

1.0 Purpose

The Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) provides advice to Council on identifying, preventing and eliminating barriers to people, including those with disabilities in municipal programs, services, initiatives and facilities. The Committee plays a pivotal role in helping the Town of Yarmouth become a barrier-free community and ensuring obligations under *An Act Respecting Accessibility in Nova Scotia (2017)* are met.

2.0 Scope

This Policy is applicable to all members appointed to the Town of Yarmouth's Accessibility Advisory Committee (ACC).

3.0 References

Bill No. 59 – Accessibility Act, Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2017

4.0 Definitions

- a. **“Accessibility Act (2017)”** – The provincial law enacted to achieve accessibility by preventing and removing barriers for people with disabilities. The law defines the role and responsibilities of the Accessibility Directorate and the Accessibility Advisory Board, and addresses standards, Compliance, and enforcement. nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/leg_c/statutes/accessibility.pdf
- b. **“Barrier”** means anything that hinders or challenges the full and effective participation in society of persons with disabilities including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technology barrier, a policy or a practice;
- c. **“Business unit”** means an administrative unit of the Town responsible for the delivery of those services assigned to the unit from time to time by the Chief Administrative Officer;
- d. **“Committee”** means the Advisory Committee on Accessibility;
- e. **“Council”** means the Town Council for the Town of Yarmouth;
- f. **“Disability”** includes a physical, mental, intellectual, learning or sensory impairment, including an episodic disability that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders an individual's full and effective participation in society;
- g. **“Town”** means the Town of Yarmouth.

5.0 Policy

5.1 Public Appointment Policy

Except as herein provided, the provisions of our policies shall apply to the Committee.

5.2 Membership

- a. The nominating body for membership on the Committee shall be members of Council, which shall make recommendations to Town Council.
- b. The Committee will consist of nine (9) voting members as follows who serve without pay.
- c. The Mayor is an ex-officio non-voting member of the AAC.
- d. Council shall appoint each of the nine (9) voting members as follows:
 - i. to two-year term – Two (2) members of Council, in December;
 - ii. to two-year terms – Four (4) members at large; and
 - iii. to three-year terms – Three (3) members at large.
- e. At least one half of the members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee must be persons with disabilities or representatives from organizations representing persons with disabilities.
- f. If a member vacates the Committee for any reason at any time before that member's term would normally expire, Council shall appoint promptly a new member to the Committee to hold office for the unexpired term.
- g. Applications for the appointment in the Committee shall be invited by public advertisement.
- h. The Chair and Vice-Chair will be appointed annually from among the members of the Committee who are not Councillors.

6.0 Objectives

The advice provided by the Committee will be guided by the following objectives:

- a. the full participation of all citizens with disabilities in civic and community affairs by ensuring that policies, programs and services do not impose barriers to such participation;
- b. increased civic and community awareness regarding the disability communities within the Town by promoting effective communication;
- c. the elimination of barriers facing persons with disabilities; and
- d. the provision of an equitable opportunity for the Town's disability communities to voice their views on disability and other issues affected by monitoring the effectiveness of the Town's policies, programs and services.

7.0 Mandate & Responsibilities

The Committee has the following responsibilities:

- 7.01** Advise Council in the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of its accessibility plan. In accordance with the Act, the plan must include:
- a. A report on measures the Town of Yarmouth has taken and intends to take to identify, remove and prevent barriers;
 - b. Information on procedures the Town of Yarmouth has in place to assess the following for their effect on accessibility for person with disabilities;
 - i. Any of its proposed policies, programs, practices and services, and
 - ii. Any proposed enactments or bylaws it will be administering.
 - c. Any other prescribed information.
- 7.02** Review and update Town of Yarmouth accessibility plan at least every three years, in accordance with the act.
- 7.03** Advise Council on the impact of Town of Yarmouth Policies, Programs and Services on persons with disabilities.
- 7.04** Review and monitor existing and proposed Town of Yarmouth Bylaws to promote full participation of persons with disabilities, in accordance with the Act.
- 7.05** Identify and advise on the accessibility of existing and proposed municipal services and facilities.
- 7.06** Advise and make recommendations about strategies designed to achieve the objectives of the Town's Accessibility Plan.
- 7.07** Receive and review information directed to it by Council and its committees, and to make recommendations as requested.
- 7.08** Advise business units in responding to issues and concerns of persons with disabilities, when requested to do so by the Chief Administrative Officer.
- 7.09** Monitor federal and provincial government directives and regulations.
- 7.10** Host community consultations related to accessibility in the Town of Yarmouth.
- 7.11** Significant municipal matters, plans and programs having an impact on persons with disabilities and the disability community shall be referred to the Committee for its consideration and recommendations to Town Council.

8.0 Reporting

The Committee shall submit a written report of activities to Council during the first quarter of each year.

- 8.1** The Chair, or designate, may present the annual report to a meeting of Council.

8.2 The Committee may make reports to the Council on the activities of the Committee as necessary, or as requested, together with such other presentations that the Committee may deem advisable.

9.0 Sub-Committees

Subject to (a), the Committee may appoint sub-committees, consisting of members of the Committee, to report to the Committee on matters that the Committee determines require further investigation.

- a. A work plan identifying issues, goals, timeframe, scope of work and resources required, shall be submitted by the Committee to Council for approval by Council prior to the Committee establishing a sub-committee.

9.1 The Committee shall appoint one of its members to chair the sub-committee at the time it constitutes the sub-committee.

9.2 Sub-committees shall report directly to the Committee.

10.0 Meetings

The Committee shall meet no less than six times per year, or otherwise as required to fulfill the duties as outlined. Meetings of the AAC shall be open to the public.

10.1 A majority of the voting members of the Committee constitutes a quorum.

10.2 The Chair, in consultation with staff of the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, shall be responsible for calling all meetings of the Committee and for setting the agenda.

10.3 In the absence of the Chair or Vice-Chair, the members of the Committee may select a member to chair the meeting.

10.4 Subject to the principles set out in the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, all committee members present including the person presiding shall vote on a question.

10.5 Subject to Section 22 of the *Municipal Government Act*, meetings of the committee shall be open to the public.

10.6 The Committee may receive presentations from the public upon approval of the Chair.

11.0 General

Each member of the Committee shall serve without remuneration but may be reimbursed by Council for any necessary expenses incurred while engaged in official duties, provided that such expenses are approved by Council in advance.

11.1 The Chief Administrative Officer shall assign Town staff with required expertise to advise on Committee as required.

12.0 Policy Review

This Policy will be reviewed every four years from the effective/amended date.

Clerk's Annotation for Official Policy Book

Date of Adoption: March 12th, 2020

Date of Amendment: November 12th, 2020 (Section 5.2 (d) – 7 to 9 members)

Date of Amendment: February 11th, 2021 (Report to Council, not Committee of the Whole)

I certify that this 'Accessibility Advisory Committee Policy' was adopted by Council as indicated above.

Town Clerk:

Date:

Appendix A

Sample Call for applicants for an Accessibility Advisory Committee

Volunteer Opportunity: Accessibility Advisory Committee

Town of Yarmouth

Are you looking to make a difference in your community? Why not consider serving as a volunteer member of the newly formed Accessibility Advisory Committee?

The Accessibility Advisory Committee provides advice to the municipal council on identifying, preventing and eliminating barriers to people with disabilities in municipal programs, services, initiatives and facilities. The committee plays a pivotal role in helping the Town of Yarmouth to become an accessible community that complies with Nova Scotia's Accessibility Act (2017).

At least one half of the members of the advisory committee must have a disability or represent an organization that represents people with disabilities.

Disability includes a physical, mental, intellectual, learning, or sensory impairment— including an episodic disability—that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders an individual's full and effective participation in society.

Applications are available online or can be picked up at Town Hall. The deadline for applications is [\[date\]](#). Your completed application may be submitted by mail, in person, or by email to:

Address:

E-mail:

Subject line: Accessibility Advisory Committee Volunteer

For more information about the Accessibility Advisory Committee, refer to the terms of reference at [\[link\]](#). Or contact [\[name\]](#) at [\[phone number\]](#) or [\[e-mail\]](#).

Appendix B

Sample application for Accessibility Advisory Committee members

Committee Application Form

Applicant Name

Street Address

Postal Code

Home Telephone

Work/Cell Telephone

E-mail Address

Occupation

Application for appointment to (Committee Name)

Describe how your lived experience, community involvement, education, or work might be helpful to this committee.

Why are you interested in serving on this committee?

What contribution do you believe you can make to this committee?

What past contributions have you made on a similar committee or organization?

What experience do you have in exchanging your views with others and in appreciating and respecting the skills, abilities and knowledge of others?

Are you a person with a disability, or do you represent an organization representing people with disabilities? Yes No

Note: At least one half of the members of the advisory committee must have a disability or represent an organization that represents people with disabilities.

Organization/sector you are representing (if applicable): If you are a person with a disability or represent an organization representing people with disabilities, what disability/disabilities do you or your organization represent?

Note: Members with a variety of disabilities will bring diverse perspectives to this committee. We will strive to accommodate all members to ensure they are able to fully participate.

Are you interested in an interview? Yes No

The final approval of appointments is given by the council. If you would like more information about the approval process, or if you have questions about any of the bodies to which appointments are to be made, please contact the Town of Yarmouth's Administrative Office at [insert phone number]. The personal information on this form will be used to assist the council in selecting appointees for various committees. Questions about this collection may be referred to the Chief Administrative Officer, [insert address]. [insert a consent to collect and disclose personal information, if required]

Applicant Signature

Date