

ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**May 6, 2021**

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 7:12 p.m., by video conference with the following members present:

- Councillor George El-Jakl - Chair
- Denise Nickerson, Nova Scotia Works – Vice Chair
- Warden Lindsay (Eddie) Nickerson
- Boyd Scott

Absent:

- Loretta Nickerson, Executive Director, Shelburne Association Supporting Inclusion.
- Councillor Shaun Hatfield

- Chris Frotten, CAO
- Lesa Rossetti, Accessibility Co-ordinator
- Cameron Whiteway, Director of Property Services

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Being duly moved and seconded that the agenda be approved as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Being duly moved and seconded that the minutes of the last meeting held March 4, 2021, be approved as circulated.

Motion carried unanimously.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Reference was made to page 8 of the Accessibility Planning Toolkit for Municipalities, which outlined steps to be taken to launch a committee. Required steps have already been completed, but two optional steps remain.

One optional step is to provide orientation to the committee. It was agreed that arrangements be made with Carla Bezanson of the Accessibility Directorate to provide orientation at our next meeting.

The remaining optional step is to prepare a “Statement of Commitment”. This statement should outline the Municipality’s commitment to improving accessibility for the public.

It was agreed that staff draft a Statement of Commitment to be considered by the Committee at their next meeting. It was agreed the statement be concise and limited to a maximum of 2 paragraphs.

TRAINING/PRESENTERS/WORKSHOPS

No training suggestions were put forward. Members were advised that they could suggest training topics at any time.

PRESENTATION – DEVELOP YOUR MUNICIPAL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Pages 12-15 of the Accessibility Planning Toolkit for Municipalities was then reviewed in detail. This section of the Toolkit explains steps to be taken to develop a Municipal Accessibility Plan.

Discussion took place as to what is required, how we go about developing our plan and reference was made to Wolfville's Plan.

It was noted that our plan must include the following:

- achievements to date in identifying, removing and preventing barriers in policies, programs, practices and services.
- how you will identify, remove and prevent barriers in policies, programs, practices and services.
- processes in place to assess the effect of your policies, programs, practices and services on accessibility.

When developing our plan we will consider the following areas of focus:

- Goods and Services
- Information and Communications
- Transportation (this could be our relationship with Southwest Nova Transit)
- Employment
- Built Environment

For each area of focus we have to identify our commitment, starting point, policies and planned actions.

During discussion it was noted that the disability rate in the western health zone is 29% which is a bit below the provincial rate. The province has identified approximately 1 in 3 people in Nova Scotia as having a disability. Based on our population we are looking at just over 1900 people with disabilities within our municipality.

It was suggested that when considering "Information and Communications" that we commit to providing information in larger print and braille, as well as audio.

The Vice Chair indicated that she could provide information on disability grants and disability wage subsidies.

After much discussion it was agreed that members would consider the first two focus areas at their next meeting.

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Worksheets will be forwarded to members to get their thoughts on each area – Goods and Services and Information and Communications. Worksheets can be returned to staff or brought forward at the next meeting.

During discussion it was noted that when we consider “Transportation” we should invite a representative from the Sou’west Nova Transit to attend the meeting for discussion.

NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on June 17th or June 10, 2021, depending on the availability of Carla Bezanson, Program Coordinator, Accessibility Directorate. The meeting would commence at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Chair

Secretary for the Meeting