

**WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY**  
**Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda **AMENDED****  
**March 27, 2025, 6:00 p.m.**

**Council Chambers, 76 Morison Drive, Windsor, NS**

*Agenda is subject to changes up to and including during the meeting*

*This meeting is open to the public. It will not be livestreamed on YouTube*



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1. Call to Order
  2. Announcements
  3. Approval of the Agenda, including additions or deletions
  4. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – February 6, 2025
  5. Unfinished Business
    - a) Equity, Anti-Racism and Accessibility Strategy Plan Update – Kevin Waters
  6. New Business
    - a) 2025 Accessibility Advisory Committee Work Plan – Michel Bourgeois
    - b) Provincial Built Environment Accessibility Standard Approved – Michel Bourgeois  
**AMENDED to add Built Environment Presentation**
    - c) Community Accessibility Assessments Discussion – Jordan Stephens
  7. Next Meeting Date / Meeting Adjournment

**WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY**  
**Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**March 27, 2025, 6:00 p.m.**

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**Present:**

Michel Bourgeois, Resident Member  
Denise Long, Resident Member  
Councillor Chrystal Remme  
Jennifer Davison, Resident Member  
Tina McKay, Building & Fire Official  
Amie Deleavey, Resident Member  
Deanna Snair, Municipal Clerk

Roseanna Boyd, Resident Member  
Kevin Waters, Active Living Coordinator  
Jordan Stephens, Resident Member  
Troy Burgess, Public Works Operations Manager  
Mark Phillips, CAO  
Melissa MacAskill, Resident Member  
Carmen Dewar-Miller, Admin Assistant

1. Call to Order – Chair Bourgeois called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. Announcements – West Hants Regional Municipality acknowledges that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People and that this land is governed by the treaties of Peace and Friendship signed in 1726. West Hants Regional Municipality recognizes that we are all treaty people and have responsibilities to this land and each other.

West Hants Regional Municipality also recognizes African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose history, legacies, and contributions have enriched that part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia for over 400 years.

Committee members were reminded of the proper behavior expected of them from the Municipal Code of Conduct.

There were round table introductions. Staff Member Waters announced that he was taking a new position within the organization but would continue to attend committee meetings.

3. Approval of the Agenda, including additions or deletions  
**Moved by Resident Members Davison and MacAskill that the agenda be approved.**  
**Motion Carried.**
4. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – February 6, 2025  
**Moved by Resident Members Davison and Long that the minutes be accepted without corrections**

## **Motion Carried**

### 5. Unfinished Business

#### a) Equity, Anti-Racism and Accessibility Strategy Plan Update – Kevin Waters

On Tuesday, March 25, Council approved the Plan, with some subsequently applied feedback. Council amended the plan to put Rick Hansen gold certification back as the built environment standard. The definition of accessibility was updated to include a deeper version of neurodiversity. Staff Member Waters' efforts to have this comprehensive plan in place by the deadline of April 1, 2025 were recognized by the committee.

### 6. New Business

#### a) 2025 Accessibility Advisory Committee Work Plan – Michel Bourgeois

Chair Bourgeois presented the proposed work plan, outlining goals, deliverables and the reasoning behind having a work plan. An example of an HRM work plan was provided, as well as an accompanying checklist. Suggested next steps include brainstorming, drafting a work plan, reviewing, voting on, and prioritizing items. The proposed work plan would then be presented to Council for approval.

Committee members were in agreement that a work plan would be beneficial. Discussion points included:

- The plan would help manage and measure the work to be carried out
- Support for breaking into sub-groups
- Need to identify priority items, a good way to provide focus
- Look to the new strategy for inspiration, target setting
- Brainstorming sessions would focus on actions, establish deliverables
- A suggestion to establish five major themes (similar to DEI committee strategy), then assign actions. Prioritize 10-15 (of the first 77) that speak to the committee's wants and needs over the first year
- There was encouragement from the Chair for email communication between meetings
- There is labelling within the new plan that suggests who might take the lead. Working groups will start to emerge based on interest

A motion to move forward with the creation of a work plan was made.

**Moved by Resident Members Davison and Stephens that the Accessibility Advisory Committee move forward with a Work Plan.**

**Motion Carried**

- b) Provincial Built Environment Accessibility Standard Approved – Michel Bourgeois  
Chair Bourgeois presented an overview of this new standard. He reviewed the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act, provided some background information, defined what an accessibility standard is and the accompanying technical and planning requirements, development of the standard, and how it differs from the Building Code. Chair Bourgeois touched on compliance, timeline for compliance and enforcement. There are some requirements for existing infrastructure (renovations), but for the most part, the standard applies to new construction. Existing barriers in the built environment are addressed through establishing Accessibility Plans and Guidelines. Examples of built environment standards were included. There were amendments to the NS Building Code Regulations to address accessibility. The NS Fire Code was not amended and this legislation does not apply to Federal properties. Chair Bourgeois advised that he will share some additional links.
- c) Community Accessibility Assessments Discussion – Jordan Stephens  
Resident Member Stephens proposed a working group organized to create a series of videos focused on the positives in our region, as well as the challenges, as related to accessibility. This would involve getting out into the community, engaging the public and gathering information/opinions. To kick this initiative off, Resident Member Stephens would like the group to accompany him on a “day in the life” walk around Windsor. This would offer people a chance to see how the day to day tasks we take for granted (banking, buying a coffee, using a public washroom, visiting the library) are not easily accessible to everyone. Creates an opportunity to work with local businesses, educate the public and continue to make improvements.

Discussion points included:

- Unanimous expressions of support for the initiative
- If the intent is to video and post to municipal website or social media sites, we have to be sensitive to not appear to be targeting businesses. Approaching businesses in advance, explaining ourselves and taking a collaborative approach would be the way to go.
- This would be a great idea for a sub-group.
- With regard to defining accessibility, we are looking at the built environment but also need to consider more than just physical accessibility. This can be challenging.
- The municipality is better positioned to retrofit properties than a private enterprise.
- The goal would be to inform, educate, provide resources and have folks take advantage of any funding/grants that they may not be currently aware of.
- There are two streams – what municipality can control and what we can encourage others to do.

- This could be done as part of promoting the new plan, actively engage and challenge businesses, and sign non-committee members, including people with disabilities up for a working group. Make it an awareness program.
- Over and above an initial kick-off in Windsor, including other communities. This will take planning.
- There are benefits to creating more of a collaborative approach. Staff Member Waters has had preliminary conversations with local business associations.

The decision was made to form a working group for this initiative with suggested prescheduled meetings. Staff Member Waters cited Sub Action 5.2, *“To provide guidance and support to local businesses and community groups to enhance the accessibility of their built environments”* of the plan as a way to move forward.

A motion was put forward to provide guidance and support to local businesses and community groups to enhance the accessibility of their built environments.

**Moved by Resident Members Davison and Boyd that the committee establish a working group to provide guidance and support to local businesses and community groups to enhance the accessibility of their built environments under Resident Member Stephens’ ideas.**

**Motion Carried.**

All committee members would like to be involved. A suggestion was made to meet monthly rather than every other month in order to launch the work plan and start the brainstorming as soon as possible. This was agreed upon. Staff Member Waters mentioned that there could be a goal set to have a video or videos ready for NS Access Awareness Week, the last week in May.

A few items of note from committee members:

- AT-related Sidewalk Needs Assessment sessions in Falmouth and Three Mile Plains on Monday, April 7.
- On April 24 at 6:00 p.m. New Boundaries are hosting Inclusion Nova Scotia for a presentation on the human rights case from The Remedy
- The Windsor Coyotes are going to be offering Challenger Baseball for ages 13-18 on Tuesdays. They are looking for volunteer “Buddies”. Look for the information on their Facebook page.
- Chair Bourgeois has signed up for the Canadian Playground Safety Institute course for accessible playground equipment.

## 7. Next Meeting Date / Meeting Adjournment

The next meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. on April 23, 2025.

**Moved by Resident Members Davison and MacAskill that the meeting be adjourned.  
Motion Carried.**

*The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.*

**X**

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Meeting Chair