

AWG Meeting Minutes
September 10, 2018

1. Welcome and Roll Call

- Present: Linda Bartram, Chris Marks, Chris Dobbie (arrived at 4:10 pm), Robin Bayley (via Skype), Steve Bertrand (arrived at 4:20 pm), and Susan Gallagher (Interpreters: Keith Brougham, Mary Butterfield)
- Councillor: Councillor Loveday and Councillor Isitt (arrived at 5:20 pm)
- Staff: Brad Dellebuur and Christine Brinton, City of Victoria
- Regrets: Paul Jones
- Guests: Tim Cottrell and Elizabeth Monk and guest
-

2. Approval of September 10, 2018 agenda

The AWG approved the agenda as amended.

Moved by Chris M, seconded by Susan. Carried

- Access to Council Information and Meetings - Robin
- Cecilia Ravine Park – Accessible Playground / Washroom - Linda
(<https://www.victoria.ca/EN/main/residents/parks/improvements/cecilia-ravine.html>)
- Accessible Voting Accommodations – Linda

Linda advised the AWG about an all candidates forum sponsored by the Victoria Disability Resource Centre on October 1st at 6:30 pm at the Church of Truth in James Bay (111 Superior Street). Mayor Helps has agreed to attend. This will follow the AWG meeting which will adjourn at 5:30.

3. Approval of August 13, 2018 minutes

The AWG approved the minutes of August 13, 2018 as circulated.

Moved by Chris M, seconded by Robin.

Carried

4. Business Arising from Minutes:

a. Balancing Accessibility Considerations With Pollinator Habitat

This item was deferred to the following AWG meeting when Parks staff can hopefully be in attendance. They had been invited to attend today but did not show up.

b. Quarterly Review

Councillor Jeremy Loveday updated the AWG regarding the Committee of the Whole meeting on September 6, 2018. COTW received a report from staff with details of the City of Victoria's activities and accomplishments on major projects, initiatives and programs contained in the 2015-2016 Strategic Plan and the 2018 Financial Plan." Appendix E included two Staff referral reports on accessibility topics.

This report can be found on the City of Victoria's website:

<https://www.victoria.ca/EN/main/city/mayor-council-committees/council-committee-meetings.html>

Councilor Loveday explained that the staff report did not include financial implications so Council was unable to address the backlog of AWG issues. Instead, Council directed staff to forward this report with the recommendations from Accessibility Working Group, to the 2019 budget process to receive the financial implications of all of these.

Amended at Council that evening

Recommendations from Advisory Committees: That Council forward this report with the recommendations from Accessibility Working Group to the 2019 budget process to receive the financial implications of all the *unactioned* recommendations.

It is the understanding that staff will include the recommendations from the December 2016 report to

Council, the 24 items on the current issues list and any recommendations included in the supplementary report submitted by Linda to Council for consideration at COTW.

The AWG discussed the following:

- Can motions made at today's meeting be added to the list of items whose cost estimates staff will report to Council as part of the budget process? Brad did not see why not. Councilor Loveday thought they would have to be added separately.
- Robin asked "How will the decision be made as to which recommendations are "unactioned" and therefore which actions will be subject to financial implications estimates?" Brad responded that he would report on anything that could not be accommodated in the operating budget for issues that are Engineering and Public Works related.
- AWG did not see the final list of recommendations that staff were working on, despite staff agreeing to share this once drafted, at the August meeting. AWG was surprised to find that the staff report did not include all AWG recommendations when it was publicly posted. After this report, Council has still not seen all AWG recommendations.
- Staff reported what they plan to do, rather than seeking Council direction on AWG recommendations. Some of those plans may be for actions AWG would not support – particularly re. an accessible meeting space. For instance, the AWG recommendations from their report to Council in December 2016 re. pet and scent reduction, were not reported.
- AWG's recommendations re. making City Hall accessible remain the same as when made in December 2016, yet Council has never had the opportunity to learn about the barriers and make a decision.
- Robin fears that staff is taking the position that most of AWG recommendations will be addressed by the Accessibility Framework, and therefore they will not see the need to cost them.

- The Accessibility Framework contract may be sufficiently broadly worded to allow for work on some of the AWG recommendations but Robin is concerned that the contract may not *require* outputs relating to specific AWG recommendations and will not produce tangible products because it is not funded to do so.
- Linda would like Brad to share staff reports to Council before they are posted.

Action: Robin to review AWG recommendations and communicate to Brad which items were not on the list of issues staff presented at the September 6, 2018 Quarterly Review.

Brad will look into Staff reports re. accessibility, being shared with AWG prior to public posting for Council meetings.

c. Crystal Pool and Wellness Centre Replacement Project – Initial Parking Alternatives

Staff also presented a referral report on parking as part of the Quarterly Report at the September 6, 2018 COTW meeting - “a report advising Council of the outcome of an initial analysis of parking options to reduce potential impacts to park space, with recommendations to consult on street parking option and to investigate underground or covered parking options in central park”.

Staff recommended investigating further the option of underground parking and Council supported that. The alternative, given Council direction for no net loss of park area with the new Crystal Pool would be parking distributed in the neighbourhood, along residential streets and in nearby lots. Robin outlined accessibility concerns relating to that model, shared by David Willows, with whom she discussed it.

The group felt that underground parking was more desirable from an accessibility point of view than distributed parking. AWG advised the City to:

- ensure that there is sufficient accessible parking near the facility to deal with peak demand during accessible programming

- implement measures to prevent unauthorized use of accessible spaces (others may be tempted to use it as pick-up/drop off parking, due to scarcity)
- ensure that any underground parking has good accessible access in the form of separated ramps and elevators
- consider that people who do not have accessible parking permits may find it difficult to walk from distributed parking while carrying exercise equipment

d. Accessibility Framework Update

Brad updated the AWG – they have had discussions with the consulting team. Jason Ducharme, Team Leader, MNP will be coming to do internal and external interviews during first week of October. Tim Cottrell suggested AWG be interviewed as a group as this is more cost effective, would need to consult with Jason (as he is the Team Leader).

The AWG would like to have confidential meetings with the consultants (without staff present), to help them understand the history and background.

Action: Brad will check into meetings (one on one with consultants) when speaking with Jason; will also check into Wednesday, October 3rd (after 4:00 pm), meeting as a group.

Members posed questions regarding timing for the completion of the Accessibility Framework contract. The final report is expected by the end of March 2019.

The AWG is aware of the terms of reference and deliverables posted during the procurement process but is not aware as to how the consultant plans to meet these deliverables and if what they plan to include is the same as what staff is saying to Council will be addressed by the Accessibility Framework. Brad did not see any problem with sharing MNP's submission.

e. Accessible Meeting Venue & Accessibility of City Hall

At the July 21, 2018 AWG meeting, Linda requested a meeting with Brad, Thomas Soulliere and Robin to explore options for making City Hall accessible. Derrick Newman, Facilities Manager is agreeable and would like to schedule a meeting of this group (once he is back in the office in October).

Staff's report to Council as part of the Quarterly Report recommended conducting an Indoor Air Quality Assessment at City Hall for about \$11,000 and finding a "suitable, comfortable meeting space outside of City Hall until assessments and improvements are substantially complete"

The staff report did not mention AWG recommendations for implementing a scent reduction policy and restrictions on pets, contained in the AWG report of December 2016.

The AWG then held a lengthy discussion regarding options for an accessible meeting space outside City Hall:

- Cook Street Activity Centre, making this washroom more accessible, or possibly meeting there regardless in the meantime.
- Robin is considering not continuing to participate remotely until an accessible meeting space can be provided
- Save-on Foods – turn up the heat, would this be a possibility in the meantime?
- Other options earlier identified included James Bay Library and next door to the Conference Centre.

Action: Brad and Robin to conduct a site visit to Save-on Foods Memorial Arena to see if it is an accessible venue for Robin. If it does not work, then Cook St. Village Activity Centre will be the site of the next meeting. Brad will also reach to Paul to discuss how to overcome his objections to Memorial Arena.

Action: Brad will arrange a meeting with Derrick Newman, Robin and Linda to discuss all options for making City Hall accessible.

f. Update On AWG and Advisory Committee Governance

Robin asked if there had been any progress on the two governance issues directed by Council, or if staff had deferred them entirely to the Accessibility Framework consultants. Brad said that a new AWG Terms of Reference for the AWG as an Advisory Committee to Council was an explicit deliverable in the Framework contract so staff had not worked on that and that there had been no movement on options for Advisory Committee Governance from the Clerk. It was determined that the consultant would be asked to comment on this aspect of governance also.

Robin inquired as to the process the Clerk had mentioned in June 2017 regarding advisory committees being disbanded for elections, to be reconstituted at the discretion of the new Council. Would Council likely not re-form the AWG until a new Terms of Reference is in place? Councillor Loveday and Brad advised the AWG on the process (how it was done in the past) with Advisory Committees when a new Council is in place. Committees generally continue to operate and are usually continued under a new Council.

Robin reminded Brad and the group that she had conducted research and analysis and the AWG had considered a summary document. Robin wants to share her research and work with the consultants.

g. Update On Off-Leash Pilot

Robin discussed the August 2, 2018 COTW minutes regarding off-leash pilots where the main motion as amended:

“That Council extend the pilot project for two years in Fisherman's Wharf Park, Oaklands Park, and Barnard Park and change the time from 6:30 a.m. to 9 a.m.”

Robin discussed:

- This makes it a 3-year pilot, so it is no longer a pilot. It is permanent – there is no going back. It never had a solid evaluation plan, relying instead on passive information

collection. It wasn't subject to much staff scrutiny for implications beforehand, and there was no opportunity for public comment.

- There were important aspects such as potential conflict with federal Victoria Harbour Migratory Bird Sanctuary regulations and accessibility impacts that were not considered in advance or when the extension was approved.
- There was evidence of accessibility issues in the input received but it was not reported and there was no Accessibility Impacts section in the staff report.
- Other initiatives such as this one are not subject to the same evidentiary burden as accessibility work. For instance, staff are recommending \$11,000 Indoor Air Quality Assessment before concrete action is taken on City Hall environment.
- These are the kinds of things we refer to when we talk about unconscious bias and ableism.

Councillor Ben Isitt arrived at 5:22 pm

Councillor Jeremey Loveday left the meeting at 5:24 pm

Action: Brad will look into whether a senior management person could do a review of Council reports for existence and adequacy of their accessibility impact statements.

h. Truncated Dome pilot

Update – medal buttons are in place at Blanshard and Fort – Susan wondered if they will be slippery when wet. Brad said they are scored and shouldn't be slippery, but will be monitoring this. The installation needs to not only be esthetically pleasing but also functional and cost effective for downtown locations. The buttons are more expensive than the mats. There is little contrast between the buttons and concrete.

Action: Brad will inform Linda once all installations are complete so that she might spread the word so affected residents can test them and provide feedback. Brad will ensure that a public announcement is made that will supply information on location and how to supply feedback.

i. Crystal Pool Update Re: Robin's Discussion With Adam

Action: Brad will arrange meeting with Adam and Robin to address issues affecting Robin that were discussed in July when she was absent from the meeting.

Elizabeth, a guest, spoke of her disability – chronic migraine, which is a neurological disorder and the barriers she faces. The form of lighting can be a huge barrier for her, she can't go into Commonwealth Pool for example because of flickering tubes which trigger migraines. Elizabeth explained that neurological disorders like hers are held by 11% of Canadians. At this time, Crystal Pool is the only center she can use as it has the dome and natural light. Another unnamed guest at meeting, reported that her son is autistic and he is very sensitive to lighting.

They would both like to attend the next Crystal Pool consultation.

Action: Please watch the AWG agendas posted on the City website for the next consultation.

Action: Guests are to forward information on the barriers to Brad, including the doctor's letter cited and he will share information on the barrier and the preferable forms of lighting with the group and forward to the consultants.

Elizabeth also noted that City Hall, 2nd floor is not accessible as far as lighting goes. The AWG took note and will take these barriers into consideration when considering accessibility of both Crystal Pool and City Hall.

Action: Brad to loop back around with consultant (Adam) and give him all comments.

With regards to parking options at Crystal Pool, Brad assured the AWG that accessibility will be part of the discussion and report back to Council. The bulk of on-site parking (if on-site parking is restricted to say 20 stalls) would be designated accessible and family parking.

Considerations: ensuring that there are sufficient permanent accessible parking stalls in the parking lot, accessible street parking adjacent to the facility, all accessible parking is well signed and

enforced, the capacity to temporarily designate stalls as accessible during activities which target persons with disabilities, pick-up and drop-off zones are designed to preclude the desire for other users to illegally use accessible stalls, due consideration of the equipment that centre users may be carrying, and ensuring that access to any underground parking is safe and accessible with features such as an elevator or divided pedestrian ramp of suitable grade and stalls sized to allow ramps and wheelchair access to vehicles. Plans need to acknowledge that not all people with disabilities can take transit, and many drive.

J) Polara APS features – deferred

5. New Business:

Access to Council Information and Meetings – Linda spoke about the technical issue with the webcast for COTW September 6. The video was sketchy and the sound did not work at the start of the meeting, including the report of AWG recommendations. Once again, Council proceedings were not accessible to Robin. Chris Dobbie also reported that the Closed Captioning (CC) function has not been enabled, making Council webcasting inaccessible for people who are deaf. Linda reported that the Council webcasting system is difficult to use with screen readers and does not allow such users to listen solely to the part of the webcast associated with a particular agenda item. They must listen to the entire webcast.

The AWG put forward the following motion:

Robin moved, Steve seconded

That Council direct staff to research and plan to address barriers in the Council documents and webcasting service and system/page and report to Council on financial implications as part of the 2019 Financial Planning process. Such barriers include but may not be limited to:

1. Inaccessibility of webcasts to people with hearing impairments.
2. Unreliability of webcasts for people who cannot attend City Hall,
3. Navigation issues on the page for people using screen readers (very difficult to find and play the webcast or access documents associated with agenda items), and

4. Lack of process for people who cannot attend City Hall to address Council.

Carried

6. Next Meeting – October 1, 2018

AWG requested Ismo Huso attend a meeting, Brad asked the AWG to forward any concerns with the parking services department to him and he would address them. Engineering is responsible for parking policy.

7. Adjournment at 5:55 pm