

**WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY**  
**Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda**  
**April 23, 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. Attendance
  3. Announcements
  4. Approval of the Agenda, including additions or deletions
  5. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – March 27, 2025
  6. Unfinished Business
    - a) Work Plan
    - b) Video Project Proposal
  7. Next Meeting Date / Meeting Adjournment

**WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY**  
**Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**  
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1. Call to Order – Chair Bourgeois called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. noting quorum was achieved.

2. Attendance

Michel Bourgeois, Resident Member  
Councillor Chrystal Remme  
Jennifer Davison, Resident Member  
Tina McKay, Building & Fire Official  
Tim Leslie, Manager of Building & Fire Officials

Deanna Snair, Municipal Clerk  
Roseanna Boyd, Resident Member  
Jordan Stephens, Resident Member  
Melissa MacAskill, Resident Member  
Kathy Johnston-Isenor, Manager of Recreation & Community Engagement

Regrets:

Carmen Dewar-Miller, Admin Assistant  
Denise Long, Resident Member  
Troy Burgess, Public Works Operations Manager

Amie Deleavey, Resident Member  
Mark Phillips, CAO

3. 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.

Happy Administrative Professionals Day was shared.

There were round table introductions.

4. Approval of the Agenda, including additions or deletions

With no changes made to the agenda, the agenda was accepted as presented.

5. Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes – March 27, 2025

With no changes required, the minutes were accepted as presented.

6. Unfinished Business

a) Video Project Proposal

A small working group met consisting of Michel Bourgeois, Jordan Stevens, Rosanna Boyd, and Kathy Johnston Isner to discuss Jordan's overall vision for the video project proposal. The plan was to look at the project in phases.

Citizen member Jordan shared a high-level overview of his vision with the committee members. Phase 1 - Create approximately 20-30, 40 second videos that highlighted and celebrated accessibility throughout the region and business communities. Each video would have a focus on public spaces and services used by everyone, regardless of ability and focus on some of the great work the business community has undertaken to make their stores accessible to all. This could include features like wheelchair ramps, accessible signage, inclusive language, removing barriers and obstacles in aisles, etc. The goal of these videos was to create awareness and educational opportunities for both community and businesses on creating spaces and the ability to access services where everyone can participate fully and equally. The videos would celebrate the successes that West Hants has achieved so far and look for ways to build momentum and improve in other areas. West Hants (WHRM) could lead by example and inspire others in the business community to take similar actions or help mentor them by offering advice/resource information on steps to be a more accessible/welcoming space. Tim Horton's and Walker's Restaurant were identified as local businesses that played key roles within the community and were generally in agreement to help wherever they could to support and better the community.

Some areas/items to focus on for the videos included:

- Curb cuts
- Debit machines
- Placement of AED's
- Placement of building controls (light switches, etc.)
- Maintaining and keeping ramps and entrances clear from debris
- Keeping aisles in shops/stores accessible and free from displays and boxes
- Wayfinding signage (interior and in the community)- showcasing location of ramps, etc.
- Removing boxes from under counters/tables
- Proper placement of garbage cans to avoid blocking access to light switches, door pushes, fire alarms, etc.

It was important the videos be positive and celebrated achievements and not be a platform to publicly shame businesses. This was about being uplifting, inspiring and striving for a fully accessible community for all.

Committee members were encouraged to make a mental note of businesses where they felt they had a good experience or recognized the business was worthy of a shout out for their awareness and steps taken to address accessibility. They agreed to share names of businesses via email. From there the committee could establish a list of businesses that they could connect with to see if they would be willing to participate in a short video showcasing the great work they have or are doing. A thought was that businesses could be showcased as "An Inspiring Business of the Week".

The committee discussed the video project expanding and having a phased in approach. Ideally there would be five (5) phases:

1. Business Audience – connecting with local businesses to help take on a pilot project that looked to celebrate accessibility wins
2. General education
3. Introducing the Accessibility Committee to the public
4. Highlight positive accessibility within the communities
5. Create “a day in the life of videos”. These videos would showcase local community members, friends and family living with a disability going through their everyday activities, navigating challenges and provide an opportunity for able bodies individuals to experience these same challenges through a different lens and have a better understanding of what it's like to live with a disability.

This would be a lengthier process, but the committee felt these videos would be valuable and were excited to embark on the projects.

With May being Accessibility month, the committee were eager to get started and felt that introducing the committee to the public would be a great first step.

#### b) Work Plan

Chair Bourgeois spoke of the creation of a work plan and the reason/importance behind having a work plan. Once the committee established a workplan it would be presented to Council for endorsement and approval. Chair Bourgeois spoke of having some smaller, achievable goals but also having larger goals.

The committee discussed options they felt would be easily achieved in the work plan and a good place to start; these options included:

1. Adding a section in the Council report form templates that speaks to the request aligning with the Accessibility plan. The committee were advised this form was in the Meeting and Committee Procedural policy and staff were planning to present amendments to this policy at the upcoming meeting in May. Staff will incorporate this addition into the template as part of the proposed amendments.
2. Improve website. If people are being sent to the website to access information, improvements were needed to make it more accessible and use friendly. Work is currently underway to improve the website; however, it was likely this work would bring the website into compliance with accessibility standards, but it would be an improvement compared to the current website. It was agreed this was a step in the right direction. Councillor Remme advised there were ways and resources available to assist and make improvements to be more accessible. Staff welcome any information or suggestions on ways to improve access to the website for all and look forward to making any changes suggested.
3. Add a section in tender documents to identify any new municipal building construction or updates will strive to meet the Rick Hansen Gold Standards for accessibility. This

addition to the tender documents would bring them in alignment with the Anti-hate, Anti-racism, Accessibility Plan. This sparked a lengthy discussion on current building code standards, enforcement challenges, roles of a committee and decisions made by Council. Building and Fire Officials explained they are only able to enforce what the Building Code states, they do not have the authority to hold businesses to a higher standard than what was written within the building codes. The committee understood that WHRM was not able to hold a business or someone else to a higher standard than what was identified in code; however, Council endorsed the Anti-hate, Anti-racism, Accessibility Plan with the addition that any new municipal building construction or updates to existing buildings will strive to meet the Rick Hansen Gold Standards for accessibility. As an accessibility committee, they unanimously felt passionate that it was their role advocate to Council to meet this standard and to make sure all municipality facilities met accessibility standards and that all of West Hants was fully accessible to all. The committee will continue to advocate that Council adhere to the standards they set within the Anti-hate, Anti-racism, Accessibility Plan for all municipal building upgrades or new builds.

Chair Bourgeois suggested he would share a draft work plan template with the committee members, and everyone could provide feedback on it. The committee agreed to proceed as suggested.

The sub-committee will meet again and start developing the framework for the videos.

The committee would like to get together and have a photo taken that will be used to introduce the Accessibility Committee to the public. It was agreed that once Carmen returns from vacation, the committee would like her to send out a Doodle poll to determine a time when all the committee members can meet briefly to have a group photo done.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will take place on May 29, 2025. Deanna will extend a calendar invite to committee members.

7. Next Meeting Date/Meeting Adjournment

With no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

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Chair

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