

Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting

Thursday, April 8, 2021 @ 2:00 PM

Council Chambers, Administration Building, Liverpool

Minutes

Present: Councillor Ralph Gidney, Chairperson

Councillor Vicki Amirault

Wayne Huskins

Kelly Oxner

Tyler Roy

Elise Johnston, Accessibility Coordinator, Region of Queens

Regrets: Mike MacLeod, Director of Planning and Development, Region of Queens

Resignation: David Rudderham, Vice Chairperson for health reasons.

1.0 Call to Order

By Chair Ralph Gidney at 2pm

2.0 Changes/Approval Of Agenda

Add 6.4 Final Council Budget insights from Ralph.

It was moved by Wayne and seconded by Vicki that the Agenda be approved as amended. MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

3.0 Approval Of Minutes Of February 4th, 2021

It was moved by Kelly and seconded by Tyler that the Minutes be approved as circulated. MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

4.0 Presentations: None.

5.0 Planning:

5.1 Review our Municipal Accessibility Plan with a focus on details and prioritizing actions.

- A main point for the Region's Commitments should be that we want to be a '**Champion of Change**', a role model for the private sector and broader population. We have an obligation to show the benefits of improved accessibility for others to follow.

- Some minor edits were discussed following the CAO's review of the plan. Where he asked that existing laws (such as Duty to Accommodate; Human Rights and Building Codes) not be repeated, we agreed that some points need highlighting, not buried in various legislation, but pulled into this document as a resource as well as a guiding plan. These elements however will be put together at the back as addendum.
- In the **Employment** section, we discussed the "designated staff person to help people with accommodations" and whether that's in-house Human Resources or whether the provincial directorate or association of municipalities might have a centralized support person. Wayne highlighted good training is required and some exists online from UCLA, a certification on adaptive technology.
- In the **Goods and Services** section, when discussing dropped counters with knee clearance, Kelly emphasized that we do not want to separate, but rather to include. While we look at the functionality of a service counter, we want everyone to be served at generally the same space, even if with 2 counter height options.
- The waiving/discounting of entry fees was discussed, the challenge of determining who qualifies and how that would be confirmed. Easter Seals does an Access 2 card but is focused on mobility. Some people with visibly obvious disabilities could have their support person accepted, but what about invisible disabilities? The concept is nice, but logistics still need to be worked out. Also, the municipality often doesn't control the gate intake anyways, for example when hockey associations rent out Queens Place Centre.
- While we recognize a range of therapy animals are useful in various contexts, we'll focus on offering rest and water for dogs as service providers but NOT ask for certification paperwork.
- With regards to **Transportation**, we agreed to stick to federal and provincial codes for traffic signals and pedestrian standards as opposed to CNIB.
- In the **Built Environment**, Elise asked about the degree to which all municipal 'parks' are to be made accessible, including the small ones without any built elements. It was felt that they should all be listed as long term goals, to have at least minimal treatment with stable parking, a bench, good lighting and signage.

5.2 Updates on Accessibility Coordinator's work:

- 5.2.1 Presentation to SQ Chamber of Commerce: a powerpoint webinar was offered but had poor attendance for a few reasons. Elise said that while the private sector is a lower priority focus than municipal work, she'll look for more future outreach and member involvement. Kelly suggested that it be a part of Accessibility week.
- 5.2.2 Provincial Community ACCESS-Ability grant: Elise will be applying to the province for \$50,000 as 2/3 contribution towards a project. As much as a new entry to the Astor will be a focus, she wants to purchase some MOBI mats and sand barriers at the same time if possible.
- 5.2.3 Community Health Board grant planning: Elise described briefly 6 sessions of various hobby development for a range of people. Funds cover transportation, venue, instruction and materials. It was agreed that a range of time options should be offered.

6.0 REPORTS/UPDATES

- 6.1 Information on painting new crosswalks: Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal 1-844-696-7737 has put Caledonia corner "on the request board" but would like more information. Wayne will try to get a contact to liaise about the best place for it. Tat-occ@novascotia.ca
- 6.2 Recreation for All is for municipal programs only.
- 6.3 Masks at QPEC: YES, these are available but at the front desk, which most won't know (even if a sign in front says so). If the argument is hygiene, then a few can be put out in ziploc bags as other places do.
- 6.4 Budget insights from Ralph confirm \$100,000 budget from the municipality towards accessibility projects with this year's focus on the Astor.

7.0 Adjournment at 3:45pm. Next meeting set for Thursday, May 6th, 2pm in Council Chambers, Liverpool. Focus will be on Accessibility Week May 31 – June 6.

8.0 To Do:

Elise to investigate discounts on tickets through TicketPro and Cineplex.

Prepare draft plan for submission to Council meeting of April 23rd.