

Report CCR-AAC-21-16

To: Dwight Burley and Members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee
From: Rob Hatten, Communications Officer
Meeting Date: May 27, 2016
Subject: Accessibility Advisory Committee Terms of Reference Update
Status:

Recommendation(s)

WHEREAS the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) Terms of Reference outlines the scope and responsibilities of the AAC, in respect to the Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act;

AND WHEREAS the AAC Terms of Reference defines the membership of the subcommittee;

AND WHEREAS the membership definitions are very specific and limit public participation on the subcommittee;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Report CCR-AAC-21-14 be received;

AND THAT the amended AAC Terms of Reference as presented in Report CCR-AAC-21-16 be endorsed.

Background

Under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, municipalities with more than 10,000 residents are required to have an AAC. The role of the AAC is to provide recommendations to County Council about accessibility-related issues on behalf of all residents within Grey County.

Each municipality can structure its AAC in any way that works best for the community. The only requirement is for the majority of committee members to be persons with disabilities. Municipal staff can support the committee, but public members should help determine priorities.

In 2013, Grey County was facing challenges maintaining membership on the AAC. At the time, the Terms of Reference was amended to ensure the committee was compliant with legislation. Currently, the structure for voting members is as follows:

- a. One member of County Council (Corporate Service Committee); plus
- b. Three residents of Grey County who are persons with disabilities; and
- c. One person who is an advocate for persons with a disability, such as the parent of a child with a disability.

This revised structure has allowed the committee to remain compliant; however, the specific wording is restrictive. The current Terms of Reference limits the number of public members on the AAC to four and prevents anyone without a disability from qualifying.

Having public participation and input on accessibility issues is vital to represent the needs of the region. The County can be more inclusive by allowing more voting members to sit on the committee. Allowing more members would also make it easier for the committee to meet quorum.

Another way to increase the effectiveness of the Terms of Reference is to allow public members to sit on the committee even if they don't have a disability. There are many passionate and knowledgeable advocates in the community. When recruiting for the current committee term, Grey County received applications from two interested public advocates. Neither applicant had a disability, but both had a great deal of knowledge and experience with one candidate employed by an organization that advocates for people with disabilities, promotes independent living and provides accessibility resources and training. Despite the strong background of both applicants, neither was eligible for the committee under the current terms of reference.

Attached to this report is an amended version of the AAC Terms of Reference. Changes have been highlighted.

Financial / Staffing / Legal / Information Technology

Considerations

Adding more public members would result in a slight increase to mileage compensation. There are no other staffing, IT or legal considerations.

Link to Strategic Goals / Priorities

Corporate Strategic Plan goal 6.7 – Ensure county services and programs are inclusive, accessible, and reflective of the diversity of the population.

Respectfully submitted by,

Rob Hatten
Communications Officer

Director Sign Off: *Sharon Vokes*

Accessibility Advisory Committee

Purpose:

To comply with ODA and AODA legislation and to provide recommendations to the Corporate Services Committee regarding accessibility-related issues on behalf of all residents within the County of Grey. Scope of Responsibility:

Below is a list of 6 duties of the Committee as legislated in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act:

- a) Advise Grey County Council each year about the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of Grey County's multi-year accessibility plan.
- b) Provide advice when requested by Council on the accessibility for persons with disabilities to a building, structure or premises:
 - i. Purchased, constructed, renovated, owned or operated by Grey County and participating municipalities;
 - ii. Considered for new lease;
 - iii. Provided as a municipal capital facility under an agreement in accordance with the Municipal Act.
- c) Review in a timely manner the site plans and drawings described under Section 41 of the Planning Act when requested.
- d) In response to circulated plans the Committee shall review and provide timely comment to Council or its designates on site plans prepared for major renovations and newly constructed developments including new commercial, institutional, industrial, major residential and other development subject to site plan control undertaken by the County.
- e) Perform any other functions required by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and/or its regulations.
- f) Provide advice on the accessibility for persons with disabilities as it relates to all new standards under the AODA.

Membership:

The Committee has been formed in compliance with the AODA and ODA to include 50% plus one of persons with disabilities. The remainder of the members includes political representation. **Staff provide ongoing support.**

Members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee shall be selected and appointed by County Council.

Note: Term of membership of public members is the term of council (currently four years). Other members may change on an annual basis.

To avoid conflict of interest, voting members who are persons with disabilities may not be Grey County employees.

Neither the Committee nor any member thereof shall pledge the credit of the County in any manner whatsoever, nor shall the Committee or any member thereof authorize any expenditure or expend public monies in any manner unless authorized by Council.

Voting Members

- a) **The majority of voting members on the Accessibility Advisory Committee must be persons with disabilities, or persons advocating for a family member with a disability.**
- b) **One member of Grey County Council (Corporate Services Committee)**
- c) **Other interested members of the public who advocate for people with disabilities and show a high degree of accessibility knowledge.**

Non-Voting Members

The Accessibility Advisory Committee's Non-Voting Members shall consist of;

- d) **Staff resources or representatives from Grey County's member municipalities;**
- e) **Grey County Chief Administrative Officer**
- f) **Other Grey County staff resources**

Chair and Vice Chair:

The Chair and Vice Chair shall be elected from the voting members on an annual basis.

Meetings:

Meetings occur ~~at least quarterly~~ at the call of the Chair or ~~as~~ determined by the Committee (approximately four ~~to five meetings~~ per year).

Quorum:

A quorum shall consist of more than 50% of the ~~membership voting members~~ of the Committee.

Addendum November 5, 2013: Procedural By-law 4821-13, section 24.5: "If the majority of appointments to an advisory committee are not Members of Council, the Terms of Reference of the Advisory Committee may provide for Quorum to be achieved using alternate forms of attendance including, but not limited to, Skype, teleconference or other electronic means."

Reporting Relationship:

The Accessibility Advisory Committee reports directly to the Corporate Services Committee with recommendations being finalized by County Council.

Statutory Authority

Ontarians With Disabilities Act (ODA)

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

County of Grey Procedural By-law

Lead Staff:

County Clerk/ Director of Council Services

Communications Officer

Administrative Assistant to the County Clerk / Committee Coordinator