



**ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR ACCESSIBILITY IN HRM  
MINUTES  
April 18, 2016**

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

**REGRETS:** Sue Uteck

**STAFF:** Laughlin Rutt, Diversity Consultant, Government Relations & External Affairs  
Darren Young, Project Manager, Corporate Facility Design & Construction  
Ahmed Kidwai, Manager, Accessible Transit  
Cathy Collett, 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>*

*The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m., the Committee adjourned at 5:35 p.m.*

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

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 – February, 29, 2016**

MOVED by Ms. Meredith Fillmore, seconded by Councillor Steve Craig,

**THAT the minutes of February 29, 2016, be approved as circulated.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

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

MOVED by Councillor Wayne Mason, seconded by Ms. Krista Daley,

**THAT the agenda be approved as circulated.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

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

**5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST - NONE**

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

**7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS**

**7.1 Correspondence - None**

**7.2 Petitions - None**

**7.3 Presentations**

**7.3.1 Tie-Downs in Conventional Busses – Jason Everett**

Mr. Everett introduced himself to the Committee and explained that he believes that Halifax Transit should use the four point tie-down system instead of the new system which involves one strap.

On July 10, 2015 Mr. Everett slid in his chair which tipped over on the bus. He requested that a research study be done on the safest and most cost-effective way to do this.

Mr. Post explained that he has faced similar issues with the new one strap as well.

Councillor Craig thanked Mr. Everett for coming. He requested that information be provided to the Committee about what Halifax Transit is doing to rectify this issue.

Mr. Kidwai explained that the current rear-facing one-point system is the industry standard. He stated that Halifax Transit would provide a formal response to the issues presented by Mr. Everett at the next Committee meeting.

**8. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD – NONE**

**9. REPORTS/DISCUSSION**

**9.1. STAFF**

**9.1.1 Darren Young, Project Manager, Operations Support**

Mr. Young shared the following update with the Committee:

- To address the issue that large power chairs have been having at the Central Library a new post with a wireless button is being installed.
- Sackville Library renovations are beginning on Wednesday.
- Accessible water fountains have been installed at 6 locations over the past 6 months.
- Accessible renovations at Cole Harbour Pool are underway.
- The North Woodside Community Centre is out to tender.
- Carol's Corner Community Centre renovations are underway.

**9.1.2 AVL Update – Kevin Flemming**

Ms. Patricia Hughes introduced herself to the Committee and explained that her goal was to build awareness about the AVL+ project and its impacts on the accessibility of the public transportation system.

She shared that Citizen Services will give customers tools to receive accurate traveler information across multiple channels, including a number of Google tools.

Bus stop data is the foundation of the system. There are 2,600 bus stops tagged in the software that are used in conjunction with GPS to monitor schedule adherence. On board bus communications also rely on bus stop locations because they allow the bus to know which stop it is approaching. With on board communications announcements can be made on the bus and external announcements can also be made when bus doors are open.

Potential issues that have been identified mostly revolve around temporary stop locations, bus re-routing due to emergencies and bus stops that are too close together.

The Committee suggested that Metro Transit share these potential issues prior to the launch of AVL instead of waiting until the issues arise to discuss them. Ms. Hughes requested that the Committee provide her with feedback after the launch of the system.

Mr. Clement requested that drivers not be able to adjust the volume of the announcements, noting that there have been issues in other cities where drivers have turned the announcements down. He also suggested that if the bus is stopped somewhere the external announcements should play every minute or minute and a half.

Mr. Post noted how great the Google Maps system is and clarified that eventually the bus arrivals will be in real time.

The Committee requested an opportunity to test out the system before it is launched.

**9.1.3 Accessible Elections Plan – Kevin Arjoon, Municipal Clerk/Returning Officer and Lori McKinnon, Assistant Returning Officer**

The following was before the Committee:

- An Information Report entitled “Accessible Services – 2016 Municipal and School Board Elections”
- A document entitled “Municipal & School Board Elections – Improving Access for Voters”

Mr. Arjoon explained that he gained great feedback from the Committee for the 2012 elections and also received feedback at an engagement session at the library. These discussions shaped the themes of the Information Report which are: Independent Voting, Communication, Equitable Hiring Practices and Physical Accessibility.

Mr. Arjoon requested that the Committee pull from any experience that they have had with elections as voters or volunteers. He also requested that the Committee provide organizations that they should be approaching for feedback.

Ms. McKinnon agreed to provide Mr. Young a list of facilities that will be used for the election so he can assess accessibility upgrades.

Councillor Craig noted the importance of everyone knowing the answer to the questions “What happens when you get to the poll and you cannot access it?” He suggested that care be taken around the template that visually impaired individuals have, assistance and compliance of volunteers for individuals with accessibility issues and the expertise required for assisting long term care facilities and voting. He stated that there is a need to be accommodating of the employment of any individuals who would like to assist.

The Chair stated that she is going to vote by phone but insisted that individuals working at the polling stations that individuals with visual impairments are very independent but may require a little guidance or assistance.

Ms. Daley noted the need for ongoing accessible assessments throughout the day, checking every 2-3 hours because the environment changes. The federal government listed accessibility issues of each polling location online so that voters could research that before going. Ms. McKinnon noted that HRM intends to do this also.

The Committee emphasized that individuals with intellectual disabilities have the right to vote also and need to be accommodated. Mr. Arjoon noted that this is definitely something that they are considering along with other disabilities that are not visible such as mental health issues.

The Committee noted that the enthusiasm for accessibility is what they want. The language used needs to be person-first instead of disability-first and noted some issues of over-accommodation causing embarrassment.

Mr. Arjoon also requested that the Committee put forward the names of any groups or organizations that he should be consulting. Ms. Daley suggested that a member from the Committee come through and assess potential polling stations.

Ms. McKinnon noted that if any Committee members have any further feedback or commentary to send it along.

**9.2. Committee Member Updates**

**9.2.1 Active Transportation Committee – Councillor Mason**

Report deferred to next meeting.

**9.2.2 Taxi & Limousine Liaison Group – Gerry Post**

The meeting was cancelled.

**9.2.3 Crosswalk Safety Advisory Committee – Krista Daley**

Ms. Daley reported that a review is being done of the Committee to see if it has met its mandate. If the decision is that the Crosswalk Safety Advisory Committee has met its mandate it will no longer be in place. The reviewer will report to the Crosswalk Safety Advisory Committee to let them know the outcome of their review before her final report goes to Council.

Ms. Daley suggested that Committee members interested in this issue look at [www.crosswalk.ca](http://www.crosswalk.ca)

**9.2.4 Work Plan – Pat Gates**

The Chair announced that the AAC work plan session would take place on May 9, 2016 at 3:00.

**10. ADDED ITEMS – NONE**

**11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – May 16, 2016**

The next meeting will be held on Monday, May 16, 2016, at 4:00 p.m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Jenny Benson  
Legislative Support