



**ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR ACCESSIBILITY IN HRM
MINUTES
September 21, 2015**

PRESENT: Patricia Gates, Chair
Councillor Steve Craig
Yvon Clement
Gerry Post
Meredith Fillmore
Mikiko Terashima

REGRETS: Krista Daley, Vice Chair
Councillor Waye Mason
Nancy Beaton
Troy Nauffts

STAFF: Tracey Jones-Grant, Manager, Diversity and Inclusion, Government Relations & External Affairs
Supt. Cliff Falkenham, Halifax Regional Police
Laughlin Rutt, Corporate Diversity Consultant, Government Relations & External Affairs
Darren Young, Project Manager, HRM Planning & Infrastructure
Damion Stapledon, Community Recreation Planner, Parks & Recreation
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/AACagenda150921.php>

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m., and the Committee adjourned at 5:17 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax. Roll call was taken.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 10, 2015

MOVED by Councillor Steve Craig, seconded by Mr. Gerry Post,

THAT the minutes of September 10, 2015, be approved as circulated.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

MOVED by Mr. Gerry Post, seconded by Councillor Steve Craig,

THAT the Order of Business be approved as circulated.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – None

4.1 Update on Service Dog Park

Ms. Weagle shared that the previous dog park on Cogswell has been reduced in size as a result of the construction but will remain open until the new dog park opens.

The new Ardmore Service Dog Park is scheduled to open by the end of October.

Mr. Clement asked Ms. Weagle to look into whether or not the issues surrounding the height of the fence have been resolved.

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – None

6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

6.1 Correspondence – None

6.2 Petitions – None

6.3 Presentation - None

7. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

7.1. Introduction and Overview of the Diversity and Inclusion Department – Tracey Jones-Grant, Manager

Ms. Tracey Jones-Grant introduced herself as the new Manager of Diversity and Inclusion, within Government Relations & External Affairs, Ms. Jones-Grant reviewed her background, noting that she has been working in the area of diversity and inclusion for a long time through the public library system as well as the Halifax Regional School Board.

The Municipality has a number of priorities in the area of diversity and inclusion. Ms. Jones-Grant is responsible for the Local Immigration Partnership, African Nova Scotian Integration Office and Diversity in Halifax. The Diversity and Inclusion Department has been tasked with finding out any work that has already been done by business units with respect to diversity and inclusion. This information will assist in the mapping a framework.

Councillor Craig thanked Ms. Jones-Grant for attending the meeting and asked that she return to the Committee once the department is better established and there are items that the Committee can provide feedback on.

Mr. Post explained to Ms. Jones-Grant that the Accessibility Committee reports to the Transportation Standing Committee despite all of the issues that it examines. He requested that she examine this structure and consider having the Accessibility Committee reporting directly to the Executive Standing Committee.

Based on questions from the Committee, Ms. Jones-Grant stated that the current focus of the Diversity and Inclusion Department is establishing the mandate of the office and its relationship with business units. Mr. Post urged Ms. Jones-Grant to look beyond City Hall for partnerships and resources such as Dalhousie University.

Ms. Jones-Grant told the Committee that she is in her office and Committee members are welcome to reach out to her there. She pointed out that her Department is not a direct service provider but will be working with business units on delivery.

The Chair asked whether or not the Diversity and Inclusion Department would be in charge of the implementation of the provincial legislation around accessibility that is supposed to be passed in the fall of 2016. Mr. Rutt shared with the Committee that the Municipality has already been working to improve accessibility throughout Halifax in advance of this legislation. All business units have been asked to report on what they have been doing and what they are planning to do in the future with regard to accessibility. The path forward from here will be determined by the overall framework that is currently being developed for diversity and inclusion.

Mr. Stapledon shared that Parks and Recreation has been doing reflexive work around accessibility for a long time now. He expressed excitement around this work and working with Mr. Rutt and other individuals around the province.

Ms. Gates shared that Mr. Damion Stapledon assisted a few community organizations with hosting a picnic for individuals with disabilities and their families at The Emera Oval.

7.2. Planning for 2015 Town Hall Meeting on Accessibility

Ms. Weagle explained that last year we met at the Bedford Community Centre. Feedback after that meeting was that the location caused attendance to be low.

The Committee agreed to keep Wednesday November 4th, Thursday November 5th and Monday November 9th open in their calendars with preference being given to Monday November 9th. They agreed that the meeting should take place from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The Committee requested that ease of transportation to the venue be considered as priority when looking at possible locations. Preference was given to the Sportsplex as a possible location for the meeting this year, given its proximity to the Dartmouth Transit Terminal.

Mr. Stapledon reminded the Committee that there were numerous issues with audio at the Dartmouth Sportsplex so an audio technician would need to stay throughout the meeting. The Chair asked that Halifax staff be seated on the same level as attendees as opposed to elevated as they were in 2013.

Ms. Weagle asked the Committee if the panel should be the same as last year. Councillor Craig requested that Jane Young from 311 attend. The Committee also requested that Ms. Tracey Jones-Grant attend the meeting since she is the Manager of the new business unit. Mr. Post requested that each staff member provide a report card on where they are this year compared to last year. Councillor Craig offered to chair the meeting again.

Ms. Terashima requested that an update be provided on the work that is being done around snow removal as discussed last meeting.

7.3. Update – Accessibility Assessment HRM Owned/Operated Buildings

Mr. Young shared with the Committee that last year 34 recreational facilities were audited for accessibility purposes. Council granted one million dollars to work on priority facilities this year. Mr. Young is working with staff from Parks and Recreation, installing door operators and ramps. Some of the sites that are being worked on are priorities because they are also voting locations for the upcoming federal election.

Work has begun on the Cole Harbour outdoor pool. The service building is not accessible so renovations began two weeks ago.

An RFP is going out on a new round of accessibility audits that will be focused on administrative buildings that will be included in next year's budget. They are hoping to improve six to eight administrative buildings next year.

The Chair requested that Mr. Young look into braille at the Central Library elevators.

Mr. Post asked about making City Hall more accessible by doing a curb cut to allow access to the building from Argyle Street.

Mr. Clement asked that a plexi-glass wall at Central Library be looked into as it seems to be a hazard for individuals with visual impairments. The Chair shared that large decals are supposed to be put on it.

7.4 Committee Member Updates

7.4.1 Active Transportation Advisory Committee – *Councillor Mason*

Councillor Mason was not present to provide an update.

- **Appointment of an AAC representative to ATAC**

The Active Transportation Advisory Committee Terms of Reference were before the Committee.

No members offered to fill this vacancy. This matter will be brought forward to the next meeting.

7.4.2 Taxi & Limousine Liaison Group – *Pat Gates*

The Chair advised that she was unable to attend the last meeting of the Taxi & Limousine Liaison Group.

- **Appointment of an AAC representative to TLLG – deferred to next meeting**

The Taxi & Limousine Liaison Group Terms of Reference were before the Committee.

No members offered to fill this vacancy. This matter will be brought forward to the next meeting.

7.4.3 Crosswalk Safety Advisory Committee – *Krista Daley*

Ms. Daley was not present to provide an update.

7.5 Discussion – “Low Hanging Fruit”/Easily Achievable Fixes

7.5.1 Barricade at Crosswalk

Mr. Clement expressed frustrations around a road block that he encountered at an event over the weekend. The blockade was set up at a crosswalk. Supt. Cliff Falkenham noted that barricades need to be a few inches outside of the white line, it should never be in the crosswalk unless there is construction occurring on the crosswalk. He offered to follow up on this issue.

8. ADDED ITEMS - NONE

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday, October 19, 2015, 4:00-6:00 p.m., Halifax Hall, main floor, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:17 p.m.

Jenny Benson
Legislative Support