

**Advisory Committee on Accessibility**  
**Minutes**  
**Monday, April 19, 2021**  
**Zoom**  
**5:00 PM**

**Attendance:** Barry Martin, Chair, Robert Hunn, Vice-Chair, Councillor Isa Lee, Jewell Lofsky, Nahid Verma, Kaushi Ragunathan, Laura Meffen, Mona Nazif, Senior Manager HR Client Services and, Laura Gold, Council/Committee Coordinator

**Regrets:**

Nahid Verma  
Rita Lam  
George George

**Guests:**

Mary Creighton, Director of Recreation, Portia Lee, Recreation Coordinator, Programs and Research, and Jason Tsien, Senior Manager of Business Improvement, and the Seniors Advisory Committee (Gail Leet, Diane Gaby, Patricia Anderson, Satya Arora, Lily Liu, Laila Jiwa, KY Chu and Kirk MacDonald )

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action Items
<b>1. Call to Order</b>	The Advisory Committee on Accessibility convened at 5:06 PM with Barry Martin in the Chair.	
<b>2. Essential Accessibility</b>	<p>Yosh Jurkic, and CSO Spiro from Essential Accessibility provided a demonstration of the City's Accessibility Features on the City's portal/website.</p> <p>Elton Chong, Client Advisor, ITS, City of Markham, was in attendance to assist in answering the Committee's questions.</p> <p>Mr. Jurkic advised that Essential Accessibility helps organizations ensure their digital assets meet accessibility standards that exist under the <i>Accessibility for Ontarians Disability Act (AODA)</i>. Some of the services Essential Accessibility provides to organizations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Providing advice on building an accessible website;</li><li>• Conducting accessibility audits of web content;</li></ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring screen readers can access the content.</li> </ul> <p>The following responses were provided to inquiries from the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The text reader does not translate text, but can read text in a select list of other languages;</li> <li>The text reader speed can be adjusted;</li> <li>The application can be used on any website or PDF document, as long as the content is accessible;</li> <li>Magnifier technology can be used to make the text larger;</li> <li>AODA requires organizations to adhere to its <u>Web Content Accessibility Guidelines</u> to make sure digital assets are accessible to everyone;</li> <li>The software is free to download, and it only needs to be downloaded the first time you use it.</li> </ul>	
<b>3. Accessibility, Recreation and Audit</b>	<p>Mary Creighton, Director of Recreation, Portia Lee, Recreation Coordinator, Programs and Research, and Jason Tsien, Senior Manager of Business Development spoke in regards to the City's recreational accessibility programs and features.</p> <p>Some of the accessible services provided by Recreation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compliance with all AODA and City of Markham Accessibility guidelines;</li> <li>Inclusion services that are available to adults and youth;</li> <li>Inclusion services for children that require support to participate in the City's day camps;</li> <li>Note that inclusion support may include modifying an activity or providing encouragement;</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Help for residents that have challenges accessing City services due to financial or physical barriers;</li><li>• Review of programs through an accessibility lens;</li><li>• Offering of adapted dance, swim, cooking and tennis programs led by trained instructors.</li></ul> <p>Staff provided the following responses to inquiries from the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At this time, there is a limited offering of virtual programs for seniors and persons with a disability;</li><li>• Partnership with Seniors' Clubs to offer affordable seniors classes and programs;</li><li>• Residents that need support, either financially or through the City's inclusion program, can request help, or may be referred from an outside group (each case is reviewed on an individual basis);</li><li>• The amount and type of subsidy will vary based on the resident;</li><li>• The City will continue to review its recreational services to ensure they are inclusive;</li><li>• Programs in languages other than English are not provided- agencies and partners are relied upon to provide these types of programs;</li><li>• The City offers translation services to help navigate the City's services through the Contact Centre;</li><li>• 4500 seniors were called at the start of the pandemic to ensure they were fine-approximately 100 seniors indicated that wanted to stay connected;</li><li>• Programs are promoted through various channels, but also rely on stakeholder groups to help get the word out;</li><li>• The City continues to look at new ways to reach residents;</li></ul>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Councillors also update residents on City services through their newsletters;</li> <li>• Currently only producing Markham Life virtually, may look at printing sections of the magazine in the future.</li> </ul>	
<b>4. Approval of the Minutes</b>	<p><b>a) Approval of Action Items</b></p> <p>Moved by Jewell Lofsky Seconded by Bob Hunn</p> <p>That the Minutes of the April 19, 2021, Advisory Committee on Accessibility, be approved as presented.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Carried</b></p> <p><b>b) Review of Action Items</b></p> <p>Committee reviewed the action items from the previous meeting.</p>	
<b>5. Diversity Action Plan Update</b>	<p>Mona Nazif, Senior Manager HR Client Services provided a Diversity Action Plan Update. The RFP to update the plan went out in March. Submissions are due May 5<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p>Staff will consult both the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and the Seniors Advisory Committee during the community consultation phase, which is targeted to be held during the fall.</p>	
<b>6. Sub-Committee</b>	<p><u>Website Sub-Committee</u></p> <p>Jewell Lofsky advised that the Website Sub-Committee has been actively reviewing the City's website. It is currently looking at if the diversity and accessibility sections of the website should be together or separate. The Sub-Committee hopes to provide a more comprehensive update to the Committee in June.</p>	
<b>7. New Business</b>	<p>Barry Martin, Chair advised that he will be resigning from the Committee, as he will be moving out of Markham in June. The May 17<sup>th</sup> meeting will be his last meeting.</p> <p>Robert Hunn agreed to Chair the May 17<sup>th</sup> Advisory Committee on Accessibility meeting.</p>	

	There was a brief discussion on the replacement of the Chair.	
<b>8. Next Meeting Date</b>	The next meeting of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility will be held on May 17, 2021.	
<b>9. Adjournment</b>	The Advisory Committee on Accessibility adjourned at 6:44 PM.	