

**St. Francis Xavier University**  
**University Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee**  
**Online in Teams**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**May 28, 2020**

**Present:** Employee Representatives: Tyson Ball, Colin Rankin, Kris MacSween, Patrick Wallace, Susan MacKay, Mary MacLean, James Braid  
Employer Representatives: Leon MacLellan, Krista McKenna, Jacob Burghardt, Dan Belliveau, Randy Peters  
Advisory: Laurie Reid – OH&S Officer, Janet Beaton – Health and Wellness

The meeting was chaired by Tyson Ball and was called to Order at 12:15 p.m. A quorum was confirmed by having more than five members, with at least 50% being Employee representatives and at least two Employer representatives.

*\*\*Action Items are in Italics and Underlined. Please take note of those assigned to you or the Committee, and be prepared to provide update at the next meeting.\*\**

#### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The agenda for today's meeting was reviewed and accepted by general consensus.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM LAST MEETINGS**

The minutes from the April 23<sup>rd</sup> UJOHSC meeting were approved by general consensus.

*At this point the meeting moved to **NEW BUSINESS** to ensure there was enough time to provide a **COVID-19** update.*

#### **OUTSTANDING ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

##### ***Fume Hoods***

**May 28, 2020** – Both users and maintenance have been asked for final comments on the SOPs before marrying them together into one program and rolling it out to the Campus.

**April 23, 2020** – No update.

**February 27, 2020** – Alarms reported by the Chemistry department continue to be logged on a tracking sheet. Since the last meeting, there have six reports of alarms. Further information was requested offline about the number of alarms coming in from all of the fume hoods; this request was forwarded to FM. A follow-up meeting should be held with users and maintenance

personnel to see how the draft procedures are working. Next steps would be to roll out the procedures to everyone and provide training as required in both procedures.

**January 23, 2020** - One “zero” alarm was reported since the last meeting, and was due to an issue with vibration within the ventilation system, which has since been rectified. Both fume hood maintenance and use procedures are being implemented and will be finalized in due course. Communication between users and FM requires follow-up.

History of this issue has been archived.

### ***University OH&S Policy Review***

**May 28, 2020** – No update.

**April 23, 2020** – No update.

**February 28, 2020** – Reformatted, and in for signing. No update.

**January 23, 2020** – No update.

**November 28, 2019** - Formatting changes.

History of this issue has been archived.

### ***Scent Awareness***

**May 28, 2020** – No update.

**April 23, 2020** – No update.

**February 27, 2020** – Janet advised that the committee met and developed a draft awareness campaign. The draft was circulated to all committee members for their input. Two types of signage were decided upon. The intention is to put the information up on the website as well. Some concerns were expressed about having too much signage, with the suggestion it be put on “rolling TV/projection screens”, where possible. Leon suggested talking to Communications to develop a roll-out strategy.

**January 23, 2020** – Update from Janet. Committee to reconvene to review new information and determine next steps, and will report back at the next meeting.

History of this issue has been archived.

### ***Draft Inspection Program***

**May 28, 2020** – There will be more information forthcoming regarding inspections to cover COVID-19 workplace restrictions, in addition to the usual items on the checklists.

**April 23, 2020** – The current draft of the program is in Teams for review. Copies of the checklists from the website will be posted in Teams as well. Inspections will be scheduled when we get back to campus. In the meantime, this program is being rolled out in FM, where inspections are performed on a frequent basis.

**February 27, 2020** – A new draft of the program was circulated to the committee at the meeting. Some new inspection checklists were developed and will be posted on the website and shared with the committee members. Members were asked to do more inspections, if time permitted and if they felt comfortable to do so (check with Laurie for buildings that still require a yearly inspection). More work is required to identify all areas that require a workplace inspection, e.g. are residences included or are they covered under another program? (Residence Life/FM-mechanical and custodial rooms). Some members requested training prior to doing any more inspections.

History of this issue has been archived.

***Space Heaters***

**May 28, 2020** – Leon moved that the Space Heaters SOP be adopted, and it was seconded by Dan Belliveau. Motion Carried. The plan is to roll-out this new SOP to Campus by the Fall. CLOSED.

**April 23, 2020** – Dan advised that he reviewed the SOP, and thought the new changes looked good. A copy will remain in UJOHSC Teams (Documents for Review), and approval will be sought at the next UJOHSC meeting, with implementation planned for Fall 2020.

**February 27, 2020** – The updated SOP for space heaters was distributed during the meeting. All members are asked to review the SOP and provide their comments prior to the next meeting. Leon advised that ideally we would like to eliminate their use on campus. They are a safety concern, they draw too much power and they interfere with thermostats. With the proposed changes to their use on campus, this SOP and/or policy will not be rolled out until the autumn. Next steps are to get an inventory of ones being used – maybe consider a swap-out program, and to establish Comfortable Indoor Working Temperature policy – for both summer and winter.

**January 23, 2020** - A safe operating procedure was distributed to the committee in early December. This item has been tabled to the next meeting to allow input from Facilities Management.

**November 28, 2019** - The safety of space heaters has been raised several times during recent inspections, and whether StFX has a directive in this regard. They are used in residences, with the rule being that they cannot have an exposed element. It was noted that other universities such as SMU and Dal have banned space heaters from residences (according to their websites). A number of people working in offices use them for personal comfort. Have there been any fires in the past? Due to lack of consistent reporting, we cannot be sure. Space Heaters are viewed as a workplace hazard within our legislation, and are prescribed in the Nova Scotia Occupational Health and Safety Regulations as follows:

***Space heating equipment***

**102** *An employer shall locate, install, operate, inspect and maintain temporary space heating equipment so as to prevent the unintended ignition of any material.*

**103** *Where space heating equipment is powered by a combustible fuel, the employer shall ensure that*

(a) *the equipment is located on the ground or above a non-combustible floor of sufficient thickness to prevent the transference of enough heat to cause a fire below;*

*Clause 103(a) replaced: O.I.C. 2000-130, N.S. Reg. 52/2000.*

(b) *if located above a combustible floor, the equipment is separated from the combustible floor by 75 mm of non-combustible material covered by sheet metal extending 600 mm beyond the heating equipment on all sides.*

It was suggested that FM should have a temperature policy, with minimum and maximum, taking into consideration what is reasonable and sustainable. In addition to being a safety hazard, space heaters are a considerable power draw.

The question arose as to whether we are we allowed toasters in offices? This is another hazard we should look at to ensure appropriate safeguards are in place, e.g. distance from combustibles, proper cords, etc. The hazards posed would be similar to space heaters, although the typical use is different.

Laurie to draft a Safe Operating Procedure (SOP) for the committee’s review, with a view to sharing the information with the campus community as an awareness to the hazards presented by space heaters.

### ***Doors being propped open***

**May 28, 2020** – Doors are now being propped open because people do not want to touch doorknobs. Awareness and training required. Fire safety shouldn’t be ignored to avoid touching surfaces. We are increasing the amount of sanitizer in the buildings. The virus cannot “jump” from surfaces. It has to involve someone contaminating the (twice daily sanitized) doorknob, then another person touching the contaminated surface then touching their face. If they practice proper personal hygiene, this won’t be an issue. CLOSED (again).

**April 23, 2020** – This is an ongoing issue that requires monitoring, awareness and inclusion in applicable SOPs. CLOSED.

**February 27, 2020** – No update.

**January 23, 2020** - It was suggested that we add stickers to doors stating that they should not be propped open, especially designated fire doors. There may be Accessibility reasons for some doors being propped open, e.g. in the library. There are some old buildings with big heavy doors, and some upgrades are taking place. This issue will be taken offline and assessed for follow-up.

### **November 28, 2019**

The Antigonish Volunteer Fire Department (AVFD) has expressed concern on a few occasions about the practice of propping open doors in all buildings. If a fire occurs, it and the smoke can spread much easier throughout a building if doors are propped open. This has been reviewed with FM, and it was raised again during the Room Burn earlier this year by the AVFD. This issue needs a collective effort of awareness, un-propping doors and monitoring. No doors should be permanently propped. It was noted that a fire door in the Keating Centre has been propped for quite some time now because it’s not working – Laurie to follow-up with FM.

### ***First Aid Training***

**May 28, 2020** – Further changes, that were previously communicated on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, were not reflected on the document. It will be updated and brought to the next UJOHSC meeting for acceptance.

**April 23, 2020** – Dan noted that 6.4.3 should clarify the use of personal vehicles, and 6.4.4 should include the correct number and location of AEDs once they are issued. The Draft

document is in UJOHSC Teams under Documents for review, for committee members to provide their comments, if they haven't already done so. Approval for this program will be sought at the next UJOHSC meeting, with immediate implementation planned, upon returning to campus.

History of this issue has been archived.

### ***JOHSC Roles and Responsibilities***

**May 28, 2020** – This information was circulated to “bridge the gap” until UJOHSC member training takes place. CLOSED.

**April 23, 2020** – Until training is completed, *committee members can review provincial documents in the UJOHSC Team under Training* that review the roles and responsibilities of JOHSC in Nova Scotia. They include [JOHSC Overview Slideshow](#) by NS WorkSafeForLife and the NS OHS Division's [Guidance to JOHSC](#).

**February 27, 2020** – No update.

**January 23, 2020** - The section from the OHS Act that lists the responsibilities was circulated to all members and a short discussion took place about the responsibilities. Members were reminded that confidentiality and privacy should be respected when following up on issues. Training is required for all members to ensure they understand the role and responsibilities of JOHS committees. Further information will be sent to members via email.

### ***Hazard Reporting***

**May 28, 2020** – So far portal is working well for capturing Health and Safety Concerns, and is part of the Reopening Plan. CLOSED.

**April 23, 2020** – A link to the portal is included in the StFX COVID webpage. It is also being rolled out in FM to track concerns and to “test drive” the report.

**February 27, 2020** – A link for an online “Health and Safety Concern” Reporting portal was sent to committee members yesterday for their review. The purpose of this portal is another option, one that is quick and online, for anyone to report a Concern. One change to be made is to remove Fire from the list of types of concerns (due to the urgent nature of a fire!) and replace it with Smoking. It was also suggested that samples be provided about what a Health and Safety Concern is. This samples will likely be part of the email we send when we roll out the portal.

**January 23, 2020** – There is a general lack of awareness around reporting of hazards, concerns and incidents. Some groups are reporting more than others, and not all information is making its way to the UJOHSC as it should. We are looking at various online options including apps and similar technology.

### ***Martha Drive Hazards***

**May 28, 2020** – No update.

**April 23, 2020** – No update.

**January 23, 2020** - Randy and Leon to follow-up. A concern was expressed about the hazards presented by the one-way, service-vehicle-only rules for Martha Drive not being followed. There have been several near misses between cars and pedestrians. Food service in the area requires larger delivery vehicles, and Starbucks attracts public off-campus customers. Authority and follow-up is unclear. Encourage reporting of near misses. *Security and FM to follow up to develop action plan.*

***Automated External Defibrillators***

**May 28, 2020** – No update.

**April 23, 2020** – No update.

**January 23, 2020** - An inquiry about the plan for automated external defibrillators (AEDs) around campus was received. Randy advised the plan is to have up to 10 additional AEDs in place by the end of this calendar year (following a risk assessment to determine requirement and locations). These locations will be communicated. No update.

***COVID-19 Update***

**May 28, 2020** – It was reported that the situation with employees not checking in with Security when they are coming into work has improved.

**April 23, 2020** – The notes from the special UJOHSC meeting on April 9<sup>th</sup> were reviewed (cut and pasted at the end of these minutes for simplicity)

Leon advised that University employees in buildings, who haven't communicated their presence to Security, are an ongoing concern for FM employees who are working in the buildings. All employees should be doing self-assessment and reporting to Security first. FM employees should report to Security when unexpected (not communicated through Security) persons are in buildings.

It has been reported that there are people in every building every day, and some are not following the social distancing rules. People can share the spaces, but have to be aware who is where and when. Maybe they need direction on how to enter and exit the work place, communicate, what you can and can't do. Some accountability to work around others. Security are doing a good job of keeping track where everyone is, but not everyone is currently reporting to Security. Randy and Leon to take this issue offline and address it with Human Resources.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY CONCERNS**

No health and safety concerns were raised at this meeting.

**REVIEW OF INCIDENTS**

No update.

**UPDATE ON HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING**

No update at this meeting.

## NEW BUSINESS

### *COVID-19 Reopening Plan*

Randy provided an overview of the COVID-19 Reopening Plan. This is a broad project, with a phased in approach. First phase involves return to work for employees. Subsequent/concurrent phases involve return to research and students returning. We will discuss today return to campus for employee. Plan went to Executive Council (EC) this morning, and they have approved the plan in theory. They made a couple of changes and some requests. The plan will go back to the COVID-19 Steering Committee members, then to UJOHSC for their input. Committee members are asked to review the plan and have comments back from next Tuesday, June 2. Hoping for approval from this committee. If something comes up, we will try to clarify it in the document. Our goal is to bring people back to work safely while following the guidelines. The current plan is not in great detail – high level at this point. Establishing some of the rules for working in a COVID environment – health checks, the hygiene requirements, physical distancing, mask use, details around working when physical distancing can't be maintained.

At the direction of EC, if you're on campus, you're wearing a mask until such time you get to your office location where you do not need a mask. This also applies to contractors and community members. Wear it when you get out of your vehicle or enter campus, until you're in a safe area. Jurisdictions who use masks have less cases of COVID-19. Details will be worked out, and concerns about masks will be addressed. We will use the Report a Health and Safety Concern tool to report incidents of non-compliance. Employees should not try to resolve issues non-compliance; they should go through process of reporting. Reported incidents will be followed up on, and the rules will be enforced. We want everyone safe and comfortable while on campus.

During Phase 1 – approx. 30% of workers coming back to Campus. Lot of people involved in the decision and planning process, including Human Resources and Risk Management. Priority will be given to people who need to be here for a variety of reasons. Some may continue to work at home. The idea is get some people back, ensure we have success, iron out the wrinkles, then we will expand it. There are timelines that are not very well defined – dependent on external factors, but we are not going to necessarily move with province. Utilizing a phased and methodical approach; we will work through plans and open when we ready. We hope to have some amount of students here in September. Procedures are being developed for specific work practices and rules to work safely while meeting the Public Health directives

#### Questions:

Q: What about meetings?

A: Could be based on the gathering limit, with other protocols in place. Encourage to continue meeting virtually as much as possible.

Q: Wearing mask health concerns. Do we accommodate smokers?

A: There may be some exceptions, and they will be noted. Another reason to do all reporting through the online system.

*(Note that a couple of questions were likely missed due to “technical difficulties”)*

Q: Turfs and tracks, have they thought about outdoor use?

A: We may not follow everything the province does. Our track is not open. Our facilities are not open.

Q: Who is responsible for PPE?

A: For now, all PPE requests will be approved through Risk Management. There is a training and use component that needs to be monitored.

Public areas will each be assessed individually, looking at access, restrictions, building limitations, signage, queuing, etc. Some complexities to non-employees coming to campus. The campus is currently closed to the public.

Some departments or entities will have unique challenges, and some will have protocols from their association. We will make sure all of the conditions are met. We will do assessment and may get into PPE. Those organizations will have a fair amount of guidance. We will work with them to make sure the plan is aligned with the University’s direction.

*We will call another Teams meeting on Tuesday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> to discuss this Plan. (12:30 p.m. in Teams)*

#### **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT (regular) MEETING**

Next meeting is scheduled for **June 23, 2020, time TBA**

This year may be different than other years for obvious reasons. We should keep the summer meeting schedule, and the use of Teams will make that easier. It’s important that we continue to meet. This is a special year and we have a lot to do. Important for us to have quorums for the meetings. Invitations will be sent out for the next two months. *Members please ensure you RSVP your true attendance for the meetings.*

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned at 2:47 p.m.