

WEST HANTS MUNICIPALITY
Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda
August 23, 2021, 1:00 p.m.
Sanford Council Chambers 76 Morison Dr, Windsor, NS
(also held virtually via Zoom and Facebook livestreamed) Agenda
is subject to changes up to and including during the meeting



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- 1. Call to Order**
 - 2. Attendance**

Voting: Debbie Francis, Denise Long, Jordan Stephens, Roseanna Boyd, Mike Colter, Jennifer Davison, and Michael Bourgeois.
Staff Support (non-voting): Mark Phillips, Tina McKay, Bekah Craik, Troy Burgess, Shelleena Thornton, Carmen Dewar-Miller
 - 3. Approval of the Agenda** (including additions or deletions)
 - 4. Approval of Minutes** – April 29, 2021
 - 5. Unfinished Business**
 - a) Accessibility Plans of other Municipalities
 - i. Town of Kentville
 - ii. Municipality of East Hants
 - b) Experiential Learning Planning and Follow-up
 - i. Committee information gathering (attachment to follow)
 - ii. Experiential learning community experience (Bekah/Jordan)
 - c) Accessibility Plan Consultant and Request for Proposals
 - i. Draft Scope/Specs of proposed Request for Proposals (RFP) (attached)
 - 6. New Business**
 - a) Presentation(s) – None
 - b) Draft Accessibility Survey Review and for Committee Discussion (attached)
 - 7. Next Meeting Date / Adjournment**



WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
Accessibility Advisory Committee Minutes

August 23, 2021 – 1:00p.m.

In-Person Sanford Council Chambers, 76 Morison Drive, Windsor, NS
(Meeting is also held via Zoom and Facebook livestream)

1. Call to Order

Chair, Councillor Francis, called the meeting to order at 1pm

2. Attendance

Voting:

Debbie Francis - Councillor, District 5, Chair

Denise Long - Resident Member

Jordan Stephens - Resident Member

Roseanna Boyd - Resident Member

Michael Bourgeois – Resident Member

Staff Support (non-voting):

Tina McKay – Building & Fire Official

Bekah Craik – Active Living Coordinator

Troy Burgess – Mgr., Public Works Operations

Deanna Snair – Executive Assistant

Shelleena Thornton – Mun. Operations Supervisor

Carmen Dewar-Miller – Admin Assistant

3. Approval of the Agenda

No additions or deletions.

MOVED by Resident Members Bourgeois and Boyd that the agenda be approved.

Motion Carried.

4. Approval of Minutes – April 29, 2021

MOVED by Resident Members Long and Bourgeois that the April 29, 2021 meeting minutes be approved.

Motion Carried.

5. Unfinished Business

a) Accessibility Plans of other Municipalities

Kentville and East Hants plans were included in the package as information only.

b) Experiential Learning Planning and Follow-up

i. Committee information gathering – Verbal report

An individual diagnosed with an intellectual disability (cognitive delay) provided an evaluation of the municipal website, reporting back on the challenges they encountered as well as aspects that worked well, as they navigated through the menus, pages and links.

Takeaways from this exercise - less is more, stick to clear, factual, short and to the point when providing information, reducing anxiety and

misinterpretation. “Click here” icons appreciated. Suggested as an effective option for the Contact Us page.

Discussion Points

- Use icons to access simpler menu subsets
- Accessibility being taken into consideration as part of region’s branding project (icons)
- Next steps beyond information gathering include a survey and RFP, to be discussed later in the agenda

ii. Experiential learning community experience

Staff Member Craik and Resident Members Stephens and Boyd met to create a video of Resident Member Stephens’ experience navigating the Causeway Trail, accessing Pesiquid Park, Falmouth Mini-Park and the Coach House public washrooms.

Key Takeaways

- Potholes were an issue, need to be fixed
- Terrain was steep in at least one area
- Walkway to the public washroom was inaccessible due to a piece of equipment parked in front of the access point
- Education and mindfulness required for all

Once the video is edited, it will be shared. A great deal of good information included, describing each area and the accessibility challenges.

c) Accessibility Plan Consultant and Request for Proposals

Draft Scope/Specs of proposed Request for Proposals (RFP) (attached)

Staff Member Thornton was able to connect with many other municipalities varying in size and review their plans. She spoke with accessibility coordinators, seeking input based on their experience

Staff Member Thornton reviewed the go-forward plan for the Consultant RFP. The goal is to post to the procurement site by the end of this week, closing at the end of September, or sooner and award by the end of October.

Discussion Points

- Council allocated money in the budget for a consultant
- An Accessibility Coordinator will be considered eventually, as part of the process
- The Accessibility Committee can help champion this once the direction is determined
- There needs to be an in-house resource
- Between Sep. 23 and next COTW, allow for enough time to evaluate and score the proposals for Council to review the recommendation report and approve, with ratification at the end of October

6. New Business

- a) Presentation(s) – None
- b) Draft Accessibility Survey Review and for Committee Discussion (attached)

Staff Member Thornton screen-shared the draft survey, stating that we don't need to wait for a consultant to put this survey out, she is bringing it forward for committee members' review and feedback.

Discussion Points

- Suggestions for distributing the survey included:
 - sending as an insert with water bills
 - doing a mass mail-out
 - distributing via Windsor Township / local business,
 - public outreach such as setting up a table at the farm market, sports complex or rink
 - working in partnership with Active Transportation, New Boundaries and Kings Meadows, Schools Plus
 - connecting with local tourism for visitor feedback
 - Don't limit ourselves to computers and social media

c) Washroom Photo

A photograph of one of the West Hants recreation site's public washrooms was included as part of the agenda. Raises washroom accessibility concerns throughout the region at different recreation areas. A sign states that the washroom is "accessible", but the step built to access the washroom is prohibitive.

Discussion Points

- Resident Member Stephens sees this constantly
- Wider doors are good but access to the doors is not being well considered
- There are multiple reasons why this washroom is not wheelchair friendly. Are there bars for the toilet? Can everyone reach the light switch? Is there a ramp?
- Resident Member Stephens can get in the door because of his experience, but the platform is too small for the door to be opened with room to wheel in
- It was noted that the doors for the Coach House washrooms are heavy. Bekah is going to take a measurement of the door in the photo
- Large, powered wheelchairs need to be considered as do automatic doors for those who do not have use of their hands
- Qualify accessibility using standards that should be applied before the sign gets put on the washroom door. We don't need to reinvent standards, just follow them.

7. Next Meeting Date / Adjournment

To be decided via Doodle poll and held before Consultant RFP is awarded.

End of Meeting Discussion Points

- The survey questions will be made available in electronic and paper format, posted online and included as an insert in next mail-out
- Look at sharing the survey at upcoming Community Development events
- Once wider open from COVID, look at community meetings, respecting gathering limits
- Public participation is important. Once we have RFP, consultant and staff involved, we will have a better-oiled machine with direction to go out to the public
- Regarding the weight of municipal metal doors, code-wise. Do they have to be a certain weight? Has to do with the closing mechanism. Some are made to withstand a heavy wind
- Staff Member McKay can look up to see if there must be a certain way it closes and look up some door standards under NS building code regulations for accessibility

MOVED by Resident Member Bourgeois and Staff Member McKay that the meeting be adjourned.

Motion Carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:40pm.

X

Committee Chair