

ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

September 7, 2023

Location: Video Conference

Present: Warden Amanda Mombourquette, Allison Martell, Meghan Hayter, Shannon Mury, Kelly Hibbert, Esther McDonnell, Ashley Lavandier, Natalie Groom, Jessica MacDougall

Absent: Councilor Mike Diggdon & Chantal Boudreau

Quorum Present – Yes

Warden Amanda Mombourquette called the meeting to order at 4:19 pm

Items Added to the Agenda (Approval of Agenda):

- No Items added to September 7, 2023.

*Moved by Ashley Lavandier, seconded by Shelly Dorey, that the agenda be approved as circulated. **Motion carried.***

Review of Minutes Re: June 1, 2023:

No errors or omissions noted for the June 1, 2023 Minutes.

*Moved by Ashley Lavandier, seconded by Jessica MacDougall that the minutes be approved as presented. **Motion carried.***

Pocket Talkers

- A discussion was held on the use of Pocket Talkers. A pocket talker is a personal amplifying device, consisting of a headset and small box with a microphone on it, which is wired to the headset.
- Jessica MacDougall stated that they use them in her line of work, but it is usually in more of a one-on-one situation with clients who have hearing impairments. She said that there could be concerns about using them in a larger setting such as council chambers, as they could pick up multiple sources of noise.
- Warden Mombourquette confirmed that the Municipality is currently working with Telile to improve the current sound issues that they experience.
- Warden Mombourquette will follow up with the resident who brought forward the discussion on Pocket Talkers.
- Jessica MacDougall mentioned that NS Hearing and Speech may be a good resource for hearing impairment solutions.

Acting Priorities on Plan

- The municipality continues to work towards their Rick Hansen certification goals, with a goal set of December 31, 2023, as the codes will run out by year end.
- County has done work on the Library.
- Village – Meghan Hayter said that the main Village Office space will require extensive plans to meet accessibility needs. The Village continues to focus on the Community Hub building currently.

Accessibility Week Discussion

- It was agreed that planning should start earlier for the 2024 Accessibility Week.
- Warden Mombourquette stated that she had received some concerns that we had focused on the “Move It” events and had hoped that we would have time set aside to hear accessibility concerns.
- Discussion on having two separate events, another “Move It” event, as well as a second town hall where people could bring their accessibility concerns forward.
- Everyone stated how pleased they were with the award ceremony and agreed that it would be great to be able to hold this ceremony in Richmond County in the upcoming years.
- Kelly Hibbert mentioned that 10 AM in the morning might not be the best time of day to hold events such as the flag raising and award ceremony. Many people are working during this time of day and may not be able to attend. We may have to consider a time change to get more people in attendance at these events.
- Discussion was held regarding making the “Move It” events more visible, i.e., additional flags/banners, designated colours. Meghan Hayter said the Village had received its second flag, so that will be helpful in promoting the event within the Village.

Business Survey

- A business survey was discussed, and everyone agreed that this is an important accessibility component. Could possibly be a tie in with Accessibility Week. Warden Mombourquette will follow up with the Chamber of Commerce to see if they will be able and willing to assist with the business survey.

Websites

- The Municipality’s website has gone through a major upgrade, adding more accessibility features to the website. Allison Martell asked who had completed the upgrades for the Municipality. Shannon Mury that is had been done through their agreement with AMANS(Association of Municipal Administrators Nova Scotia), which they pay a yearly fee.

Accessibility Plans

- Discussion on where we are regarding the Accessibility Plans for the Municipality and the Village. The general consensus was that we need to decide what our priorities are going to be at this point. It was agreed that having a face-to-face meeting is a great way to refresh ourselves on the Accessibility Plans.
- Discussion followed re: date and time, and it was decided that there would be an in-person meeting on Thursday October 12, 2023, at the 4:15 pm time slot. Location to be

determined in the case that county chambers is not available. Shannon Mury said that she will check for either the hospitality room or the board room at Richmond Arena to see if either are available.

Update on Action Items list

- Not much to report, the Village was able to mark the sidewalk policy change as completed as it was approved in June 2023. Allison Martell will share the plan with Shannon Mury

Committee Memberships

- Ongoing discussion on how to attract memberships.
- Natalie Groom asked about social media outreach. Warden Mombourquette confirmed that we do not do regular social media updates. Discussion that many people with accessibility issues rely on social media for their information. Agreed we should put another advertisement on social media.
- Another suggestion was that given was doing a presentation at the drop-in center at the Lions Hall in St. Peter's. Different organizations have held "We Care Days" for the people who use the drop-in centre.

General Points of Discussion prior to adjournment

- Allison Martell mentioned the accessibility mats that were in place at Point Michaud Beach, they were well received, and perhaps we could recognize Jennifer Mombourquette as an Accessibility Champion
- Village was happy to report that they had received funding for two adult change tables.
- Allison Martell mentioned that the Village had been having some accessibility concerns after significant rain events, with washouts and large amounts of gravel on sidewalks, stated it is important to contact Department of Public works to put in tickets if we see areas of concern that can cause accessibility issues.
- Allison Martell shared a "feel good" story about an "accessible prom."
- Esther McDonnell mentioned that she and Meghan will be attending the Association of Nova Scotia Villages Annual General Meeting later in September, and they will ask other Villages how they are facing accessibility. They will bring back any information from the AGM and will share it with our committee.

Next meeting

- Our next meeting will be an in-person meeting on Thursday October 12, 2023. The location will be either Council Chambers or Richmond Arena Hospitality Room or Board Room. Time of meeting will be 4:15 PM

Adjournment:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:01 pm, by Warden Amanda Mombourquette.