

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting #240, December 13, 2006

MEMBERS:

Cathy MacLean (R)	University Appointee	Heather Ann Walker (P)	DUAG
Greg McNutt (P)	University Appointee	Ezra Edlestein (R)	DSU
Paul Bourgeois (P)	University Appointee	Zita Hildebrandt (P)	NSGEU
Marlene Daye-Smith(P)	University Appointee	Denise Sommerfeld (P)	DFA
Mateo Yorke (P)	University Appointee	Forest Fyfe (P)	DFA
Patrick McGrath (A)	University Appointee	Joe Dorey (P)	IUOE
Paul Amyotte (P)	University Appointee	Michael Armstrong(P)	IUOE
Ruth Murray (P)	University Appointee	Troy Winters (R)	CUPE

(P)resent - (R)egrets - (A)bsent

William J. Louch - Director, Jan Taylor McIntyre - Recording Secretary, Stephen Ellis - H&S Officer

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. DRAFT MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Adoption of the November minutes were approved as distributed.

3. ITEMS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

3.1 Update on Biosafety Seminar in December

W. Louch reported the Biosafety seminar scheduled December 7th, went well. Two invited speakers from Winnipeg and Ottawa, each presented a morning and afternoon session to 165 participants. The seminar was very well attended with an evaluation about the session was requested to be completed. Responses have been very positive. The day ended with a base whereby a Biosafety Program could be built upon. G. McNutt responded he attended and found the day to be very positive and heard the similar comments from staff in Faculty of Medicine who also attended. There was a lot of good information and material dispersed in a very short period of time. Bill Currie, Biosafety officer, and G. Johnston, past Biosafety officer, are interested in moving forward to develop the program.

3.2 Update on Emergency Phones in Elevators and Exterior Signage

Z. Hildebrandt drew attention to a letter in the Committee's package to B. Mason regarding a request for funding from A&R (Alterations and Renovations) for signage and emergency phones in elevators, starting with the 2 most problematic elevators that are located in the Dunn and CRC buildings. Elevators fall under Safety and a project leader would be charged with the work order. P. Bourgeois responded he has pushed the job forward and the signage project is in the works.

W. Louch reported a letter was also sent to the Chemistry Safety Committee explaining what has taken place, following up their letter of request for better signage for the Chemistry Building.

3.3 Smoking

W. Louch provided an update on the smoking policy. The Policy remains a matter of concern for some neighbours.

F. Fyfe noted he had passed the Killam Library and observed Facilities Management grounds staff cleaning up butts in front of the building using a leaf blower which was stirring up dust and dirt into the air. The use of a broom and pan would be a better solution in keeping with the clean air initiative.

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.1 Engine Exhaust and Idling

Continuing with air quality, fumes from truck exhaust parked in the CSB loading dock, delivering bunker fuel, are being drawn in and circulated through the building. A temporary wall of plastic has been placed to help reduce the amount of exhaust. The LSC experiences a similar problem with vehicle exhaust fumes going into the building through open windows.

M. Armstrong added diesel tractors must keep running or they will freeze up, and if there are refrigeration units on them, they will seize up. P. Amyotte asked if it is feasible to attach a hose to the exhaust pipe to redirect fumes from the truck away from the building.

G. McNutt added when work was going on in the Tupper building, the ventilation was turned off at 1 or 2 hour intervals which seemed to be effective.

W. Louch responded by suggesting having the Safety Office students, conduct a survey of loading docks in the new year to see what signage is posted.

4.2 University Infection Control

With recent experiences with mumps, Norwalk and perhaps other illnesses, Z. Hildebrandt wondered whether the Committee would see merit in hosting a seminar at which representatives of those involved in university operations at Dalhousie and neighbouring institutions, might meet with public health officials to compare experiences, and perhaps develop a “best practice “ guide which would assist Dalhousie and other universities to respond to concerns about infection risks.

Members felt that the idea was worth pursuing. Members are aware that the mumps outbreak has struck at universities across the continent and the infection problems have arisen in the cruise ship industry, in health care and most recently, at Atlantic Universities.

Members asked W. Louch to poll members of the Dalhousie administration and report back in February on whether the University would see merit in a session. If the response is positive, members asked W. Louch to get a similar sense of how other universities and the public health agencies would respond to the suggestion.

If a session were to take place, it might be scheduled on campus after the end of classes when meeting space is available.

4.3 Mould Testing

W. Louch reported he conducted a round of mould/mildew sampling in Killam and the Marion McCain Building. Tests in both areas did not point to mould colonization of tested spaces.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

P. Amyotte will be going on sabbatical for 6 months in January and will try to find a replacement for himself on the Committee until he returns to resume participating on the Committee.

B. Mason's retirement farewell is schedule later today at the University Hall at 4:00 pm and members were invited to attend. Z Hildebrandt read a draft of a letter, thanking Mr. Mason for his many years of support for the activities of the Committee. Members asked Ms. Hildebrandt to forward the letter.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 am.

Next meeting is scheduled:
Wednesday, February 13, 2007
9:00 - 10:30 am
Room 429
Weldon Law Building