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MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee
CC: Melissa Myers, Accessibility Advisor
FROM: Annie Sherry, Legislative Assistant
DATE: October 14, 2021
SUBJECT: Annual Town Hall Update

Attention Chair and Members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee:

At the direction of the Committee, the Legislative Assistant, Annie Sherry, and Accessibility Advisor, Melissa Myers have continued working with staff at the Halifax Public Libraries and Halifax Regional Municipality to plan the Annual Town Hall. This memo outlines the work that has occurred since the September 20, 2021 meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, and ongoing efforts.

Livestreaming Vendor:

The Legislative Assistant worked with staff in multiple business units to facilitate the procurement process for securing a livestreaming vendor for the Town Hall. The invitation to quote was sent to three potential vendors on September 29th and closed on October 6th. Two quotes were received, and the Office of the Municipal Clerk and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion worked together to finalize the purchase order. This process was completed on the morning of October 14th and the vendor has officially been notified. CART Captioning services were included in the quote.

Conversations with the vendor are forthcoming regarding the creation of the registration link for the virtual side of the event (priority item), logistics of the backend management of the livestream, working with Corporate Communications and IT to ensure appropriate access to HRM social channels, and a breakdown of responsibilities for the event.

Business Unit Invitations:

Emails were sent to Business Unit representatives to invite them to attend as speakers on October 7th. As of the time of this memo, we have received confirmation of attendance from the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Corporate and Customer Services, and Transportation and Public Works. The deadline for Business Units to indicate their interest/ability to attend to Town Hall is end of day October 15th, and the Legislative Assistant will update on attendance at the October 18th meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Office of the Municipal Clerk

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The Legislative Assistant and Accessibility Advisor will schedule group meetings with all Business Unit speakers to ensure they are prepared for the Town Hall, and that deadlines for presentations are met.

Below is an overview of the event that was included in the invitation:

- A representative from the Accessibility Advisory Committee will welcome everyone, provide an overview of the work of the Committee, and introduce HRM staff
- HRM staff members will each provide a 5-10 minute presentation outlining the accessibility successes and challenges within the Business Unit over the past two years
- A live Question and Answer session from the public will follow, with questions coming both virtually and from the floor
 - It is expected that any staff member speaking at this event will be present to answer questions from the public

Communications:

A final communications plan was received on October 12th. The plan includes:

- Digital and print materials
- Utilizing HRM social media platforms
- Timelines for launching materials
- A plan to engage the Council Coordinator Office so that information about the Town Hall may be shared in Councillor Newsletters

A webpage for the Town Hall has been created on the HRM website that will house all information for the event. This webpage will continue to be updated as information is made available: [Accessibility Townhall | Halifax](#)

The Legislative Assistant worked with Corporate Communications and the Public Libraries to create postcards that are being distributed through the Library's home delivery program. The postcards were delivered to the Halifax North Library on October 12th and will be provided to over 340 residents over the course of three weeks.

ASL Interpretation:

The Accessibility Advisor has reached out to the Society of Deaf and Hard of Hearing to solidify ASL interpretation for the Town Hall. Interpretation will be available at Paul O'Regan Hall and be maintained on the screen for the livestream.

Sighted Guides:

The Accessibility Advisor has been in contact with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind to acquire training materials for sighted guides. A video link and written materials are listed as information items at the bottom of this month's agenda. Any member of the Committee who is interested in taking on this role for the Town Hall can express so during the October 18th meeting, and the Legislative Assistant or Accessibility Advisor will be in touch. Staff members

present at the viewing locations for the Town Hall will also receive this material so that this service will be available at the three major locations.

Access-A-Bus:

The Accessibility Advisor has been in contact with staff at Transit to facilitate Access-A-Bus bookings for the Town Hall. Registration information will be added to the Town Hall webpage on Halifax.ca shortly. Transit staff has indicated that the Access-A-Bus will be available for booking for established serviceable areas, which does not include service to the Musquodoboit Harbour Library.

Between now and the Town Hall:

- Meetings with BU Speakers
- Meetings with Staff Support for Event
- Meetings with livestreaming vendor and HRM staff – priority on creating registration link
- Updates to Town Hall webpage
- Internal and External communication efforts about the Town Hall
- Updates to Committee by email
- Agenda posting