

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
MINUTES**

October 20, 2008

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

REGRETS: Ms. Sanaz Gerami
Councillor Patrick Murphy

STAFF: Superintendent Cliff Falkenham - Patrol Division (HRP)
Mr. Laughlin Rutt, Diversity Consultant
Ms. Julia Horncastle, acting Municipal Clerk
Ms. Sandra T. Riley, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:01 pm by Ms. Helen McFadyen, Chair, in Halifax Hall, City Hall.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

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

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES -None

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

Deleted Items:

5.4 Kevin Hindle - not available

Additions:

9.1 Access-a-bus drop off sign on Argyle Street, across from City Hall.

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

5. REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS

5.1 Mr. Darrell Wentzell and Mr. Eldon Hubley: Spryfield Lions Arena request for building accessibility funding

Mr. Wentzell introduced himself as Chairman of the Spryfield Lions Arena (their Board of Management). He advised that the arena was constructed in 1972 and the Recreational Hall addition was constructed in 1979. Mr. Wentzell gave the Committee an overview of the items needing accessibility funding in the Arena as follows:

- There is no accessibility in the building to accommodate disabled persons
- There are two automatic doors needed (\$4,000 ea)
- The washroom doors are too narrow; washroom space is small (\$20-22,000)
- The bleachers do not have space or accessibility for wheelchair users; games have to be viewed from the hallway, along the boards (\$19,840 for a bleacher platform lift)
- A lift for the second floor where the main meeting room is (\$28, 200); plus electrical and a room to house the lift

- Two washrooms in the meeting room that need to be made accessible
- Approximately \$100,000 needed

A discussion ensued with clarification from Mr. Wentzell on the following points:

- The Recreational Hall is used for Lion's Clubs meetings, and community recreational purposes such as: weddings, parties, etc. (Physical activities; no fairs or craft shows) There is a 'Moms and Tots' program and some Senior use
- The first priority for accessibility is the rink
- It may be possible to have some seats removed for wheelchair accessibility
- The rink is used for ice activities and lacrosse after ice is removed
- Last year cost for oil to heat the Recreational Hall was almost \$14,000. This expense is what prevents the hall from being used for meetings; cheaper to heat the meeting room
- There is a shortage of ice in HRM
- Grab bars and buttons (automatic) for the doors may be a possibility for a lower cost for the washrooms; special washrooms would have to be built on a coed basis

The ACPD advised they would need more information regarding estimates and the accessibility issues for the Spryfield Lion's Arena.

Mr. Rutt volunteered to go out to the Spryfield Lion's Arena and have a look at accessibility issues, after which the Advisory Committee for Persons With Disabilities will revisit this item.

Mr. Wentzell will send an outline of the total requests and costs to the Committee, electronically. The ACPD also requested a timeline for these repairs/additions.

5.2 Mr. Gary Russell - Report from Taxi and Limousine Committee and Cultural Advisory Committee

Mr. Russell advised that the Taxi and Limousine Committee's (TALC) meeting of this month was cancelled. Regarding the Cultural Advisory Committee (CAC), Mr. Russell advised that the CAC had been extended to November after being on hold. The next meeting of the CAC will be in November when new criteria will be established.

The Chair expressed concerns over the fact that the Taxi and Limousine Committee never meets as there are issues in the community that cannot be addressed when the TALC does not hold meetings. Councillor Wile suggested that the concerns should be addressed to the Municipal Clerk's office for a clear response to the queries of the ACPD regarding the Taxi and Limousine Committee.

Mr. Russell advised that he sent an email requesting that Ms. McFadyen be put on the agenda for the TALC's next meeting, but had received no response. He further advised that he had attempted to contact Deputy Mayor Stephen Adams and had received no reply.

The Legislative Assistant (L.A.) was asked to make a formal enquiry regarding this issue and bring back to the Committee. Ms. Coffey suggested that the L.A for the ACPD contact the L.A. for TALC, Barb Coleman, for further clarification.

5.3 Forum on HRM Recreation and Accessibility (buildings, programming, affordability and other aspects). Mr. John Henry, Mr. Phil Townsend, Ms. Margaret Soley, Terry Galagher, Ms. Karen MacTavish, aquatics staff

The Chair advised that Ms. Soley opted not to attend as there was adequate coverage for this item.

Mr. Terry Galagher, Coordinator, Capital Projects - Buildings, spoke on the Mainland Commons and advised that accessibility should be broken into two distinct parts: What is mandated to do (the National Building Code and the Barrier Free Code from the Province) and the concept of Universal Design. He advised that Universal Design is to create an environment to suit the broadest range of users, regardless of their abilities: cognitive, vision, hearing and speech, [body, arm, hand functions] mobility. He stated that this is then broken down into seven principles:

1. Equitable use (a person can use a facility on their own with independence; no segregation because of a physical, emotion, or health challenge; everything is identical). There are provisions for privacy, security and safety for everyone, uniformly
2. Flexibility. Designs are flexible so it is not expensive to go back and renovate as the programming changes
3. Design should be simple and intuitive. Buildings will not be a maze of corridors; very easy to memorize the layout in your head
4. Perceptive Information. Allows the person to have tactile, colour, or spacial references to the building; also embraces persons with visual impairments or different ethnic backgrounds
5. Minimize the hazards in the building. Safety features or signage to prevent injuries
6. Low physical effect. Persons do not have to have complete physical dexterity to open doors or enter other spaces
7. Spaces and sizes appropriate for each of the uses for the building. I.e, the size of bathroom stalls, heights of windows and components.

He stated that the facilities would be open to more community recreational purposes and sport uses. He advised that he had an architect prepare a list of things worth mentioning:

- The ramps and transfer walls and lifts are available to the pool
- Clearances to the doors are adequate; entry doors are going to be 3'6 for those with mobility issues
- Passive travel are free and wide; most corridors are 6 and 8 feet wide; motorized wheelchairs will not interrupt each other's flow
- Elevator is very large to accommodate wheelchairs or stretchers
- Changing rooms layouts have clearances around the lockers, transfers and benches

- The locker dimensions and heights are sized for everyone, as well as switches, mirrors, drinking fountains, telephones, wash basins, etc.
- There will be tactile strips in areas so that by change in texture of the floor a person will realize they are moving into a different area or zone of the building
- The exercise equipment has floor space around all of the equipment
- There will be barrier free showers and washroom as well as tempered water to the showers

A discussion ensued with Mr. Townsend and Mr. Gallagher giving clarification to the following questions expressed by the ACPD:

- The existing bus stop will be removed to take advantage of the new sidewalk trail system put in; the sidewalk is ten feet wide [most existing sidewalks are only five feet wide and do not accommodate people very well]
- The target audience for the facility is those who are moving into the time of their lives where they can not open things as well
- There are five locker rooms and one will be a 'family' locker room with adult sized change tables
- The lighting issue has been addressed for visibility and safety, as well as the alarm systems; the exits are well-lit to get people in and out of quite easily
- There will be a cafeteria and two IT systems: the HRM designated system as well as a wireless system so that the internet can be accessed from any spot in the building
- The floor of the track will be rubberized to absorb impact; working with Sports Nova Scotia

Ms. Karen MacTavish, General Manager, Community Recreational Services, circulated copies of the Spring/Summer 2008 and Fall/Winter 2009 brochures for Recreation Exploration Community (REC). She pointed out page 4 of the catalogue which outlined the inclusion policy which states "HRM has an inclusive mandate which welcomes, encourages and supports all persons with disabilities and/or persons requiring support to participate in our recreation programs". Ms. MacTavish went on to give the ACPD a brief overview of the service, stating that there is a lot of support from parents for the services. She advised that there were a few barriers that prevented children from participating :

- Cannot afford transportation
- Cannot afford the equipment
- Financial restraints

She stated that a Staff person will answer enquiries and advise as to what could be done to assist. Mr. John Henry, Coordinator, Aquatic Services, advised that no child is turned away from participation. He advised that they are looking into getting more equipment into the facilities. He stated there is a lot of main-streaming into the existing programs and there is someone who will work one on one with a child, if need be.

Ms. Rhonda Dea, Aquatic Specialist, Aquatic Services advised the ACPD on the adaptive

aquatics program for children who are blind, deaf, autistic, and other disabilities. She advised that the pilot program was to get these children into the water to have fun and explore other opportunities for them. She circulated a booklet for Aquatic Services which is for the child to fill out and tell 'All About Me". This booklet helps the service to find the real needs of the child. She stated that the idea was not to segregate the children of special needs, but to get them into participation. She advised that the family is allowed to get into the pool as well.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Henry advised that they would bring 'dry land' staff next time to address concerns in that area for accessibility.

5.4 Mr. Kevin Hindle

This item was deferred to the next meeting of November 17, 2008.

5.5 Mr. Phil Townsend: Status of Disbursement of Funds (200k). Review of list and addition of items to consider funding

Mr. Rutt retired from the meeting at 5:28 p.m.

The Chair advised the Committee that Mr. Phil Townsend and herself found a piece of land around Rainey Drive and Cogswell that would be a good spot for the service dog run. Mr. Townsend further advised that it would not be too expensive and is highly accessible and is an open space [for safety].

Councillor Wile retired from the meeting at 5:32 pm.

The Committee discussed the land and the possibilities further and the following motion was passed:

MOVED BY Ms. Newcombe, seconded by Mr. Farquhar that the HRM Advisory Committee for Persons With Disabilities recommend that Mr. Phil Townsend recommends that Regional Council allot up to \$20,000 towards fencing the parkland at Rainey Drive and Cogswell, to create a dog run *giving priority towards service dogs*. MOTION PUT AND PASSED

Mr. Townsend reminded the ACPD that he had come to them in a prior meeting regarding a lift for the pool in Cole Harbour Place. After a brief discussion with Mr. Henry and Ms. Dea, the Advisory Committee for Persons With Disabilities made the following motion:

**MOVED BY Mr. Boyd, seconded by Ms. Newcombe that the HRM Advisory Committee for Persons With Disabilities recommend that Mr. Phil Townsend recommends that Regional Council allot \$8,000 towards a pool lift for Cole Harbour Place.
MOTION PUT AND PASSED 1:48:26**

Mr. Townsend advised that he would let the Advisory Committee for Persons With Disabilities

of how much was left of the original \$200,000 disbursement.

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS

Mr. Russell requested that the deferred item from last months minutes be put on the agenda.

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS AND DELEGATIONS

The Committee discussed the electronic correspondence that was circulated prior to the meeting.

8. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES - None

9. ADDED ITEMS

9.1 Access-a-bus

**MOVED BY Mr. Russell, seconded by Mr. Farquhar, that an Access-a-Bus sign be erected across from the wheelchair accessible entrance of City Hall, on Argyle Street.
MOTION PUT AND PASSED**

It was advised that Metro Transit has to do this. The Chair advised that she will make contact with the appropriate person at Metro Transit.

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting of the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities will be November 17, 2008, from 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. in Halifax Hall, 2nd floor, City Hall.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The Chair advised that the she will send a note to Councillor Murphy to thank him for his service to the ACPD.

The Chair advised the members of ACPD whose terms will expire in December, to re-apply if they choose to do so.

The meeting adjourned at 5:57pm.

Sandra T. Riley
Legislative Assistant