



## **Accessibility Advisory Committee**

### **NOTES**

**Wednesday, November 22, 2023, 5:30 p.m.**  
**Open to public attendance in Committee Room G**  
**Lower Level, City Hall**  
**Committee members may attend electronically**

#### **PRESENT:**

Councillor Jaimie McEvoy	Chair
Karen Basran	Human Resources Business Partner
Shannon Dolton*	Committee Member
Hazel Fitzpatrick*	Committee Member
Karla Olson	Committee Member
Julia Schoennagel	Committee Member

#### **REGRETS:**

Anne Bélanger	Committee Member
Taryn Bruckshaw	Committee Member
Iris Cheng	Committee Member
Nancy Kato	Committee Member
Vic Leach	Committee Member

#### **STAFF PRESENT:**

Mike Anderson	Manager of Transportation, Engineering
Hailey Finnigan	Communications Coordinator, Office of the CAO
Chris Koth	Manager of Programs and Community Development, Library
Anur Mehdic	Social Planner, Climate Action, Planning and Development
Carilyn Cook	Committee Clerk, Legislative Services

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#### **1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Although quorum was not achieved, Councillor McEvoy opened the meeting at 5:36 p.m. and recognized with respect that New Westminister is on the unceded and unsurrendered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples. He acknowledged that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. He recognized that, as a City, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.

**2. INTRODUCTIONS**

None.

**3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

None.

**4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**4.1 September 27, 2023**

As quorum was not achieved, the minutes were not adopted.

**4.2 October 25, 2023**

As quorum was not achieved, the minutes were not adopted.

**5. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

None.

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

**6.1 Local Community Accessibility Grant Application**

Hailey Finnigan, Communications Coordinator, advised committee members of the Local Community Accessibility Grant opportunity and noted that:

- The grants are available to all local governments;
- The New Westminster Police Department (NWPD) is hoping to apply for two grants for:
  - Funding to cover the cost of a feasibility study for the NWDP to replace the lift in the Police Station's lobby that was installed in 1984. A contractor and engineer will look into the lift having a larger footprint in order to fit both a mobility device and an aide inside the lift;
  - Funding to cover the cost of a new accessibility podium, as the current one is damaged and with no height accessibility; and
- It is requested that the Committee write a letter in support of the applications.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Finnigan provided the following comments:

- While there are two entrances to the Police Station, the one near the lift is on Columbia Street and that will be the one that is assessed;
- The grant money is coming from the provincial government;
- Other city departments may also submit grant applications requesting to receive up to \$25k in funding;
- The lift will be improved and a new accessibility podium will be purchased regardless of the outcome of the grant applications;
- A third grant request for a feasibility study to improve the Sixth Street entrance may be possible;
- Those who find the stairs at the Sixth Street entrance difficult to use are encouraged to use the lift instead;
- An intercom is currently located just outside of the lift, allowing for after-hour communication; however, improving that communication tool will be looked at during the feasibility study;
- Various accessibility podium vendors have been researched and the cost of a podium runs from \$8k to \$14k, with \$9k being the average price for a fully accessible podium; and
- If a grant is secured for the cost of a new podium, it will save asking Council to fund it out of the City's budget;

Hazel Fitzpatrick, Committee Member and New Westminster Police Department volunteer, shared their experience using the current accessibility podium at the Police Department noting that they currently need to be lowered in order to use the podium and that accessibility equipment is expensive.

Discussion ensued and committee members provided the following comments:

- If possible, other alternatives should be explored as the cost of accessibility podiums seems excessive; however, they may become more cost effective if more facilities purchased them; and
- Society is heading toward universal accessibility and once that becomes commonplace the prices of things will drop.

## 7. **END OF MEETING**

The meeting ended at 6:00 p.m.

8. **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

This is the last scheduled meeting of the committee year.

Certified correct,

Original Signed  
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Councillor Jaimie McEvoy

Original Signed  
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Carilyn Cook, Committee Clerk