

TOWN OF SOUTHTON
SAFETY COMMITTEE
Quarterly Meeting
Wednesday, April 14, 2010

Minutes

The quarterly meeting of the Town of Southington Safety Committee was held on Wednesday, April 14, 2010, in the Town Council Chambers, Town Hall, Southington, Connecticut.

- *Members present:* John Weichsel, Fire Chief Harold Clark, John DeGioia, Dave Lapreay, Richard Lopatosky, James Paul, Mark Sciota, Michael Shanley (Police), Cindy Wall and Steven Wlodkowski.
- *Others present:* John Kauffman, CIRMA Sr. Risk Management Consultant
- *Members absent:* Police Chief Jack Daly, Capt. Gregory Simone, Mark Beal and Domenic Perone.

I. Roll Call: Chairman John Weichsel called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Quorum was confirmed.

II. Minutes of Last Meeting: Mark Sciota made a motion to accept the minutes of the January 13, 2010 meeting as submitted; seconded by Richard Lopatosky. Carried unanimously.

III. Old Business: None.

IV. Review of Accidents and Corrective Action: Injury reports numbered 10-01 through 10-17 were reviewed.

#10-01 – Fire Fighter slipped on a running board, injured left knee. Had a previous sprain that got aggravated. Lost a couple weeks of work time. He is back to work.

#10-02 – Police employee slipped on ice in parking lot at police station. Employee had a previous back injury. No lost time from work. The parking lot is maintained frequently in winter but slips and falls are hard to prevent.

#10-03 – Water Pollution employee slipped on snow at plant, hitting head and hurting neck. No lost time; reported for the record.

#10-04 – Police officer slipped on icy driveway of private residence when leaving. No lost time.

#10-05 – Several officers were assisting the dog warden on private property to capture an aggressive pit bull. When officer began retreating backward as the dog charged at him, he tripped over a small tree. Minor injury, no lost time.

#10-06 – Highway employee slipped on the step when getting back into the truck during a snow storm, injuring left knee. No lost time.

#10-07 – Highway employee was cutting trees and pulled a muscle in his back. Doctor put him out of work two weeks. He had therapy and is back to work.

#10-08 and #10-16 – Two similar incidents. Fire fighters were injured while trying to free the air pack regulator from the back of seat. The first employee was hit near the eye, went to the hospital and had four stitches. No lost time. Chief Clark said since there were two injuries in a short period of time, he will look into it. Could just be a freak incident but he will review how the packs are stored.

#10-09 – Female prisoner under arrest struck officer in groin causing discomfort. The prisoner was eventually taken to the hospital for a mental evaluation. No lost time.

#10-10 – Highway had a breakdown on the road during a snow storm. Employee attempted to assist the mechanic in putting a belt on the truck, causing strain in his neck. No lost time.

#10-11 – During interaction with combative suspect, officer was struck and suffered abrasion to left knee. This incident was at a home run by DCF for troubled juvenile females. Police are called to this location frequently. Last Friday two officers were bitten by suspects. Police have met with DCF to try to reduce calls for service there. Not much to do about it. Mr. Weichsel noted that there will be another house run by DCF in the Pattonbrook area. It was originally intended for juvenile boys but will now be for girls.

#10-12 – Water Pollution employee slid on wooden plank on way to floating cover (only way to get there), causing contusion to right knee. Serious injury; employee had to have an operation and is still out. John DeGioia said the plank system has been in use since 1976 and there has not been any trouble with it.

#10-13 – Civilian employee at the Police Dept. caught finger while adjusting her chair height. Not much to be said about it.

#10-14 – Officers dispatched to a home where two brothers were fighting. Officer was assaulted in face and head sustaining cuts and bruises. There was no lost time. One of the brothers was known to officers from previous calls (mental health issues).

#10-15 – Officer sustained lacerations on face from tree branch while on pursuit of suspect. No medical attention; no lost work time.

#10-16 – already reviewed

#10-17 – While moving a buffer in a box, Fire Dept. employee extended and strained his left arm. He is going for therapy. No lost work time.

V. New Business:

Mark Sciota reported that CIRMA presented two workshops for clerical and public works staff. John Kauffman introduced himself as the Senior Risk Management Consultant for CIRMA replacing Jeff Grundt. He said the workshops went very well with good participation. Going forward, Mr. Kauffman thought he might come in and review some work stations in order to offer some suggestions to make people more comfortable and thereby reducing strains and injuries.

Mr. Kauffman handed out a loss analysis on the last three full years and the current year up to January. In the second year there was an accident that involved 58 people in the Fire Dept. Chief Clark and Mark Sciota believed that to be when the old Beaton & Corbin factory burned, so it was one incident, not 58. Mr. Kauffman said if you took that out of the equation, the numbers are fairly flat, running about 60 incidents per year. Strains and sprains are the big issue, especially with the police, fire and public works employees. Perhaps this is a training issue where we could teach people the proper way to lift, etc. An overall analysis of the four years 2006-2010 on page 3 of the report shows that strains and sprains have the highest frequency when you take out the industrial incident. Slips and falls are not uncommon; it is an ongoing issue, especially in the Northeast where we get ice and snow. Mr. Kauffman believes that deeper investigation should be done to find out if perhaps there are certain areas of parking lots that collect water, freeze and cause slips. He commented that schools in particular have a footwear issue where people do not wear the proper shoes or boots in winter.

Mr. Kauffman said CIRMA is ready to help with training to reduce injuries and losses. Sometimes it is just an awareness issue. He noted that there are costs involved that are not covered by the insurance. The town spent almost \$2 million over the past 4 years in uninsured costs. Mr. Weichsel thanked Mr. Kauffman for the report and said we would be in touch regarding training.

VI. Miscellaneous: None.

VII. Adjournment: There being no further business, a motion was made by Mark Sciota to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Richard Lopatosky. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Berardinelli
Acting Secretary

(Workers' Compensation Loss Analysis 2006-2010 attached to file copy of Minutes)