



**Minutes**

**Accessibility Advisory Committee**

**September 22, 2023, 1:00 p.m.**

**City Hall - 808 2nd Avenue East - Council Chambers**

**MEMBERS**

**PRESENT:** Chair Christine Farrell  
Vice Chair Carol Merton  
Member Donald Anderson  
Member Jason Crone  
Member Rebecca Knisley

**MEMBERS**

**ABSENT/REGRETS:** Councillor Marion Koepke  
Member Jacob Morris-Wheeler

**STAFF PRESENT:** Lara Widdifield, Director of Public Works and Engineering  
Briana Bloomfield, City Clerk  
Staci Landry, Deputy Clerk  
Kevin Linthorne, Chief Building Official  
Heidi Jennen, Supervisor of Environmental Services  
Bethany Chandler, Human Resources Assistant

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Farrell called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

**2. CALL FOR ADDITIONAL BUSINESS**

2.a Chair Farrell Re: Weaver’s Creek Boardwalk

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

4.a Minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting held on July 25, 2023.

**"THAT the Accessibility Advisory Committee approves the minutes of the meeting held on July 25, 2023."**

Carried.

**5. DEPUTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

There were no depositions or presentations.

**6. PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD**

There were no questions from the public.

**7. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FOR WHICH DIRECTION IS REQUIRED**

There were no correspondence items presented for consideration.

**8. REPORTS OF CITY STAFF**

**8.a Verbal Report from Chair Farrell Re: Future of the Accessibility Advisory Committee**

Chair Farrell gave an overview of the staff report that went to Council recommending some changes to the committee structure and the recommendation to dissolve the Accessibility Advisory Committee at the end of this committee term. The legislative requirement from the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) is that the City have an Accessibility Advisory Committee, which would still be met by joining the Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, which meets four to six times per year.

Responding to a question from the Committee, the Deputy Clerk advised that if Council decides to dissolve the Accessibility Advisory Committee and join Grey County, they would have to make a resolution at Council to opt-in to the Grey County Committee and send that resolution along with a letter to Grey County stating they are opting-in. Then Grey County would update their terms of reference to include the City of Owen Sound.

Responding to a question from Committee, the Deputy Clerk advised that in consultation with the Grey County Clerk and Accessibility Coordinator, if the City were to opt-in, they would not add another public member to the Committee. The City would have to provide their rationale with a Council resolution to Grey County Council requesting an additional member that resided in Owen Sound. The Deputy Clerk noted that designating a member to live in a specific area differs from the County's current committee structure and could risk treating the City differently regarding residency stipulations.

Committee members discussed support for recommending that Council ask that Grey County consider adding an additional member who resides in Owen Sound to be added to the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Responding to a question from Committee, the Deputy Clerk advised that the Grey County Committee application process is similar to the City's, wherein they would put out a call for application notice, and community members would apply directly to Council. Applications would be reviewed, and members appointed.

Responding to questions from Committee regarding the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, assessment tool for site plan approvals, and Human Resources and Inclusion Strategies, the Deputy Clerk advised that these would still be reviewed with staff internally, the public, City Manager or Council, and would be taken to the Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee for comment and approval, as applicable.

Responding to a question from Committee, the Deputy Clerk commented that the City encourages the present committee members to apply to other committee vacancies.

Committee members discussed the accomplishments of the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee, concerns over moving the committee to Grey County, the loss of having individuals who have self-identified with a disability on City committees, considerations to provide to Council, and the accessibility issues in the City that have not been addressed.

AC-230922-002

Moved by Member Anderson

**"THAT in consideration of the verbal report provided September 22, 2023, from Chair Farrell respecting the future of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Accessibility Advisory Committee recommends that City Council:**

- 1. Continue the Accessibility Advisory Committee at a minimum until 2026, prior to the election, to coincide with the recruitment cycle of the Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee; and**
- 2. Allow for evaluation of the Accessibility Advisory Committee during that time, including but not limited to structure, process, and effective use of committee and staff time."**

Carried.

AC-230922-003

Moved by Member Knisley

**"THAT in consideration of the Verbal Report provided September 22, 2023, from Chair Farrell respecting the future of the Accessibility Advisory**

**Committee, the Accessibility Advisory Committee directs the Chair to provide a letter to Council ahead of the September 25, 2023 Council meeting that outlines the Committee's motion that was passed and other considerations brought forward at the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting."**

Carried.

**9. MATTERS POSTPONED**

There were no matters postponed.

**10. MOTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE WAS PREVIOUSLY GIVEN**

There were no motions for which notice was previously given.

**11. CORRESPONDENCE PROVIDED FOR INFORMATION**

11.a Mobility Transit Dashboard Month Ending August 31, 2023.

AC-230922-004

Moved by Member Knisley

**"THAT in consideration of correspondence provided for information purposes listed on the September 22, 2023, Accessibility Advisory Committee agenda, the Accessibility Advisory Committee recommends that City Council receive the Mobility Transit Dashboard for information purposes".**

Carried.

11.b Cooling and Warming Centre Guidelines

Responding to a question from Committee, the Supervisor of Environmental Services advised that she will add information that service animals and emotional support animals are allowed in cooling and warming centres to the guidelines.

AC-230922-005

Moved by Vice Chair Merton

**"THAT in consideration of the Cooling and Warming Centre Guidelines provided for information, the Accessibility Advisory Committee recommends that City Council direct staff to add to the Cooling and Warming Centre Guidelines that service animals and emotional support animals are allowed at cooling and warming centres."**

Carried.

## 12. DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

### 12.a Chair Farrell Re: Weaver's Creek Boardwalk

Chair Farrell discussed rebuilding the boardwalk on the trail at Weaver's Creek in Harrison Park and the recommendation provided to Council by staff to reconstruct and create a more accessible trail with the help of volunteers and community donations.

Committee members discussed their support for this recommendation and ensuring Accessibility Standards are met. The Deputy Clerk advised that the option approved by Council was to start with an open call for community groups and skilled volunteers to support the project, and then a plan would be formed. As this is a redeveloped public space, the plan will have to come to Committee for review and comment.

AC-230922-006

Moved by Vice Chair Merton

**"THAT the Accessibility Advisory Committee waives the notice provision in the Procedural By-law in order to deal with a time-sensitive matter relating to the rebuilding of the Weaver's Creek Boardwalk."**

Carried by a 2/3 vote.

AC-230922-007

Moved by Member Knisley

**"THAT in consideration of the recommendation regarding the rebuilding of the Weaver's Creek Boardwalk, the Accessibility Advisory Committee supports the recommendation that staff consider accessibility features when the boardwalk is being rebuilt."**

Carried.

## 13. NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no notices of motion.

## 14. ADJOURNMENT

The business contained on the agenda having been completed, Chair Farrell adjourned the meeting at 2:17 p.m.