



3 November 2010

City Council Committee Report

To: Mayor & Council

Fr: Joanne L. McMillin, City Clerk

**Re: Post Election Accessibility Report – as required by
The Municipal Elections Act**

Recommendation:

That the Council of the City of Kenora hereby receives this legislatively required report prepared by the Clerk in accordance with The Municipal Elections Act regarding the recognition, removal and prevention of barriers identified during the 2010 municipal election process with respect to electors and candidates with disabilities; and further

That this report be made available to the public.

Background:

Section 12.1 (1) of the Municipal Elections Act provides that a clerk who is responsible for conducting an election shall have regard to the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities.

Section 12.1 (2) of the Municipal Elections Act provides that within 90 days after voting day in a regular election, the clerk shall submit a report to council about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.

Section 45 (2) of the Municipal Elections Act provides that the Clerk shall ensure that each voting place is accessible to electors with disabilities.

In keeping with legislation, the Clerk ensured the following items were addressed and completed with respect to the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors with disabilities:-

- (i) With the use of Vote-by-Mail as an alternate method of voting for the third time, essentially eliminates the need for polling locations with the exception of the Revision Centre at City Hall Council Chambers.
- (ii) The election training attended by the Clerk through AMCTO included a comprehensive section on conducting 'accessible elections.'
- (iii) External election staff were provided with in-house accessibility training to ensure they were cognizant of persons with disabilities and able to vote in a positive environment, and that in every way possible a voters needs' were accommodated whenever possible.

- (iv) As a voting place the Chambers was made fully accessible to electors with disabilities, as well as City Hall for dropping off ballot kits.
- (v) The Clerk ensured the Voter's List was prepared with a larger font-size for ease of reading.
- (vi) The Voter's List was made available on-line through the City's Portal so electors with disabilities were not necessarily required to attend one of the municipal locations to determine if their name was on the Voter's List.
- (vii) Magnifying sheets were made available at the Revision Centre for any electors with vision difficulties to place over the ballot for easier marking.
- (viii) The Clerk consulted with and obtained comments and suggestions from the Kenora Accessibility Advisory Committee to ensure that potential needs for voters with disabilities were identified and addressed to the greatest extent possible.
- (ix) The Clerk contacted other municipalities to review the various types of accessibility plans being developed for the 2010 Election.
- (x) Council approved the establishment of an additional (temporary) disabled parking stall on Main Street in front of City Hall for the purpose of providing a shorter and safer access route to the Revision Centre (Council Chambers).
- (xi) One polling booth at the Revision Centre was configured with the add-on of a handheld Ballot Marker Device feature to serve voters who may not be able to negotiate a paper ballot. An audio unit was also made available with a headphone set together with the use of a printer to print a ballot which could be marked by use of a confidential marker device.
- (xii) A fully adjustable accessible table was purchased in order to accommodate both a wheelchair and the required accessibility equipment, i.e. handheld device, printer, audio unit, etc.
- (xiii) Guide-dogs were welcome to accompany any elector that required such assistance.

Budget:

Expenses associated with ensuring the accessibility standards were met formed part of the 2010 Municipal Elections Budget.

Communication Plan/Notice By-law Requirements:

N/A