

**Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee of
Lincoln, West Lincoln, Pelham, Thorold, Niagara-on-the-Lake,
Grimsby and Port Colborne
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 14, 2023
Zoom and In-Person Meeting**

6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Present: Dave Antaya (NOTL), Lauren Bubnic (NOTL), Rebecca Hill (Lincoln), Joey Hewitt (Thorold), Rhys Evans (Pelham), Dan Whipple (Pelham), Jennifer Thiessen (Lincoln)

Regrets: Lisa Peso (Grimsby), Laura Slade (Port Colborne), Jennifer Korstanje (Grimsby), Dianne Rintjema (Lincoln), Janice Desroches (Thorold)

1. **Call to order.** Dan called the meeting to order at 6:41 pm.

2. **Approval of the Agenda**

Be it resolved that the agenda is approved as amended. Moved by Rhys Evans, seconded by Dave Antaya. CARRIED.

3. **AccessNow Presentation – Corie Caplan, AccessNow**

Corie was introduced to the group and gave a presentation on the AccessNow App:

- App information is based on crowd sourced information, not professional audits. Information is based on personal/lived experiences and not AODA compliance.
- Pan disability experience – not just wheelchair access
- App has 1 million locations in 107 countries
- Can also do **Map Missions** – add reviews for 7 days
- **AccessNow Verified** – employ people with disabilities to verify accessibility. Indicated by blue checkmark on App. Tracks user engagement and respond to review, creating feedback loop. Allows member presence on App.
- **Access Outdoors** – adds parks, trails and outdoor spaces
- Corie showed the committee how to add locations into the App and answered questions from the group.

4. Approval of the Minutes of July 13, 2023

Be it resolved that the minutes are approved as presented. Moved by Joey Hewitt, seconded by Jennifer Thiessen. CARRIED.

5. Lincoln Economic Development Newsletter Article

Donna requested some assistance in getting this article done. Lauren volunteered. Donna will reach out to Lauren to begin the process.

6. Accessibility Award

Donna would like to establish a working group to discuss the recognition process for accessibility efforts. Rhys, Joey, Dan and Jennifer volunteered. Donna will set up a Zoom meeting for the initial discussions.

Rhys asked if Councillors are welcomed at meetings. Yes, as we represent the Council, we'd be happy to have any Councillors at our meetings. Dan suggested we send a formal invitation to all Council members to attend a JAAC meeting in the future.

7. Audits – Status Update

Onsite audits are complete. Donna is working on the reports. JAAC members will receive the reports upon completion.

8. Community News

- Joey suggested that our mandate be printed up and distributed to all JAAC members for reference.
- The Emergency Measures Accessibility Standard as part of the Accessible Canada Act is out for public review. Joey suggested this is an important standard for JAAC members to review. She will circulate the information to JAAC members via email. A JAAC response is an important opportunity for representation in the Accessibility Standard development process. Deadline for feedback is December 13, 2023.
- Port Colborne received a grant from the Niagara Community Foundation for accessibility upgrades. They will use these funds to install handrails in the Lighthouse Theatre. Also, they will be upgrading their service counter at City Hall to be accessible. This will be done by the new year.

9. **Next Meeting – Thursday, November 9, from 6:30-8:30 pm.** Location to be determined. Format to be hybrid (in person/Zoom).

10. Adjournment. Dave motioned to adjourn at 7:51 p.m. Seconded by Rhys.