins and joined at the hip.

Mr. Curry adjourned the meeting at 11:57 a.m.

CERTIFIED

Katherine Archuleta
Co-Chair

Beth Cobert
Co-Chair