



Minutes

Of a Meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee Of the City of Kenora Thursday, September 7th, 2023 – City Hall/Virtual 4:00p.m.

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**With:** Chad English (v) Corrie Neufeld (v) Mary Bawden Heather Bird

**Staff:** Danica Farion – Executive Assistant

**Regrets:** C. Kelsie Van Belleghem Mauren Wasacase

### 1. Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement

Chad called the meeting to order at 4:10pm and Mary Bawden delivered the land acknowledgement.

Chad welcomed everyone back from the summer pause and made note that there has been a lot of activity in the community throughout the summer and is looking forward to all those changes and expansions.

### 2. Confirmation of Previous Minutes

**Moved By Mary Bawden Seconded by Heather Bird, and Carried –**  
That the Minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting held June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, be confirmed as written and filed.

### 3. Beyond Minimum Letter Update / Active Transportation Study

The Staff Resource shared that with the changes in staff within the Building and Planning department, she has confirmed that the Beyond Minimum letter is still accompanying building permit applications as well as development conversations.

She noted as well that the Active Transportation Study consultant is looking to engage with this committee, and she will forward information as it becomes available.

#### 4. Wishlist

The staff resource reiterated that it is important for this Committee to be bringing areas of concern or areas that may require improvement forward. As members have a view on the community that City staff may not, their assistance in this is important. The staff resource will keep a list of all items brought forward, they will be considered during capital work planning and grant funding opportunities.

Discussions about the following being added to the list:

- Doorknobs to levers – particularly at City Hall
- Corrie's email list (copied here):
  - > A wheelchair accessible taxi. Maybe it could be part of the Taxi license in Kenora. Or the city could purchase 1 and co-ot could manage it.
  - > That the pool isn't always accessible. It could also use adult change room with an adult change bed.
  - > That the street corners in the core area are maintained. The ones on Matheson and first need some work done for the walkers cannot articulate the wheelchair and walkers.
  - > If the pool is not open during summertime then Keewatin beach should become more accessible for people in wheelchairs. The Moby Matt is not always clean and doesn't go far enough out. Maybe find out if a Lyft can be built there.
  - > The sidewalks that have slanted driveway access needs to be changed. People in wheelchairs and motorized wheelchairs have a tendency flipping over on the slide the driveway.
  - > The accessibility washrooms in Kenora or not accessibility friendly need to revisit this (not big enough for chairs, ex. Pavilion)
  - > All businesses should have accessibility especially in the downtown core including the store themselves
- Discussions around the curb stops and ramps around new builds such as the KDSB property for seniors in Lakeside not being adequate
- In depth conversations about accessible toilets being too low, and they require grab bars on both sides; most power chairs are 22-24 inches and most accessible stalls don't allow for that size of a chair
- The ramp at the new McLeod Park appears to be too steep; right now the slope of the ramp is dangerous and extremely difficult to utilize
- A member made note that there were woodchips put in at the new parks as well, stating that although it is more economical to utilize woodchips, the City needs to consider the impacts meeting minimum standards has on those with accessibility needs. The most economical solution is not always the best solution for the community.

The Chair has requested a list of all the projects/builds/developments that occurred over the summer and a list of those that will be underway within the next few months. He reiterated the Committee's mandate, specifically:

- Advise Council on all accessibility and inclusion related issues within the City of Kenora including the review of site plans relating to identified buildings within the municipality;
- Advocate for the elimination of barriers including physical, attitudinal and social for citizens with disabilities;

The committee is requesting better communication between City Staff and the AAC to ensure these mandates are being followed. The Chair recommended that Council, Staff, and members of this Committee should all read the Independent 4<sup>th</sup> Review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (Interim Report March 1, 2023).

There was discussion about why residents in our community with accessibility needs feel isolated, when the path of least resistance is to save money, it sends the message that those with accessibility issues are not as valued as other members of the community. The committee would like to see the City identify areas where they are falling short on accessibility and inclusion and shift the attitudes on how they approach works. While the committee promotes going beyond minimum on external projects, they would like to ensure the City is also taking this approach on upgrades or new projects internally.

The table is in agreement to have the staff resource start drafting the annual update report to Council.

Mary Bowden noted that the Aged Friendly Committee is hosting an "Older Adults Expo" at Seven Generations on October 17<sup>th</sup>, it will cover topics such as Reconciliation, Poly-Pharmacy, Scams, and Dementia Friendly Communities.

## **5. Meeting Times**

The Committee will continue to meet at 4:00pm, this time will work for all members.

## **6. Next Meeting – October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023 @ 4:00pm**

## **7. Adjourn Meeting – The meeting adjourned at 5:06pm.**