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MEMORANDUM

TO: Accessibility Advisory Committee
CC: Melissa Myers, Accessibility Advisor, Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ANSAIO
FROM: Annie Sherry, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Municipal Clerk
DATE: September 22, 2023
SUBJECT: **September 25, 2023 AAC Meeting - Town Hall Planning Discussion**

Members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee,

The purpose of this memo is to provide updates to the Committee on the exploration of alternative venues for the 2023 Annual Town Hall, and to provide the Committee with options for the format of the 2023 Annual Town Hall.

2023 Town Hall Venue Options

At the July 24, 2023 meeting of the Committee, staff were directed to explore alternative venues options for hosting the 2023 Annual Town Hall, with preference for being hosted on the Dartmouth side of the Harbour. The following options were explored:

- Alderney Landing
- Zatzman Sportsplex
- Halifax Public Library locations other than Halifax Central Library
- NSCC Ivany Campus

Staff engaged the venues above to inquire about technical capacity for a hybrid (virtual and in-person) event, accessibility of the space, and for date availability for the weeks of November 13-17 or 20-24, 2023. Given the Committee's priority for continuing the practice of a hybrid event, it was found that none of the venue options above had the combination of technical, accessibility, attendee capacity, and date availability required for the 2023 Town Hall.

In the search for an alternative venue, staff spoke with the Halifax Central Library to ensure there was a back up plan, and put a hold on Paul O'Regan Hall for Tuesday, November 21, 2023. Given the results of the search and this venues proven ability to

meet the requirements for the hybrid event, it is staff's recommendation to proceed with this date and venue for the 2023 Annual Town Hall.

2022 Town Hall Format Background

Throughout the planning process for the 2022 Annual Town Hall, the Committee discussed the option for engaging an external consultant to facilitate the event. Staff underwent a procurement process in search of an organization that could work with the Committee to alter the format of the Town Hall, facilitate the event both in person and virtually, and provide a "What We Heard" Report following the event.

After receiving proposals back from potential vendors, it was discovered that the services were outside of the budget allocated for the event, and the Committee opted to proceed with replicating the format of the previous year's Town Hall. This format included a panel with HRM staff, engaging a livestreaming vendor to help facilitate the virtual component of the event, and an added open floor session called "Envisioning a More Accessible Future."

Feedback from public attendees on the format of the 2022 Town Hall were to explore an alternative venue in the Dartmouth area, to have a representative from the Province of Nova Scotia present at future events, and that the event format should largely stay the same.

2023 Town Hall Format

Since the 2022 Annual Town Hall, a dedicated budget line has been allocated for the event in the amount of \$10,000 and is housed under the Office of Diversity and Inclusion/ANSAIO.

Given that the 2023 Annual Town Hall is targeting for November, staff are looking for direction from the Committee on what action should be taken with respect to the format of the Town Hall. Both of the options below will require staff to undergo a procurement process, which will need to happen following the September meeting of the Committee.

The direction that staff are looking for from the Committee at this month's meeting is as follows:

- Proceed with replicating the format of the 2022 Annual Town Hall and engage HRM Procurement on requesting proposals for a livestreaming vendor.
- Engage HRM Procurement to request proposals for the support of an external consultant to help plan, facilitate the format and livestreaming of the 2023 Town Hall, and write a "What We Heard" report.