



**City of Kingston
Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee
Meeting Number 04-2023
Unconfirmed Minutes**

**Thursday, June 8, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.
In a virtual, electronic format**

Committee Members Present

Aimee Burtch; Chair

Kim Atwood

Emily Bennett

Penny Bennett (arrived at meeting at 1:08 p.m.)

Chantaille Buczynski

Dinah Cotter

Andrea Fitzgerald

Ibrahim Kettaneh (arrived at meeting at 1:46 p.m.)

Darcy King McKay

Susan Mockler

Lucie Moussu

Aldo Ramirez (left meeting at 2:01 p.m.)

Nikolas Tolgyesi

Janice Wilby

Regrets

Councillor Tozzo

Caitlin Bruce

Staff Members Present

Speros Kanellos, Director, Facilities Management and Construction Services

Laird Leggo, Manager, Licensing, Parking Operations & Policy

Jeff Rempel, Manager, Facility Construction Services

Curtis Smith, Director, Licensing & Enforcement

Iain Sullivan, Committee Clerk

Derek Ochej, Acting Deputy City Clerk

Meeting to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Ms. Wilby

Seconded by Mr. King McKay

That the agenda be approved.

Carried

Confirmation of Minutes

Moved by Ms. Mockler

Seconded by Ms. E. Bennett

That the Minutes of the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Number 03-2023 held May 4, 2023 be approved.

Carried

Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

There was none.

Delegations

- a) Joseph Dowser, Chair, Kingston and Area Taxi Commission, was present and spoke to the Committee regarding accessible taxicab service in Kingston

Mr. Dowser provided the Committee with background information regarding the Kingston and Area Taxi Commission (KATC) and the history of accessible taxicab governance. He advised that the KATC had started its own accessibility committee in 2022. Mr. Dowser explained that the accessibility committee meets monthly and is mandated to work with the industry to increase the number of accessible taxicabs, establish reporting requirements to the commission, ensure by-law compliance and to examine potential subsidy programs. He advised the Committee how they may wish to interact with the accessibility committee to learn more or provide feedback on service.

Ms. Atwood sought further details regarding the training provided to drivers of accessible taxicabs. Mr. Dowser stated that past practice required the plateholder to bring in a driver with the appropriate training. He advised that the KATC is looking to expand the program to require certification and renewal of that certification.

Ms. P. Bennett arrived to the meeting at 1:08 p.m.

Ms. Mockler spoke to the benefit of offering accessibility training to all taxicab drivers and not just those driving accessible taxicabs. Mr. Dowser explained that training is being offered to all drivers on topics including sensitivity, physical assistance and requirements of the service industry. He added that accessible taxicab drivers receive additional training regarding the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Ms. Moussu asked what the proportion of accessible taxicabs was to less accessible taxicabs. Mr. Dowser responded that there are currently nine licensed plateholders for accessible taxicabs. He added that the goal of the KATC is to have 25% to 30% of their licensed fleet be accessible taxicabs.

Ms. Cotter noted the lack of availability for accessible taxicabs. She spoke to the difficulty that persons who use manual accessibility devices, such as walkers, experience with being able to find appropriate service. Ms. Cotter also advised that ramped taxicabs are often in short service, and inquired as to what is being done to relieve this problem. She further spoke to refusal of service issues for persons who have service animals due to drivers claiming to have allergies to the service animal.

In response to Ms. Cotter's concerns, Mr. Dowser stated that the biggest concern the KATC receives regarding accessible taxicabs is availability. He advised that an industry

issue is a lack of drivers available to drive licensed accessible taxicabs. Mr. Dowser stated that in some cases a person driving an accessible cab may take in fewer fair dollars than a person driving a less accessible taxicab. Mr. Dowser stated that the KATC is looking to train more drivers and get vehicles into code, examining if financial aid is needed. He further stated that it is a slow process and that the KATC is looking to improve service through education, enforcement and/or subsidy.

Ms. P. Bennett spoke to her personal experience with taxicab drivers in Kingston, advising that she did not receive appropriate assistance for a person with a visual disability. She stated that drivers in Kingston have a bad reputation for not providing adequate assistance to persons with disabilities. Ms. P. Bennett stated she would be willing to assist in providing training to drivers.

In response Mr. Dowser apologized for the service issues and stated that the KATC is opening up communications channels to receive complaints that will be followed up on by staff.

Ms. Buczynski spoke to potential solutions in terms of vehicle style that may help to bridge the service gaps between accessible and less accessible taxicabs. Mr. Dowser advised the Committee that when there is no need for an accessible taxicab the vehicle is placed in the standard queue for service, adding that requests for accessible taxicabs are always given priority. He added that increasing the number of accessible taxicabs will help to reduce this problem.

Mr. Dowser advised the Committee that any concerns or complaints regarding accessibility may be forwarded to access@katc.ca for follow up and resolution.

b) Michael Judd was present and spoke to the Committee regarding Accessible Parking Fees & Fines Options

Mr. Judd conducted a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which may be obtained by contacting the City Clerk's Department.

Ms. Moussu expressed support for Mr. Judd's presentation. She spoke to the need for equity when comparing the need to pay for parking for a person with a disability versus a person who does not have a disability. Ms. Moussu inquired if Mr. Judd was in favour of unlimited time for accessible parking spaces.

Mr. Judd responded that his preference would be for unlimited time for parking in accessible parking spaces. He spoke to the motion in this regard passed by Council, advising that few municipalities have required time limits for accessible parking spaces. Mr. Judd stated that Kingston has few accessible parking spaces and that their fill rate

is generally low, adding that sometimes a person with a disability is required to park in a standard space for a variety of reasons. He stated that most jurisdictions do not implement a time limit due to the additional time required for a person to enter and exit their vehicle. Mr. Judd spoke to the increased capital and maintenance costs for accessible vehicles. He spoke to the advantage that businesses receive from the patronage of persons with disabilities.

Briefings

- a) Speros Kanellos, Director, Facilities Management and Construction Services, was present and spoke to the Committee regarding Facilities Management & Construction Services Update

Mr. Kanellos conducted a PowerPoint presentation regarding Facilities Management & Construction Services Update, a copy of which may be obtained by contacting the City Clerk's Department.

Mr. Kettaneh arrived to the meeting at 1:46 p.m.

Ms. Buczynski advised that a bench had been moved at the rear of City Hall and was partially blocking the accessible entrance to the Market Wing.

Ms. Moussu spoke to difficulty she experienced in finding the accessible entrance to City Hall upon her first visit. She spoke in favour to the placement of wayfinding signage on the exterior of City Hall. Ms. Moussu spoke to the poor customer service she received upon her first visit, adding that additional training should be considered for security staff.

Ms. Atwood expressed support for the improvements to the fire alarm system in City Hall. She expressed concern that in some areas of the building it is not clear which exits are wheelchair accessible. Mr. Kanellos advised that staff would take this feedback into consideration. Mr. Rempel added that the system is designed to be in compliance with the Building Code and staff will include consideration of this in the fire safety plan.

Business

- a) **Facilities Management & Construction Services Update**

This report was considered currently with Briefing a).

- b) **Accessible Parking Fees & Fines Options**

Mr. Smith provided an overview of the Report.

Mr. Ramirez left the meeting at 2:01 p.m.

Ms. Moussu advised that Toronto provides unlimited free parking in accessible spaces, including allowing people with an accessible parking pass to park in no parking zones. She inquired as to how Toronto could make such a system financially viable. Mr. Smith stated that he would have to assume that the volume of spaces and parking businesses within the City of Toronto allow the cost of the program to be absorbed through other methods.

Ms. Mockler spoke to how proportionality can be taken into account when considering accessible parking options. She asked if staff had taken into consideration allowing persons with accessible parking passes to park in no parking zones. Ms. Mockler spoke to the difficulty in finding parking in the downtown area. She stated that reducing fees will be helpful where cost is an issue, adding that accessibility to payment methods is also a major factor. Ms. Mockler inquired if there is an option for persons with an accessible parking pass to pay a flat fee per year to use accessible parking spaces.

In response to Ms. Mockler's comments, Ms. Smith stated that staff had not yet examined the operational aspects of allowing persons with accessible parking passes to park in no parking zones, adding that staff could look into it. Regarding accessibility of payment methods, Mr. Smith advised that a new mechanism has become available that will allow for single space payment for every accessible space. He encouraged Committee members to provide feedback directly to the City on the need for more accessible spaces and/or their required locations.

Ms. P. Bennett expressed concern with the plan to recover the potential lost revenue from accessible parking spaces with the fines received when people park illegally in accessible spaces. She added that this system requires people to park illegally in order to make the accessible spaces available at no cost. In response Mr. Smith stated that it is important to keep in mind that an increased deterrence may reduce the funds coming into the City to fund reduced cost accessible parking spaces.

Mr. Tolgyesi spoke to the difficulty experience by a person with a disability when it comes to a three-hour time limit on parking spaces as a result of increased time required to exit and enter a vehicle. He spoke to the difficulty of using the Honk mobile app, which doesn't always list the location of accessible parking spaces. Mr. Tolgyesi expressed concern with raising the fees for parking illegally in accessible spaces to recover revenue, adding that this puts a difficult onus on persons with disabilities.

In response to the comments, Mr. Smith stated that a three-hour parking limit is used to encourage movement and prevent long-term parking from occurring at on-street parking

locations. He stated that additional time could be considered for on-street accessible parking spaces, adding that a balance needs to be struck to ensure that they are available to as many people as possible.

Mr. Leggo advised that the utilization for on-street accessible parking space ranges from 10 per cent to 60 per cent. He added that garages were not factored into the report, but that their usage rate is 60 to 70 per cent.

Mr. Smith stated that utilization is very dependent on the area. He expressed confidence in the estimate of accessible parking spaces revenue as detailed in the report. Mr. Smith advised that Guelph is a municipality that has offered a monthly parking pass for on-street accessible spaces.

Ms. Cotter sought an explanation as to why warnings are issued for people parking illegally in accessible parking spaces. Mr. Smith advised that warnings are no longer issued for those parked illegally in accessible parking spaces. He stated that fines for illegal parking in accessible spaces are the most frequently contested ticket, adding that it may take over a year to collect the fine.

Ms. Burtch sought further details regarding the next steps for the report. Mr. Smith advised that staff would be bringing a report with recommendations to the Environment, Infrastructure and Transportation Policies Committee before the end of Q3 2023.

Motions

There were none.

Notices of Motion

There were none.

Other Business

There was none.

Correspondence

There was none.

Date and time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee is Thursday September 7, 2023 at 1 p.m.

Adjournment

Moved by Ms. Cotter

Seconded by Mr. King McKay

That the meeting of the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee adjourn at 2:36 p.m.

Carried