

Report # 27/02/15/1205 – Accessible Elections

Report to Council from Municipal Clerk Regarding Accessibility Initiatives Undertaken for 2014 Municipal Election

Recommendation: That although late, this report be accepted as presented.

WHEREAS Elections Accessibility Reports to Council are legislated and have been provided;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the report dated February 27, 2015 be accepted as information.

Purpose of Report: Attached for council's / management's information is a report as required by Section 12.1 of the Municipal Elections Act regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities

Identification of Barriers

We took the following actions to identify barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities:

<i>Actions</i>		<i>Considerations for 2018 Election</i>
1.	Reviewed our election accessibility initiatives	Same
2.	Physically reviewed our elections locations	same

Removal and Prevention of Barriers

We took the following actions to remove and prevent barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities:

Communications and Information

<i>Actions</i>		<i>Considerations for 2018 Election</i>
1.	Advertised that information was available in alternate formats	Same
2.	Posted all information to municipality's website	Same
3.	Provided links to: a Candidates Guide to Accessible Elections , produced jointly by the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerk's and Treasurer's of Ontario and the Province;	Same
4.	Provided all documentation, forms and posters in large print	Same

	to assist visually impaired	
5.	Provided candidates and staff with information relating to accessible customer service	Same – will hold a session specifically for accessibility issues aside from regular elections training due to details of both.

Voting Locations

<i>Actions</i>		<i>Considerations for 2018 Election</i>
1.	Conducted site visits of voting locations to ensure full accessibility as against our standards which included: adequate lighting, parking, physical access, washroom facilities, heating.	Provincial Park office in Deux Rivieres is to provincial standards. Our location is adequate.
2.	Provided one central voting location on voting day with accessible voting equipment, in addition to being physically accessible	Might provide alternate tools to assist however at this point there has not been a need identified for alternate voting formats.
3.	Provided appropriate signage at voting locations	Same
4.	Permitted service animals and support persons in all voting locations	Although this issue was not specifically identified it will be addressed during 2018 training.
5.	Ensured designated or reserved parking for persons with disabilities at each voting location	Same

Voting – see also additional table at the end of this table Re. accessible voting methods made available

<i>Actions</i>		<i>Considerations for 2018 Election</i>
1.	Provided tools to be utilized to assist with ensuring accessibility as identified	Same

Staff Training

<i>Actions</i>		<i>Considerations for 2018 Election</i>
1.	Staff training incorporated provisions to meet accessible customer service standards	Will consider holding a separate training for accessibility purposes due to length of training required.

2.	Provided reference materials	Same
3.	Monitored elector's concerns and ensured that their needs were met, i.e. if an individual with a walker was in a long line, staff observed, and if felt that the elector was having difficulties, offered a chair and ensured that their place was saved in the voting line-up	Same
4.	Ensured that electors were aware that magnifiers were available, if required, throughout the day by routinely advising line-ups that may have occurred	Same
5.	Encouraged election workers to approach an elector if it appeared that the elector required assistance to get around in the voting location. Offered assistance to help, did not assume an individual needed help	Same
6.	Staff maintained a friendly and approachable demeanour	Same
7.	Checked the access doors frequently to offer assistance and watch for electors unable to easily enter the building	Same

For each voting method we took the following measures to ensure accessibility:

<i>Voting Method</i>	<i>Considerations for 2018 Election</i>
Traditional Paper Ballot with large text ballots available	Same
Traditional Paper Ballot with magnifying sheets available	Same – might consider alternate voting methods for other reasons and if we do, will certainly provide focus on accessibility.