



Acadia Students' Union
Students' Representative Council
Report to Council

Subject: Creation of an Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)	Author: Oliver Jacob
Report Number: 2017-11-16-01	Title: Chairperson
	Date: November 16 th , 2017

Recommendations:

That Council strike an Accessibility Advisory Committee with the terms of reference attached as Schedule A of this resolution.

Further That this resolution come into full force and effect immediately upon its passing thereof.

Background

The Province of Nova Scotia introduced and enacted Bill 59 (*Accessibility Act*) with its official commencement taking effect on September 18, 2017. This piece of legislation sets the ambitious goal of making Nova Scotia accessible by 2030 and makes Nova Scotia the third province to enact such legislation, behind Ontario (2005) and Manitoba (2013). As part of this *Act*, public organizations (including post-secondary institutions and non-profit organizations) must adhere to minimum accessibility standards as will be set out by regulation in the coming months/years. Once these standards are in place, such organizations must also establish an Accessibility Advisory Committee to provide advice and expertise on issues pertaining to accessibility within the organization.

Discussion:

As an item on my Fall Semester goal document, the creation of an Accessibility Advisory Committee is of particular interest to me as I have seen how successful these committees can be at delivering the policy and procedural benefits that organizations seek in terms of legislative compliance and increasing accessibility for our clients (the student body, staff, faculty and community members as the case may be). The Town of Arnprior established its Arnprior Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAAC) in 2013 in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*. The committee provides advice and recommendations to Council regarding accessibility issues within the Corporation and the potential solutions that would break down any barriers to effective and inclusion service.

After a review of the provincial legislation in Nova Scotia, I have ensured that Schedule A (Draft Terms of Reference) conforms to the letter and spirit of the legislation as written. As a result, the provisions regarding having at least 50% of members having a disability has been added as it is mandatory under the legislation.

The membership of the committee would be the Chairperson (as Chair), President (as Vice-Chair), one (1) additional Executive Member, one (1) additional Non-Executive Member, and up to four (4) regular Union members. The General Manager and Building and Events Services Manager would sit ex-officio (non-voting) on the committee as staff. At least 50% of the committee membership would have to have some form of disability. Additional non-voting members may be appointed by the committee as it sees fit as it reaches out to other stakeholders and community groups that relate to its mission.

Options

- a. Strike the Accessibility Advisory Committee with the draft Terms of Reference
- b. Alter the draft Terms of Reference attached in any way
- c. Reject the Creation of an Accessibility Advisory Committee

Policy Considerations:

None

Financial Considerations:

None

Meeting Dates:

None

Consultation:

Town of Arnprior

Documents:

Schedule A – Draft Terms of Reference

**Report and Process Certified By
Chairperson:**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, enclosed in a black rectangular box. The signature is cursive and appears to be the name of the Chairperson.

Schedule A
Draft Terms of Reference

(1) Mandate

- (a) The Committee will serve to promote and facilitate a barrier-free Union, by advising Council and assisting in the removal and prevention of barriers faced by persons with disabilities within the Acadia Students' Union

(2) Goals

- (a) To be able to provide an opportunity for persons with disabilities to raise issues and concerns.
- (b) To participate in the creation and ongoing review of the Acadia Students' Union Accessibility Plan, and annual status reports as required.
- (c) To participate in the review and update of the Acadia Students' Union policies dealing with accessibility for persons with disabilities, as required.
- (d) To provide feedback to Council on the implementation, status, and effectiveness of the Acadia Students' Union's Accessibility Plan.
- (e) To review and monitor existing and proposed Acadia Students' Union policies, practices and procedures, to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities.
- (f) To review, assess and make recommendations to Council on barriers for persons with disabilities on all owned, leased, or operated facilities of the Acadia Students' Union
- (g) Raise public awareness on issues affecting persons with disabilities.
- (h) To make the Acadia Students' Union a "barrier-free" and accessible community.
- (i) To consult with on-campus and off-campus groups and resources including, but not limited to, Accessibility and Learning Services, Physical Plant, and Facilities Management.
- (j) To remain compliant with and perform all other functions required by the Accessibility Act and any regulations enacted under its authority.

(3) Composition

- (a) The Accessibility Advisory Committee shall be comprised of the following voting members;
 - I. Chairperson (as Chair)
 - II. President (as Vice-Chair)
 - III. One additional Executive Member, as appointed by Council

- IV. One additional Non-Executive Member, as appointed by Council
- V. Up to four (4) Regular Union Members, selected by Council as outlined in the *Procedural Policy* as amended.

(b) The Accessibility Advisory Committee shall include the following individuals as non-voting members;

- I. General Manager
- II. Building and Event Services Manager
- III. Any other person as the committee may deem helpful in the exercise of its duties

(c) At least 50 % of the **voting** membership of the Accessibility Advisory Committee shall have a disability **as self-identified**.

(d) Quorum for meetings of the Accessibility Advisory Committee shall be at least 50% of voting members.

(4) Frequency of Meetings

(a) The Committee shall meet at least monthly and may conduct audits of buildings and policies outside of these meetings.

(5) Term of Appointment

(a) All members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee shall be appointed to a term coinciding with the current term of Council, ending on April 31st, 2018.

(6) Mandatory Review

(a) The Chairperson shall review the Accessibility Advisory Committee and make a recommendation to Council regarding its continuance by the last meeting of the current term of Council.