

## ACCESSIBILITY WORKING GROUP MINUTES

**Monday, October 2, 2017**

### **1. Roll Call:**

Present: Paul Jones (Acting Chair), Robin Bayley (via speaker phone), Susan Gallagher, Steve Bertrand, Chris Dobbie, Chris Marks

Councillor: Councillor Thornton-Joe, Councillor Jeremy Loveday

Staff: Brad Dellebuur, Christine Brinton

Guest: Christine P. from the Disability Resource Centre

Regrets: Linda Bartram

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### **2. Motion to accept the agenda of October 2, 2017:**

#### **Addressing action items, under business arising:**

“Update on Accessible Pedestrian Pilot” - added to agenda.

“Report on Timeline for the Bicycle Lanes Crosswalk Safety on Pandora, Susan G.” - added to agenda.

4b – Pet Restriction at City Hall – should now be “City Hall Environmental and Allergy Related Concerns”

#### **New Business Items (Robin):**

“Motion to recommend the City adopt a formal policy and guidance material regarding briefing Council on Accessibility impacts” and

“Motion for the AWG to recommend a representative on a dogs in parks committee”

Moved: Chris D.                      Seconded: Robin B.                      CARRIED

### **3. Motion to accept the minutes of September 11, 2017:**

Paul discussed a review of all action items in the minutes from the previous month. For example items such as the “checklist for the conference centre” have not been followed up on.

Under item c – Accessibly survey – change wording “HR director” to “Engagement Director”.

Under item g – Robin added – “Action: Councillor Thornton-Joe undertook to find out if hand soap and hand sanitizers are unscented and whether there are wall-mounted air fresheners or solid deodorant pucks in City Hall bathrooms”.

Motion to accept the September 11, 2017 minutes, as amended.

Moved: Susan G.                      Seconded: Steve B                      CARRIED

#### **4. BUSINESS ARISING DISCUSSION:**

- a) Proposed Statement of Commitment - Motion to ask Council Liaisons to propose adoption of the Statement of Commitment approved by the AWG at the March 6, 2017 meeting with possibly of the following being added to the beginning of the document.

*“Whereas the City of Victoria is a signatory to both the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination and the Vienna Declaration; and Whereas the City has committed to taking concrete action to identify, monitor, and proactively address forms of individualized and systemic racism and discrimination in the Victoria community; Whereas both these documents promote anti-discrimination of persons with disabilities; and Whereas the City of Victoria is subject to the BC Human Rights Code which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability*

*Be it resolved that the City of Victoria endorse the following statement of commitment adopted by the Victoria Accessibility Working Group on March 6, 2017”*

Moved: Paul J.                      Seconded: Chris M.                      CARRIED

Action: Council Liaisons (Loveday and Thornton-Joe) will bring forward to an appropriate Council meeting.

- b) **City Hall Environmental and Allergy Related Concerns** – deferred from September.

Linda had suggested that more education on disabilities was needed for staff and Council members. Robin and Linda feel that staff and Council need disability awareness training. Robin thinks this should come before we bring the issue allergy-related issues to Council for decision, so they will understand the legal and human rights framework for considering accessibility issues. Staff and Council will need specialized knowledge of the accepted process for assessing barriers and developing options and solutions, as well as principles for reasonable accommodation and proactively addressing barriers. This knowledge is important when there are conflicting rights and interests, as there often are in accommodating allergies. She said that bringing accessibility issues forward for decision without that basic understanding would be like asking Council to make land use decisions without knowledge of land use processes under the Municipal Act and the City's bylaws and zoning. Decision makers may need general disability training as well as information on specific disabilities and barriers.

Robin pointed out that although there may have been a long standing practice of allowing pets in City Hall, there was a fundamental change in 2014 to proactively encourage dogs in City Hall, with dog treats and publicizing the dog-friendly stance. Robin pointed out that the AWG has yet to have a full discussion of all the pros and cons and how the presence of dogs creates a barrier. The AWG has also not made a formal decision to tackle the perfume environmental allergy before pets.

Action: Chair to add to agenda for a future meeting – **Accessibility Awareness Training for the City of Victoria**

Action: Councillor Loveday will discuss with the City Human Resources Department and see what policies / training are currently in place.

Action: Robin asked members to help her develop written material to help others understand how allergies affect people who have them and the barriers allergens create, by providing their questions to her outside the meeting.

- c) **Children with Allergies and Crystal Pool activities** – deferred from September meeting.

The AWG discussed inviting a representative from the Crystal Pool and from RIV to an upcoming meeting.

**Motion:** Robin moved that the AWG request recreation staff and the RIV to come to a future AWG meeting to discuss accommodation of people with disabilities, including allergies, in City recreation programs.

Moved: Robin

Seconded: Paul

CARRIED

Robin informed the Committee that a human rights case alleging lack of appropriate policies and practices to accommodate children with severe allergies in recreational programs has been brought against another municipality at the BC Human Rights Tribunal. She asked that access to recreational programs for people with allergies be discussed at a future AWG meeting to which a representative of the Recreation Department and Recreation Integration Victoria are invited, in connection with the Crystal Pool renewal.

- d) **Over-arching Policy for Advisory Committees** – Discussion with C Coates – Councillor Loveday - Discussion and approval of *“AWG – Response of the Draft Advisory Bodies to Council Policy w recos Aug 2017”*

This item was deferred.

- e) Accessible Pedestrian Signal Pilot (from the July and September meetings – the AWG was to review the list (in September 11th minutes) and prioritize for the October meeting)

The AWG prioritized this list (see below)

Three intersections to be trialled are:

- Quadra @ Fisgard (CNIB) \*\*\*3
- Quadra @ Yates (CNIB) (replace with another intersection on the city's list because there are no push buttons at this intersection)
- Gosworth @ Hillside (Linda) \*\*\*1

- f) The AWG discussed the vacant position on the Active Transportation Advisory Committee.

**Action:** Christine/Brad to forward link to the Active Transportation Advisory Committee for information regarding recruitment.

- g) **Crosswalk Safety at Pandora Timeline** (Susan) – on July 17, 2017

Susan G. gave an overview of a timeline of action items from previous AWG minutes regarding the Pandora bike lane crossing safety (a person without sight, trying to cross the street and some cyclists not stopping at crosswalk). The AWG discussed the following:

- Robin thinks there could be low tech design solutions such as pavement markings in the cycling lanes to instruct cyclists to stop for pedestrians.
- Brad discussed the site meeting (see September minutes) where he met with Linda at that time it was decided by the AWG that there is a need for an education component, rather than installing more signs (at this time)
- Susan's understanding was that in 6 months' time, testing out the education component and have people become more aware and then if its not resolved, review issue again.
- Steve B. believes education has to come first.

**Action:** Brad will forward this section of the minutes to the staff liaison for the Active Transportation Advisory Committee and update AWG at the next meeting.

## 5. NEW BUSINESS

- a) Timing of pedestrian signal at Hillside and Blanshard, and obstruction of sidewalks on Wark Street near Hillside – Councillor Loveday to introduce these issues raised by Janice Lacouvee.

This was brought to Councillor Lovedays attention by the Hillside/Quadra Neighbourhood Association, as two accessibility concerns were raised. Janice, who brought this forward is meeting with engineering staff this week. Janice advised there are seniors who never cross the road as the timing is insufficient at that crossing.

Discussion of various timings in the City of Victoria. Douglas and Pandora is a concern also Blanshard at Finlayson / Tolmie.

Brad will have staff review and do some assessments.

6. **Date of next meeting:** November 6, 2017

\*\* Christine P, from the Disability Resource Centre asked if the minutes and agenda can be sent to her directly, each month.

7. **Adjournment:** 5:45 pm

Proposed Statement of Commitment to create a Barrier-Free Victoria  
February 3, 2017

The City of Victoria values the contributions made by all its citizens and believes that diversity strengthens the community.

The City of Victoria recognizes the wealth of knowledge and lived experience of people with disabilities and their essential role in creating a barrier-free Victoria and thus, will include the viewpoint and needs of persons with disabilities in its decisions.

The City of Victoria is committed to building an inclusive society and providing an accessible environment in which all individuals have access to the City's services and programs in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

The City of Victoria's policies, practices and procedures will ensure barrier free access for persons with disabilities to City facilities and participation in programs and processes including accessible customer service, information and communication, employment, the built environment and transportation.

The City of Victoria will ensure that all city employees are aware of their role in facilitating accessibility for persons with disabilities.

The City of Victoria will continue to prevent barriers by supporting positive attitudes that address "ableism" - attitudes which devalue and limit the potential of persons with disabilities.

In working towards its goals under this Statement, the City of Victoria is committed to creating a barrier-free city by meeting the requirements of existing and future legislation and by its own policies and goals related to the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to people with disabilities. To this end, all elected City officials and City employees have a role to play in meeting these goals.