

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES MINUTES

November 19, 2007

PRESENT: Mr. Alan Farquhar, Chair
Mr. Gary Russell
Ms. Rebecca King
Ms. Helen McFadyen
Mr. Kevin Bulley
Ms. Helen Cianfaglione
Ms. Sanaz Gerami
Councillor Gary Meade

REGRETS: Ms. Mary Newcombe
Superintendent Cliff Falkenham, HRP
Councillor Patrick Murphy

STAFF: Mr. Laughie Rutt, Diversity Consultant
Mr. Phil Francis, Right of Way Engineering Manager
Ms. Barbara Coleman, Legislative Assistant
Ms. Melody Campbell, Legislative Assistant

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:08 p.m. in Halifax Hall, 2nd Floor, City Hall.

2. **INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair asked members of the committee to announce their presence for the benefit of visually impaired members.

3. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Amendment: Minutes should read, "Moved by Ms. McFadyen, seconded by Ms. King that the minutes from September 17, 2007 be approved as circulated".

MOVED by Councillor Mead, seconded by Mr. Russell that the minutes from October 15, 2007 be approved as amended . MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. **APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS**

Additions:

9.1 **Elect a representative from this committee to sit on the *Taxi and Limousine Committee***

MOVED by Ms. Gerami , seconded by Ms. King, that the Order of Business, as amended, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

5. **REPORTS**

None

6. **CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS**

None

7. **CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS AND DELEGATIONS**

7.1 **Presentation by the Society for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Nova Scotians**

A Presentation was provided by Mr. Frank O'Sullivan, Executive Director, Society of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Nova Scotians (SDHHNS). There are two offices one here in HRM and one in Sydney. Pamphlets on membership to the Society were distributed to the Committee.

Mr. Sullivan noted that there are approximately 58,000 Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Late

Deafened people and a small percentage of Deaf/Blind people across Nova Scotia with the greater percentage of these people living in the Halifax region because services are more accessible in the Halifax Region as opposed to the rest of the province. He also noted that each group has their own special needs.

The Society provides many services such as Sign language and Oral Interpreting Services, Computer Note Taking Services , Assistive Devices - Loan Program and Demonstrations, Community Resource Library, Community Support, Sign Language Classes Self Help/Support Groups, etc.

One of the challenges for the Society is the shortage of qualified interpreters. The Nova Scotia Community College, Waterfront Campus, is offering a three-year course, American Sign Language/English Interpretation which will have an annual intake. This should solve the problem of the shortage of qualified workers.

Another challenge of this community is who is going to pay for these services. The Society does not pay for all interpreting services. For example, if a person needs to go to Court; the Court would pay for these Interpreting services.

Mr. O' Sullivan advised the group that there are many technical devices that are available. There was not enough time to bring these devices to the meeting to demonstrate them but left the catalogue called *Communication Devices Product Catalogue - Your One Stop Shop* for the Committee's perusal.

A "Questions and Answer" period followed with the following noted

- For Deaf/Blind persons, it makes a difference which comes first. Persons who became blind first do not know sign language so communicating becomes more difficult.
- Certain institutions such as the Church Diocese, banks, and Courts pay for Interpreter services.
- If a person wants to become employed as an interpreter, they must take post secondary education in this field. Knowing how to sign is not enough.
- There are advantages and disadvantages to Services groups such as Team Works and Work Bridge. It is an advantage that there is a pooling of resources but the challenge is that every group has their own needs and these needs can be very different.

7.2 Accessible Trails - Mr. Paul Euloth

Mr. Paul Euloth, Regional Trails Coordinator, gave an information presentation. The group had concerns that if someone called up and wanted to know what trails are accessible then would the information be available. Mr.Euloth brought with him a map of the trails that are available in the area.

Discussion followed with the following concerns;

- Easily assessable by Assessable Metro Transit
- Are the trails wheel chair assessable
- Is there information available on these trails
- Assessable washrooms available along the way
- How do we make information available on these trails

Mr. Euloth told the group that he would be willing to meet with members of the group to discuss further the needs of the group and how they could better inform the public on the accessibility of the trails.

8. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

8.1 Discussion - Suggestions for 2008/2009 Budget Process

- Dog Runs for Off-leash Service Dogs - Ms. McFadyen presented her proposal for off-leash dog runs for service dogs. Discussion followed. One of the concerns is the safety of the owner and the service dog from other dogs. It was established that these runs should be service dog runs only. Mr. Farquhar will draft a cover letter for the proposal and Ms. MsFadyen to provide a letter of proposal as an attachment. This should be done as soon as possible.
- Raised platforms at arenas - Councillor Meade - Discussion followed. It was agreed that priority should be given to arenas where there are larger seating capacities. One or two can be done a year.
- Accessible doors on HRM facilities - Discussion followed. Mr. Rutt agreed to check out the doors at the new addition to the Sackville Sports Stadium.

Mr. Farquhar will draft a proposal on the Raised platforms at arenas and the Accessible doors on HRM forward it off to the group for their perusal and once approved the package of three proposals will go off to Phil Townsend, Manager, Infrastructure and Asset Management.

9. ADDED ITEMS

9.1 Elect a representative from this committee to sit on the *Taxi and Limousine Committee*

A member of this committee needs to be elected to sit on the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee. Mr. Russell offered to sit on the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee. Ms. Campbell will email Mr. Russell with the times, dates and location of the meeting.

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting of the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities will be January 21, 2007 at 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. in Halifax Hall, 2nd floor, City Hall.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:00p.m.

Barbara Coleman
Legislative Assistant