

FEDERAL PREVAILING RATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

588th FPRAC

SHELDON FRIEDMAN, Chairperson, Presiding

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Room 5526
Office of Personnel Management
Washington, D.C. 20415**ATTENDANCE:****Members/Alternates:**Management Members:Mark Allen, OPM
Seth Shulman, DoD
Pamela Sokol, ArmyLabor Members:Bill Fenaughty, MTD
Jacque Simon, AFGE
Robert Shore, NAGE
Steven Landis, ACT**Staff Specialists and Visitors:**Jeanne Jacobson, Designated Federal Officer, OPM
Madeline Gonzalez, OPM
Jennifer Dorsey, OPM
Darlene Freeman, Navy
Jim Brady, DoD
Gary Kistner, DoD
Karen Kurian, DoD
Kermit Howard, DOI
Crystal Gailes, DOI NPS
Dennis Phelps, MTD**Recording Secretaries:** Mike Eicher and Terri Wallace

[Transcript prepared from digital audio produced by FPRAC.]

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P R O C E E D I N G

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Good morning, everyone, and welcome to this, our 588th meeting of the Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee. My name is Sheldon Friedman, Chair of the Committee.

As usual, why don't we go around and introduce ourselves, and let's start with you, Bill, and welcome back.

MR. FENAUGHTY: Thank you. Bill Fenaughty, Metal Trades Department, NFFE.

MS. SIMON: Jacque Simon, AFGE.

MR. SHORE: Rob Shore, NAGE.

MR. LANDIS: Steve Landis, ACT.

MR. ALLEN: Mark Allen with OPM.

MS. SOKOL: Pamela Sokol, Army.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: And we'll hope a few more Management members show up shortly. Meanwhile, if the folks around the edge of the room could also introduce themselves, please?

MS. JACOBSON: Jeanne Jacobson, OPM, Designated Federal Officer.

MS. GONZALEZ: Madeline Gonzalez with OPM.

MS. FREEMAN: Darlene Freeman, Department of the Navy.

MS. GAILLES: Crystal Gailes, National Park Service, with the Department of the Interior.

MR. HOWARD: Kermit Howard, Department of the Interior.

MS. WALLACE: Terri Wallace, OPM.

MR. PHELPS: Dennis Phelps, Metal Trades Department.

MS. DORSEY: Jennifer Dorsey.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Okay. I have a couple of quick announcements. I imagine everyone knows that we do have our new Director here at OPM, Katherine Archuleta, but just in case somehow you have been off on vacation for the last 3 weeks, I will mention that.

Also, FPRAC's FY 2013 Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) Report (588-OC-1) is included in your folder. I assume there's no questions on it, but in the unlikely event there are questions, let us know.

Also in your folder under 588-OC-2, are a couple of the questions relating to pay satisfaction from the latest Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey where you can see what the answers were for the FWS folks as compared to other Federal employees over the last few years. If there are any questions about that or discussion, we can entertain that.

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: If not, let's move on to the review of the transcript of our last meeting, the September meeting. I hope we can adopt it. Does anybody know if we can adopt it with only three management members and four labor members present?

MR. ALLEN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: We can. All right.

Any further changes beyond those that we have heard from you already?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: If not, then I will assume that it is acceptable for us to adopt the transcript. Going once, twice, three times. Transcript is adopted. Thank you.

On our Old Business list, there are some things that have been listed for an awfully long time, some of which are really not that active, and so at the next meeting, we will have a list of things that we could remove from the list and ask your consent for us to do that.

In terms of things that we are still working on, some of these items are being discussed in the Working Group. Is there anything that people want to bring up today from the list

of Old Business items?

MS. SIMON: Well, I can tell you that item (e) is something that we are continuing to work on, but I'm not sure that FPRAC needs to do any more work on it. But it's certainly an issue that's still alive.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Sure. It's covered by the recommendation that we have passed on to the Director with regard to the larger issue, of which it is a part and which is still pending.

MS. SIMON: Right.

MR. ALLEN: I would just say that Director Archuleta is aware of this issue. She has been briefed on it, and a decision hasn't been reached on it yet. It is under consideration.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Regarding the project to update the FWS Wage Area maps and the new software, we did receive one recommendation and suggestion from a Committee member. What I was going to suggest is, if people are interested, that we have a demonstration in the next Working Group meeting, not today but the next one when OPM staff is available to do it, demonstrating the capabilities of the software, what might it do differently in terms of the mapping, just so we have a better feel for how

it works. So that might be in, let's say, January if that works out.

MR. ALLEN: I think it's a good idea if everybody would like to see it.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Because I at least would like to see it.

MS. SIMON: Yeah. I'm very interested also.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Okay. Then we can offer more intelligent input as to ideas.

Well, unless there's anything further on Old Business, we can move on to New Business. The first item is a further review based on the latest MSA updates of the definition of Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton, North Carolina, MSA, 588-MGT-1.

Mark, would you like to summarize that for us, please?

MR. ALLEN: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

588-MGT-1 is really just an update to a document previously introduced under 575-MGT-1. The findings from the update are really no different than they were in the original Management recommendation, which is to no longer split the Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton, North Carolina, MSA between two different wage areas.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Any questions or discussion?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Well, for my own 2 cents on this one, I found it a little troubling. Applying the regulatory criteria clearly points as the analysis shows, although one could quibble. The commuting clearly is a lot higher in the Charlotte direction. Even though it's very low commuting, it's much, much higher in one direction than the other, and the distance, although close, does point differently, depending on whether you're measuring cities or installations. But nevertheless, the strict application of the regulatory criteria point one way, and yet if you know anything about that area, the economic pull of Charlotte, particularly for counties that are on the Charlotte side of that MSA, is clearly a lot stronger. I'd just point that out as an observation. The actual economic pull versus strict application of the regulatory criteria, in my mind, anyway, point in two different directions. I don't know what people want to make of that, if anyone agrees or disagrees.

But any further discussion of that? It would be nice if we could clean up our list of business. This is a new item but also pertains to an older item.

MS. SIMON: And what is the impetus for this change?

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Basically, the current wage area

definition splits an MSA, which the regulations say we can't do. So in order to not split the MSA, there's basically two ways you could go. You could move the whole MSA into Asheville, or you could move the whole MSA into Charlotte. But the regulatory criteria point to Asheville if you strictly apply them, per the staff analysis here.

MR. ALLEN: The only exception should be if there's some kind of extraordinary circumstance which would compel OPM to not have the Metropolitan Statistical Area in just one wage area. Based on my review, I haven't really picked up on any reason for that based on any kind of extraordinary circumstance.

MS. SIMON: But the difference in distance is negligible?

MR. ALLEN: Distance to city favors neither.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Well, it actually favors Charlotte, right?

MS. SIMON: It favors Charlotte.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: By a hair, you know, admittedly not by much.

MS. SIMON: It might alter based on route, and then the other one from the host to the host is a negligible difference.

I don't want to vote on this until I have had a chance to look into it more. Just by coincidence, this is -- the VA Medical Center in Salisbury is where our National President worked for 25 years, and I think that the point that the Chairman makes might be very relevant to this in terms of economic integration of the counties, given that the distance criterion is hardly a clear case of one versus the other. I'm not familiar with the area at all.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Well, we can defer this, but at some point, I really feel we're going to need to address our backlog.

MS. SIMON: Yeah.

MR. ALLEN: Our analysis on 588-MGT-01 shows that distance to the closest cities favors neither. Distance to the closest installation marginally favors Asheville. Transportation facilities and geographic features, neither of those are really pushing in one direction or the other. Commuting patterns, not much of a difference, --so it really does not favor one wage area more than another.

MS. SIMON: Do we have enough people here today to vote?

MR. ALLEN: No.

MS. SIMON: So we couldn't vote anyway. We don't have our quorum really.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: No.

I mean, the commuting, I would just say I agree it's small, but it's way, way higher in one direction versus the other. It's almost zero versus almost 1 percent. Now, 1 percent is not very much, but I think it does point to a greater degree of integration and economic pull.

MS. SIMON: Yep.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Anyway, so I guess we're going to defer this, but we've got to get back to it and decide.

The other New Business items are in regard to the Department of the Interior's Special Vessel Schedules. We have a number of new pieces of data on that topic. Under 588-OPM-1, Mark put together a list of options for revising the pay policy covering the crew of the *RANGER III* vessel. Document 588-OC-3 is a response from the Department of the Interior on some of the questions that we asked at our previous meeting. The next one, document 588-OC-4 is the FOIA letter that Captain Hanrahan shared with us and asked us to introduce. And recently added to the agenda under 588-OC-5, 588-OC-6, and 588-OC-7 are the Maritime Schedules that we received from Jim Brady at DOD.

Unfortunately, he is caught in traffic and has not arrived yet, because I want to ask him some questions about the schedules.

Is there any discussion that any of you would like to have on this issue? I'd really like us to get this one resolved.

I guess one thing that I'd find helpful, Mark, is if you could review the options that are listed in 588-OPM-1, and also clarify what is within our purview to do at FPRAC and what the Director of OPM could do or could not or would not be able to do based on a recommendation that she might get from us.

So, for example -- and please listen, Mark, to make sure I'm stating this accurately -- on the issue of Maritime Schedules, it is not within OPM's purview to tell another agency that they have to use the maritime rates in a given situation. Director Archuleta might recommend that the maritime schedules be used if that were to be our FPRAC recommendation to her and she agreed with that recommendation. But it would not be a requirement on the other agency to implement her recommendation to use the maritime schedules.

Did I say that right?

MR. ALLEN: Yeah, that's right. That's also the case with the set-aside schedules, which is the type of schedule

currently used for the *RANGER III* vessel. It is a set-aside pay practice, which is really an agency pay system, because it's never been brought into the Federal Wage System, since the Federal Wage System was created in 1972.

MS. SIMON: So what's our purview in this case?

MR. ALLEN: OPM received a letter from the Department of the Interior asking OPM to look into the pay practice for the crew of the *RANGER III*, and OPM is acting on that by bringing the Department of the Interior's request to FPRAC, so that FPRAC can make a recommendation, if it so chooses, to OPM, and then OPM would respond back to the Department of the Interior with FPRAC's recommendation and anything else that the Director of OPM would like to include.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Can I just interrupt, Mark, and ask our newcomers to introduce themselves for the recorder, please?

MR. SHULMAN: Seth Shulman, Department of Defense.

MR. KISTNER: Gary Kistner, Department of Defense.

MS. KURIAN: Karen Kurian, Department of Defense.

MR. BRADY: Jim Brady, Department of Defense.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Welcome to all of you.

MR. BRADY: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: We were discussing the Department of the Interior's Special Vessel Schedules issue.

Please continue, Mark.

MR. ALLEN: Okay. I can run through the options for revising the pay policy covering the crew of the *RANGER III* vessel in 588-OPM-1, if everybody is okay with that.

MS. SIMON: Yes.

MR. ALLEN: Option one, no change. If FPRAC made this recommendation, OPM would respond back to the Department of the Interior that the current set-aside pay practice should continue for the crew of the *RANGER III*. Rates would continue to be set at Step 3 of the FWS regular wage schedule for the Northwestern Michigan wage area. That level is determined under the Department of the Interior's classification system for the crew members.

That's one of the key difficulties with this case. The Department of the Interior classification system is a separate classification system and does not comply with the Federal Wage System standard way of classifying jobs because there are no OPM developed and approved job rating standards for the crews of vessels.

We do have floating plant schedules and Hopper Dredges

schedules, but those are under the Army Corps of Engineers' classification system. That's one of the obstacles for developing a new pay system for the *RANGER III*.

Option two. Continue as a set-aside special schedule using rates from the Northwestern Michigan wage schedule, but add steps. This would establish a five-step rate range. The pay practice for the vessel would remain a set-aside pay practice, again, because of the classification system.

Option three. Continue as a set-aside special schedule, but base rates on the Detroit, Michigan, floating plant, other than Hopper Dredges schedule, using five steps. This is the Department of the Interior, National Park Service proposal under 585-OPM-1.

Option four. This is one that Captain Hanrahan mentioned in his proposal. Continue as a set-aside special schedule but base rates on the Hopper Dredges schedule, using the five-step rate range. WJ-12 to WJ-16 would be limited to a single step 2 rate. Note that there are two Hopper Dredges wage schedules: Atlantic and Gulf Coasts and West Coast. Again, this would be a continuation of the set-aside pay practice, meaning that this would be up to the Department of the Interior to administer.

Option five is to pay the *RANGER III* crew prevailing maritime rates under 5 USC 5348. As our Chairman has mentioned, choosing this option is not something that OPM can dictate. It's a finding that the employing agency that operates a maritime vessel, in this case, the Department of the Interior, has to make on its own, and then it must set the rates of pay for crew members on the vessel, according to prevailing rates in the maritime industry.

If the Department of the Interior agreed to establish rates under option five for the *RANGER III* crew according to prevailing maritime rates, then OPM's involvement would only be to eliminate the mention of the *RANGER III* from the Appendix V of the OPM Operating Manual for the Federal Wage System.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Any questions or discussion?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: One question that I have for everyone is to ask if we now feel we have sufficient information in our hands to make a recommendation, or do we have more questions based on the new information that we received?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: I have a few questions.

Jim, thank you for sending the maritime schedules. I

have a question about whether Great Lakes data are collected and included in whatever survey is done for purposes of compiling that schedule. Do you happen to know?

MR. BRADY: I don't happen to be aware of that information. I can contact our MSC representative and ask.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Okay. I'd find that helpful to know --

MR. BRADY: Sure.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: -- and in particular whether that data is kept in a form that would identify the geographic source, if I am making sense. In other words, I understand the schedule is -- let's say the Atlantic schedule is lots of data from lots of sources. I am wondering if the Atlantic schedule includes the Great Lakes data, and if so, if one could parse that data out from the rest of the data that's collected to see what it looks like.

Anybody have any other questions or discussion?

MS. SIMON: I have a question. What gave rise to this inquiry?

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: How did this come to FPRAC?

MS. SIMON: Yes.

MR. ALLEN: Under 585-OPM-1, the Department of the

Interior sent a request to OPM to take a look at the set-aside pay practice, along with a recommendation to change the pay practice to use the floating plant schedule (other than Hopper Dredges) for the Detroit Army Corps of Engineers area.

That's why OPM has brought this to the agenda now, but it's --

MS. SIMON: Is that basically the same sort of labor pool working for those two employers, same kind of skill set, same kind of work, or no?

MR. ALLEN: The Department of the Interior sent a justification document over to us, 588-OC-3, which goes into more detail as to why they feel that the Detroit floating plant schedule (other than Hopper Dredges) is the best fit for the crew of the *RANGER III*.

In terms of other vessel schedules in effect within the Federal Government, I can't speak for the Department of the Interior on that.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: We can invite them to comment if they want to, since they have some representatives here.

MS. GAILES: We have other vessels that are on the Detroit schedule with other bureaus under the Department, so there are other vessels that are using this.

MS. SIMON: I guess that's one answer. Yeah, thank you. I mean, that's what motivated this recommendation for inquiry?

MS. GAILES: It's been a longstanding issue that we've been trying to address, and so we did a lot of research on the different pay schedules. And using the Detroit floating plant schedule (other than Hopper Dredges) was our final decision, because there have been issues with retention.

MS. SIMON: What kind of issues with retention?

MS. GAILES: It's been difficult at times.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Jacque, I know you weren't here at that meeting, but Captain Hanrahan made a very extensive presentation at the -- which was it? August meeting, I believe? If you have a chance -- he also submitted information to FPRAC, and I believe that would address your question.

MS. SIMON: Okay. Thank you.

MR. GAILES: There is also a letter from him in our proposal if you get a chance to read it.

MR. ALLEN: It certainly does appear that the regular wage schedule rates for the Northwestern Michigan wage area are inadequate to provide the National Park Service with sufficient tools to be able to recruit and retain a qualified crew for the

vessel. The Captain raised some concerns about the safe operation of the vessel when the vessel is undermanned at certain points of the year, because the pay rates are not sufficient to be able to attract the right kinds of people to work on the vessel.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: You've raised a number of issues about the comparability of the jobs to their dry land equivalent as well.

MS. SIMON: Well, do we have enough people here now to vote, or is the Management side still down one member?

MR. ALLEN: There are not enough members to vote if we needed to vote.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Is there a proposal?

MR. FENAUGHTY: I have a question. Which one of these five options gives the best current rate of pay, and best future rate of pay? Got a lot of options here.

MS. SIMON: I think option three, right, or is it option four?

MR. ALLEN: Option one, of course, does nothing. Option two provides more room within the existing rate range, which probably is not enough to recruit and retain crew for the vessel.

Under option 3, the Detroit Michigan floating plant (other than Hopper Dredges) schedule is higher than Northwestern Michigan wage schedule. The Hopper Dredges schedule is really always based on maritime rates. It currently applies to different kinds of vessels than the *RANGER III*. The Atlantic and Gulf Coast is one of the schedules, and then the West Coast is another schedule.

Maritime rates under 5 USC 5348, are an unknown. Although we have data for what are essentially Military Sealift Command rates, those might not be reflective of what the actual pay rates would be for a comparable type of crew on the Great Lakes -- or comparable type of vessel, if there are any, on the Great Lakes. We don't really know if the Department of the Interior does a survey of maritime rates on Lake Superior, and if they could find job duties that are comparable to those of the crew of the *RANGER III*. So that's why the Department of the Interior says that this has been a longstanding issue. It was really an issue back when the pay practice for the crew was put in a set-aside schedule in 1972. They decided the best course of action at that time was to use the regular schedule, and it's now causing problems.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Well, I think that actually brings

up another follow-up question, which is how the *RANGER III* crew would fit on the maritime schedule. It wasn't immediately obvious to me what the rates would be if the maritime schedule was applied to the crew.

MR. PHELPS: Sheldon, as I remember, wasn't option four the one that Captain Hanrahan testified that he thought was the best option to be able to recruit and retain crew members? I imagine that option is the highest pay, which I think answers the question Bill was asking earlier.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: My understanding was that the Captain was in favor of that. That was the basic disagreement between DOI and the Captain, that DOI was favoring option three, and he was favoring option four.

Option five wasn't really in the mix, as a point of discussion. I don't know whether it should be or not. It seemed to me it's a vessel, and, you know --

MR. ALLEN: The Department of the Interior made the determination in documents that they sent to OPM that that's not an appropriate way to set pay for the crew of that particular vessel, and they made stated reasons. They found after reviewing it that pay under 5 USC 5348 is not feasible because there's insufficient maritime pay practice in the local area for

setting pay for the crew of that vessel.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: I have to say I personally don't quite understand that, given that there is a lot of shipping commerce on the Great Lakes, but there may be a deficiency of data in terms of Federal wage setting since the maritime schedules appear to be based on ocean vessels and not lake vessels, and that's why I asked my question to Jim earlier, which was does that collection of data on which the maritime schedules are based include some Great Lakes shipping data that we could parse out to see.

The maritime rates on the Great Lakes may be very similar to the maritime rates on the oceans -- which personally is my guess, but I don't know. I haven't researched it so I don't know. If it were the case, then that might be a factor in our thinking that option five could be used.

MR. LANDIS: Does DOI have an opinion on the potential of option four?

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: I believe in their document to us, they stated that they don't favor it and gave some reasons. I'd invite the Department of the Interior folks to comment on that, if you want to, as to why you think either of the Hopper Dredges schedules is not applicable to the *RANGER III*.

MS. GAILES: We basically analyzed some of the operations of the hopper dredge versus the operation of the *RANGER III* and what the ship actually does, and referenced the statistics of where the *RANGER III* operates in the -- mainly Lake Superior area, taking materials, personnel, tourists from the mainland to the island, basically all of their operation. The schedule of that operation was also analyzed and it's not a 365 day operation. It's basically a 40-hour regular week. So we have examples as to why we felt the hopper dredges schedule wasn't as appropriate as the floating plant schedule.

MR. LANDIS: -In 588-OC-3, there is a wage schedule on the last page. Is that the floating plant schedule?

MS. GAILES: No, that's the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts Hopper Dredge schedule.

MR. LANDIS: Oh, okay. I'm sorry. Right at the top, it does say Hopper Dredge. Do we have the wage schedule for the floating plant here?

MS. GAILES: It is in our original proposal.

MR. LANDIS: All right. I probably have that. Is there a big difference in pay?

MS. GAILES: You can see the difference in the pay for the captain if you take a quick look in the additional

documentation that we put forth.

MR. LANDIS: Okay.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: So I know this is a lot of material. One possibility is we defer this one more month, but seriously resolve to come up with a recommendation next month, giving everyone more time to review everything. We could do it that way, or is there some proposal that people want to make now and have it discussed?

MS. SIMON: I think that there doesn't seem to be any strong reason not to grant the proposal the Department of the Interior made, is there?

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Well, the Captain doesn't think it will solve his problems of recruitment and retention. That's his opinion.

MS. SIMON: Okay.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: I mean, that's his opinion. He may or may not be right about that.

MS. SIMON: He thinks they need option four.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: That's what he thinks.

MS. SIMON: Okay. Is there any reason then not to recommend option four?

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Well, that conflicts with what the

Department of the Interior proposes - there is a conflict. We have to take a position on it.

MS. SIMON: Well, if the motivation is to solve a recruitment and retention problem and there's only one option that succeeds in solving that problem, shouldn't we support the option that solves the problem?

MR. ALLEN: I think the Department of the Interior is saying that option three, the floating plant schedule, is enough for them to address the recruitment and retention problems.

Captain Hanrahan has said that he would prefer option four, which is to use the hopper dredge schedule, and for a variety of reasons, the Department of the Interior believes that using the rates from the floating plant schedule is the more appropriate schedule to use, and that's what their proposal states.

MS. SIMON: Okay. I understand that, but, I mean, just as a general rule, a manager at the operations level like the Captain is probably more knowledgeable about the situation.

MR. SHORE: It's my recollection that his problem with option three was that floating plant duties are not comparable to the work that's performed on the *RANGER III* vessel, and that he and his men and women do a lot more intense work that

involves a wide range of tasks such as both working with passengers and cargo material that could be hazardous. That combination could create a hazard to both the people onboard and to the Great Lakes. That was his reasoning for it not to be a fair or a valid comparison.

MS. SIMON: Does somebody want to move that we recommend option four?

[No audible response.]

MS. SIMON: Okay. I will move that FPRAC recommends option four.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Is there a second?

MR. ALLEN: We don't actually have enough people here today to vote.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: We can't vote, but we --

MR. ALLEN: It's okay to put the motion on the floor.

MS. SIMON: Okay.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Okay. So, hopefully, we'll have a quorum next time. We could have further discussion of the motion, even though we can't vote on it today. Does anyone want to discuss it further?

MR. LANDIS: I just would like to see -- I mean, we have this wage schedule here for the hopper dredge, and you said

in the past DOI proposal, it has the floating plant wage schedule as well?

MR. ALLEN: Correct.

MR. LANDIS: Okay. And they are the two wage schedules we're talking about. So anything else really isn't relevant. So I'll look at that.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: We have a lot of information in our record by now, between the August meeting, the Captain's submission, the DOI original proposal, the supplementary information from DOI, et cetera. It's quite a bit. So I think if people, between now and the next meeting, have an opportunity to review all that information, it may be enough for us to come to a decision. If we still have questions, we can try to get answers to them.

MR. ALLEN: Captain Hanrahan gave an excellent review of the history of how the vessel has been operated and problems with recruiting and retaining people on the vessel, and that's something that's really good for everybody to go back and look at again.

MR. LANDIS: That was from the August meeting?

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Yes. If you look at the transcript and also the agenda documents.

Any other discussion?

MR. HOWARD: Excuse me.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Yes, sir.

MR. HOWARD: There was a question regarding Management being engaged in recruitment in the region. Just so that we have clarification, there is a superintendent, and then there is a supervisor, and then under that, is Captain Hanrahan. Recruiting challenges are already addressed in our initial proposal, but are you asking for additional information to get a clearer picture how things are situated in that region?

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Do people feel the need for more data on that point?

MR. ALLEN: I think any additional information is helpful, if it's something we haven't already had access to in the DOI documents.

MR. HOWARD: Because I just want to make sure that there is a clear picture across the board, an understanding that if we're talking about various types of work that is being performed in comparison, and with our proposal saying we found it to be comparable to resolve the issue. Then we will provide that information, just so you have a true understanding of how things would be addressed as far as the salary within that

region.

So if that is the case, we will provide that information to you.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: We certainly would welcome any more data you would like to provide us with. It is our hope to actually reach some decision in our December meeting. So I don't know if that allows you enough time or not.

MR. HOWARD: We will convene with our folks today.

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: All right. Well, is there any other new business that people want to bring up?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: If not, it would be in order for us to adjourn. I guess I should say before we adjourn, our not-to-be-missed holiday party will be at the December meeting, and I certainly want to wish everybody a Happy Thanksgiving.

If there is no further business and no objection, we can adjourn. Any objection to adjourning?

[No audible response.]

CHAIRMAN FRIEDMAN: Okay. We are adjourned, and in 10 minutes, we will convene in the Small Pendleton Room for the working group meeting.