

Accessibility Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 5, 2024, 9:30-10:30am

The Sunset Community

140 Sunset Lane

Pugwash, NS, B0K 1L0

Present: Stephanie Keilhack (Chair), Amanda Purdy (Vice-Chair), Maggie Pitts, Catherine Aquino Russell, Helen Sims, David MacEwan, Melanie Prendergast (Recording Secretary)

Regrets: MacKenzie Aitken, Darrell Fagan

Guests: Adam Fraser, Hub Coordinator, Department of Community Services
Councillor Jennifer Houghtaling
Dean Pounder, Sunset Community
Celina Kinnear, Nova Scotia Early Childhood Development Intervention Services
Christie Blackie, Administrative Assistant, Village of Pugwash

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am.

2. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as circulated.

3. Approval of Minutes

September 4, 2024 minutes were approved as circulated.

October's meeting was cancelled due to a quorum not being met.

4. Review of Action Items

Action Items were reviewed and updated (Page 3).

5. New Business

- a) Department of Community Services (DCS) Guest Adam Fraser.

Adam Fraser is the Regional Hub Coordinator for the northern region. He attended the meeting to address questions or concerns that the Committee has regarding the Human Rights Remedy and its impact on residents and communities.

The following questions were asked:

- **Where has the move into community for people with disabilities worked well and not well?**

It was a challenge in Ontario and British Columbia because they moved people quickly into home share situations and did not prepare themselves for the risks and challenges this would cause such as social isolation for these individuals. It has been a success in New Zealand and Australia. The good part is that we have time in Nova Scotia to make sure all risks are managed. The best support for individuals is their community to assist them in not becoming isolated.

- **What about transportation?**

Once resources can be pooled, missing coordination of information can be determined to assess transportation needs. Individuals will have set funding, but to determine what that will be, they will be asked the three following basic questions:

- 1) Where do I want to live?
- 2) Who do I want to live with?
- 3) Who will support me?

- **There is the provincial Service Evolution Fund available right now, can it go towards transportation?**

The grant will not fund a vehicle or a retrofit. It is geared towards existing businesses transforming how they provide their services, it depends on community.

- **Are there any statistics/data to help with determining how many vehicles are required (For Cumberland County Transportation Society), especially when having to plan a year ahead? There are 23 others in the province who are in a similar situation, and it is important for all to be informed.**

Someone from DCS could do a presentation to those 23 people.

- **Can DCS present to Council to make them aware of the situation?**

They would be happy to speak to Council after provincial election.

- **We are working on revising the Accessibility Plan, what can we put in our transportation section?**

- Open opportunities for service providers
- Be open to creative solutions

- Develop connections with e.g. developers to increase Remedy awareness, acceptance, and capacity
- Clear mention of the Remedy and the fact that it's court-ordered
- A resources list (e.g. funding sources for businesses)
- Include housing - work with landlords and developers

- **Additional comments/info:**

- The Municipality needs to be aware of how much work needs to be done.
- We need to determine who we are connected to that can help us (small businesses for example).
- Social security has a policy rate of \$150/month/individual for transportation (not nearly enough and there does not seem to be changes to come with that).
- There is a disproportionate population of people with disabilities living in Oxford.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:30am followed by a tour of the facility.

| <u>Action Item</u> | <u>Meeting Date</u> | <u>Responsibility</u> | <u>Status</u> |
|--|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| 1. Coordinate sending invitation and agenda to Public two weeks prior to meetings. | March 6, 2024 | Stephanie | Ongoing |
| 2. Discuss Transportation at next meeting and save Employment for last. | July 3, 2024 | Stephanie | In Progress |
| 3. Connect with different Municipalities re. what they do for accessible Information and Communications. | July 3, 2024 | Stephanie | In Progress |
| 4. Connect with Department of Community Services to inquire about their biggest communication barriers. | July 3, 2024 | Stephanie | In Progress |
| 5. Add records of frequent Municipal Public Communications to the "Goods and Services" Section. Update: Deferred until January 2025 meeting. | Oct 8, 2024 | Stephanie | In Progress |
| 6. Email organizations to inquire what would work well for the Access Awareness week 2025. | July 3, 2024 | Stephanie | In Progress |
| 7. Have conversation with province as to how often funding for vehicles can be requested and for how much. | Sept. 2024 | Helen | In Progress |
| 8. Inquire if Disability Support Program can meet with committees and communities across the province to educate everyone on this transition. | Sept. 2024 | Stephanie, Amanda | Complete |

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| 9. Explore possibility of larger grants from the Municipality for Cumberland County Transportation Services to assist with costs of new vehicles and additional staffing. | Fall 2024 | Committee | In Progress |
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