

**THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA  
ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

**REPORT 1-2009**

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Minutes of a meeting of the Region of Niagara Accessibility Advisory Committee (RNAAC), Ontarians with Disabilities Act held in the Regional Municipal Building, Thorold, Ontario, on Monday, January 6, 2009, commencing at 12:30 p.m. in Committee Room 4.

**ATTENDANCE**

Committee: Jocelyne Gagne, Chairperson; Jean Bennett, Geoff Eden, Ian Greaves, Diann Krieger, Anita MacKenzie, Carol Walker, Griz Witlib

Committee

Regrets: Krystine Donato, Councillor Cindy Forester, Brian Kon, Mary Lou Whitty

Staff: Steve Murphy, Accessibility Coordinator, Janice Emeneau, Gord Low, Kumar Ranjan, Penny Pitt

Staff regrets: Eric Flora, Catherine O'Leary, Birgit Page, Denise Papaiz,

**CALL TO ORDER**

Jocelyne Gagne welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Introductions were made around the table for the benefit of everyone in attendance.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Moved by Geoff Eden

Seconded by Diann Krieger

1. That Agenda 1-2009, being the agenda for the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting of January 6, 2009, be approved as amended to include Committee Membership under the heading of Other Business.

Carried.

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

Moved by Jean Bennett

Seconded by C. Walker

2. That Report 8-2008, being the minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting of November 4, 2008, be approved as distributed.

Carried.

## **REGIONAL NIAGARA ACCESSIBILITY COORDINATOR UPDATE**

3. Jocelyne Gagne announced that Steve Murphy, a current staff member of the AAC, has been appointed as the Regional Niagara Accessibility Coordinator. Mr. Murphy apprised the committee that he would need and welcome the expertise of all members to fulfill his position. Council has approved his position for a year secondment and will look at a permanent position in 2010. Mr. Murphy will be located in the Integrated Community Planning Department in the Campbell East building at Niagara Regional Headquarters and can be reached at Ext. 3252.

## **ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

4. Steve Murphy reviewed the obligations of the Chairpersons and of the Committee members.

Steve Murphy called for nominations for the position of Chairperson.

Carol Walker nominated Jocelyne Gagne for the position of Chairperson of the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Jocelyne Gagne accepted the nomination for the position of Chairperson.

Steve Murphy called for any further nominations. None were made.

Jocelyne Gagne was declared the Chairperson of the Accessibility Advisory Committee for 2009.

Steve Murphy called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chairperson.

Jocelyne Gagne nominated Carol Walker for the position of Vice-Chairperson of the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Carol Walker accepted the nomination for the position of Vice-Chairperson.

Steve Murphy called for any further nominations. None were made.

Carol Walker was declared as Vice-Chairperson of the Accessibility Advisory Committee for 2009.

## **ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2008-2009 – UPDATE**

5. Denise Papaiz, Senior Communications Manager, was unable to attend, but provided her update prior to the meeting.

On December 16, regional employees representing IT Solutions, telecommunications, Web-Administration, corporate communications and public health communications met to review the proposed, draft Accessible Information and Communications Standard. Mary Eagles, Housing Initiatives Coordinator, Niagara Regional Housing, and Geoff Hunt, Web Content Analyst – IT Solutions, presented a summary of the draft standard. Denise Papaiz, Senior Manager, Corporate Communications, will be attending the community Stakeholder Meeting on Friday, January 9 from 10 a.m. to noon, on behalf of Niagara Region. The invitation was sent to Niagara Region by the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario.

Janice Emeneau of the Integrated Community Planning Department had nothing to report to date. Ms. Emeneau offered her assistance to Mr. Murphy in meeting his objectives.

Gord Low, Project Manager, apprised the committee that the FADS design was used in the planning and construction of the new facilities for the Administration and Clerks. A lower accessible countertop, accessible washroom, and larger doors were incorporated in the design. The move will take place at the end of January 2009.

Mr. Low reported that the Welland Public Health office exterior and interior doors are being modified to meet the FADS design. The new office will be completed in April with a move in date targeted in May. At the Grimsby Senior Centre a request by a man in a wheelchair prompted the changing of doors to accommodate wheelchairs. He responded his thanks in an email to the centre.

The Accessibility Advisory Committee now comes under the umbrella of the Integrated Community Planning and Public Works Department.

### **2009 Priorities**

The committee reviewed and discussed priorities for the coming year and agreed upon the following short term goals:

- Staff training in Customer Service Standards with the upcoming deadline of January 2010.
- Audible pedestrian crossings would also be a priority and will be reported on at the next meeting.
- Information needed on how the TTY is working
- All committees urged to coordinate timetables, cross reference each other, and critique on cost

## **NIAGARA SPECIALIZED TRANSIT (NST) UPDATE**

6. Kumar Ranjan had no ridership update to report but informed the committee of the draft work-plan terms of reference approved by TSSC; for implementing an inter-municipal transit system. This work-plan is split into 3 phases;

Phase 1 – Planning; expanding on the work already done and proposing the Transit work plan Goals and Vision.

Phase 2 – Operational; Service delivery model implementation based on recommendation of Phase 1 (Short Term and Long Term)

Phase 3 – Administrative set up based on the recommendation of Phases 1 and 2.

## **AODA UPDATE**

7. Diann Krieger reported that the Proposed Accessible Information and Communications Standard Public Review Feedback has been extended to February 6, 2009. It was discussed amongst the committee and a decision was made to draft wording that the committee supports the standard in principle. Feedback from the AAC will be sent to the AODA.

Moved by Diann Krieger  
Seconded by Griz Witlib

That the Regional Niagara Accessibility Advisory Committee supports the Proposed Accessible Information and Communications Standard in principle. This committee feels the document is very complex and for this reason recommend that the document be made available in a simpler language. This committee also requests Compliance Manual be developed and the compliance date should be adjusted upon the availability of this manual. Legislation and standards are very difficult for many people to understand especially for those with limited knowledge.

Carried

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

8. Summary of Information Items

Information Items – AAC 153-2008 – AAC 176-2008 were reviewed and received.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

9. Selection of representative for the NHS-TIP Working Group

Kumar Ranjan advised the committee that the NHS-TIP Working Group is planning a meeting on January.27, 2009 in Committee Room 4. Geoff Eden has committed to temporarily represent the AAC at the initial meeting. Transportation will be provided for him once the details are finalized. A report will be made at the next AAC meeting.

### Committee Membership

Steve Murphy informed the committee that there was currently one vacancy due to the resignation of Tony DiPaola. Mr. Murphy will check in with the existing members to establish whether or not they wish to continue on the committee, to determine if there are other vacancies before proceeding to fill those positions.

Mr. Murphy will also review and check in with the internal staff membership and reaffirm their continued interest and arrange for representation from all departments as well as other Regional agencies such as Niagara Regional Housing, NPCA, and NEDC. Mr. Murphy will contact Anne Hepplewhite of the NRPS, who was a former member of the AAC, in an effort to bring her expertise back to the committee.

### Accessible Channel

Geoff Eden apprised the committee the Accessible Channel was now available on Cogeco Cable TV, channel 555 and on Satellite TV Star Choice channel 48.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Carol Walker  
Seconded by Griz Witlib

10. That the Committee be adjourned at 3:15 p.m. to meet again on Tuesday, February 17, 2009 at 12:30 p.m. in Committee Room 4.

Carried.

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Jocelyne Gagne  
Chairperson

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Penny Pitt  
Administrative Assistant  
Council Support