

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES  
MINUTES**

**June 16, 2008**

**PRESENT:** Ms. Helen McFadyen, Chair  
Ms. Joanne Coffey  
Ms. Rebecca King  
Mr. Alan Farquhar  
Councillor Mary Wile  
Ms. Helen Cianfaglione  
Mr. Tom Boyd  
Mr. Gary Russell, Vice-Chair  
Ms. Mary Newcombe  
Ms. Sanaz Gerami  
Councillor Patrick Murphy

**SPECIAL PRESENTER(S):** Mr. Phillip Townsend, Manager, Capitol Projects  
Mr. Jerome Singleton, PhD, CTRS - Dalhousie University

**STAFF:** Superintendent Cliff Falkenham - Patrol Division (HRP)  
Ms. Sandra T. Riley, Legislative Assistant

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**HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 pm by Ms. Helen McFadyen, Chair, in Halifax Hall, City Hall.

2. **INTRODUCTIONS**

Ms. McFadyen asked members of the Committee to identify him/herself audibly for clarification on the record.

3. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES** -April 21, 2008 and May 26, 2008

Ms. Mary Newcombe requested that the minutes reflect that she sent regrets for the April 21, 2008 meeting of the Advisory Committee for Persons With Disabilities.

**MOVED BY Mr. Russell, seconded by Mr. Boyd, that the minutes of April 21, 2008 be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED**

**MOVED BY Ms. King, seconded by Ms. Newcombe, that the minutes of May 26, 2008 be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED**

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

**Additions:**

- 9.1 Re-appointment of Mr. Gary Russell as representative to the Cultural Advisory Committee (CAC) - (official notification to Municipal Clerk's Office - electronic)
- 9.2 Update on CAC and Taxi & Limousine Committee meetings - Mr. Russell
- 9.3 Taxi Driver Training in HRM.

**Information items:**

- 1. Ms. Lori Patterson re: ALF Bus Survey and results (electronic correspondence)

**MOVED BY Ms. Newcombe, seconded by Mr. Russell, that the order of business be approved, as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED**

5. **REPORTS**

5.1 **Mr. Phil Townsend - Update and discussion**

Mr. Phil Townsend, Manager Capital Projects returned to the Committee to discuss

possibilities and suggestions of the ACPD on how to disperse, for maximum usage, the \$200, 000 allotted to the Committee for accessibility issues in public buildings. He advised that the Committee will make the ultimate decisions on where the funding will go.

The Advisory Committee for Person With Disabilities and Mr. Townsend made the following suggestions for use of the funds, after which they will prioritize:

- Service Dog Runs
- Larger changing tables in public facility bathrooms for parents of children with special needs
- Better accessibility to the Needham Centre (1<sup>st</sup> floor/Pool)
- Spryfield Lion's Arena - accessible seating in the arena
- Cole Harbour Place - a pool lift (\$8,000)
- Sackville Sports Stadium (\$6,000) - accessible washrooms for the T3X Canadian Wheelchair Championship for Curling
- Accessible bathrooms in Dartmouth Ferry Terminal

Mr. Townsend advised the Committee that what is not funded this year can be covered next year as he will attempt to have the same amount or more money allotted to the ACPD next year. The Committee will electronically prepare a list for the next meeting of July 21, 2008.

**MOVED BY Councillor Wile, seconded by Ms. King, that the Advisory Committee for Person With Disabilities give \$6,000 for the funding of the retro-fit of the washroom in the Sackville Sports Stadium near the arena. MOTION PUT AND PASSED**

A discussion ensued regarding the Cole Harbour Place pool lift and it was decided that the Committee would check other pools (indoor and outdoor) first to see how many pools have lifts or could benefit from lifts. Ms. McFadyen will contact Mr. John Henry regarding the pool lifts.

#### **5.2 Update - Councillor Wile - Mayor's Plan for Task Force on Accessible Taxi Service**

Councillor Wile advised that she spoke to the Mayor's office and they are doing a followup on the above stated issue, and the Mayor will be getting back to her regarding this subject. The Mayor advised Councillor Wile that he spoke to Ms. Jen Powley regarding the Task Force, and he will follow up with Ms. Powley. Councillor Wile further advised that she will keep reminding the Mayor of the issue.

#### **5.3 Dr. Jerome (Jerry) Singleton - Dalhousie University - Study on Accessibility Issues for Children [Kids With Disabilities]**

Ms McFadyen introduced Dr. Jerome Singleton, stating that Dr. Singleton expressed the possibility of getting some students in the Psychology Department of Dalhousie University to do a study related to accessibility issues for children with disabilities in HRM.

Dr. Singleton stated that he has an Undergraduate Degree from the University of Waterloo in Recreation and Leisure Studies; a Master's Degree from Penn State University in Recreation and Leisure Studies; a PhD from the University of Maryland in Leisure Studies (Emphasis in Therapeutic Recreation); a Doctor's Certificate in Gerontology from the University of Maryland; he is a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS), and has been working with persons with disabilities since 1971. Dr. Singleton further advised that he worked with the League for Equal Opportunity (LEO) and the Disabled Individual Alliance (DIAL) to examine transportation and leisure needs of persons with disabilities.

In the 1980s, Dr. Singleton was the President of the Recreation Council for Persons with a Disability (RCDNS), assisting in the development of the Therapeutic Recreation Activities for Children and Youth program, that operated for five (5) years from 2001 to 2006. Dr. Singleton's research, since the early 1980s, has been in the area of Leisure for Persons with Alzheimers.

Dr. Singleton advised that Nova Scotia, at 25%, has the most persons with disabilities, whereas the average is 12.5% across the country. Dr. Singleton clarified that he is offering his assistance in reviewing the ACPD mission and identifying students of the Therapeutic Recreational Program or the Recreation Management Program to assist in achieving the mandate of the Committee towards something the Committee will value. He advised that this will be a learning curb for the students. He further advised that he is not coming to the Committee with his own agenda, but to work with them as a group, and it will be based on the perceptions of the ACPD, not what he perceives. A discussion ensued with Dr. Singleton and the Committee reviewing and clarifying the following points and suggestions:

- Students would work with Dr. Singleton for three (3) academic credits from September to April. (Possibly two or three students; maybe one or two grad students. He may be able to get a colleague to enlist other students)
- Create a series of questions identifying certain programs to assist
- The IWK has two therapeutic recreational professionals that assist individuals with disabilities
- The lack of accessible programs for individuals between the ages of 21 and 64 years
- The growing need of accessible buses as a result of the aging population that will require adaptive devices and special transportation
- Access-A-Bus is funded solely by HRM
- The need of accessible parks, recreational facilities and playgrounds in all communities so that children with disabilities are able to develop social relationships and interactions within their own communities
- It is less costly to build a facility that is accessible than to try to retrofit an existing building
- Parks, recreational facilities, and playgrounds should be accessible to disabled parents to have the ability to take their children to these places
- HRM has set priorities to have all new buildings accessible upon planning and development; the need to make these areas accessible for less cost
- Dr. Singleton to speak to some of the HRM Park Planners
- Not a lot for children with disabilities or developmental challenges to do, once they reach the age where they no longer want to go to playgrounds; lack of stimulation

in terms of recreational activities. Broad stream recreational facilities broken up by age groups should be developed

- Emphasis on the point that not all persons with disabilities socialize/play/work together; everyone has their own interests
- These children need a 'leisure repertoire' to be able to chose an activity based on his/her level of ability/mobility
- Develop activities that the entire family can participate in
- Check current policies in HRM for decision making regarding playgrounds
- Awareness of resources for individuals to participate in recreational activities

Dr. Singleton advised that he would like to start the process with the student research by September. Ms. McFadyen advised Dr. Singleton that by the end of July, the ACPD will have some solid ideas on what they need to assist in the Committee mandate. Mr. Farquhar suggested getting a report from the person in charge of HRM playgrounds, Mr. Blair Blakeney, Coordinator, Capital Projects - Parks. Dr. Singleton advised that he knows this person and will make contact with him on behalf of the ACPD.

Dr. Singleton thanked the Committee for inviting him and stated he would assist in any way he can to make HRM more accessible. He advised he would send the points and suggestions made to the members through electronic mail.

**6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS - None**

**7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS AND DELEGATIONS**

**7.1 Email from Chair to Mr. Phil Townsend re: Service Dog Proposal**

Ms. McFadyen advised the Committee that there have been several emails between herself and Mr. Townsend regarding the service dog proposal. She advised that HRM requires an idea of the need for such a service; how many service dogs there are in the HRM. She advised the Committee that there is no organization that keeps track of how many dogs there would be using this service. She stated that she called 37 vets in HRM and, as there are no databases to draw from, she approximated 80 service dogs, excluding the police dogs (they have their own run/exercise areas). She added that there is great interest in the community regarding these service dog parks.

Ms. McFadyen advised that she checked across the country enquiring about off-leash/fenced dog parks and found there are only open parks, though there are off-leash park talks coming up. She further advised that there are many in the United States, that tend to be private businesses, and suggested proposing private partnership for the Regional Plan. Mr. Townsend advised that they would have to determine the percentage of usage for this service to put a business case together to support moving this along.

**7.2 Needs Assessment - electronic correspondence with Mr. Phil Townsend**

See item 7.1

**7.3 Michel Bourgeois email re: Spring Garden Road Access-a-Bus Landing Pad**

The electronic correspondence between the Chair and Mr. Bourgeois from HRM Transportation and Public Works, was circulated to the Committee. Mr Bourgeois advised that this location will be done this Summer, as it is included in a larger accessibility project involving 50-60 bus stop locations. Ms. McFadyen suggested that Mr. Russell keep track of the development. Mr. Russell advised that the cost for these pads varies depending on the site. Councillor Wile advised that she has taken calls regarding the concrete pads and walking in mud when stepping off the bus, during the rain.

Councillor Murphy advised that Ms. McFadyen contact Mr. Bruce Gates, Mr. Mike Bombardier, and Mr. Shaw, - Construction Inspectors.

**8. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES - None**

**9. ADDED ITEMS**

Added Items Agenda:

**9.1 Re-appointment of Mr. Gary Russell as representative to CAC - (official notification to Municipal Clerk's Office - electronic)**

This information was circulated to the Committee at the meeting as an information item.

**9.2 Update on CAC and Taxi & Limousine Committee meetings - Mr. Russell**

Mr. Russell informed the Committee that the last meetings for both the Cultural Advisory Committee and the Taxi & Limousine Committees were cancelled, therefore no updates were available. Mr. Russell advised that there would be a Council meeting regarding de-regulation for the Taxi & Limousine Advisory Committee tomorrow.

**9.3 Training of Taxi Drivers in HRM**

The Advisory Committee for Persons With Disabilities briefly spoke on taxi driver training in HRM regarding the training program that used to be mandatory before acquiring a license, and that the idea of this training should be re-visited. It was advised that some members of the ACPD attend Council tomorrow for the Taxi and Limousine Committee hearing on de-regulation.

**Information item:**

**1. Electronic correspondence to Ms. Lori Patterson re: ALF Bus Survey and Results**

Electronic correspondence from the Chair to Ms. Lori Patterson was circulated to the Committee regarding the ALF Bus Survey and Results. Ms. McFadyen advised that Ms.

Patterson received this correspondence today, so the Committee will be advised of her response in a future meeting.

**10. NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next meeting of the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities will be July 21, 2008 from 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. in Halifax Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, City Hall.

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 5:41 pm.

Sandra T. Riley  
Legislative Assistant