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The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, March 28, 2023

A meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, March 28, 2023 at Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby at 1:00 PM. Electronic participation was permitted for this meeting.

1. Roll Call

Present: A. Beach, Oshawa, attended the meeting at 1:02 PM
A. Blum, Scugog
D. Campbell, Whitby, Vice-Chair, left the meeting at 2:56 PM
H. Hall, TeachAbility
W. Henshall, Whitby, attended the meeting at 1:08 PM
L. Houston, Community Care Durham
D. Hume-McKenna, DMHS, left the meeting at 1:55 PM
Councillor McDougall
J. McEwen, Clarington, attended the meeting at 1:04 PM
R. Purnwasie, Ajax, Chair
S. Sones, Whitby
***all members of the committee participated electronically**

Staff

Present: A. Hector-Alexander, Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
P. Hines, Manager, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
D. Pineda, Policy Advisor, Local Immigration Partnership
K. Wall, Accessibility Coordinator, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
K. Smith, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
***all staff except R. Inacio participated electronically**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **Adoption of Minutes**

R. Purnwasie advised that H. Hall no longer represents Participation House and requested that the minutes be updated to reflect that she represents TeachAbility. H. Hall confirmed that she represents TeachAbility.

Moved by S. Sones, Seconded by D. Hume-McKenna,
That the minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting held on
Tuesday, January 24, 2023, as amended, be adopted.

CARRIED

4. **Presentations**

A) Dr. Matthew Stein, Ontario Tech University, and Danielle Pineda, Policy Advisor, re: Durham Community Evaluation Research Program – Case Study on Newcomers with Disabilities

Dr. Matthew Stein, Ontario Tech University, and Danielle Pineda, Policy Advisor, participating electronically, provided a PowerPoint presentation with regards to Durham Community Evaluation Research Program – Case Study on Newcomers with Disabilities.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Background on Case Studies
- Approach
- Demographics
- Barriers to Access
 - Transportation
 - Reliance on Caregivers and Limitations
 - Language Comprehension
 - Difficulties in Navigating Systems and Processes
 - Technology
 - Stigma
- Recommendations for Improved Service Access and Delivery

M. Stein responded to questions with regards to how the case study is being shared with other organizations; whether CNIB was consulted on the case study; types of information being provided to the newcomers; whether Durham Region is working with the Province on this initiative; how the presentation can be shared with other organizations; whether there is assistance available to persons with disabilities; the definition of newcomer; and the length of time people are considered a newcomer.

B) Wayne Henshall, Head, Partnerships and Entrepreneurship, re: Come to Work Program and Impact Evaluation at CNIB

Wayne Henshall, Partnerships and Entrepreneurship, participating electronically, provided a presentation with regards to the Come to Work Program and Impact Evaluation at CNIB.

W. Henshall stated that the CNIB, Ontario Tech University and OCAD University hosted a Co-Design Festival on February 23 and 24, 2023. Members of the sight loss community were invited to share what they are experiencing post COVID-19 with a focus on sight loss and collaboration work.

W. Henshall stated that the event had sessions focusing on virtual distractions and accessibility challenges, navigating transportation, virtual presence in meetings, and understanding artificial intelligence. He also stated that it is important to have lived experiences from different demographics when conducting research to ensure that as you are designing solutions and ensuring validating its usability. He advised that the Chief Accessibility Officer at CNIB would like to have these sessions twice per year.

W. Henshall provided a brief overview of the five stages of the Come to Work Program available through CNIB.

It was the consensus of the Committee to recess at this time. The Committee recessed at 2:10 PM and reconvened at 2:15 PM.

Following the recess, the Committee Clerk conducted a roll call, and all members of the Committee were present with the exception of D. Hume-McKenna.

5. Discussion Items

A) Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Business Compliance Deadline

K. Wall advised that businesses and non-profits with 20 or more employees and public sector organizations must complete an accessibility compliance report by the end of 2023 and submit it to the Ontario Government to confirm ongoing compliance. She also advised that it is the intent for all businesses in Ontario to be fully accessible by 2025.

J. McEwen provided the following update:

- There has been a funding model provided to Premier Ford and the Honourable Raymond Cho, Minister for Seniors and Accessibility.
- On May 1, 2023, local stroke survivors will be meeting with Minister Cho to discuss how Ontario can become accessible by the deadlines. K. Wall will be invited to the meeting.

Discussion ensued with regards to the recommendations being presented to Minister Cho and who will be meeting with Minister Cho on May 1, 2023.

J. McEwen advised he would provide committee members with an update following the meeting with Minister Cho.

B) Nomination for Appointment of Two Members to the Transit Advisory Committee

K. Wall advised that the Transit Advisory Committee requires 2 members nominated for appointment by the Accessibility Advisory Committee. She also advised that the Transit Advisory Committee meets quarterly and the meeting schedule for 2023 is May 16, September 19, and November 21.

W. Henshall indicated he wished to stand. J. McEwen indicated he wished to stand.

Moved by H. Hall, Seconded by Councillor McDougall,
That Wayne Henshall and Jim McEwen be nominated for appointment as the Accessibility Advisory Committee representatives to the Transit Advisory Committee.

CARRIED

6. Correspondence

There were no items of correspondence to consider.

7. Information Items

A) Education Sub-Committee Update

K. Wall advised that the education sub-committee is open for anyone interested in joining. K. Wall provided the following update:

- Planning for National Accessibility Awareness Week, which takes place from May 28 to June 3, 2023, has begun.
- Durham Region will be hosting its second annual Accessibility Conference on Tuesday, May 30, 2023 at 9:30 AM.
- The deadline to apply for the Inclusive Community Grant being provided by the Province of Ontario is April 20, 2023, and an update will be provided at the next meeting.
- A policy and advocacy advisor from the Whitby Chambers of Commerce reached out to K. Wall and D. Campbell to collaborate an event to host subject matter experts on Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities education and the deadline for compliance in 2025.

Discussion ensued with regards to engaging with colleagues at Ontario Tech University regarding education for businesses to become AODA compliant by 2025.

B) Accessibility Coordinator Update

K. Wall provided the following update:

- There will be a Non-Police Led Mental Health Response Focus Group at the Abilities Centre taking place on Friday, March 31, 2023 at 1:30 PM and information about the session will be forwarded to committee members.
- Durham Region is working with Turner Consulting Group to put together an internal equity audit for staff.
- Welcome to new members Jim McEwen and Adam Blum.
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee 2022 Annual Report and 2023 Workplan was approved by Regional Council on March 1, 2023 and will be provided to committee members.
- The 2021 Accessibility Report final version is being presented to the Finance and Administration Committee on April 11, 2023 and will be shared with committee members.
- Durham Region Transit will be hosting public information centres at various locations in each municipality of the Region and dates and will be shared with committee members when they become available.
- A Microsoft Teams Channel has been created for committee members and offered assistance for those obtaining access to the channel.
- Durham Region has an ongoing commitment to meet the guidelines of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR).

Discussion ensued with regards to the internal equity audit being conducted with Turner Consulting Group; hearing from individuals in the community that have had interactions with Durham Region as part of the recruitment process; the information received from the employee census conducted by Turner Consulting Group; and whether the census was shared with local municipalities.

8. Reports for Information

There were no reports to consider.

9. Other Business

There was no other business to be considered.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 23, 2023 at 1:00 PM.

11. Adjournment

Moved by H. Hall, Seconded by J. McEwen,
That the meeting be adjourned.
CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 3:03 PM

Respectfully submitted,

R. Purnwasie, Chair, Accessibility Advisory Committee

K. Smith, Committee Clerk