



Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 10, 2022

5:00 PM

Online Attendance Only

Committee Members: Christine Easterbrook, Chair
Brad Frenette
Diana Kirkbride
Gord Queen, Vice Chair

Absent: Debbie Alexander
Rachel Jewell
Stephanie Olewski

Administration: Katherine Hebert, Deputy Clerk

1. Call to Order

The chair called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM.

2. Land Acknowledgement Statement

We begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations, comprised of the Ojibway, Odawa and Potawatomie Peoples.

To recognize the land is an expression of gratitude to those whose territory you reside on, and a way of honouring the Indigenous people who have been living and working on the land from time immemorial.

We value the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all the Original Peoples of Turtle Island.

3. Recording of Attendance

All members were in attendance virtually, with the exception of Stephanie Olewski and Debbie Alexander who sent their regrets.

4. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

There were no conflicts of pecuniary interest declared.

5. Adoption of the Minutes

February 10, 2022 Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting minutes.

Moved By Gord Queen

Seconded By Brad Frenette

That the minutes of the February 10, 2022 meeting of the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee be adopted as presented.

Carried

6. Delegations and Presentations

6.1 Essex County Civic Centre Renovations

Randy Pearson, Supervisor - Facility Operations, County of Essex to provide a review of the Entrance Doors Upgrade, for the Essex County Civic Centre.

Randy Pearson reviewed the measurements and configurations of the new door systems and explained that they were all working on sensors now.

Discussion included the type of signage used to indicate the direction the doors opens. Randy also updated the committee on parking lot markings that were installed last year to provide for safer pedestrian crossing at the West entrance.

7. Communications

Moved By Gord Queen

Seconded By Diana Kirkbride

That Communications items listed on the agenda for March 10, 2022 be received and any noted actions taken.

Carried

7.1 Accessibility Services Canada

Free Webinar - [Hidden Mobility Disabilities](#)

Research has defined hidden mobility disabilities (HMD) as being able to walk, but only for 35-50 feet, and being able to stand unsupported, but only for 1-2 minutes, without significant health consequences. In this webinar we explore the access barriers

faced by those with hidden mobility disabilities and options for addressing those barriers.

Webinar is free.

7.2 Pathway to Potential (P2P)

February 2022 - [Online Newsletter and Information Sharing](#)

7.3 Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

[AODA Resources Online](#)

7.4 AODA Alliance

What's New in Our Campaign - [Latest News and Updates Online](#)

7.5 Community Living Ontario

Upcoming Events - [Find an event online](#)

7.6 Canadian National Institute for the Blind

CNIB [Latest News Source](#)

7.7 CityNews Ottawa

March 3, 2022 - [Disability advocate urges Ottawa's City Council to scrap e-scooter program](#)

7.8 BBC News

March 3, 2022 - [Winter Paralympics: The lowdown on being disabled in China](#)

7.9 Brock University

March 2, 2022 - [TikTok activist to discuss anti-racism, disability justice at Brock event](#)

7.10 Bradford Today

March 2, 2022 - [Recognizing need for equitable access to information on World Hearing Day](#)

7.11 CBC News

February 7, 2022 - [3 years after Ontario accessibility report, 'little progress' made, former lieutenant-governor says \(Onley\)](#)

7.12 Province of Ontario

February 23, 2022 - [Ontario Investing in a More Accessible Southwestern Ontario](#)

7.13 CBC News

March 3, 2022 - [Mental health centre to be built in Ontario for first responders with post-traumatic stress injuries](#)

7.14 CBC Radio

February 10, 2022 - [As restrictions loosen up, advocates for people with disabilities say their needs haven't been considered](#)

7.15 The Sun

[Time to Close the Disability Employment Gap](#)

8. Reports from Administration

8.1 ECAAC 2022 Workplan

Review of the 2022 ECAAC Workplan, a document which is meant to be fluid and can change and be adapted as needed.

Katherine Hebert provided the Committee with a tentative schedule of activities for the ECAAC that was drafted at the Feb 10, 2022 meeting. The schedule is to serve as a guiding document to accomplish the goals of the committee identified for 2022. The schedule can be adjusted as needed.

The Chair asked to add a visit to the Sun Parlor Home to review their renovated outdoor space once visitation restrictions allow.

9. Unfinished Business

9.1 Guest Speakers Options

Options to consider, should the ECAAC want to host an Accessibility Forum in 2022:

- [Julie Sawchuck](#) - Author - Virtual session \$950 plus tax, for 45 minute talk with 15 minute question period.
- [Michael Jacques](#) - Author - Bio Attached
- Haben Girma - \$7,500 USD for a 1 hour fireside chat or lecture style talks, including Q&A [Official Website](#)
- Laverne Jacobs - (Cost Pending) [Biography Page](#) (Not Available in 2022)
- Maayan Ziv - \$5,000 CAD for a keynote address [AccessNow Website](#)

The Committee would prefer an afternoon session and agreed that having both presentations either in-person or virtual.

Katherine Hebert will connect with the presenters and provide feedback to the committee at next meeting.

Moved By Gord Queen

Seconded By Rachel Jewell

That the ECAAC pursue booking a session with Julie Sawchuk and Michael Jacques for a presentation to the local AAC's June to September 2022.

Carried

9.2 Social Media Updates

- [ECAAC Facebook](#)
- [@EssexCountyAAC Twitter](#)

Discussion included opportunities to increase social media presence and leverage assistance through the County of Essex Communications Department.

9.3 Accessibility Flag

Update for the Committee regarding the status of the Accessibility Flag.

The decision was made to proceed with this project with the County of Essex as the project lead. Preliminary artwork is being drafted and the designer has agreed to work with in the schedule required. The designer will attend the ECAAC to reveal the designs. Local lower-tier AAC would be invited and will be provided the opportunity to provide input.

9.4 Joint Meeting of the Local AAC Chairs and Vice Chairs

Administration to provide an update regarding the scheduling process.

Meeting will be scheduled as soon as the local tier AAC determine their Chairs and Vice-chairs for 2022.

9.5 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Discussion regarding next steps for the MYAP. The ECAAC Workplan list the need to begin consultations in April.

- Feedback Form/Survey
- Public Notice

- Targeted groups (County Council, COE Departments, Local Municipalities, local agencies/boards/commissions, service/community groups, the public, other?)
- A working draft of the 2023-2027 MYAP to be presented to ECAAC at April meeting

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Public Consultation period is scheduled for April 2022. Katherine Hebert will provide a draft questionnaire at the April committee meeting for review and approval.

9.6 WE Check The Trails

Discussion regarding the state of Phase 1 and next steps to move to Phase 2 of the WECTC program. Sections of CWATS trails could be added to the feedback forms, in addition to the existing ERCA network. Next steps include, consultation with the CWATS Coordinator and County GIS personnel and possibly a delegation from CWATS to ECAAC.

A grant to subsidize this project has been applied for; the results of the application are pending.

County GIS had provided assistance to this project in 2021. The committee requested the attendance of a representative at a upcoming meeting.

10. New Business

10.1 Delegation at Essex County Council

Discussion regarding theme/focus for the delegation.

- Who will attend and what roles will you have?
- What will the message be?
- County Council meetings are May 18 or June 1 (June 1 is also Red Shirt Day) and National AccessAbility Week is May 29-June 1

The Committee agreed that the May 18, 2022 County Council meeting is the most appropriate day for delegation ahead of AccessAbility Week May 29 - June 4. Subjects to be discussed could include:

- COVID and how it has affected people with disabilities and the new challenges the pandemic has identified.
- Travel related barriers.

- New AccessAbility flag and raising.

10.2 Accessibility Awareness Walk

Discussion regarding feasibility and planning for a tentatively scheduled June Accessibility Awareness Walk.

- Date possibilities
- Location

The committee agreed to defer the walk to 2023 due to uncertainties in the impacts of reduced pandemic restrictions on vulnerable populations.

Moved By Gord Queen

Seconded By Brad Frenette

To defer the Accessibility Awareness Walk to 2023.

Carried

10.3 Accessible Banking Machines

Brad Frenette brought forward the subject of accessibility of personal banking touch screens at financial institutions.

Brad will investigate further and report back to the committee.

11. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the ECAAC is scheduled for April 14, 2022, at 5:00 PM.

12. Adjournment

That the March 10, 2022 meeting of the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee be adjourned at 6:21 PM.

Moved By Brad Frenette

Seconded By Diana Kirkbride

Carried