

## **Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting**

**Thursday, February 3, 2022 @ 2:30 PM**

Zoom online

# Minutes

### **Present:**

Councillor Ralph Gidney, Chair,  
Councillor Vicki Amirault,  
Wayne Huskins,  
Tyler Roy,  
Mackenzie Colp,  
Mike MacLeod, Director Planning, RQM  
Elise Johnston, Accessibility Coordinator, RQM  
Monica Clarke, ASL interpreter from Society for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

**Regrets:** Janine Stewart, Kelly Oxner.

**1.0 Call to Order** 2:34 pm

**2.0 Changes/Approval Of Agenda**

**It was moved by Wayne and seconded by Tyler that the Agenda be approved as circulated. MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

**3.0 Approval Of Minutes** of January 6, 2022

**It was moved by Vicki and seconded by Wayne that the Minutes be approved as circulated. MOTION CARRIED unanimously.**

**4.0 Presentations:** None

**5.0 Planning:**

5.1 How to offer more to the public as a resource in all categories?

- Built Environment: Elise has taken provincial material on Adaptable Housing and put it into a flyer format and an online document. After final review it will be distributed to

permit applicants and be available at commercial sites including PharmaSave and Home Hardware.

- Employment: Elise has been invited to participate in a group of inclusive employment collaborators. A first meeting will be on February 25<sup>th</sup>. Meanwhile, she was happy to see that current employment posts by the region articulate our support of diversity and include the offering of accommodations.
- Education and Community Outreach:
  - Elise described the short video series that the Finance Department has been creating called 'Money Mondays' in which grants and financial support resources are shared with the public through Facebook posts. Elise asked to participate with two videos focusing on alleviating costs when renovating homes for accessibility. She asked if the members had watched and if there were accessibility issues. Wayne couldn't make the Facebook link work but could hear from the other video link. Mackenzie said the captions worked for her. Unfortunately, the process is back-logged and provincial money can take over a year to come through, so the earlier people are aware and applying, the better!
  - When developing their calendar of events, the Liverpool Library offered Elise a public information session at the end of both March and April. She is prepared with a slideshow type of presentation if a group shows up, or if people trickle in slowly, she can discuss specific issues on a more individual level.
  - A second meeting was offered with the NS Health Authority's Continuing Care Team that is based out of the Queens General Hospital. Elise had previously shared her role with them and will follow up on how to best promote and use various community supports to those in need. Certain volunteer organizations are well suited to help follow up with their clients in need. Caregivers NS, for example, is a group that supports the family caregivers, and yet is not well known to the public who could use their services.
  - Communications continue towards collaboration with Autism NS, Sports NS and Schools Plus led Inter-agency

group. Elise will be learning and sharing more once the new NS Standards Committee for Education gets under way.

## **6.0 REPORTS/UPDATES**

- 6.1 Ralph and Vicki have been added to the Adhoc committee that will review municipal policy edits created by the Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator, Eric Levy. Elise has given her input from an accessibility lens including the concept of Social Procurement practices.
- 6.2 Tender bids for Liverpool's Universally Designed Playpark were reviewed and with Council's approval of the recommended winner, contracts have been signed and manufacturing will begin as soon as possible! Unfortunately anticipated delivery time is much later than hoped and the park may not be open for summer, but we are happy to have received great value
- 6.3 Recap of grants and project budgets:
  - Last year's Provincial Community AccessAbility grant of \$20,000 has now been completely spent, with the stage lift and assistive devices ordered. Vicki asked about the budget and municipal expenditure. Elise confirmed that RQM was to contribute a third of the total costs, so at least \$10,000. We have gone beyond that with the allocated accessibility budget that Council had approved. Final amounts are currently being compiled for reporting and will be shared shortly.
  - Federal Communities Revitalization Fund c/o ACOA – over \$150,000 is still being evaluated apparently, with no date for expected results.
  - The Rink Revitalization money was received so a deposit could be made for the hand rail manufacturing. We hope to see a sample soon and complete the order of about 30, to be placed around Queens Place Emera Centre seating. The power door operations have also been ordered and paid for. Tyler asked about the sensor operators at the front entry. Elise said, yes, these are included and told the group that the snow and ice have caused issues there as well.

At least the staff is aware and conscientious to clear this space well for access.

- It was confirmed that the last Community Health Board Wellness Grant for hobby development can be extended beyond the original end date. It is recognized that the social aspect is as important as the hobby activity itself, so it's better to wait for restrictions to lift than to try to deliver materials for at home use.

The money from the next CHB Wellness grant was received and two types of elliptical mini cyclers have been ordered. Elise will ask for testers when they arrive! These too were to be used in a group setting, but we can loan them out until such time as we can have safe gatherings.

- An application for the Community AccessAbility Grant 2021/2022 (with up to \$50,000 as 2/3 of eligible costs) will go in for the Astor. Elise hopes to focus on an elevator to offer people with mobility impairments access to the upstairs community rooms. Expenses are being balanced to ensure the new accessible entry is still a first step as priority.

- 6.4 No other business, concerns, and priorities. Some casual conversation ensued, including Wayne's winter walking adventures and how his guide dog adapts quickly for him.

- 7.0** It was agreed that we could meet bimonthly, with the next meeting set for April 7th, 2:30 on zoom according to gathering restrictions at the time. Communications will continue of course as needed.

**Adjournment** at 3:10 pm