

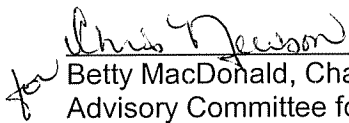


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10.3.1

REGIONAL COUNCIL
October 26, 2004

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

FROM:  Chris Dawson
for Betty MacDonald, Chair
Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities

DATE: October 19, 2004

SUBJECT: Amendment to the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities

ORIGIN:

Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities meeting held on October 18, 2004.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that:

Regional Council revise the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities to reduce the composition of the Committee from a minimum of 15 residents to a minimum of 8 residents as follows:

1. Section 3. COMPOSITION, Sub-section 3.1:

3.1 *Members of the Committee shall be appointed by Council and will consist of not less than 8 residents of HRM who shall come from the disability communities, including parents and advocates; and two members of Council.*

BACKGROUND:

The Committee has expressed concern with difficulty in achieving quorum at times for their meetings. Upon lengthy discussion of the issue, the Committee suggested a reduction in the composition of the Committee could assist in obtaining quorum.

Concern was also raised in the recent past regarding an accessible meeting location for the large Committee. The Committee had been meeting in the HR Training Room, on the third floor of Duke Tower. A number of Committee members are wheelchair users, have guide dogs or an assistant with them which requires space for everyone to manoeuvre. Once staff are included and any presenters and their equipment such as overhead projector/screens etc., space can be very limited and has at times resulted in members of the Committee not being able to sit at the Committee table.

The large group and lack of space also raised a safety concern. In case of an emergency there would be very little room to maneuver quickly to vacate the premises. Research by HRM Staff persons have indicated options are limited in the downtown core in regards to an accessible meeting location for larger groups. The Committee is currently meeting in Halifax Hall, City Hall which is the most accessible location for a larger group and is at ground level.

A reduction in the composition of the Committee could also assist with finding accessible meeting locations.

DISCUSSION:

It is requested that the Terms of Reference be revised to reflect a reduction to the minimum requirement for residents from 15 to 8. The number of Councillors serving on the Committee is to remain at two.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

None.

ALTERNATIVES:

No alternatives recommended at this time.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Attachment "A" Current Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities.
2. Attachment "B" Excerpt of the October 18, 2004 minutes for the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities.

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Revised February 24, 2004

The Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities was established pursuant to s.11(4) of the Halifax Regional Municipality Act S.N.S.1995, c.3 to advise and assist Council to facilitate and to promote the access and accessibility of all citizens to their community including municipal government, programs and services. Accessibility for this purpose meaning the removal of all barriers confronting citizens with disabilities, including attitudinal barriers.

1. OBJECTIVE

The main responsibility of the Committee is to advise Halifax Regional Municipal Council on the impact of Municipal policies, programs and services on persons with disabilities.

- 1.1 To facilitate the full participation of all citizens with disabilities in civic and community affairs by ensuring that policies, programs and services do not impose barriers to such participation.
- 1.2 To increase civic and community awareness regarding the disability communities within HRM by promoting effective communication.
- 1.3 To work towards the elimination of physical and attitudinal barriers facing persons with disability by advising Council on issues and concerns raised by citizens.
- 1.4 To ensure HRM's disability communities have an equitable opportunity to voice their views on disability and other issues affected by monitoring the effectiveness of HRM policies, programs and services.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 To advise Council on matters related to the status of persons with disabilities.
- 2.2 To review and or monitor existing and proposed by-laws of Council to promote full participation of persons with disabilities in their community.

- 2.3 Act as a resource for all municipal departments in responding to issues and concerns of persons with disabilities.
- 2.4 Review and or monitor the accessibility of existing and proposed municipal services and facilities.
- 2.5 To advise Council and through Council municipal departments and the public about strategies designed to achieve the objectives of this Committee.
- 2.6 To receive and review information from Council or its committees and commissions and make recommendations.

3. **COMPOSITION**

- 3.1 Members of the Committee shall be appointed by Council and will consist of not less than 15 residents of HRM who shall come from the disability communities, including parents and advocates; and two members of Council.

4. **SUB-COMMITTEES**

- 4.1 The Committee may establish subcommittees to deal with specific issues, subject to the submission of a work plan (identifying issues, goals, time frame, scope of work and resources required), and Council approval. The ability of a committee to establish subcommittees, other than through the Council approval process is to identify specific subcommittees in the body of the objects of the committee whereby they can outline the role and scope of subcommittees and the number of subcommittees to be set.
- 4.2 The Committee shall develop terms of reference and time lines for any such sub-committees as referred to in 4.1.

5. **OFFICERS**

- 5.1 The Committee shall yearly elect a Chairperson from among its members at the first meeting of the year.
- 5.2 The Committee shall yearly elect a Vice-chairperson from among its members at the first meeting of the year.
- 5.3 The officers of the Committee shall be elected from among the 15 residents who serve as members.

6. **QUORUM**

- 6.1 Quorum shall consist of not less than 50% + 1 of the voting members.
- 6.2 Meetings can be held without a quorum present, however a quorum will be required for voting purposes.

7. **MEETINGS**

- 7.1 The Committee shall meet no less than four times per year. The Council will provide Municipal Clerk resources ***for all regular and special meetings*** and additional support will be subject to the approved and/or revised work plans of the committee where the number of meetings and resources required are to be identified.
- 7.2 In case of emergency, the Chairperson or designate can call a meeting with reasonable notice.
- 7.3 Upon receipt of a written petition of the majority of the members of the Committee, the Chairperson shall summon a special meeting for the purpose and at the time mentioned in the petition, on at least three days' notice.

8. **RELATIONSHIP TO COUNCIL AND CAO**

- 8.1 The Committee shall make recommendations to Council and/or the Chief Administrative Officer solely in an advisory capacity.
- 8.2 Significant issues, plans and programs impacting on persons with disabilities and the disability community shall be referred to the Committee for its consideration and recommendations to Council and/or the Chief Administrative Officer.
- 8.3 Members of the committee and Council shall come together on a periodical basis to participate in a joint working session.
- 8.4 The CAO will appoint an advisor(s), with skills and knowledge appropriate to the subject matter, as recommended by Directors and General Managers, in consultation with the Committee.

9. **APPOINTMENTS**

- 9.1 A public appointment process encouraging representation from HRM's diverse communities be used with regard to appointments to this Committee.

9.2 All appointments shall be for a two-year term following Council's normal selection and appointment process. Members may be re-appointed for no more than three consecutive terms.

10. **RESIGNATIONS**

10.1 Any resignation from the Committee shall be tendered in writing to the Chairperson, who will advise Council through the Municipal Clerk.

10.2 The name of a replacement member shall be obtained through the most recent public appointment process from the list maintained by the Municipal Clerk

10.3 When approved by Council, the new appointee shall serve the remainder of the vacant term.

11. **ABSENTEEISM**

11.1 In the case of any member missing three meetings without the consent of the Committee, the member shall be deemed to have resigned.

12. **PROCEDURE**

The meeting shall follow the rules of order (Administrative Order #1) approved by Council as amended from time to time.

13. **REPORT TO COUNCIL**

13.1 The Committee shall submit a report of activities to Council during the first quarter of each year.

13.2 The Chairperson of the Committee, or a designate, may make reports to Council on the activities of the Committee as necessary, or as requested by Council, together with such other presentations that the Committee may deem advisable.

14. **AMENDMENTS**

14.1 The Committee may from time to time recommend to Council the amendment of these Terms of Reference following an appropriately voted resolution.

15. **REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENSES**

15.1 Each member of the committee shall serve without remuneration, but may be reimbursed by Council for any necessary expenses incurred while engaged in official duties, provided that such expenses are approved by Council in advance.

(feb2000)

8.2 New Business

8.2.1 Membership

The Legislative Assistant reviewed the membership requirements indicating seven (7) terms would be expiring this November. She further advised there are an additional two vacancies for terms expiring in November 2005 for a total of nine (9) upcoming vacancies.

There will also be some members (approximately three) who would not be able to reapply to the Committee for 2005 as the Terms of Reference states that the members could only serve for three consecutive terms.

The Committee commented on their recent problems in achieving quorum at their meetings and suggested reducing the total composition of the Committee thereby reducing quorum requirements. A brief discussion followed on what the composition should be for the Committee and the following motion was made:

MOVED BY Mr. Patrick Harrington, seconded by Mr. Warren Reed that the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities recommend Regional Council amend the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities to reduce membership requirements from a minimum of fifteen (15) citizens and two (2) Regional Councillors to a minimum of eight (8) citizens and two (2) Regional Councillors.

Ms. Charla Williams clarified that additional members could be appointed to the Committee as the Terms of Reference would continue to indicate a **minimum** of 8 residents.

The Legislative Assistant further clarified that if eight (8) residents were appointed and then additional members were appointed to the Committee, the quorum requirements would increase accordingly. Also, if an appointed member resigns before their term is complete, that position would continue to count toward quorum as it is assumed the vacant position would be filled.

Councillor Meade advised other HRM Boards and Committees are looking for visible minorities to serve and encouraged those who would not be returning to consider applying for another Committee and also to encourage others to apply .

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.