HALIFAX

ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
November 17, 2025

PRESENT:	Rachele Manett, Chair Nikolas Harris, Vice Chair Councillor Trish Purdy Glenn Babcock Oliver Keith Anne Sinclair Jamil Sinno Céline Vautour
REGRETS:	Councillor Laura White Councillor Jean St-Amand Cathi Stevenson
STAFF:	Melissa Myers, Accessibility Advisor Elizabeth Macdonald, Legislative Assistant

The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.

The agenda, reports, supporting documents, and information items circulated are online at halifax.ca.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:16 p.m. and acknowledged that the meeting took place in the traditional and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people, and that we are all treaty people.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 20, October 29 and November 5, 2025

MOVED by Jamil Sinno, seconded by Oliver Keith

THAT the minutes of October 20, October 29 and November 5, 2025 be approved as circulated.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

Additions: None

Deletions: None

MOVED by Councillor Purdy, seconded by Oliver Keith

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Elizabeth Macdonald, Legislative Assistant responded to questions of clarification from the Committee regarding receiving a presentation from the Province of Nova Scotia at a future meeting.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS – NONE

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS
7.1 Correspondence – None
7.2 Petitions – None
7.3 Presentation – None

8. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD – NONE

9. REPORTS/DISCUSSION
9.1 STAFF
9.1.1 Proposed 2026 Meeting Schedule

The following was before the Committee:

- Staff memorandum dated November 17, 2025

MOVED by Jamil Sinno, seconded by Oliver Keith

THAT the Accessibility Advisory Committee approve the proposed 2026 Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting schedule as outlined in the staff memorandum.

Elizabeth Macdonald, Legislative Assistant spoke to the proposed meeting schedule.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

9.1.2 2025 Annual Town Hall Discussion

The following was before the Committee:

- Handout dated November 17, 2025

The Committee discussed the 2025 Town Hall.

The Committee noted the following highlights from the event:

- Overall, the event was a success and was well attended by members of the public;
- The popularity of the food table;
- The high level of interest in the booths;
- The amount of themes and topics covered;
- The event provided an opportunity for Committee members and residents to connect with staff in person; and
- The usefulness of the live transcript.

Regarding aspects of the event members disliked or could be improved upon, the Committee noted the following:

- The benefits and drawbacks in members of the public answering questions directed at staff during the panel's question and answer period;
- The need for improved placement of the question and answer table;
- The event taking place in an enclosed space may have deterred some residents from attending;
- The unequal power dynamics between panelists and members of the public;
- Concerns with the comprehensiveness of panelists' responses to questions;
- The need for a better follow up process for questions submitted to staff;
- The need for a longer question and answer period;
- The need for the municipality to demonstrate greater accountability to members of the public;
- There was no indication that performing mic checks before the panel would have disrupted booths if they had been open before the panel had begun;
- Panelists had issues hearing what other panelists had said; and
- Issues with acoustics in Paul O'Regan Hall.

Regarding aspects of the event that could be added or changed for future Town Halls, the Committee noted the following:

- The need for more optimal spacing of the booths;
- Having booths open before and after the panel;
- Inviting community groups that could speak to issues of food insecurity;
- Benefits to increasing the 3-minute time limit for questions to panelists;
- The need for the best qualified staff being represented on the panel;
- The benefits of shorter introductions and updates by the panelists to allow for a longer question and answer period;
- The potential benefits of the event taking place in a smaller space;
- Exploring ways to increase in-person attendance;
- Providing printed programs at future Town Halls;
- The use of audience interaction platform, Slido;
- Considering changing the 1:1 ratio of taking questions from in person and virtual attendees;
- Panelists providing visual descriptions of themselves for accessibility purposes;
- The need for a bigger sign for the question and answer table;
- Extending the duration of the event in the future;

- Keeping a log of the main questions and concerns that were raised at the Town Hall event each year; and
- The importance of determining actionable next steps following the Town Hall.

Regarding the handout dated November 17, 2025 and titled “Accessibility Advisory Committee Town Hall Feedback Form”, the Committee noted plans to distribute the form to acquire feedback from staff who participated in the event and requested the following changes be made prior to distribution:

- That the question “What aspect(s) of the Town Hall did you like the most?” be changed to “What aspect(s) of the Town Hall did you like and dislike the most?”; and

- That the following two questions be added to the survey and include a 1–10 rating scale for each:
    1. How satisfied did you feel with your interactions with members of the public?
    2. How well did you feel received at the Town Hall?

Melissa Myers, Accessibility Advisory responded to questions of clarification from the Committee and clarified this was the first time a survey had been created requesting feedback from staff participants in the Town Hall.

Elizabeth Macdonald, Legislative Assistant responded to questions of clarification from the Committee and noted plans to distribute the updated survey to the Committee.

10. ADDED ITEMS – NONE

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – January 19, 2026

13. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:32 p.m.

Elizabeth Macdonald
Legislative Assistant