

MINUTES

ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**April 15, 2019 - 12:30pm- Glenyre Room 1,
Paul Reynolds Community Centre**

Present: Taylor Stocks, Chair
Natalie Godden, Manager of Family & Leisure Services
Sherry Mercer, Program Coordinator, Inclusive Services
Margaret Tibbo, Citizen Rep
Dave Saunders, Citizen Rep
Debbie Ryan, CNIB
Trevor Freeborn, CODNL
Sarah White, Autism Society
Kim Pratt-Baker, Hard of Hearing Association
Donna Power – Metrobus, Accessible Transit
Megan McGie – Association for the Deaf
Annette Powell – CHANNAL
Joby Flemming - Empower
Maureen Harvey – Legislative Assistant

Also present for a portion of the meeting was Garrett Donaher, Manager of Transportation.

CALL TO ORDER AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion

Moved- Debbie Ryan, Seconded- Donna Power

The agenda be adopted as presented.

CARRIED UNANANIMOUSLY

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Motion

Moved – Margaret Tibbo; Seconded -Debbie Ryan

**That the minutes of the IAC meeting held on February 15, 2019
be adopted as tabled.**

CARRIED UNANANIMOUSLY**DELEGATION**

Ms. Sarah White of the Autism Society was welcomed to the meeting and proceeded to deliver information with respect to autism programs that are available.

ASNL offers a variety of programs and services for individuals with ASD and their families.

Some of the programs include:

- Social Learning Opportunities
 - Social Group
 - Sibling Workshop
- Pre-Employment and Career Services
 - Transitions – aimed to identify strengths and interest of participants to better prepare them for employment and community involvement beyond high school
 - Employment Works Canada (EWC) – offers 12 weeks of employment readiness
 - STEP (Students Transitioning into Employment Program) – targeted career development activities and exploration.
 - Ready, Willing and Able – designed to increase the labour force participation of people with an intellectual disability or Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- Life Skills Development
 - Adult Leisure – safe and supportive environments to discover new interests and socialize with peers
- Community Inclusion
 - Swimming Lessons
 - Rock Climbing
 - Music Therapy
 - Individual Art Therapy
 - Video Game Creation Classes
 - Family Events – are being added

- Adult Meetups – will benefit those who require support when accessing community activities.

Ms. White concluded by reporting that the Provincial Government is currently developing an Autism Action Plan. She invited those with questions or comments to connect with her.

The Committee thanked her for the information.

BUSINESS ARISING

Pay by Phone Parking System – Frequently Asked Questions

The Committee reviewed a document containing frequently asked questions in relation to the City's Paid Parking Management Strategy.

In June 2018 the City introduced a pay-by-phone only service to control 136 on street parking spaces on Harbour Drive. PayByPhone will continue to be introduced in new areas in the future. On Harbour Drive no other payment method is currently accepted. This is a one year pilot project that will be assessed to see if PayByPhone in isolation is a viable option for parking areas. This project is part of a long-term Paid Parking Management Strategy. The strategy outlines a comprehensive overview of the City's existing paid parking system and makes 57 recommendations. The full strategy is available online.

Mr. Garrett Donaher was in attendance and responded to questions and concerns. The following summarizes comments made by the committee:

- People are avoiding downtown because of parking issues and the anxiety it creates for some.
- The Battery area is also an area of concern for parking.
- A lot of people with English as second language also have concerns.
- People who do not own credit cards feel they will not be able to access parking.
- Some of the signs are high and, combined with text size, can be difficult for people with vision impairment.
- Seniors, particularly those without smartphones, will have challenges.

Mr. Donaher responded with the following comments:

- Other options are being considered over the long term. As an example, an RFP is being issued today for new parking meter equipment which will include standard meters and kiosks (pay stations).
- While the new meters will not be cash based, they will accommodate the City's park card. Efforts are being made to make the Metrobus Cards compatible with the new equipment.
- Consideration is being given to being able to purchase and/or top up park cards online.
- It is hoped that some new equipment will be in place this fall.
- The City has incurred nearly \$3 million in vandalism and lost revenue over the last few years. Additionally the current model of meters is no longer available compounding the need for new equipment.
- The City is exploring the use of debit cards.
- The City is trying to identify mechanisms that mitigate barriers.
- In terms of lowering signage, consideration must be given to the risk of personal injury.
- Increasing the size of text on signs is a challenge from a legal and practical point of view.
- Consideration is being given to supplementary signage to support people once parking spaces have been secured.
- The City is attempting to rectify problems with number of accessible spaces in the downtown as well as the condition of curb ramps at these spaces.

Mr. Donaher was thanked for providing information. He encouraged the continued use of emails to submit feedback as the strategy unfolds.

Information Note dated April 1, 2019 re: Bowring Park Accessible Parking

Throughout 2017/2018 the City of St. John's has been receiving requests to incorporate accessible parking spaces at Bowring Park. Initially, Service NL requested the placement of accessible parking signage in the large gravel parking lot. As these lots are not accessible the City designated accessible parking on Squires Avenue. Some of these spaces are not accessible to all users due to curb cuts or inability to open the back door for a ramp. To ensure full accessibility the parking lot near the maintenance building will have a portion paved to create accessible parking spaces. These new spaces will be linked to the main park road by a hard surface

pathway to ensure a complete travel path from parking to park amenities. This new parking area will allow for 10 accessible parking spaces as we increase accessibility for individuals with vision loss, or those who have difficulty walking/rolling long distances. This will also provide choice to residents and increase overall accessible entry to the park.

It was reported that construction was approved by Council during the past week. It was noted it will be one of the first projects to commence once the asphalt plants open.

The Committee was also referred to the recent press release from Government which identified amendments to the Accessible Parking Regulations, previously known as the Designated Mobility Impaired Parking Regulations. These changes will support enforcement and compliance regarding issues such as signage and the size of accessible parking spaces. It has also increased the cost of fines from a \$100-\$400 range to a range of \$400 to \$700.

Mr. Donaher also informed the Committee of plans to improve parking at Churchill Square and to improve the painting of accessible parking spaces throughout the City.

Information Note dated March 6, 2019 re: Inclusive Organization Working Group

The Committee considered the above-noted information note which stated that this working group met in February 2019 and focused mainly on a review of the partnership between the City of St. John's and Inclusion NL. Once the Businesses OPEN Partnership Report being updated by Inclusion NL is available it will be circulated to the Committee.

Information Note dated March 22, 2019 re: Planning and Conducting Inclusive and Accessible Meetings

In a previous decision note resources and collaboratives that the City has in place to support inclusion and diversity were outlined. To that end a resource document has been prepared for use by City employees. This type of document would be helpful for various organizations.

The Committee reviewed the draft document and brought forward the following recommendation.

It was agreed that Inclusion Advisory Committee formulate a small working group to review the City of St. John's Planning and Conducting Inclusive and Accessible Meetings resource and make necessary changes to create a resource - a resource that will promote the planning and execution of accessible meetings. This document will then be shared with the community by Inclusion Advisory Committee members.

Debbie Ryan indicated her interest in serving on this working group. Other members who are interested were requested to submit their name to Sherry Mercer.

Information Note dated March 22, 2019 re: Creating Accessible Documents

As noted in a previous decision note, the city outlined the resources and collaboratives in place to support inclusion and diversity, which includes the accessibility of documents. To help ensure documents such as forms and emails are accessible, a resource document entitled "How to Create Accessible Documents" has been developed to supplement the Clear Print Guidelines. Staff of the City of St. John's will be informed about the process of creating accessible documents and encouraged to follow it.

The Committee was advised that efforts are being made to identify improvements through software enhancements where it is not currently available. Debbie Ryan indicated she has a number of documents on Microsoft and ADOBE about accessibility enhancements. These programs have an accessibility component. She is willing to share with the Committee.

Information Note dated March 25, 2019 re: Committee Engagement for Public Projects

In keeping with existing resources and collaboratives, the Committee reviewed a flow chart which maps out various forms by which the Committee can engage on large and pilot projects.

The Committee also indicated it would like to get updates on projects such as the paratransit processes and/or changes that will impact community groups.

Mr. Donaher agreed to provide the committee with details on the proposed roundabout for Allandale Road

Arising from discussion was the Committee's desire to be consulted on all City projects that impact the inclusive community. Particular mention was made with respect to Rawlins Cross Pilot Project for which feedback is currently being sought.

Recommendation

Moved – Debbie Ryan; Seconded – Joby Flemming

Given the potential impact of the Rawlins Cross Pilot Project, particularly as it relates to pedestrian traffic flow and safety, the Committee requests consultation prior to final design and implementation.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

New Business

Resignation of Annette Powell

Ms. Powell indicated that given the expansion of her organization and the resulting demands she is no longer to be able to serve on the Committee. She will be recommending a replacement in due course. Annette was thanked for her past contribution and encouraged to continue her involvement in an indirect way.

Metrobus Study

Donna Power indicated her surprise that there was limited uptake on feedback for the Metrobus Study. Members were encouraged to submit their comments. The following was highlighted:

- There will likely be more feedback when individuals are required to go for an assessment.

- Consideration ought to be given to the assessment location so as to mitigate barriers for people who have to attend.
- Consideration ought to be given for an appeal process.

Donna thanked the group and advised these suggestions will be put forward.

Next Meeting

The next meeting date, time and location to be determined.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:08 p.m.

Taylor Stocks
Chairperson