



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

MINUTES

ACCESS AWARENESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, November 4, 2009
4:00 P.M.
Council Chambers, Esquimalt Municipal Hall

PRESENT: Councillor Don Linge – Vice Chair
Councillor Meagan Brame
Barbara Amberstone
Joe Buczkowski
Paul Newcombe
Lorne Argyle
Bob McKie – Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee Representative
Wanda Le Roux – BC Transit

STAFF: Andy Katschor – Parks Manager (Staff Liaison)
Jeff Miller – Director of Engineering and Public Works (Staff Liaison)
Deborah Liske – Recording Secretary

REGRETS: Brian Gray – Chair
Meagan Duncan
Emmy Labonté

1. CALL TO ORDER

Councillor Linge, Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

(1) Jeff Miller, Director of Engineering and Public Works – Staff Liaison

Jeff Miller, the new Director of Engineering and Public Works introduced himself to the committee and provided an overview of his education and work experience.

(2) Wanda Le Roux – BC Transit Representative

Wanda Le Roux, Manager of Transit Planning introduced herself to the committee and will represent BC Transit on the Access Awareness Committee.

3. LATE ITEMS

There were no late items

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by Joe Buczkowski, seconded by Councillor Brame, that the agenda of the Access Awareness Advisory Committee meeting of November 4, 2009 be approved as presented. The motion **CARRIED**.

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Moved by Councillor Brame, seconded by Bob McKie, that the minutes of the Access Awareness Advisory Committee meeting of September 9, 2009 be approved as presented. The motion **CARRIED**.

6. **OLD BUSINESS**

- (3) Measuring Up Facilities Audit
(a) Development of "Gold Star" Program

Andy Katschor, Manager of Parks suggested that a sub-committee be formed to develop the "gold star" program. Mr. Katschor reviewed the "gold star" accessibility program as suggested by SPARC BC in the audit report. The Gold Star Accessibility Program sub-committee will include Andy Katschor, Councillor Brame and Lorne Argyle.

- (b) Grant Priorities

Andy Katschor, Manager of Parks, reviewed the audit priority list and noted some items can be completed without utilizing funds from the grant. It was further noted it would cost approximately \$ 4000.00 to install an automatic door opener for the public entrance at the Esquimalt Public Safety Building.

Moved by Joe Buczkowski, seconded by Councillor Brame that the remaining Measuring Up grant monies be utilized to install an automatic door opener for the public entrance at the Esquimalt Public Safety Building. The motion **CARRIED**.

7. **NEW BUSINESS**

- (1) 2010 Access Awareness Days Preparations

Access Awareness Day 2010 is scheduled for the first Saturday in June (June 5th). Councillor Linge and Bob McKie will participate on the sub-committee to organize the 2010 event.

Barbara Amberstone will provide (at the February meeting), information that will assist with planning and organizing the Access Awareness event.

- (4) Transit Developments
(a) Routes

Wanda Le Roux, BC Transit representative provided the committee with information on scheduled changes and improvements to local transit operations. These included:

- starting in November, the McTavish interchange will be completely rebuilt resulting in a large amount of changes in that area.
- introduction of a new semi-rapid express route from downtown to UVic.
- introduction of new Bay Street to Dockyard route.
- trial period of extended late night service (till 2 a.m.) on # 4, # 6 and # 14 buses.

Ms. Le Roux noted that information regarding the Bay Street route will be provided to committee members as it becomes available.

(b) Bus Shelters

Ms. Le Roux reported BC Transit has received funding from the province to upgrade and install new bus shelters. BC Transit will focus on upgrading and installing new shelters in the Greater Victoria area. Ms. Le Roux advised that BC Transit is interested in being made aware of any bus stops that require upgrading to improve accessibility.

Current initiatives of BC Transit include:

- working on guidelines to ensure infrastructure development is completed correctly from the beginning.
- remedies to reduce the amount of graffiti on bus shelters, such as utilizing plexi-glass and altering shelter design.
- investigating the utilization of solar power to light bus stops.

A committee member noted that improvements need to be made to accommodate individuals with disabilities at large volume stops in the downtown core where it is difficult to access the buses. Designating a specific area where individuals with disabilities can be seen by the drivers would help with this issue. It was also noted that additional cross-town buses are required and that it is difficult to find information.

Ms. Le Roux noted the improvements to signage at the Royal Oak exchange and that the new rapid transit proposal would assist in reducing the large volume of buses that go into the downtown core – only specific buses would go into the core. Ms. Le Roux further noted that rural area usage and routes are currently being reviewed to ensure the routes and usage are being widely utilized. Information about BC Transit can be found at the transit website and in the rider's guides.

A committee member enquired if bus shelters would be installed on Parklands Drive. Ms. Le Roux noted that BC Transit would work with the municipality when it was determined shelters would be installed.

(5) Report from UBCM – Councillor Brame

Councillor Brame provided a report on information she obtained from SPARC BC at the Union of British Columbia Municipalities convention. Key points were:

- inclusion is as important as accessibility
- building accessible communities at the beginning is cheaper than retrofitting
- need to create seamless, age in place communities
- SPARC BC encourages the development of age friendly and disability friendly official community plans and has developed guidelines for local governments for creating accessible communities

Councillor Brame noted that visitors to the community need to be included when incorporating inclusiveness and accessibility. Accessible tourism in Esquimalt is an area to promote on the municipal website. Councillor Brame provided a handout with helpful hints on how to do this. This item will be discussed further at the next meeting. Councillor Brame also acknowledged the positive steps Esquimalt is taking to move forward with accessibility.

Jeff Miller, Director of Engineering and Public Works noted the importance in identifying accessibility issues in the community.

A committee member noted the official opening of the new crosswalk at Esquimalt Road and Grafton Street and that it lacks an audible signal. Andy Katschor, Parks Manager, noted that the SPARC BC audit noted that audible signals should be installed at all intersections with a marked crosswalk. Mr. Katschor noted his improved awareness of inclusiveness and accessibility since participating on the committee. Mr. Katschor further noted that accessibility is a component that has been built into the Japanese gardens at Esquimalt Gorge Park.

Joe Buczkowski advised the committee that his term on the Access Awareness Advisory Committee expires on December 31st and that he would not be seeking reappointment due to other commitments. Mr. Buczkowski thanked the committee for allowing his participation and noted that his time on the committee was very enjoyable and eye-opening.

8. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Access Awareness Advisory Committee will take place on January 13, 2010.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Councillor Don Linge adjourned the meeting at 4:46 p.m.

Councillor Don Linge, Vice Chair

This 21st day of January, 2010