

Cape Breton Regional Municipality

**Accessibility Advisory Committee
Meeting**

**Thursday,
January 20, 2022
4:30 p.m.
Via Videoconference**

The Chair, Councillor Cyril MacDonald called the meeting to order.

Present: Councillor Cyril MacDonald, Chair
Councillor Steve Gillespie
Citizen Louise Gillis
Citizen Sarah MacPherson
Citizen Linda Murray

Staff: Kirk Durning, CBRM Accessibility Coordinator and
Manager of Recreation
Deborah Campbell Ryan, Municipal Clerk
Sharon MacSween, Recording Secretary

Absent: Citizen Marcie Shwery-Stanley (Regrets)
Citizen Elaine Swartz (Regrets)
Citizen Veronica Merryfield

Summary of Decisions

Roll Call

1. Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve of the Accessibility Advisory Committee Minutes as amended for:

- October 19th, 2021

Carried.

3. Business Arising: October 19, 2021:

3.1 Update on RFP/Awarding of Contract - CBRM Accessibility Plan:

Four (4) RFP response submissions were received for the Accessibility Plan and the RFP was awarded to the reachAbility Association.

For information only.

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the January 20, 2022 Accessibility Advisory Committee agenda as circulated. **Carried.**

4. CBRM – reachAbility Municipal Accessibility Plan

A presentation was provided by reachAbility Association as an introduction to the process for the CBRM Accessibility Plan “Moving Accessibility Forward”.

Summary of Decisions (Cont'd)

5. Roundtable

A roundtable discussion took place following the presentation by reachAbility.

For information only.

6. Citizen Vacancies – Update:

It was **agreed** by Committee consensus to defer the decision of filling the vacancy of the 9th Committee Member until a later time.

It was **agreed** to defer nominations for a Vice Chair until a future meeting.

Adjournment

Roll Call

1. Approval of Minutes:

Suggested amendments to the October 19, 2021 draft Minutes were discussed.

Motion:

Moved by Councillor Gillespie, seconded by Citizen Louise Gillis, approval of the Accessibility Advisory Committee Minutes as amended:

➤ October 19th, 2021

Motion Carried.

3. Business Arising: October 19, 2021:

3.1 Update on RFP/Awarding of Contract - CBRM Accessibility Plan:

Kirk Durning, CBRM Accessibility Coordinator, advised that four (4) submissions were received in response to the RFP for the Accessibility Plan. He advised that the submissions were reviewed and scored by the Committee Chair, Councillor Cyril MacDonald, Paul Burt and himself. It was anticipated that the Vice Chair was to participate in the process, however he was unable to do so. Through the scoring process, it was unanimously decided to award the RFP to the reachAbility Association.

For information only.

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion:

Moved by Citizen Linda Murray, seconded by Councillor Gillespie, approval of the January 20, 2022 Accessibility Advisory Committee agenda as circulated.

Motion Carried.

4. CBRM – reachAbility Municipal Accessibility Plan:

Jessica Ward, Project & Program Manager and Primary CBRM contact, provided background information on reachAbility Association as an introduction to the process for the CBRM Accessibility Plan “Moving Accessibility Forward”. Highlights included:

- Past Projects
- Project Team: Jessica Ward and Krista O’Connor
- Our Lens:
 - provincial and federal legislation, Rick Hansen Accessibility standards, and Universal Design to evaluate:
 - accessibility
 - inclusion; and
 - inform on recommendations
- Standards and Benchmarks:
 - Goods and Services
 - Built Environment
 - Awareness
 - Information and Communication
 - Transportation
 - Employment
 - Education
- Cape Breton Regional Municipal Moving Accessibility Forward
- Environment Scans:
 - Capital Assets / Buildings
 - Parks, Playgrounds and Trails
 - Sidewalks, Public Spaces, Libraries, etc.

Continued...

CBRM – reachAbility Municipal Accessibility Plan (Cont’d):

- Engagement Strategy
 - Community Consultation
 - Surveying
 - Mapping
- The Plan including timeline
- Information for consideration when developing CBRM Statement of Commitment – Town of Kentville and Lunenburg County examples were provided and reviewed:
 - ensuring equal access and participation for all people, regardless of their abilities
 - treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence
 - meeting the needs of people who face accessibility barriers
 - identifying, removing, and preventing these barriers by meeting the requirements of Nova Scotia’s *Accessibility Act*
- Definitions:
 - Inclusion
 - Accessibility
 - Barrier-Free

5. Roundtable

Following the presentation, the Chair opened the floor for discussion.

It was **agreed** to relax the speaking time rules of order to allow discussion in 2-minute intervals without restrictions.

The following was then discussed:

- Looking beyond physical barriers
- Identifying barriers and key issues that interfere with daily routines
- Colours and transitions, inside or outside buildings including textile considerations for those with sight loss
- ASL (American Sign Language) interpreter

Continued...

Roundtable (Cont'd):

- Short term changes
- Equal access for all
- Physical and cognitive disability considerations (i.e. ADHD, Alzheimer's)
- Benchmarks and opportunities will guide the Plan (which should be a living document)
- Service animals (including birds, gold fish)
- Health care issues
- Priorities
- The Plan is for CBRM-owned buildings and spaces (including trails and parks) and not for those privately or Provincially/Federally owned
- Affordability and availability of services for users (i.e. buses)

Ms. Ward advised that reachAbility will be in CBRM between February 22 to 25th to visit as many places as possible, including downtowns and rural areas. They will also be contacting stakeholder groups with expertise, as well as individuals in the community. Meetings in the community will be set up during these dates and will follow COVID-19 rules.

Chair, Councillor Cyril MacDonald, thanked Ms. Ward for the presentation and information and the discussion with the Committee.

6. Citizen Vacancies – Update:

Deborah Campbell Ryan, Municipal Clerk, reviewed her Memo included in the agenda regarding the two Citizen vacancies. She advised that the Council passed a motion to not fill the vacancy created when Jenny-Rachel Lind moved to Newfoundland, and to leave the Committee composition at 9 members. She also advised that Douglas Foster recently resigned from the Accessibility Advisory Committee and his resignation was brought to the Nominating Committee at their January 17, 2022 meeting with a recommendation to not fill the vacancy and that the composition of the committee be eight (8) members. At that meeting, the

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Citizen Vacancies – Update (Cont’d):

Nominating Committee, passed a motion to ask the Accessibility Advisory Committee for their input on whether the second vacancy should be filled. It was pointed out that Mr. Foster was the Vice-Chair of the Committee and that position is now vacant.

Discussion took place which included requirements under the *Act*, quorum, representation, and the Vice-Chair position, and process to fill a vacancy.

It was **agreed** by Committee consensus to defer the decision of filling the vacancy (re: the 9th Committee Member) until a later time.

It was **agreed** to defer nominations for a Vice Chair until a future meeting.

Adjournment at 6:26 p.m.

Councillor Cyril MacDonald
Chair

/slm

Deborah Campbell Ryan
Municipal Clerk