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|  | | | | **Minutes of:** | | **ACCESSIBILITY advisory COMMITTEE** | | | | | | |
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| **Date:** | | June 17th , 2025 | | | | | **Time:** | 4:32 pm – 6:30 pm. |
| **Location:** | | Hybrid | | | | | **Page:** | 7 |
| **Chair:** | | Paula | | | | | **Recorder** | Ayesha Sajid |
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| **File Name:** | | **Accessibility Advisory Committee** | | | | |  | | **Guest: Meagan Lichti** | | | |

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|  | ITEM | DISCUSSION | | ACTION | |
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| **Welcome** |  | |  | |
| **Adoption of Agenda** | Agenda – Accepted as presented. | | **Motion to adopt by Brian**  **Seconded by Paula** | |
| Oxford Age-Friendly Committee | Everyone welcomed Meagan Lichti from SouthWestern Public Health, who attended the meeting to discuss accessibility planning, needs assessments, and best practices for age-friendly and accessible environments across Oxford County. The session was primarily centered around an in-depth focus group discussion with Megan, a public health nurse and Chair of the Oxford Age Friendly Strategy Committee.  This initiative is launched to assess and improve Oxford County's age-friendliness. This age-friendly initiative is motivated by a growing 50+ population and guided by the WHO's Age-Friendly Communities Framework, which focuses on eight domains, including housing, transportation, outdoor spaces/buildings, social participation, etc. For data collection, the Oxford Age-Friendly Committee is conducting surveys, focus groups, and interviews with adults 50+ and service providers. They are also identifying urban vs. rural differences in service access and transportation.  **Focus Group Discussion**  1. **Outdoor Spaces and Accessibility**: - Need for benches with backs/armrests, shaded areas, and color contrast for visibility. - Accessible paths with proper seating.  2. **Sidewalks and Trails**: - Concerns over snow removal, maintenance, and inconsistent service levels.  3**. Mobility Devices & Infrastructure**: - Growth in the use of e-bikes and scooters. - Multi-use paths and wider sidewalks are needed.  4. **Crosswalks and Safety**: - Complaints about signal timings and vehicle-pedestrian conflicts. - Example: Ingersoll's bright crosswalks with flashing lights.  5. **Winter Accessibility**: - Suggestion for indoor walking spaces due to unsafe winter conditions.  6. **Washroom Accessibility**: - Problems with dimly lit public washrooms. - Interest in automated self-cleaning units, like those in Japan.  7. **Safety and Lighting**: - Need for well-lit public areas to prevent crime and ensure comfort | |  | |
| Oxford County's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan-considerations | Ayesha showed the Committee members a draft of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan that was previously prepared but never taken to the County Council. She asked the members to suggest the best strategic actions that they feel should be a part of the Plan under the five standards. The following suggestions are below:    **Customer Service:** - Adjustable counters and communication aids are suggested.  Sunflower Program  **Employment and DEI**: - Focus on invisible disabilities and leadership opportunities. - Disability & Inclusive Leadership Programs proposed.  **Information and Communication**: - Concerns over reduced web access - Need for accessible templates and flexible document formats, e.g., you're posting an agenda, like a council agenda, which has links to various documents that vendors provided. And you had a compliant agenda template, but now there are specific components that are no longer compliant. And so it's finding that balance.  -Replace the wording "fully" accessible report with a more reasonable approach from the draft.  **Transportation**:  Remove the Community Bus Transit Project from the draft.  **Design of Public Space:**  Notes from Julie Sawchuk's audit of OCAB should be used to make suggestions.  Ingersoll's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan can also be consulted for best practices. | |  | |
| AAC role goals (2025) & (2026) | Ayesha asked members if there is something specific that they want to do in 2026, e.g., initiatives related to education, awareness, and training. Previously, AAC has promoted Red Shirt Day and National Accessibility Week, and plans were made in advance. AAC can bring ideas/suggestions to the next meeting. | |  | |
| FADS 2007/ 2021 & Oxford County's Accessibility Assessment Checklist | AAC has previously passed a motion that "the County Council adopt/adapt FADS 2021."  AAC also recommended that "the final draft of Oxford County's Accessibility Assessment Checklist be made into a policy that is consulted for retrofits and new Oxford County-owned buildings."  Ayesha updated that she is working on the report to take to the County Council. Once FADS 2021 is adopted/adapted by the Council, Sarah has suggested that Oxford County's Accessibility Assessment Checklist would be provided as a resource. This way, we won't have approval issues for the Checklist. | |  | |
| Other outstanding items | The supervisor of transportation has contacted us regarding the Audible Pedestrian Crosswalk and is working with the City of Woodstock's AAC. They will also consult Oxford County's AAC for recommendations.  Sunflower program: exploring other ways, if not the membership, to spread awareness about the Sunflower symbol and educate people on hidden disabilities.  AAC also discussed having a joint venture with Area Municipalities to raise accessibility flags during National Accessibility Week, which needs to be approved by Ben. | |  | |
| Next Sub-Committee Meeting |  | |  | |
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| **Next In-Person Meeting Date & Time** | The date and place for the next meeting are August 19th, 2025, at OCAB, Room 221, from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm. | |  | |
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