



**ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR ACCESSIBILITY IN HRM  
MINUTES  
April 20, 2015**

PRESENT: Krista Daley, Vice Chair  
Councillor Wayne Mason  
Councillor Steve Craig  
Patricia Gates  
Yvon Clement  
Troy Nauffts  
Gerry Post  
Meredith Fillmore  
Nancy Beaton  
Mikiko Terashima

STAFF: Supt. Cliff Falkenham, Halifax Regional Police  
Darren Young, Project Manager, HRM Planning &  
Infrastructure  
Darrin Natolino, Superintendent, Winter Operations  
Dave Reage, Manager, Planning & Scheduling, Halifax  
Transit  
Jennifer Weagle, Legislative Assistant  
Jenny Benson, Legislative Support

*The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of  
this meeting.*

*The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to the  
Committee are available online:*

<http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/access/index.php>

**Accessibility Advisory Committee Minutes  
April 20, 2015**

*The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m., and the Committee  
adjourned at 5:45 p.m.*

**1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL**

The Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax. Roll call was taken.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February, 23, 2015**

**MOVED by Meredith Fillmore, seconded by Nancy Beaton, that the minutes of February 23, 2015, be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

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

Mr. Yvon Clement asked the permission of the Committee for his wife, Ms. Darlene Wournell to speak about the Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians (AEBC) Annual General Meeting that is coming up next month, to which the Committee agreed.

Ms. Wournell is a member of AEBC and informed the Committee that the AEBC will be hosting their AGM from May 1-3, 2015 at the Atlantica Hotel in Halifax. She encouraged Committee members to attend, and spread the word. A number of distinguished guests will be in attendance and a number of exhibits that would be beneficial to individuals with disabilities. For more information the AEBC Twitter handle is @blindcanadians, their website is blindcanadians.ca and you can also look them up on Facebook.

Additions:

- 8.1 Motion - Update on the Accessibility Account

**MOVED by Ms. Pat Gates, seconded by Mr. Yvon Clement, that the agenda be approved, as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES - NONE**

**5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE**

**6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS**

**6.1 Correspondence - None**

**6.2 Petitions – None**

**6.3 Presentations**

**6.3.1 An Alternative Business Model for Access-a-Bus – *Gerry Post, Member, Accessibility Advisory Committee***

Mr. Gerry Post thanked the Committee for giving him this opportunity and noted that the Alternative Business Model is a collaborative project with Mr. Gus Reid.

Councillor Wayne Mason joined the meeting at 4:10 p.m.

Mr. Post stated that HRM needs a transport service that is safe, convenient, affordable, on demand and flexible.

He outlined issues around the amount of time needed to Book Access-A-Bus and the high cost which is about \$34 per trip. He stated that this is not sustainable. Access-A-Bus currently has a waiting list of over 700 people.

Mr. Post explained that there is a convergence of Disruptive Technologies (such as Uber), New Business Models (such as Uber), Shared Economy Movement and Public Awareness Activism. He also discussed how driver-less vehicles are going to be “game changers” for the disabled community. Mr. Post believes that we need to prepare for these changes because they will change the way our system works and open more options.

The Committee discussed some of the issues around the lack of noise that electric cars make, preventing individuals with visual impairments from hearing them.

Mr. Post informed the Committee that more licenses have been given to Accessible Taxis, which has reduced wait times.

In the presentation, Mr. Post presented two proposals. The first focused on deflecting clients into the conventional system, and the second examined

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the development of an outsourcing partnership with the taxi industry as a supplemental system.

Mr. Post suggested benefits are potential cost savings, 24/7 flexible on-demand service, supporting the private sector, and preparing for anticipated transformation.

Mr. Clement explained that at one point he was a Metro Transit user and an Access-A-Bus user. As a result, Access-A-Bus often required him to take Metro Transit buses to meet the Access-A-Bus adding a significant amount of travel time.

Mr. Post explained that he does not see Access-A-Bus ending but increasing partnerships with taxi companies as the demand for Access-A-Bus grows.

Councillor Mason informed the Committee that the Transportation Standing Committee has been debating whether or not all taxis should be accessible. Committee members shared that some individuals with larger chairs cannot fit into a taxi and will always need a bus. The Committee agreed that if some individuals take accessible cabs it would free up spots for individuals who really need to take Access-A-Bus.

**MOVED by Mr. Gerry Post, seconded by Ms. Patricia Gates, that the Accessibility Advisory Committee recommend that the Transportation Standing Committee request an independent assessment examining an accessible taxi service to supplement the Access-A-Bus service. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

## **7. REPORTS**

### **7.1. Discussion – Possible Accessibility Improvements to Heritage Gas Construction Sites – *Ernest Douglas, Heritage Gas***

Mr. Ernest Douglas introduced himself. He is responsible for construction activities in HRM for Heritage Gas. He explained how disruptive he knows the Heritage Gas construction sites can be and he is looking to make improvements to make their operations safer and less disruptive for individuals with disabilities. Mr. Douglas explained that Heritage Gas is obligated by HRM to put up “Sidewalk Closed” signs in the middle of the

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sidewalk which cannot be seen by individuals with visual disabilities and can be dangerous for them.

Mr. Troy Nauffts, Ms. Pat Gates and Mr. Yvon Clement offered to be resources for Mr. Douglas as members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, as well as the numerous organizations that they are affiliated with.

The Vice Chair thanked Mr. Douglas and Heritage Gas for coming to the Accessibility Committee to start this discussion. Mr. Nauffts, Ms. Gates and Mr. Clement will meet with Mr. Douglas and the Committee requested that he return to the Committee after these discussions with a presentation.

**7.2. Discussion – Bus Stop Snow Clearance – *Dave Reage, Halifax Transit & Darrin Natolino, Winter Operations, TPW***

Mr. Dave Reage and Mr. Darrin Natolino introduced themselves to the Committee.

Mr. Natolino informed the Committee that having twice the winter in half of the season presented HRM with numerous challenges over the past number of weeks. The stops could not be plowed because of the amount of snow, it had to be hauled away instead making removal very difficult.

The Committee asked if anything can be done about the curb cuts in the future. Mr. Natolino explained that HRM does do curb cuts with a focus on Priority 1 roads but with the amount of snow this winter, the city had to focus on widening a number of streets.

Ms. Gates explained that one of her friends who is partially sighted with a white cane had to be lifted by the bus driver over a snow bank to get onto the bus on Quinpool Rd.

The Committee asked about the standard of bus stops being cleared within 48 hours of the snow stopping. Some members asked if the standard for bus stops could be changed to the same as the road. This would mean that if the bus stop is on a Priority 1 Road, the bus stop would be cleared within 12 hours.

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Supt. Cliff Falkenham informed the Committee that clearing all roads has to be the priority over bus stops to allow for the passage of emergency vehicles.

Committee members requested that the definition of “cleared” be revisited because some of the bus stops are considered to be cleared but the snow banks are too high for an Access-A-Bus to lower its ramp.

Councillor Mason stated that if HRM would like individuals to be taking the bus 24 hours after snow fall, Council needs to re-visit the standards and be told what resources and equipment are needed to make this possible.

Mr. Natolino shared that there is an RFP posted right now for an independent, third-party review of snow clearing service this past season.

The Committee discussed a number of issues around sidewalks and paths not being cleared. One issue is that some home owners do not clear their paths, creating confusion for individuals with disabilities and guide dogs.

The Vice Chair asked if the Audible Intersections are prioritized for snow removal. Mr. Natolino shared that they are not.

Coucillor Craig asked about the difference between clearing to the bus shelter and clearing the inside of the bus shelter.

Mr. Reage informed the Committee that there is a contract with a company called Outfront Media that is in charge of everything to do with bus shelters including removing broken glass, advertising and clearing out ice and snow. He explained that it is very difficult to clear ice out of shelters without breaking the shelter glass.

The Committee had a discussion around communication of snow removal information.

Ms. Beaton shared with Mr. Reage that a number of shelters do not have seats which would be very beneficial to individuals with a variety of mobility challenges.

**7.3. Update – Accessibility Assessment HRM Owned/Operated Buildings**

Mr. Young informed the Committee that 6-8 door operators are being installed every month. He is also looking into some new playgrounds. He shared that in the new budget there are a number of good opportunities and the Committee has put forward its biggest ask to date, almost a million dollars for 34 community recreation facilities.

Mr. Young visited the Central Library to follow up on some issues raised by the Committee. He shared that there needs to be double the in-floor lighting installed. He also said that a railing cannot be installed in the middle of the stairs in Paul O'Regan Hall because of the building code. He is looking at staining the edge of the stairs a darker colour. Mr. Young also noticed that there are no door operators in the family washrooms, he is looking into having them installed.

Mr. Post shared that there is a railing at eye-level in the area for wheelchairs, making it very difficult for wheelchair users to see. Mr. Young said that he would look at this issue.

**7.4 Committee Member Updates**

**7.4.1 Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) - *Vacant***

The following information was before the Committee:

- Terms of Reference for the Active Transportation Committee and meeting schedule.

No members indicated an interest in representing the AAC on ATAC at this time. The appointment of a representative to ATAC was deferred to the next meeting.

**7.4.2 Taxi & Limousine Liaison Group (TLLG) – *Vacant***

The following information was before the Committee:

- The Terms of Reference for the Taxi & Limousine Liaison Group and meeting information

No members indicated an interest in representing the AAC on TLLG at this time. The appointment of a representative to the TLLG was deferred to the next meeting.

**7.4.3 Crosswalk Safety Advisory Committee (CSAC) – *Krista Daley***

The Vice Chair reported that the last meeting of CSAC focused on a report that was presented around a consultation that had happened with DalTRAC. The biggest issue that the report raised was around appropriate crosswalk signage.

The Crosswalk Committee is also revisiting their first year as a Committee and looking at the best ways to move forward.

**7.4.4 Discussion – “Low Hanging Fruit” / Easily Achievable Fixes**

The Vice Chair and Mr. Post explained that this would give Committee members opportunities to bring up issues at Accessibility Committee Meetings that have easily achievable, low/no cost fixes to improve accessibility in Halifax, that they have come across in their day to day business.

The Legislative Assistant stated that the Municipal Clerk has approved this being included as a standing item on the Committee’s agendas. Ms. Weagle will bring these items to the attention of the appropriate staff members, for their consideration.

**8. ADDED ITEMS**

**8.1 Motion from the Committee acting an Update on the Accessibility Account**

**MOVED by Councillor Wayne Mason, seconded by Councillor Steve Craig that the Accessibility Advisory Committee request that staff prepare a report with an update of projects and to date spent from the Accessibility Budget for the 2015/2016 year. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**



**9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Monday, May 25, 2015, at 4:00 p.m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

**10. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

The Legislative Assistant called for nominations for Chair.

**MOVED by Ms. Krista Daley, seconded by Councillor Mason that Ms. Patricia Gates be appointed as Chair for 2015. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

The Legislative Assistant called three times for any further nominations; there being none, she declared Ms. Pat Gates as Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

The Legislative Assistant called for nominations for Vice Chair.

**MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Ms. Patricia Gates that Ms. Krista Daley be appointed as Vice Chair. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

The Legislative Assistant called three times for any further nominations; there being none, she declared Ms. Kraitsa Daley as Vice Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Jenny Benson  
Legislative Support

**INFORMATION ITEMS:**

1. Invitation to Participate – Taxi & Limousine Services Online Survey and Town Hall Meeting
2. Information Report to the Transportation Standing Committee dated February 17, 2015 “Wheelmap.org – Apps to Increase Accessibility Awareness”
3. Information report to the Transportation Standing Committee dated March 26, 2015 “Accessibility at Municipal Public Engagement Events”