

1 **JOINT LOSS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING**

2 **October 20, 2020**

3 **1:30 pm**

4 **Town Council Chambers**

5 **35 Main Street**

6
7
8 Meeting called to order at 1:33pm by Francine Swafford.

9
10 **Attendance:** Francine Swafford- Chair, Kim Blichmann- Tax Clerk, Earl Labonte- DPW, Lee
11 Ann Chase- Library (via Zoom), Donna Fitzpatrick- Administrative Coordinator, Steve
12 Colburn-Assistant Fire Chief, Matthew Lavoie-Code Enforcement Officer, Ian Tewksbury-
13 Fire Union IAFF Local 3264 (arrived at 1:46pm)

14
15 **Excused:** Ken Conaty-Sewer, Rob Hebert-Parks and Recreation, Philip St. Cyr-Primex, Travis
16 Mannon-Police Department

17
18 *Approval of the Minutes from January, 14, 2020*

19
20 ***Donna Fitzpatrick motioned to approve the minutes from January 14, 2020, seconded by***
21 ***Kimberly Blichmann. Motion passed.***

22
23 1. Vote new chairperson

24
25 Donna Fitzpatrick recommended that Town Administrator Garron assigns a new chairperson to
26 someone who has not done it before.

27
28 Earl Labonte did not agree with putting the caveat that the new chairperson is someone who
29 has not done it before. Earl does not believe that is appropriate.

30
31 2. Temporary Alternative Duty (TAD)

32
33 Donna Fitzpatrick explained that as part of the Prime 2.5% program, the Temporary Alternative
34 Duty (TAD) policy must be reviewed to ensure compliance with the state RSA. The Town makes
35 every effort to try to have Temporary Alternative Duties for Workers Compensation related
36 injuries. The policy states that the period is no longer then 4 consecutive months. Steve Colburn
37 asked if that timeframe was a federal law. Donna stated that the employer can set the limit and
38 the full policy has been reviewed by the attorney. Earl Labonte mentioned that it does mirror
39 the time limit for FMLA. Donna went on to state that with Temporary Alternative Duty, Primex
40 has a third party come in, they review the job description and then review all aspects of their

41 job including equipment operations. If an employee does come back for Temporary Alternative
42 Duty, that employee must sign a form confirming they understand their limitations. Kimberly
43 Blichmann asked if the TAD policy mentions that a third party will review the situation. Donna
44 clarified that it does reference that there is a “safe to work” process. Department heads track
45 the 4 months of Temporary Alternative Duty. Steve Colburn asked what if the person on light
46 duty can do it for longer than 4 months. Donna clarified that it is only for 4 months and after
47 that the employee can no longer work until cleared to full duty. Donna stated that it is not until
48 someone is out for an extended period that the Town looks at the possibilities of ending
49 relations. This is the point that they can no longer perform the job at the capacity required.
50

51 3. Inspections

52
53 Donna Fitzpatrick has the master spreadsheet list, and all facilities were to be inspected, then
54 COVID hit. Francine Swafford will go through the list and get an update to everyone.

55 4. Workers Compensation Claims

56
57 Donna Fitzpatrick thought the Joint Loss Committee met in March but the last meeting was in
58 January so there are quite a few Workers Compensation Claims to review.
59

- 60 1. Fire Department: COVID Case
- 61 2. Fire Department: COVID Case

62
63 Matt Lavoie asked if quarantine counted as Workers Compensation. Steve Colburn clarified that
64 under the Governors Order, first responders are covered under Workers Compensation if it is
65 COVID related. The first month of COVID was a learning curve. There were calls with Health and
66 Human Services daily and how COVID was treated would change several times a week. They did
67 wear PPE but had to quarantine due to exposure. A lot has changed since then. 9-1-1 is doing a
68 better job on flagging potential cases. They now know where positive cases are in town and
69 there has been a reduction in exposure. The currently policy came out of a 6.5 hour conference
70 call on a Saturday afternoon.
71

72 3. Fire Department: COVID Case

73 Steve Colburn explained that there was a patient in Bedford that was taken off the COVID list as
74 he had tested negative. When they got to the hospital, the rapid test came back positive.
75 Unfortunately, it was a false positive, but it had to be treated like exposure to the employee.
76

77 Donna Fitzpatrick asked about a first responder who was supposed to get a rapid test but
78 couldn't. Steve Colburn explained that should not have happened. It was a breakdown in
79 communication. Now, employees can go to any urgent care to do a rapid test. If they don't have

80 the capability, the sample can be carried to Public Health and get an answer back within 24
81 hours.

82

83 4. Fire Department: Hose line injury

84 Steve Colburn explained that this was due to a break down in communication. The pump
85 operator charged the hose line without the person on the end of the line being ready which
86 caused an injury.

87 *Joint Loss recommended continuous training.*

88

89 5. Fire Department: Hand injury

90 Ian Tewksbury explained that this workers compensation was more of a precaution. There was
91 a hand slip while cranking and the hand was jammed. 5 hours later, the hand was swollen.

92

93 *Joint Loss recommended continuous training.*

94

95 6. Fire Department: Foot injury

96 Steve Colburn explained that this was a house fire. They could not see there was fire under the
97 stair tread and once pressure was applied to it, the firefighter fell through.

98

99 *Joint Loss recommended continuous training.*

100

101 7. Public Works Department: Head injury

102 Earl Labonte explained that the employee was working on cleaning out catch basins and the
103 tube on the back of the machine hit him in the head. It was due to a lack experience.

104

105 *Joint Loss recommended continuous training.*

106

107 8. Fire Department: COVID Case

108 Steve Colburn explained that this was a known COVID patient. The employee did wear
109 everything they were supposed to. Later, the employee was not feeling well. He tested negative
110 but due to the nature of the call, there must be Workers Compensation claim filed.

111

112 9. Fire Department: Cardiac episode

113 Steve Colburn explained that throughout the day the employee did not feel well. He received a
114 medical evaluation and was taken to the hospital as a precaution. Ultimately, this workers
115 compensation claim was denied.

116

117 10. Fire Department: Back injury

118 Steve Colburn explained that this was for a frequent flyer. When they arrived at this address,
119 there was limited space to get enough people in the area to assist. They were not able to get

120 equipment in there and the patient did not have good footwear on, so it was a lot of dead
121 weight.

122

123 *Joint Loss recommended use of proper equipment for safety.*

124

125 11. Finance Department: Carpel Tunnel Syndrome

126 Donna Fitzpatrick explained that this was from continuously doing repetitive movement.

127 However, this claim was denied as it was not work related as an ergonomic assessment was
128 completed.

129

130 12. Public Works Department: Chest muscle injury

131 Earl Labonte explained that the employee was lifting a 5 gallon can of paint and pulled a muscle
132 in the employee's chest. The employee lifts these all the time, it could have been a combination
133 of other work being done that week.

134

135 *Joint Loss recommended continuous training for proper lifting techniques.*

136

137 13. Police Department: Officer assaulted

138 Francine Swafford explained that the officer was assaulted. Which is a hazard of the job.

139

140 14. Fire Department: Abdomen pain

141 Steve Colburn explained that Hooksett was assisting in lifting a patient in Allentown. The
142 employee felt some discomfort in their stomach and then ultimately more pain. Ended up going
143 home and sought medical evaluation later. This employee has had prior back issues and proper
144 lifting techniques have been addressed with him several times. These techniques were
145 reviewed with the employee again.

146

147 15. Police Department: Officer received spit in face

148 Steve Colburn explained that there are two ways to contract COVID and it is eyes and
149 inhalation. The State has changed its protocols so that anytime EMS is out, they have face and
150 eye protections. Francine Swafford mentioned that all officers are supplied with all appropriate
151 PPE. Donna Fitzpatrick stated that if the Town is providing the PPE, it is not their call whether to
152 wear it or not.

153

154 *Joint loss recommends eye protection.*

155

156 16. Fire Department: Injury x 2

157 Steve Colburn explained that an employee was removing a piece of equipment and got
158 frustrated because it was stuck and got hurt by it. The same employee drove his head into a
159 compartment door on the apparatus a short time later.

160

161 *Joint Loss recommends taking time to remove equipment properly instead of trying to rush.*

162

163 5. Other

164 Ian Tewksbury asked what needs to be done about safety issues. A station Captain filled out a
165 form on Facility Dude, but it has not been fixed. 2 years ago, a Firefighter slipped and fell on ice,
166 the remedy was to put heat tape in the gutter but what happens is the ice melts, forms a
167 puddle then the puddle freezes overnight. There are also two fire code violations in Station 1
168 with electrical outlets, which have been submitted multiple times through Facility Dude.
169 Earl Labonte did not see those as safety committee issues, those are work order issues.
170 Steve Colburn explained further that a gutter was installed. There is still concern because
171 certain times of the year, the gutters get full of ice and runs over. In the meantime, ice melt is
172 put out during the day, but it refreezes at night.

173

174 Matt Lavoie asked if there was ever a walkthrough at Station 1 and Kimberly Blichmann
175 explained it was done last year.

176

177 Donna Fitzpatrick asked what the best way to resolve those issues is. Earl recommended going
178 into Facility Dude to see what the status is on those items. The best way to check on items is to
179 speak with Paul and emphasize the extent of the issues.

180

181 **Ian Tewksbury motioned to adjourn at 2:45 pm, seconded by Matt Lavoie. Motion passed.**

182

183 Minutes respectfully submitted by

184 *Leann Fuller*

185 Leann Fuller

186 Administrative Assistant

187

188 **Please see subsequent meeting minutes for any amendments to these minutes.**

189