

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE  
ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL  
9:30 A.M. – 11:30 A.M., TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2017  
401 YORK AVENUE, NORQUAY BUILDING**

**Present:** Yvonne Peters (Chairperson), Lanny McInnes, Jim Derksen, Judy Redmond, Dave Schellenberg, Doug Momotiuk, John Wyndels (DIO)

**Regrets:** Jesse Turner, Ralph Groening, Scott Jocelyn, Jim Baker

The public consultation on the proposed accessibility standard on employment was well-attended with more than 200 people present and more than 60 people registered to the webcast. There were a lot of comments provided by participants. Council was generally pleased with the event and it unfolded. It was recognized that Stuart Murray did a good job of facilitating the event. A public consultation for the Francophone community is being conducted on February 14. Although the cut-off day for submissions was stated as February 15, it is expected that more comments will be forwarded in the days ahead. All comments received prior to recommendations forwarded to the Minister will be considered.

There were a number of persuasive arguments for the employment standard to apply to volunteers, as well as paid employees. For many individuals, serving as a volunteer can provide the opportunity to gain valuable experience and training. This is especially true for many persons with disabilities. At the same time, the employment standard contains many sections that are very descriptive and meant to apply an employee-employer relationship rather than that of a volunteer. A number of larger organizations, such as hospitals, have volunteering positions that are more defined and directed to a particular activity, rather than the contributions of a volunteer to a once-a-year fund-raising activity or event, where volunteers may be asked to do nothing more stacking chairs or performing clean-up.

The proposed employment standard does not apply to interns either. Lanny provided information pertaining to rules and guidelines that apply to interns in Manitoba. No decision was made to whether the proposed standard would be expanded to include interns and volunteers.

There was agreement that a training component should be added to the proposed standard. It should apply to supervisors, managers and human resource personnel within an organization and all those individuals involved in developing policies, and practices related to accessible employment. More discussion is required before it is determined if training extend to all employees within an organization.

One of the suggestions was the return to work section of the proposed standard be harmonized with Workers Compensation Board (WCB) legislation. The WCB Act entitles their section “obligation to re-employ” and it applies to organizations of 25 or more and to employees who have been with the employer for more than one year of

continual service. The WCB Act is considerably more restrictive than the Human Rights Code and was the standard is proposing. This recommendation was rejected.

There was agreement for a section requiring organizations to have an overarching accessible employment policy at the front end of the proposed standard before speaking to practices and procedures to achieving accessible employment. There was also discussion of employers incorporating a proactive requirement to identify and remove barriers to accessible employment. The council will seek guidance from MHRC before making a decision on this recommendation.

The Secretary will begin drafting a report containing recommendation for a proposed accessibility standard for employment for the Minister. It will incorporate a number of additions and amendments discussed at the meeting. It will be circulated prior to the next council meeting. Additional council meetings may be required prior to consensus is reached on a number of recommendations being considered.

The meeting with the Minister on February 22 is seen as an opportunity to thank the Minister for attending the public consultation, acknowledge the Deputy Minister serving as the Director of Compliance, and bring to the Minister's attention the council's request for more government resources for educational purposes to help assist organizations with the tools needed to comply with standards.

The Secretary told council that the DM is serving as a temporary director of compliance. He has seconded two Policy Analysts from the Department of Families to develop a compliance framework.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am. The next meeting of the council is on March 14 at 9:30 a.m. in the 2nd Floor Boardroom of the Norquay Building, 401 York Avenue.