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MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee
CC: Melissa Myers, Accessibility Advisor
FROM: Annie Sherry, Legislative Assistant
DATE: January 13, 2022
SUBJECT: **2021 Annual Town Hall Overview**

Attention Chair and Members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee:

On November 10, 2021, the Accessibility Advisory Committee hosted the Annual Town Hall. The purpose of this memo is to provide an overview of engagement and staff support at the event, and highlight the planning process undertaken by HRM staff, partners, and the Committee.

Overview of Town Hall:

The 2021 Town Hall was hosted in Paul O'Regan Hall at the Halifax Central Library, and livestreamed through Zoom to YouTube. Two additional viewing locations were hosted at the Tantallon and Musquodoboit Harbour Libraries.

Public Engagement During the Town Hall:

- 50+ participants in Zoom
- 20+ participants in Paul O'Regan Hall (including a Member of the Legislative Assembly)
- 112 viewers from YouTube
- 35+ questions or feedback provided from members of the public during the live meeting

Staff and Partner Support During the Town Hall:

- 8 Business Unit representatives as panelists
- 12 HRM staff in supporting roles from 3 different business units
 - These roles included checking proof of vaccination, running mics to attendees in Paul O'Regan Hall, facilitating the virtual Q&A, minute taking, managing time, and support at the alternate viewing locations.
- 4 members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee

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- These members took on the MC/Host role, sighted guides, and facilitating questions in-person.
- 6 staff members from the Halifax Public Libraries
- 4 staff members from the livestreaming vendor's team
- 3 ASL/Deaf interpreters
- 2 CART Captioning staff

Planning Process:

While the Annual Town Hall was a subject of discussion at both the Committee and staff level for the duration of the year, the majority of the planning took place after the approval of the 2021 work plan in June. In between meetings of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Legislative Assistant and Accessibility Advisor led or participated in more than 50 meetings with HRM staff, Halifax Public Libraries, and the livestreaming vendor. The following is a high level overview of the discussions, decisions, and tasks that were undertaken over the course of 5 months:

June-August:

- The Legislative Assistant and Accessibility Advisor began exploring options for a physical location for the Town Hall to be hosted and met with representatives from the Halifax Public Libraries on several occasions to discuss venue options, availability, the concept of a hybrid virtual and in-person event, and projected costs.
- The Committee selected a meeting date and elected to move forward with a hybrid virtual and in-person event, with viewing locations being hosted at two additional Halifax Public Library locations.
- Two site visits to Paul O'Regan Hall by Legislative Assistant and Accessibility Advisor.
- Corporate Communications was engaged on the event and drafted a communications plan.

September-November:

- The Legislative Assistant undertook a procurement process to select the livestreaming vendor for the event and continued to work with the vendor until the event took place.
- The Accessibility Advisor worked with Halifax Transit staff to ensure Access-A-Bus would be available for the event, booked ASL and deaf interpretation, and did outreach to community organizations.
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee reviewed communication materials and a webpage was launched for the Town Hall on Halifax.ca.
- 340 "Save the Date" post cards designed, printed, and distributed throughout the Municipality through the Halifax Public Library's home delivery program.
- Information about the Town Hall was shared on the HRM's Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook (including the creation of a Facebook event), as well as in internal communication hubs for HRM staff.

- Communication materials were also shared with the Halifax Public Libraries and ran as digital signage through their locations.
- Invitations were sent out to Business Unit representatives to participate as panelists, and deadlines were provided regarding speeches.
- A memo was drafted and distributed to members of Regional Council regarding the event.