

Added Item 7.7(a)

ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Community Safety Working Group

Tuesday, September 3, 2019

4th Floor, Hamilton Public Library – Central Branch

Members in Attendance:

Shahan Aaron, Alex Wilson

Regrets/Absent:

Sophie Geffros, Corbin McBride

Pursuant to Section 5.4(1) of the City of Hamilton's Procedural By-law 18-270, quorum was not achieved. Those in attendance decided to continue the meeting during the absence of quorum to consider the items that did not require quorum, with no decisions being made at this time.

Administrative notes:

- Working group to meet at 6pm on the first Tuesday of every month at Hamilton Public Library Central Branch
- Concerns within the working group regarding communication with each other. Members present willing to explore different methods of communication (texting, Facebook, google drive etc.) in addition to email to resolve any potential concerns

Committee Scope:

- Community Safety
 - Community to the disability community

- Safety being the ability to be free, independent and participate fully without fearing or experiencing any kind of harm
- What types of safety concerns did members flag
 - Transit: when scooters or power chairs die it can be difficult or impossible to load them onto the HSR or DARTS, instances where seatbelts are not properly secured when using transit or secured at all, hostility from other passengers
 - Many of these instances fall under existing policies or working groups but could be discussed as part of a larger conversation
 - Interacting with police: reports of detention in hot car with windows up
(https://raisethehammer.org/article/3685/hamilton_failing_to_confront_rising_right-wing_extremism), unnecessary use of force, crisis response all considerations that uniquely impact people with disabilities safety particularly racialized people with disabilities
 - Communication differences only exacerbate concerns for d/Deaf and Hard of Hearing folks as well as non verbal communicators
 - Overdose deaths in institutions like Barton Jail (provincially run) but also in the broader community
 - HWDSB Kids Need Help reports site concerns of ableism and racism within school board policies, what potential impacts exist off school groups and in the communities with this age group
 - Winter snow removal and ice concerns
 - Construction resulting in inaccessible routes (Locke St reconstruction in 2018)
 - Presence of Benches and places to sit and/or lie down while out in community

- Hostile infrastructure such as benches with bars in the middle often further limit the usability of these benches and seating areas
- Concerns regarding sexual violence
- Biases and perceptions of dangerousness from city staff and officials that further ableism

Workplan:

- September: Continue to explore effective communication practices with working group members. Continue to explore barriers and safety concerns narrowing list. Reach out to other community members and groups to build partnerships and explore issues from an intersectional lens.
- October: Prepare for and plan a community feedback forum and/or survey to hear from community members regarding their experiences, concerns, and solutions.
- November: Host outreach activities and explore trends
- December: Report writing and presentation.