

## **MINUTES**

### **ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**July 17, 2019: 12 - 1:30pm - Gleneyre Room 1**

**Paul Reynolds Community Centre**

**Present:** Natalie Godden, Manager of Family & Leisure Services  
Sherry Mercer, Program Coordinator, Inclusive Services  
Hope Jamieson, Councillor Ward 2  
Dave Saunders, Citizen Rep  
Trevor Freeborn, Coalition of Persons with Disabilities NL  
Donna Power – Metrobus, Accessible Transit  
Hope Colbourne – NL Association for Community Living  
Megan McGie – Association for the Deaf  
Kimberly Yetman Dawson – Empower  
Kathy Hawkins - Empower  
Tonya Knopp – Facility Engineering Manager  
Grant Genova – Universal Design Network  
Tilak Chawan – Association for New Canadians  
Sarah White – Autism Society  
Tess Hemeon – Autism Society

#### **CALL TO ORDER AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

##### **Motion**

**Moved – Kimberly Yetman Dawson, Seconded- Donna Power**

**The agenda be adopted as presented.**

**CARRIED UNANANIMOUSLY**

#### **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

##### **Motion**

**Moved – Donna Power; Seconded – Trevor Freeborn**

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

**CARRIED UNANANIMOUSLY**

## DELEGATION

The City's Manager of Facility Engineering was welcomed to the meeting and presented an update with respect to the Public Engagement sessions of the proposed location for the replacement of the H.G.R. Mews Community Centre.

Public are invited to one of two engagement sessions to provide comments and feedback on a new proposed site location on July 30, 2019, from 10 a.m. to noon or from 6 to 8 p.m. at the H.G.R. Mews Community Centre. Staff will be available to talk about the potential location for the centre and public are invited to share their opinions and concerns.

Proposed new site will be in the current location of soccer field in Mundy Pond Park off Blacker Avenue. A new soccer field will be constructed at Ayres Athletic to replace it.

Canadian Tire Jump Start is donating 1.2 million dollars for a fully accessible playground and Mundy Pond Park has been identified as the location. The committee discussed the playground would be a great amenity for the area.

Mundy Pond Park will be a nice spot for families to come and enjoy all the amenities: swimming, skatepark, playground, walking trail, etc.

The entrance way to Mundy Pond Park will be widened with curb cuts and sidewalk and paved as well as the parking lot.

Comments from the Public Engagement Sessions will be collated and will then be presented to Council hopefully by the middle of August.

Members were encouraged to submit their comments. The following was highlighted:

- It was proposed that we have a working group for the new building to brainstorm new ideas and approaches.
- Need to take what we have learned from other buildings and use for future builds. The Manager of Facility Engineering noted that they would be using the Paul Reynold's Community Centre Post-Build Analysis conducted by the Universal Design Working Group and Inclusion Advisory Committee to help guide future builds.
- The application process needs to respond to accessibility.

- Need to ask questions like, “How is the design going to help accessibility?”

## **PRESENTATION**

Ms. Kimberley Yetman Dawson from Empower was welcomed to the meeting and proceeded to deliver information on Empower.

Empower offers a variety of programs and services for individuals with disabilities. They have an internship program and over 100 volunteers.

Some of the programs include:

- Advocacy Skills
  - To support consumers as they navigate different systems and advocate for themselves.
- Full Steam Ahead (Career Development)
  - An employment and career exploration program for people with disabilities.
- Community Access Program (CAP)
  - Fully accessible public internet site that anyone can use free of charge.
- Adaptive Technology
  - Provides resources and training for technology options that allow people to overcome barriers they face when using computers and other technology.
- Peer Support Program
  - Provides opportunities for people to share their life experiences and what they have learned.
- Volunteer Services
  - Helps people with disabilities identify their goals and find volunteer opportunities that work best for them.

- IL Internship Program
  - Provides an opportunity for people with disabilities to be involved in their communities and to increase awareness and skills of independent living.
  - Provides employment opportunities for individuals and supports them in overcoming barriers, developing care related knowledge, weighing out risks and gaining employment skills.

Kimberly also shared a pamphlet on “Disability Etiquette.” When someone doesn’t know how to support a person with a disability, they should ask them how they want to be assisted. The pamphlet is a good tool on how to support people with different disabilities.

**PRESENTATION: INCLUSION NL - BUSINESSES OPEN PILOT PROJECT**

Ms. Kathy Hawkins with Inclusion NL was welcomed to the meeting and proceeded to deliver information on Businesses Open Pilot Project with the City of St. John’s.

Inclusion NL helps to provide employers with supports and services to have inclusion wherever possible.

- Employers will be provided with direction and information to help create more inclusive workplaces and work environments.
- Through inclusionNL.ca they provide a host of information to build inclusion in the workplace.

Inclusion NL partnered with the City in 2017 and conducted a “mystery shopping experience” at the Mews Centre, Access Centre, St. John’s Housing, Humane Services, Summer HR Recruitment to evaluate for accessibility and inclusion.

In 2018 they continued with their partnership with the City for Dolphin Mentoring Day which provided unique opportunities for 5 mentees to spend a working day with a mentor.

In 2019 they did a follow up evaluation of the review they did in 2017 and looked at the following:

- Humane Services Building
  - Improvements completed to exterior/outside and positive change in practice regarding entrance door.
- Dog Runs throughout the City
  - The entrance wasn't wide enough for person's with disabilities to enter.
- Parks – Bowring and Bannerman
  - New blue zone parking at West Entrance to Bowring Park
  - Terrain in Bannerman Park at the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage terrain was levelled for the NL Folk Festival.
- Access St. John's Centre
  - New reception desk
  - Computer station more easily accessible
  - Improved intake process
  - Need for more information regarding accessibility in and around St. John's. Working with Inclusion NL to develop App.

The Committee thanked the speakers for their information.

## BUSINESS ARISING

### **Information Note dated May 27, 2019 re: Key2Access Accessible Pedestrian Signal Location**

Council approved \$25,000 for this project and have recently identified locations for the beacons with CNIB and input from this committee. The technology can be moved to areas of highest need.

As part of the pilot project a smart phone app will be used instead of having to reach for the walk button. CNIB has a "Phone It Forward" program that will provide smart phones to individuals who cannot afford them. Fobs are also available; the City has purchased 20 as part of the pilot project and they will be managed by CNIB.

## **Information Note dated July 10, 2019 re: Northern Youth Abroad**

The City of St. John's is a part of the Northern Youth Abroad program. This is a 10-month program that provides participants with a 5-week placement to complete volunteer work that aligns with their career choices. Gives youth the opportunity to go abroad to experience different cultures. The City currently has a youth from abroad in our Children and Youth Programs for 5-weeks.

## **Washrooms – Verbal Update**

The Committee discussed that there is a lot of social media on the labelling of public washrooms.

The City wherever possible tries to provide public washrooms for male, female, family and gender neutral. The City has provided gender neutral washrooms where possible for the past 5 years.

## **Recommendation**

**Moved - Hope; Seconded – Tess**

**The Committee feels we should continue to provide male, female and general neutral public washrooms, and that people can identify with the washroom they choose to use.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

## **Paratransit Update**

The GoBus Manager advised that Phase 2 of the Review has been completed. They looked at how to optimize services while balancing the need to ensure sustainability of the system.

They are looking at ways to provide services to non-dense areas and providing passes to low income earners and high school students.

Metrobus is currently reviewing the RFP to determine GoBus eligibility which has been awarded pending contract finalization.

Looking at having a 3- person panel for the appeal process that would be professionals from the disability area: Donna Power (Metrobus), a medical person and a Disability Committee person. Members of the panel may change depending on the needs of the individual.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **New Curb and Sidewalk**

The City has made changes to the sidewalks and curbs on Water Street. They are also in the process of making these changes on Kings Bridge Road.

As part of the Kings Bridge Road construction, brick pavers are being removed and replaced with concrete sidewalks. The Committee was asked which option they felt provided the most appropriate level of accessibility

**The Committee's consensus is to remove the brick pavers from the sidewalks as they want to be a safe City that is accessible to all.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

The following comments were noted by members:

- Are the designers of the sidewalks taking into account the colour of the sidewalks? Wayfinding could help direct people towards businesses or intersections for example.
- Bus stops are not accessible in all areas. As sidewalks are being upgraded, it is a good time to put in accessible sidewalks. Committee Staff Liaison to check with City Managers to see if there is a mandate to have all new sidewalks accessible.

### **Recommendation**

**Moved - Trevor; Seconded – Grant**

**The Committee put into motion to utilize the colour contrasted sidewalks as a way finding opportunity to indicate the following:**

- **Business Entrances**
- **Intersections**
- **Fire Hydrants**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**NEXT MEETING**

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

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

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Kimberly Yetman Dawson  
Chairperson