

MINUTES
ACCESSIBILITY AND DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room 2 and via MS Teams

770 Vernon Avenue

Wednesday, March 13, 2024, at 5:01 p.m.

Present: Councillor Mena Westhaver (Chair), Heidi Bada, Manjit Bains, Rae Franklin (via Teams, 5:06 p.m.), Stephan Herman (via Teams), Tony Kiyak (via Teams), Laurie-Anne Keith (via Teams), Susan Mader, Swapna Mazumder, Reed Poynter, Caroline Quan (via Teams)

Staff: Sheila Allen, Director, Corporate Services (via Teams, 5:08 p.m.); Cristina Caravaca, Senior Manager, Community Services; Megan Squires, Senior Transportation Planner; Engineering; Dale Samsonoff, Human Resources Manager; Planning and Programs; Sharon Froud, Deputy Manager, Legislative Services; Sarah Faria, Community Programmer II – Events, Volunteers and Film, Parks, Recreation and Community Services; Mais Hajaj, Consultant for Accessibility, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Human Resources; Angela Hawkshaw, Committee Clerk

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

MOVED by R. Poynter and Seconded by S. Mader: “That the Minutes of the Accessibility and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee meeting held February 3, 2024 be adopted as circulated.”

CARRIED

CHAIR’S REMARKS

The Chair made the following comments, and the following was noted:

- Assistance is offered to individuals requiring help with transporting garbage bins to the curb within Saanich.
- Celebrating successes is encouraging and motivating.

COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

The Deputy Manager of Legislative Services provided information on committee procedures. The following was noted in response to questions and during committee discussion:

- The selection process is confidential and conducted by Council only. Emphasis is on recruiting individuals with diverse backgrounds and experiences.
- Saanich's plans and programs are the primary focus of the Advisory Committees.
- Proposed topics must align with the Terms of Reference.
- Decisions regarding budget, legislation, and staff reports, are carefully considered by Council. Financial planning and decision-making frameworks are open for discussion and feedback.
- Residents of Saanich who have suggestions or feedback are directed to Council rather than the Advisory Committees.

COMMITTEE ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

- Programs in recreation centres offered to people with various sensory challenges could be considered for a future presentation.
- Improving accessibility of online forms and facilities, such as recreation centers, is important.
- Learning from the practices of other municipalities could be beneficial.
- Feedback received through the website and online surveys would be appreciated.
- Future presentations could involve exploring community groups and organizations.

The Deputy Manager exited the meeting at 5:36 p.m.

WINTER FESTIVAL PROPOSAL

The Community Programmer II – Events, Volunteers and Film provided an overview of the Winter Festival Proposal (report on file). The following was noted in response to questions and during committee discussion:

- An emphasis placed on holidays that celebrate various faiths and cultures rather than presenting a generalized celebration is preferred.
- Ensuring venue accessibility, with inquiries made regarding elevators/escalators is appreciated.
- Establishing partnerships with external businesses that could offer activities and education is preferred over sidewalk sales.
- The deliberate incorporation of diverse faiths is intentional. Uptown Shopping Centre is aligned with this approach. Efforts are committed to ensuring that this is executed with respect and appropriateness.
- Partnering with the Uptown Shopping Centre during the Multicultural Festival has fostered an authentic relationship.
- Each community group could represent a distinct cultural group and could offer engaging activities to encourage visitors to move through each station.
- Accessible tents, heating stations, and suitable seating arrangements could be explored to assist all ages.
- The event is anticipated to take place on a weekend day, lasting for 3 to 4 hours, and held annually.
- The budget will be presented to Council.
- A future presentation to review the formal plan would be appreciated.
- Building upon experiences and learning from both successes and challenges is the approach.
- BC Transit could provide complimentary services for individuals to utilize the public transit system.

The Senior Manager of Community Services and the Community Programmer II exited the meeting at 5:55 p.m.

DRAFT ROAD SAFETY ACTION PLAN

The Senior Transportation Planner gave a presentation (PowerPoint on file) on the Draft Road Safety Action Plan. The following was noted in response to questions and during committee discussion:

- Comprehensive collision data could enhance understanding issues at hand. Exploring this

- data from an equity perspective could be beneficial information.
- The Active Transportation Plan (ATP) outlines a 30-year strategy for integrating sidewalks, bike lanes, and a bike network.
- This plan will be put into action upon its adoption by Council in the summer.
- Exploring data regarding the reduction in accidents in comparison to previous records could be beneficial.
- Allocation of budget and prioritization are crucial considerations. No funding has been allocated at this time.
- Each plan that is implemented in Saanich will work in tandem.
- Thanks was given for the recently updated speed signs.
- Saanich is the first municipality on Vancouver Island to implement a Road Safety Action Plan.
- Main feedback from consultations indicates positivity towards a focus on safety.
- The ATP could be enhanced with a focus on understanding why people aren't utilizing the trails and bike lanes and then prioritizing safety measures accordingly.
- Accessibility to all accident data in Saanich from the Insurance Corporation of BC (ICBC) is currently not available. Negotiations for future access could be pursued.
- Embracing simple solutions like providing amenities at bus stops could play a pivotal role in encouraging public use.
- The potential noise camera pilot project could prove crucial for individuals with sensitivities to noise.
- Collaboration with schools around safety initiatives like "Safe Routes to School", demonstrates an effort to prioritize safety in educational settings.
- Although installing speed bumps at every school could be beneficial, this is a costly process.

ACKNOWLEDGING EVENTS IN FEBRUARY

The Consultant for Accessibility, Equity and Inclusion gave an update on the events that were celebrated in February and the following was noted:

- International Women's Day was celebrated with inspiring stories and facts shared on the staff website.
- World Down Syndrome Day was marked with a march in Victoria and yellow and blue decorations in the hall.
- Ramadan was given recognition at the hall.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion from R. Poynter the meeting adjourned at 6.55 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for May 1, 2024, at 5:00 p.m.

Mena Westhaver, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Angela Hawkshaw, Committee Clerk