

Richland Township and Volunteer Fire Department

Safety Committee

Meeting Minutes - March 9, 2022

Present:

Wes Meyers, Fire Chief
Scott Conahan, Police Department Representative
John Herdman, Police Department Representative
Bryan J. Beppler, Executive Director
Tiffany Shomo, Guest
Barb Smith, Teeter Group (via phone conference)

Absent:

Kim Stayrook, Administrative Assistant
Rusty Felton, Road Department Representative
Todd Shaffer, Road Department Representative

Welcome to Committee:

Mr. Beppler began the meeting with the introduction of the Safety Committee members and thanking them for their participation. He stated the Road Department representatives were unable to attend the meeting due to winter weather conditions.

Rules and Responsibilities of a Certified Safety Committee:

Ms. Smith stated that two (2) of the main responsibilities of a certified Safety Committee are the identification and correction of hazards, as well as completing a root cause analysis when an incident occurs. Asking coworkers and getting input from each department is a systematic way to incorporate others into this process.

Ms. Smith discussed training. Annual required training will be conducted at a future meeting. The four (4) topics of training include: safety committee operation, hazard detection and inspection, incident investigation and prevention, and substance abuse and opioid painkiller use.

Committee Bylaws:

Ms. Smith discussed the requirements set forth by the State for a certified Safety Committee's operation and discussed developing written bylaws that define the Committee's operation, purpose, responsibilities and functions. Ms. Smith advised the Committee that the State may select the Committee for a random audit to ensure compliance with all the requirements. Auditors verify compliance with requirements such as monthly Safety meetings being held with a quorum of members present, meeting agendas and minutes being prepared for each meeting and available for all employees to review and other requirements that will be set forth in our Committee Bylaws. If you fail to abide with the State's requirements for certification, an employer may lose their five percent (5%) credit on Workers' Compensation premiums. The certification process requires the Committee to have been meeting at least six (6) months prior to the initial application. There is a 90-day window to apply, and the initial application must be submitted at least thirty (30) days

before the January 1, 2023 renewal. If Richland Township applies by October 1, 2022, they should have the certification in place prior to the final renewal premium calculations.

There were discussions regarding the most efficient and productive ways to get safety issues and concerns to the Safety Committee representatives and Safety Committee. Safety issues and concerns can be submitted via email to Committee Representatives, Department Heads, and the Safety Committee Chairperson.

Board members had questions regarding Safety Committee members being physically present at the meetings. A phone conference is allowable, but the preference is to have the Safety Committee present for all meetings. However, if a phone conference is necessary, the meeting minutes should state that a member participated virtually.

Mr. Beppler asked if attendance by a guest participant from a department would be acceptable if a committee member from that department was unable to make a Safety meeting. Ms. Smith stated that guests are always welcome, but they would not count as part of the quorum. However, if a Committee member is unable to attend a meeting, they should email any safety issues or concerns to the Chair prior to the meeting to be included on the agenda to be shared with the Safety Committee.

Election of Safety Committee Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary:

The Committee elected to table this item until the next meeting when all members may be present.

2022 Meeting Schedule:

The board members discussed future meeting schedules. Ms. Smith recommended early or mid-month meetings in case there is no quorum. Then, there is more time to reschedule the meeting. The board agreed on the following 2022 meeting schedule (second Wednesday of every month at 11:00 am at the Municipal Building):

April 13, 2022
May 11, 2022
June 8, 2022
July 13, 2022
August 10, 2022
September 14, 2022
October 12, 2022
November 9, 2022
December 14, 2022

Discussion / Follow up:

Ms. Smith provided recommendations for the April 2022 Agenda including: bylaw reviews, confirmation of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary, and developing an agreed upon hazard identification process.

Ms. Smith will review the meeting minutes prior to the next meeting. Safety Committee members should review the bylaws before the next meeting and identify any concerns that need discussed. As part of the discussion, Mr. Beppler stated that employees should follow a chain of command when addressing safety concerns and issues (Department's Safety representative, Department

Head, and Safety Chairperson). Mr. Herdman stated that if you utilize suggestion boxes for safety concerns, the safety issues may not be clearly identified and would prefer one on one conversations with employees to clearly understand the safety concern.

Safety concerns need to be addressed. In addition, responses or remedies need to be clearly communicated. Mr. Myers suggested that an informational sheet with all Safety Committee contact information be posted at each work location for ease of reporting. Ms. Smith will work on this handout for the next meeting. After approved, the handout will be posted at all work locations.

Mr. Beppler and Ms. Smith addressed corrective actions on the workers' compensation paperwork. Please do not put N/A for the corrective action. From a workers' compensation perspective, all injuries and accidents are preventable. Therefore, a corrective action is required.

There being no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 12:01 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Tiffany Shomo