

**St. Francis Xavier University (StFX)
University Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee (UJOHSC) Meeting Minutes
Online in Teams
January 27, 2022 at 12:00 noon**

Present: Employee Representatives: Kris MacSween, Colin Rankin, Jack Irvin, Brendan Roberts, Sylvia Phee, Tyson Ball, Jamie Braid, Susan MacKay
Employer Representatives: Joe Apaloo, Randy Peters, Jacob Burghardt, Leon MacLellan, Krista McKenna
Advisory: Laurie Reid – Manager, OHS; Erica Baker – Advisor, HR

The meeting was chaired by Krista McKenna and was called to Order at 12:03 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

Krista welcomed JOHSC Members back to campus, and welcomed new Member, Erica Baker. Susan requested two additions to the Agenda: 1) StFXAUT request to call an emergency JOHSC meeting in December and 2) request for air testing in Nicholson Tower. The agenda for today's meeting was reviewed and accepted by consensus.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING

Krista pointed out the Minutes format has been condensed to include only the current items. Leon moved to adopt the Minutes. The Minutes from the November 25 UJOHSC meeting were approved by consensus and are ready to be posted.

OUTSTANDING ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Fume Hoods

January 27, 2022 – Leon provided an update. FM has approved the draft program and will continue with the procedure. Leon thanked all involved. Krista said thank you for all the ongoing hard work on this item. This item can be removed from the Minutes. CLOSED.

Scent Awareness

January 27, 2022 – The scent awareness campaign was launched. Information was sent out via the 'News You Can Use' Bulletin, social media, website, and there are posters around campus. Laurie will check with Communications about sending an email to campus. Laurie has received positive comments from employees who appreciate this campaign. Krista acknowledged the good committee work done on this campaign.

Building Inspections

January 27, 2022 – Laurie confirmed one building was done. There are plans to inspect the Keating Centre and other buildings with JOHSC Members. This is an ongoing item.

Draft StFX Violence in the Workplace Policy (VITW) / Risk Assessment Policy

January 27, 2022 – Leon and Joe approved this Policy, based on no substantial changes. After legal review, there have been changes to the Policy. Laurie will make the changes (legal wording) and review the Policy with Erica. The revised Policy will be finalized and approved by the JOHSC during the February meeting.

Nighttime Lighting Audit/Assessment

January 27, 2022 – Based on past lighting audits, Laurie will update the lighting audit inspection checklist, which will become part of the building inspection program. JOHSC Members will assist with outdoor nighttime inspections to identify areas where lighting can be improved. Krista suggested letting the campus know about the lighting audit for their awareness/input, and to amplify and emphasize safety. At the last meeting, Kris suggested a campus survey. This item is ongoing.

OHS Policy Review

January 27, 2022 – Laurie confirmed the OHS Policy has been signed by the StFX President and will be posted to the OHS website. CLOSED.

COVID-19 UPDATE

Randy provided an update. Students returning to campus will be required to participate in a check-in process, conducted by Student Life, and then given a green bracelet. There will be a heavy emphasis on mask wearing compliance, with consequences for those who do not comply. There will be additional security patrols/X-Patrol. It is incumbent on everyone to follow rules and report incidents when they see them. Current restrictions will be in place until February 14. The University purchased N95 face masks for employees (480 people requested them).

Randy invited questions. Krista asked about if, in light of X-Ring, the University is planning on following Public Health (PH) gathering numbers or being more stringent. Randy said gathering limits are small and restrictive, which all must follow. All of the planning for X-Ring followed PH guidelines. With large numbers, it became difficult to enforce wearing masks. People were reminded to wear a mask and were given a mask if they did not have one. The focus was on vaccinations and reminding people to do their part, which didn't happen enough; this is where there were issues.

Joe asked whether Administrative Assistants could distribute face masks to members of their department. Randy said those who want an N95 face mask can request one as supplies are limited and everyone should be given an opportunity to receive one.

Kris asked for clarity about the mask mandate for the food/drink policy for students. Randy said there will be no food/drink allowed in study spaces (to avoid partial/no mask wearing).

Krista asked if there were any other questions. Leon added that StFX purchased 35 HEPA filter units which have been well received by Faculty and students. They are in 30 classrooms and labs that previously had no ventilation. Susan thanked Leon for purchasing the HEPA filters noting they are appreciated by StFXAUT Members.

HEALTH AND SAFETY CONCERNS / CORRECTIVE ACTIONS UPDATE

Krista invited JOHSC Members to raise any issues/concerns they have.

Laurie said there have been two recent patterns reported in the OHS database: 1) smoking on campus (marijuana smell, smoking too close to buildings) and 2) the stop sign at the Annex/JBB is being ignored. 129 concerns have been resolved with 55 still open.

Kris asked for an update about the incident where a campus staff member fell and broke bones (they are not yet back to work) in the church parking lot (the Cathedral's property). Laurie said this incident was reported to the Department of Labour. The Cathedral has been contacted about this safety issue. Laurie will send a communication about safe winter walking to the campus.

TRAINING

JOHSC training will be offered this term. Laurie will follow up with JOHSC Members who have not already taken the training. Laurie mentioned that Safety Services Nova Scotia offers JOHSC and leadership virtual training.

NEW BUSINESS

Incident Reporting and Investigations

This item was tabled from the previous meeting. Laurie will send the website link to JOHSC for their feedback prior to the February meeting.

Committee Membership

Krista said the JOHSC Executive met to discuss Committee Membership. As per the Terms of Reference (ToR), except for the three Executive Members whose terms are 1-year, all terms are 3-years. Laurie will email a survey to the JOHSC to determine how long each Member has served and whether they would like to renew their term.

StFXAUT Request to Call an Emergency JOHSC Meeting in December

This item was added to the Minutes to officially record this request. In December, on behalf of the StFXAUT Executive Committee (EC), Susan and Jamie called for an emergency JOHSC meeting to discuss the rapidly unfolding COVID/OMICRON crisis at StFX. In response to this meeting not being called, Members of the StFXAUT EC met with Paula Dobson (OHS Officer, NS Department of Labour) who will be issuing a Report to StFX this week.

Jamie clarified the StFXAUT was fielding OHS workplace concerns from many Members. An emergency meeting was a prudent and efficient venue to exchange information. We were surprised this type of situation did not qualify as an "emergency".

Susan added this meeting would have provided an opportunity for JOHSC Members to share, address, or communicate their (or their Members') health and safety concerns, fears, risks, and safety gaps in the workplace.

Krista said the mandate fell with the COVID-19 Steering Committee. Kris added the questions asked were operational in nature and best directed to the COVID-19 Steering Committee and University leadership.

Krista asked what does qualify for an “emergency” JOHSC meeting. Laurie clarified the ToR does not say “why” but “how” to call an emergency meeting. Laurie will look into this further.

Leon added OHS environments have been challenging as COVID regulations frequently change.

Randy is open to however we determine emergency meetings. There are now Faculty Members on the COVID-19 Steering Committee. Randy invited anyone to meet with him if they have questions. If emergency meetings are mentioned in the ToR, then meetings can be called if JOHSC Members want to discuss/voice subjects of concern.

Moving forward, the StFXAUT has expressed an interest in working with the StFX Administration and the JOHSC to make ongoing recommendations to improve campus safety. Susan said this is an opportunity to improve communication, collaboration, and consultation.

Krista said in the future, the JOHSC Executive will be open to all meeting requests. Laurie added workplace concerns can be reported in the online portal.

Request for Air Testing in Nicholson Tower

Susan said StFXAUT Members have requested air quality testing in Nicholson Tower (NT), given the recent flooding incident. Leon provided some background. A week ago Sunday evening, there was a flood in NT, probably from the coffee maker on the 8th floor (there is an ongoing investigation for the cause). A leak went through the building from the 8th to 1st floors, on the east (Annex) side. FM has been working to dry out the building. Remedial work will begin at the end of term so Faculty can remain in their offices. The workplace is considered safe. Temperatures have been lowered to reduce mold buildup. WINDMAR has been monitoring humidity. Carpets will be replaced in May. FM met with 55 occupants of NT to address concerns. About 40 offices were affected. Dean Brebner is working with occupants to document damaged items (personal and StFX) for insurance. ALL-TECH is conducting tests and will provide a report. Susan asked if the testing results will be circulated to the campus. Leon confirmed the results will be communicated to the NT occupants and the JOHSC. Krista acknowledged all of the hard work done by Facilities Management.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next regular JOHSC meeting will be held at noon on Thursday, February 24, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Leon at 1:05 p.m.