

**Town of Chester  
Joint Loss Management Committee (JLMC) Meeting  
Thursday, January 26, 2023  
Chester Police Department Training Room  
Approved Minutes**

**I Preliminaries**

9:00am Call the Meeting to Order  
Roll Call

Chairman's Additions or Deletions

Approval of Minutes – October 20, 2022

JLMC Review of Spring Hill Farm Tour – **Postponed**

Reports of Accidents / Injuries

Reports from Departments

JLMC Tour of Chester Police Department and Town Hall Annex – **Postponed**

Preliminary Review of Town's Safety Policy (Updates) - **Postponed**

Inclement Weather Guidelines & Procedures

Any Other Business

Date & Location of Next Meeting

Adjournment

**1.1 Call to Order**

Vice Chair Reishus called this meeting of the Town of Chester Joint Loss Management Committee at 9:03am.

**1.2 Roll Call**

Members present:

Aaron Berube, Police Chief

Paul Cavanaugh, Maintenance Director

John Dalrymple, Groundskeeper / Health Officer

Debra Doda, Town Administrator (TA) – arrived 9:26am

Andrew Hadik, Town Planner – arrived 9:26am

Corinna Reishus, Recreation Director / JLMC Vice Chair

**1.3 Chairman's Additions or Deletions**

None.

**II. Old Business**

**2.1 Approval of Minutes: October 20, 2022**

Maintenance Director Cavanaugh moved to approve the October 20, 2022 JLMC minutes as written; Police Chief Berube seconded the motion. The vote was four in the affirmative with TA Doda and Town Planner Hadik yet to arrive; motion carried.

**2.2 JLMC Review of Spring Hill Farm Tour – October 20, 2022 - POSTPONED**

The tour of Spring Hill Farm was not discussed because many JLMC members were not present.

Police Chief Berube moved to postpone this discussion to the next JLMC meeting; Vice Chair Reishus seconded the motion. The vote was four in favor with TA Doda and Town Planner Hadik yet to arrive; motion carried.

### III. New Business

#### 3.1 Reports of Accidents / Injuries – October 1 through December 31, 2022

Finance Officer Duffy (not present) provided Vice Chair Reishus with the accident / injury report for the period of October 1 through December 31, 2022. Vice Chair Reishus advised that there were a total of six injuries reported during this period. Three were lift / strains (two of these were circumstantial and one due to poor positioning). The remaining three were a bruise (circumstantial), a cut (poor judgement / circumstantial), and an exposure (unavoidable).

#### 3.2 Reports from Departments

**Vice Chair Reishus:** Nothing to report for Recreation / Facilities, except discussion of inclement weather notification and policies, which has been pulled into its own section under **3.5 Inclement Weather Guidelines & Procedures**.

**Secretary Wilson:** Nothing to report for Building Department.

**Maintenance Director Cavanaugh:** Nothing to report.

**Groundskeeper / Health Officer Dalrymple:** Nothing to report.

**Police Chief Berube:** He advised that all chairpersons of after-hours meetings are informed that they are responsible for creating safe walking pathways during inclement weather. Whose purview it would be to determine what is cancelled during bad weather and the nature of such notifications was discussed further in **3.5 Inclement Weather Guidelines & Procedures**.

**Town Planner Hadik:** Nothing to report.

**Town Administrator Doda:** Repair / replacement of Town-owned buildings' roofs is on the CIP Warrant Article for the upcoming Town Meeting. Maintenance Director Cavanaugh added that he is going to write a letter to the Selectmen today advising of all the leakage occurring in the roofs today & recently.

#### 3.3 JLMC Tour of Chester Police Department and Town Hall Annex - POSTPONED

All members present agreed to postpone the tour of the PD and the Annex to the next meeting; attendance of more members of the JLMC will be necessary for the tour to be comprehensive, allowing for an effective review.

#### 3.4 Preliminary Review of Town's Safety Policy (Updates) - POSTPONED

All members present agreed to postpone the preliminary review of the Town's Safety Policy relative to possible updates. Attendance of more JLMC members will be necessary for the review to be comprehensive, allowing for effective updates to be recommended.

#### 3.5 Inclement Weather Policies & Procedures

Vice Chair Reishus initiated this discussion because she is not being provided with guidance on whether to hold programs during inclement weather. A lengthy discussion commenced relative to the inconsistency in guidelines & procedures surrounding inclement weather. Some items mentioned were:

- Ultimately, whose purview is it to initiate discussion on closing Town buildings and cancelling after-hours meetings and activities?
- Can we set a time (the evening before and / or day of weather event) by which the decision to close Town buildings and cancel activities is made?
- Tying the Town's plan of action to the school's plan of action is arbitrary at best. Presently, the "official / unofficial" guideline is that Town offices will have a 2-hour delay on days that Chester Academy closes due to inclement weather. When the school has a delay, does the Town? It has become case-by-case, but the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) seems to change, and the mode by which notifications are sent is also not very consistent.
- It seems unfair / inconsistent that Recreation activities might be cancelled one evening due to the weather, while a board or committee may still be allowed to meet based on the discretion of that entity's chairperson. It was also stated that even though chairpersons are informed via email that it is their responsibility to ensure walkways are cleared for meetings, many chairpersons either aren't truly aware of this or simply don't do it. Some suggested that the chairpersons think that it's Maintenance's job to clear walkways after-hours; but how can they if they are not here? Again, guidelines and procedures are not consistent and / or not understood by all.
- Some employees that live further away or start their day earlier are already en route or have arrived at work when the "I Am Responding" (IAR) message is sent that there will be a delay or closure.
- Maintenance and Grounds employees should be considered essential, and therefore receive premium pay when they come in during inclement weather to keep pathways clear and treated or perform other snow removal / storm mitigation functions. However, there may not be a clear definition of "essential employees" in the Town's policies.

Those present today at this Joint Loss Management Committee meeting agreed that there is a great deal of liability on the Town associated with inclement weather. It is strongly agreed that very thoughtful and specific guidelines & procedures need to be implemented.

The next Department Heads meeting (Wednesday, February 1<sup>st</sup> at 9am) will be dedicated to drafting such guidelines & procedures to be recommended to the Selectmen for adoption.

In the meantime, TA Doda will ask Supervisor of Roads (SOR) Piper (not present) to communicate directly with Vice Chair Reishus to advise whether programs should be cancelled if there is inclement weather. Police Chief Berube will add TA Doda's and Vice Chair Reishus' cell numbers to the Chester Academy notification system.

### **3.6 Any Other Business**

Neither TA Doda nor Vice Chair Reishus received the emails notifying of today's JLMC meeting. It was discussed that perhaps the "Groups" feature on Outlook be used to ensure all members are notified of meetings. It was reiterated that ALL Town Employees are encouraged to attend JLMC meetings, and that a 50/50 mix of supervisory and non-supervisory staff should attend.

## **IV. Adjournment**

### **4.1 Date and Location of Next Meeting**

154 The next meeting of the Joint Loss Management Committee is scheduled for Thursday, April 13, 2023  
156 at 9:00am at the Chester Police Department training room; with a tour of the Police Department & Town  
Hall Annex to follow.

158 **Police Chief Berube moved to adjourn the meeting; Recreation Town Planner Hadik seconded  
the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; motion carried.**

160 The meeting was adjourned at 10:04 am.

162 Respectfully Submitted,  
164 Caroline R. Wilson, Secretary