



## **Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, February 9, 2023**

**5:00 PM**

**Essex County Civic Centre, Council Chambers  
360 Fairview Avenue West, Upper Floor  
Essex, Ontario N8M1Y6**

Committee Members: Debbie Alexander  
Sherri Currie  
Rachel Jewell  
Diana Kirkbride  
Julie Miles  
Dennis Sanson

Absent: Sherry Bondy, Mayor, Town of Essex

Administration: Katherine Hebert, Manager, Records and Accessibility/Deputy Clerk  
Crystal Sylvestre, Administrative Assistant, Legislative and Community Services

### **1. Call to Order**

Katherine Hebert, Manager, Records and Accessibility/Deputy Clerk called the meeting to order at 5:12 PM, and acted as the Chairperson until the conclusion of the election of a Chair and Vice Chair.

### **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 of the ECAAC were in attendance in the Council Chambers, with the exception of Mayor Sherry Bondy who was absent.

**4. Introduction of Committee Members and Administration**

Katherine Hebert welcomed the 2023-2026 Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee (ECAAC) members to the meeting.

Each member introduced themselves and provided a brief introduction on their background and their intentions for the committee.

**5. Election of the Chair and Vice Chair for 2023**

Katherine Hebert explained that the position of Chair and Vice Chair would be for a one-year term per the Terms of Reference.

Debbie Alexander nominated Dennis Sanson to the position of Chair.

Dennis Sanson nominated Debbie Alexander to the position of Vice Chair.

Both agreed to stand.

**Moved By** Rachel Jewell

**Seconded By** Diana Kirkbride

That Dennis Sanson be appointed as Chair of the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee for the year 2023.

And that Debbie Alexander be appointed as Vice Chair of the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee for the year 2023.

**Carried**

**6. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest**

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest raised.

**7. Adoption of the Minutes**

ECAAC Meeting Minutes of October 13, 2022.

**Moved By** Debbie Alexander

**Seconded By** Sherri Currie

That the minutes of the October 13, 2022 meeting of the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee be adopted as presented.

**Carried**

8. **Delegations and Presentations**

There were no delegations scheduled for February 9, 2023.

9. **Communications**

**Moved By** Rachel Jewell

**Seconded By** Julie Miles

That the items listed under Communications, in the ECAAC agenda for February 9, 2023 be received, and any noted action taken.

**Carried**

9.1. **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)**

[AODA Toolbox Latest Edition and Archives](#)

Join the [AODA Toolbox Mailing List](#)

9.2. **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance**

[AODA Alliance - What's New in Our Program?](#)

9.3. **Ontario Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility**

[Latest News Releases and Program Information from the OMSAA](#)

9.4. **AODA 4th Legislative Update**

[News and Updates](#)

9.5. **Inclusion Canada**

Championing Inclusion: [Let's Make Budget 2023 Work for People with Intellectual Disabilities and their Families](#)

9.6. **Disability Scoop Magazine**

[Latest News Online](#)

9.7. **Abilities Magazine**

[Winter 2022 Edition Online](#)

10. **Orientation**

**Moved By** Sherri Currie

**Seconded By** Julie Miles

That the items listed under item 10. Orientation, of the February 9, 2023 ECAAC agenda be received as information.

**Carried**

### **10.1. ECAAC Terms of Reference**

[Terms of Reference for the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee](#) - As Approved by Essex County Council, June 6, 2007

### **10.2. County of Essex, Committee and Board Meeting Stipends**

An overview of Committee/Board Meeting Stipends, Mileage Policy and Outline of Payment of Remuneration for County Council and Committees was provided.

It was noted that mileage was calculated based on their home address to and from the meeting location.

### **10.3. County of Essex Council - Code of Conduct**

As approved by Essex County Council on 2019-02-20

- [By-law 49-2016, A By-law to Establish a Code of Conduct for Members of Council, Local Boards and Committee Members](#)
- [Code of Conduct - Council, Local Boards and Committee Members](#)

Members were provided with Code of Conduct - Council, Local Boards and Committee Members Appendix C: Statement of Commitment to review and sign.

### **10.4. County of Essex - Procedure By-law**

By-law Number 2022-31, A By-law to Provide Rules Governing the Order and Proceedings of the Council of the Corporation of the County of Essex

Discussion included the merits of in-person, virtual and hybrid meeting arrangements.

**Moved By** Debbie Alexander

**Seconded By** Sherri Currie

That the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee will stream their meetings live via Facebook Live for the 2023 calendar year.

**Carried**

**Moved By** Debbie Alexander

**Seconded By** Sherri Currie

That the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee will permit members occasional virtual attendance according to the County of Essex Procedural By-law.

**Carried**

### **10.5. County of Essex Accessibility Policies**

- [Accommodation Policy](#)
- [Accessible Customer Service Policy](#)
- [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Policy](#)

### **10.6. Social Media**

The ECAAC social media accounts are:

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

Members were encouraged to promote Accessibility related activities through the standing social media outlets.

Sherri Currie volunteered to provide support to the ECAAC Facebook page and post on behalf of the ECAAC.

### **10.7. Ontario Provincial Guidelines**

How to serve on a municipal accessibility advisory committee: [A guide to help members of municipal accessibility advisory committees carry out their responsibilities, engage with their municipal government and work well as a team.](#)

### **10.8. Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**

[2023-2027 County of Essex, Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#)

### **10.9. County of Essex - General**

Overview of the County of Essex services - [Council and Departmental Summary](#)

Discussion included the differences between lower and upper tier accessibility advisory committees and the opportunities provided through collaboration.

## **11. Unfinished Business**

There were no items of unfinished business to consider.

## 12. **New Business**

### **12.1. ECAAC 2023 Meeting Schedule**

Discussion included moving the March 9, 2023 meeting to March 2, 2023.

The ECAAC agreed to maintain the 5:00 PM start time.

**Moved By** Julie Miles

**Seconded By** Sherri Currie

That the 2023 ECAAC proposed meeting schedule be received.

**Carried**

### **12.2. 2023 ECAAC Initiatives for 2023**

Discussion took place regarding previous ECAAC initiatives prior to and during pandemic restrictions including:

- **Advocacy: Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP):** This report includes a list of accessibility initiatives developed through consultation with stakeholders and County departments to achieve accessibility goals. Discussion included the ongoing design features of the Civic Centre renovations.
- **Advocacy: The ECAAC and local advisory committees** collaborated on the development of a flag that was raised at all municipal offices to highlight and bring awareness to the start of National AccessAbility Week.
- **Participation: WE Check the Trails:** A collaborative initiative between Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA), County Wide Active Transportation Systems (CWATS) and the ECAAC that provided for the independent virtual gathering of information through an online platform to report accessibility concerns in the trail systems throughout the County. Monthly reports were generated and reviewed by the ECAAC.
- **Participation: The ECAAC hosted a walk** in a newly developed community pathway to highlight the benefits of accessible design.
- **Education: The ECAAC hosted an Accessibility Workshop** that included speakers and information sessions in an in-person format.

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- Education: The ECAAC hosted a virtual Speaker's Forum with Julie Sawchuk and Michael Jacques to learn of their lived experiences; is event was open to the public via Zoom.

Brainstorming ideas for the coming term included:

- Advocacy: Continue and enhance the MYAP goals.
- Advocacy: Connect with established businesses about built environments and accessible customer service.
- Advocacy: Continue to participate in National AccessAbility Week flag raising activities.
- Participation: Maintain and support events with community partners including:
  - Local tier advisory committees
  - Seniors groups
  - Local club activities
- Participation: Continue the WE Check the Trails program.
- Education: Host a speaker's event that includes accessibility subjects including invisible disabilities and mental health.
- Education: Encouraging the implementation of accessible spaces for off-path outdoor activities such as hunting and angling.
- Education: Attend planning meetings and openings of new public spaces to increase awareness of accessible amenities.

ECAAC would present their 2023 initiatives to Essex County Council as a delegation at a May meeting and then report back to Council at a December meeting.

ECAAC agreed to consider other options available to advance the committee objectives and develop a focused list at the March 2, 2023 meeting.

### 13. **Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting of the ECAAC was scheduled for March 2, 2023 at 5:00PM in Council Chambers.

14. **Adjournment**

**Moved By** Diana Kirkbride

**Seconded By** Sherri Currie

That the February 9, 2023 meeting of the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee be adjourned at 7:00 PM.