



**ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR ACCESSIBILITY IN HRM
MINUTES
April 24, 2017**

PRESENT:

Patricia Gates, Chair
Mikiko Terashima
Johanna Stork
Ryan Delehanty
Councillor Waye Mason

REGRETS:

Gerry Post, Vice Chair
Sue Uteck
Kristine Webber
Zainib Almkhtar
Councillor Lisa Blackburn

STAFF:

Darren Young, Project Manager, Corporate Facility Design & Construction
Glen Bannon, Manager of Transit Operations, Halifax Transit
Heather Mackenzie, Diversity & Accessibility Manager, Halifax Public Libraries
Noreen Guptill, Inclusion and Accessibility Specialist, Parks and Recreation
Liam MacSween, Legislative Assistant
Sharon Chase, 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 at
Halifax.ca*

The meeting was called to order at 4:14 p.m. and the committee adjourned at 6:06 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Chair Patricia Gates called the meeting to order at 4:14 p.m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

Roll call was taken.

The meeting began with agenda item 7.3.1 presentation while awaiting the arrival of another committee member to reach quorum.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 27, 2017

MOVED by Councillor Wayne Mason, seconded by Ryan Delehanty

THAT the minutes of February 27, 2017 be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

MOVED by Mikiko Terashima, seconded by Ryan Delehanty

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES- none

5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS- none

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & PRESENTATIONS

7.1 Correspondence- none

7.2 Petitions- none

7.3 Presentations

7.3.1 Glenn Bannon, Manager Transit Operations Access-A-Bus Strategic Review- update and request for feedback

Glenn Bannon, Manager Transit Operations, provided an update to the committee on work taking place with the Access-A-Bus service and noted the following:

- Improving delivery of this service will involve many steps and some changes to processes.
- The supply and demand model needs to be updated as demand changes while ensuring that existing resources are used efficiently.
- Staff plans on upgrading the technology used for booking paratransit buses and are considering business processes training for staff to ensure that the features of the program run effectively.

- Value added mapping was done to highlight opportunities and the new software provides an option for web based booking. This new version should be up and running in October 2017.

The committee discussed how these changes will impact users and address existing concerns of wait times and advance booking challenges.

In response to questions from the committee, Bannon noted the following:

- One of the next steps is to upgrade the buses with mobile data terminals.
- There have also been efforts to explore other options such as the use of dedicated and non-dedicated support from accessible taxis in future.
- Staff is currently looking at a shift from paratransit to conventional transit for some users.
- Travel training for drivers has proven successful in other Canadian jurisdictions. It combines classroom and hands on training with a mentor to familiarize individuals with using conventional transit.

The committee encouraged staff efforts and suggested some resources who could partner and provide mentors: Dalhousie occupational therapy students, Disability Partnership and Independent Living Nova Scotia. Bannon shared a long-term plan of integrated trip delivery with the committee which would involve using trip planning software to leverage all available resources for a user delivering the most efficient route and trip.

Bannon requested feedback from the committee on the topics of service grandfathering and revised eligibility criteria noting that is a sensitive area for existing users. In 2010, it was decided paratransit service would match conventional transit routes. Over time routes have changed and therefore access to service changes. Service grandfathering was implemented. The challenge is that this hinders the sustainability of service delivery.

The committee suggested putting conditions, such as a time frame, on the grandfathering terms. Upcoming provincial accessibility legislation may also impact this. The future goals of dedicated and non-dedicated resources and integrated trip delivery options could be potential solutions. It was agreed that it is difficult to determine the number of people affected other than taking a checkpoint in time for planning purposes. The existing eligibility criteria is recognized as being out of date. There have been many changes and improvements on the features of the conventional fleet of buses to improve accessibility. A review of what is happening in other areas was done. The Toronto Transit Commission uses a clear statement instead of a list of criteria for example. The committee suggested that incorporating the option of travel training when screening for eligibility could be considered.

Glen Bannon concluded his presentation by encouraging feedback on these topics. Committee members should send additional feedback and suggestions to Liam MacSween, Legislative Assistant.

INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD – NONE

9. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

9.1. STAFF

9.1.1 Update- Darren Young, Project Manager Operations Support

Darren Young, Project Manager, Operations Support noted that work continues with the installation of door operators at various locations. Young noted that staff are hoping to develop a Universal Access Policy for municipal buildings and will be taking a formal request to Council on May 9, 2017. Young

advised that staff are working to create an outdoor library at the Dartmouth North Community Centre which will be fully accessible with many great features for the community.

9.1.2 Update- Noreen Guptill, Inclusion and Accessibility Specialist, Parks and Recreation

Noreen Guptill, Inclusion and Accessibility Specialist, noted that Recreation will have 5 inclusion coordinators for HRM day camps this season to encourage greater participation. On June 3, 2017, Guptill advised that there will be an event at the Emera Oval with displays of new recreation equipment and some demonstrations to coincide with Access Awareness Week. Guptill further noted that Paul Tingley will hold a wheelchair basketball demonstration during this time.

Chair Patricia Gates suggested contacting Peter Parsons who could assist in coordinating a Goal Ball demonstration as well.

9.1.3 Update- Heather MacKenzie, Diversity and Accessibility Manager, Halifax Public Libraries

Heather MacKenzie, Diversity and Accessibility Manager, advised that on Friday, April 28, 2017 Halifax Public Libraries will be expanding its offerings to include CELA, Centre for Equitable Library Access, which provides access to the world's largest online library available in many accessible formats. MacKenzie noted that Bookshare will also become part of this expansion which can be accessed through a person's library card and will include braille, home deliveries and books by mail. MacKenzie concluded by commenting that Halifax Public Libraries has partnered with Saint Mary's University to hire a student to help promote this service.

9.1.4 Update- 2017 Accessibility Town Hall Meeting -Liam MacSween, Legislative Assistant

The following was before the committee:

- Draft agenda for the Town Hall Meeting
- Poster template for the Town Hall Meeting
- Draft 2017 AAC Town Hall Survey suggestions

Liam MacSween, Legislative Assistant provided an update regarding the 2017 Town Hall meeting. MacSween advised that CART and ASL services are booked and we have secured an additional 7 accessible parking spaces for the event. Liam MacSween will be meeting to finalize the advertising on April 25, 2017 which will allow for 2 full weeks of promotion. Posters can be sent out to groups or individuals upon request. The committee will want to review the survey and make recommendations and revisions. The timing of this will not have the survey ready for this Town Hall Meeting. There will be comment cards and contact information provided for feedback at the event.

9.2. COMMITTEE MEMBER UPDATES

9.2.1 Taxi & Limousine Liaison Group – Gerry Post

No update was given as Gerry Post had provided regrets for the meeting.

10. ADDED ITEMS- none

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – June 19, 2017 4:00 p.m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

Following the Town Hall on May 15, 2017, the meeting for May 27, 2017 will be cancelled.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:06 p.m.

INFORMATION ITEMS- NONE

Sharon Chase
Legislative Support