

MINUTES
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS MEETING
BOARDROOM, SERVICE AND RESOURCE CENTRE,
411 DUNSMUIR STREET, NANAIMO, BC
WEDNESDAY, 2021-FEB-24, AT 4:00 P.M.

Present: Councillor Armstrong, Chair
Councillor Maartman
A. Breen, At Large Member (joined electronically)
S. Cameron, At Large Member (joined electronically)
T. Davenock, At Large Member (joined electronically)
L. Derksen, At Large Member (joined electronically)
S. Hamel, At Large Member (joined electronically)
R. Harlow, At Large Member (joined electronically 4:08 p.m.)
D. Hollins, At Large Member (joined electronically)
J. Maffin, At Large Member (joined electronically)
R. Pike, At Large Member (joined electronically)
E. Williamson, At Large Member

Staff: R. Harding, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture
B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works (joined electronically)
J. Van Horne, Director, Human Resources (joined electronically)
L. Wark, Director, Recreation and Culture
T. Doyle, Fire Chief (joined electronically)
L. Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning
J. Speed, Recreation Coordinator, Recreation Services Section
K. Kronstal, Social Planner (joined electronically)
S. Snelgrove, Deputy Corporate Officer
K. Lundgren, Recording Secretary

1. CALL THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS MEETING TO ORDER:

The Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness Meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:

- (a) Councillor Armstrong advised that Richard Harlow would be bringing forward an item under Other Business regarding live closed captioning service.
- (b) Councillor Armstrong advised that Lynn Wark, Director, Recreation and Culture, would be bringing forward an item under Other Business regarding Adapt Island.
- (c) Councillor Armstrong advised that she would be bringing forward an item under Other Business regarding the Canada Healthy Communities Initiative Grant.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

It was moved and seconded that the Agenda, as amended, be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES:

It was moved and seconded that the Minutes of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness Meeting held in the Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre, 411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Wednesday, 2020-NOV-25, at 5:05 p.m. be adopted as circulated. The motion carried unanimously.

5. PRESENTATIONS:

(a) Alessandro Iachelli, President, Nanaimo Pride Society

Introduced by Richard Harding, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture.

Alessandro Iachelli, President, Nanaimo Pride Society, provided a verbal presentation. Highlights included:

- Nanaimo Pride Society appreciates the support from the City of Nanaimo (the City) over the years and will continue to support the City on initiatives to make Nanaimo an inclusive and welcoming community
- Provided suggestions to improve diversity and inclusiveness within the City operations including:
 - Encouraging the use of identifying pronouns
 - Using gender inclusive language
 - Better representation of the LGBTQ community in printed and online materials such as the Parks and Recreation activity guide

R. Harlow joined the meeting electronically at 4:08 p.m.

- Diversity and inclusion training for City employees
- More visual representation of LGBTQ community during City promotions and functions
- Collaboration between Nanaimo Pride Society, the City and the Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce for a signage/sticker campaign for businesses and organizations
- Requesting Council to pass a bylaw banning conversion therapy within the City of Nanaimo
- Attendance at the 2019 Nanaimo Pride Festival doubled from 2018. This demonstrates that Nanaimo has come a long way in acceptance
- Nanaimo Pride Society is willing to be a leader along with any other organization that wants to embrace inclusion and diversity

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The banning of conversion therapy is an important step for municipalities to take
- The LGBTQ engagement process and a community survey to go out hopefully in March
- The policies surrounding the sticker campaign program
- Requesting the list of recommendations from the Nanaimo Pride Society to be forwarded to the Committee for information

It was moved and seconded that the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness recommend that Council immediately ban conversion therapy within the City of Nanaimo. The motion carried unanimously.

Committee discussion continued as follows:

- The City could be helpful in providing awareness of services available for the LGBTQ community
- Vancouver Island University (VIU) offered diversity training to their staff
- Diversity and inclusion training would be beneficial for City staff and school district teachers
- Requesting that Alessandro Iachelli, President, Nanaimo Pride Society, share the result of the community survey once completed

(b) Brain Hackwood, Assistant Director of Planning and Operations, School District 68

Introduced by Richard Harding, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture.

Brain Hackwood, Assistant Director of Planning and Operations, School District 68, provided a verbal presentation. Highlights included:

- School District 68 facilities will be undergoing seismic upgrades over the next 10 years
- Taking a proactive approach on accessibility at schools
- Rick Hansen Foundation accessibility audit
- Seeking input from the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness (ACAI) on the facility upgrades

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- VIU had all buildings audited by the Rick Hansen Foundation
- VIU's experience and some inexpensive ways to improve accessibility and inclusiveness (gender neutral and wheelchair accessible washrooms)
- Availability of simple self audit materials
- Rick Hansen Foundation audit will inform what is incorrect, but does not provide details on fixing the problem
- The perspective of different types of disabilities to identify barriers that able bodied individuals may not recognize
- Recognized that schools occasionally require public access for events such as voting or renting parts of the facility

- Suggestion that organizations such as the Child Development Centre may be able to provide feedback from parents of students in the school district
- Big gains can be made by simple measures such as inclusive signage

Brain Hackwood, Assistant Director of Planning and Operations, School District 68, noted that the School District is piloting gender neutral washrooms, and so far the pilot has been successful.

Richard Harding, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture, gave thanks for the presentation and to the committee for sharing their feedback. He proposed a potential opportunity for the City and School District 68 to work together on accessibility audits of facilities.

(c) REIMAGINE NANAIMO – Phase 1 Update and Phase 2 Next Steps

Karin Kronstal, Social Planner, provided a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:

- Phase one of REIMAGINE NANAIMO exceed expectations in terms of outreach
- Phase two will include exploring options (more refined phase of the process)
- Provided the highlights of the phase one engagement
- Distribution of responses show a proportionate geographical representation
- Ways to overcome some of the barriers to participation in the REIMAGINE NANAIMO engagement
- Provided some of the engagement results of what people love most about Nanaimo as well as what concerns people about Nanaimo
- Phase two will include developing the City Portrait related to the Doughnut Economics framework model
- A City Portrait looks at local/social and ecological indicators
- Provided a summary of indicators currently used by the Regional District of Nanaimo as well as examples of indicators identified in the Health and Housing Action Plan
- Hoping to hold an inter-committee workshop on this topic to include experts in various fields

6. REPORTS:

(a) 2020 Annual Report for Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness

Introduced by Richard Harding, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture.

Lynn Wark, Director, Recreation and Culture, spoke regarding the 2020 annual report. Highlights included:

- All topics described in the 2020 Work Plan were covered (along with additional topics) with the exception of the “Guiding Principles Summary” topic
- Overall ACAI had a very successful first year and achieved more than anticipated

- Seeking approval from the committee that the report accurately reflects the year

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Suggestion to include a short summary of the discussion had at the 2020-NOV-11 ACAI meeting regarding improvements
- “Guiding Principals Summary” to be included in the 2021 Work Plan

It was moved and seconded that the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness approve and provide to Council the 2020 Annual Report for information. The motion carried unanimously.

(b) Leap Program Review - Phases 1 and 2

Introduced by Richard Harding, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture.

Lynn Wark, Director, Recreation and Culture, spoke regarding the Leisure Economic Access Policy (LEAP) program review. Highlights included:

- Introduced Jeff Speed, Recreation Coordinator, Recreation Services Section
- Significant drop in LEAP program usage stemmed a review to assess if the program is still meeting the community’s needs
- An inventory of free and low cost Parks, Recreation and Culture opportunities is provided in the report appendix
- First two phases of the Leap Program Review suggest that the program is going well; however, it could be better marketed
- In comparison to financial assistance programs in other municipalities, the LEAP program requires more documentation
- Listed the top barriers to participation and how they can be addressed
- Census poverty information indicates a continued need for LEAP program in Nanaimo
- Targeting specific areas where there are more people living in poverty

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Suggesting a less rigorous registration process in terms of the required supporting documents
- Considerations for individuals who may not meet the low income requirement; however, still have financial barriers that limit their disposable income (ie: medication expenses, or they are single parents)
- Numerous paper documents a barrier to visually impaired
- Documents written in a more accessible language (third grade reading level)
- Application process should be made as simple as possible, and placing less of a concern on those attempting to take advantage of the program

Richard Harding, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture, spoke regarding the history of the LEAP program.

It was moved and seconded that the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness receive the information for the LEAP Program Review for Phases 1 and 2 and approve Phase 3 to proceed as outlined. The motion carried unanimously.

7. OTHER BUSINESS:

(a) Live Closed Captioning Service

Richard Harlow spoke regarding services available to allow live closed captioning of committee and council meetings. This would be a valuable service to allow many people the opportunity to participate.

Committee discussion took place regarding audio and video upgrades in the Shaw Auditorium, Vancouver Island Conference Centre.

It was moved and seconded that the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness recommend that Council direct Staff to implement a live captioning service for all future Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness meetings with the potential to expand to all meetings of Council and Council's committees. The motion carried unanimously.

(b) Adapt Island

Lynn Wark, Director, Recreation and Culture, spoke regarding Adapt Island. Highlights included:

- Adapt island is in their second year as a registered society
- Their goal is to make outdoor recreation and sport activities as accessible as possible
- The Committee, by unanimous consent, agreed to invite Adapt Island to speak at a future ACAI meeting

Committee discussion took place regarding the importance of physical exercise and the positive impact that has on mental health.

(c) Canada's Healthy Communities Initiative

Councillor Armstrong advised the committee of the Government of Canada's Healthy Communities Initiative grant and requested the Committee's input on identifying projects that may qualify.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The importance of improving the sound and captioning of council and committee meetings
- There is a closed captioning service offered through Zoom
- Accessibility of the Beban Park fitness centre

Richard Harding, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture, advised the Committee of an improvement plan for the Beban Park Pool; however, the plan is in need of more advocates to push forward. The plan will be forwarded to the committee for information.

Committee discussion continued as follows:

- The City offering programs through Zoom
- Anticipating strong competition for this grant
- Consideration for the senior population and isolation due to COVID-19
- Staff to follow up with Shaw TV regarding closed captioning of live streamed council meetings
- Scheduling an additional ACAI meeting for March
- The consideration for a described video (DV) service that narrates a description of visuals on a screen

8. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 5:58 p.m. that the meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CORPORATE OFFICER