



MEETING NOTES

Fort Erie Accessibility Advisory Committee

Meeting Date, Time, and Location

Tuesday, January 25, 2022 at 3:30 p.m. at the Town Hall – via Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/219560823>

Members

Dennis Hernandez-Galeano, Chair
Bev Ferris, Vice-Chair
Gary Kooistra
Adam McLeod
Barbara McLeod
Lori Brant
Veronica (Faith) Sparling (regrets)
Councillor Ann-Marie Noyes
Ashley Greaves, On-Demand Transit Rep.

Staff Resources

Keegan Gennings, Chief Building Official
Sean Hutton, Facilities Supervisor
Bev Bradnam, Manager, Strategic Initiatives

Guests:

Patrick Carew, Transition in Employment

1) **Call to Order**

As the meeting was “informal” it was not called to order. The following are notes that were taken.

2) **Approval of Minutes - DEFERRED**

Recommendation No. 1:

THAT: The December 7, 2021 Minutes of the Fort Erie Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting be approved as printed.

3) **History Happened HERE - DEFERRED**

Presentation and discussion with Signe Hansen, Manager, Community Planning and Jane Davies, Manager, Museum and Cultural Services. This will be deferred until we are able to meet in person and view the draft signage.

4) **Transition To Employment**

Presentation and discussion with Patrick Carew. Patrick advised that the program is under the DSBN umbrella but is open to non-students and is not funded through the Ministry of Education. Patrick advised that it is an Employment Ontario program, similar to Job Gym, but the biggest difference is that it is specific to individuals with disabilities. Individuals may be 16 years and older and the median age is between 40 and 50 and there is even a 90-year-old on their case load. The program has been available for 20 plus years and is funded through ODSP, MCCSS. They support over 300 people per year to help secure and retain employment. They are the largest employment firm in the Region and receive 40% of all disability funding in the Region. Participants are those that self identify as someone with a disability but they do not need an official diagnosis. They also provide support once a job is found for up to 12 months. Developmental disability, mental health disability and even someone with diabetes is able to qualify for assistance. Their program helps reduce barriers to engagement across the Region and there is no specific catchment area ... “don’t make people come to us, if travel is a barrier” – they will meet at a local library, Tim Horton’s etc.

- Build employment capacity
- Preparedness workshops
- Secure employment
- Build resumes
- Advocate
- Sit through interviews
- Help with onboarding

Some won’t be ready for a year and will want more training vs. some that want to start work tomorrow. The support for the first 12 months of employment used to be 3 years. 75% retention rate over 3 years compared to the Provincial average of 20%. They work with employers. Job searching – letters, resumes, second career, coaching, interview prep, all individualized. 100’s of employers sensitive to needs. 75 % of jobs found through hidden job market, concern is retention – staff split between searching and retention. Literacy based skills program is also offered and is unique to the person. They do not go into people’s homes or drive them around and because of the pandemic it has been moved more on-line/virtual. The help people how they need to be helped = success. There will be an individual for Fort Erie, based out of the Niagara Falls office. Voted best employment agency. Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) – have to be 19 plus years – help develop reading, writing, math, employment/social and/or life skills as well as digital skills. Learning and Developmental Disabilities – trained to help those with learning and developmental disabilities. 4-8 individuals – twice/week – life skills in each class. Work 1 to 1 – create goals – no hard start or end date and intakes are ongoing. 1st point – start that week – want to get education, employment, independence. 2-4 credits through co-op, specialized training, customer service training, cash handling, MS Office, ASL, computer basics, etc. Intake takes about an hour and there is no pre-determined curriculum – based on needs of individual. Some classes provided virtual, others they will help arrange transportation. Gary noted that it sounds like the program helps build self confidence and to learn self-worth.

4) **Transition To Employment, continued**

Keegan asked if they help pay for accommodations if it's a good fit. Retention rate is very attractive due to turnover usually experienced. Keegan asked if they help fund things such as hand bars, interview clothes, computer monitors, accommodation needs for physical stuff and Patrick advised that there is no limit to accommodation costs. Dennis asked if this is just through the public school board and Patrick advised that the Catholic School Board does not offer a program like this but participants don't have to be part of any school and most are past school age. Patrick said in the past the program offerings have stayed central and did not reach the extremities of the Region and there was little exposure to disability employment services so he thanked us for allowing him to present and provided his contact information. Patrick left the meeting at 5:00 p.m. His presentation is attached as Appendix "1" to the meeting notes.

5) **Outstanding Matters**

1) Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee

- Accessible Bus Demo (deferred until Transit Governance Study completed).
Bev asked if this item could now be removed from under the Regional AAC heading as an inter-municipal transit has been approved.

2) Parking Concerns

Bev encouraged members to send in any examples of parking for the Jarvis Street redevelopment and advised that she sent Tim Marotta several best practices for consideration. The request brought up by Councillor Noyes at the last meeting for an accessible space in front of the dentist office on Jarvis Street is now included in the project.

3) Fort Erie Active Transportation Committee (FEAT)

Dennis advised that the FEAT Committee has not met in some time and he will be following up with Pieter.

4) Pool Lift – E.J. Freeland Centre

Lori advised that she send a message to Brian Hodge and Bev will send a follow-up email to Stephen Passero and copy Lori and Dennis on it.

6) **Site Plans**

4152 Erie Road – residential development of town houses was reviewed. No barrier free requirements apply.

7) **Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2019-2023**

Deferred.

8) **Other Matters**

No new matters were discussed.

9) **Date for Next Meeting**

The next AAC meeting will take place on Tuesday, February 22, 2021 at Town Hall - Conference Room #1 at 4:00 p.m.

10) **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.



Transition to Employment

Canada 



Ontario 

This Employment Ontario program is funded in part by the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario.

WHO WE ARE

- Transition to Employment is a free employment service delivered by the DSBN as part of the Lifetime Learning Center and offered to individuals 16+ anywhere in the Niagara Region
- Have been a fully operational program for over 20 years and has been funded by Ministries including MCCSS, MLTSD and now is under the wider Employment Ontario umbrella
- Support over 300 people per year to build employment capacity, secure employment and maintain employment
- No Wrong Entry!



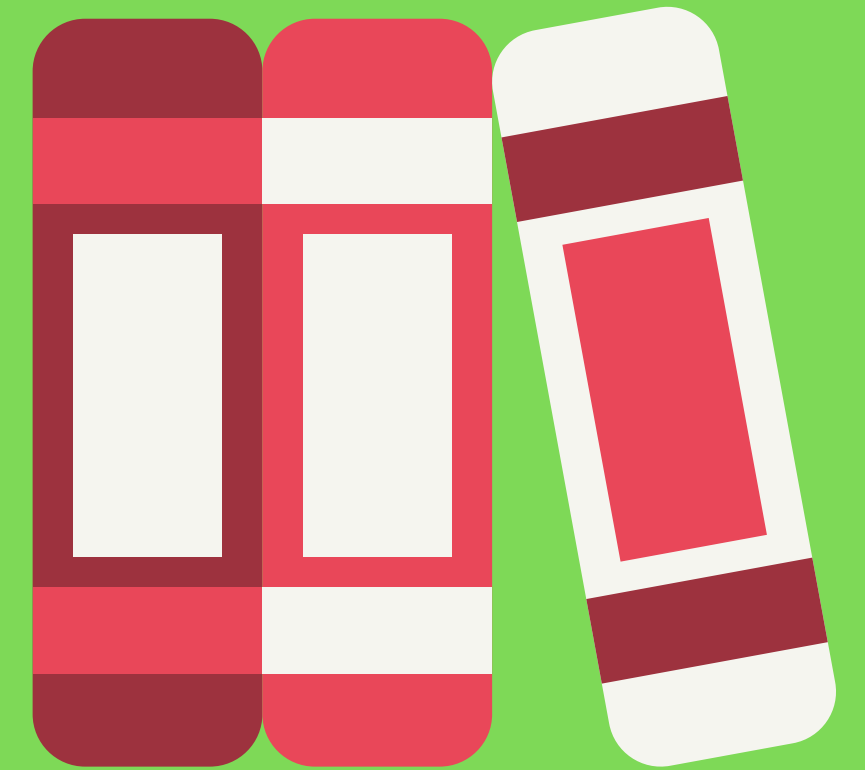
WHAT WE DO



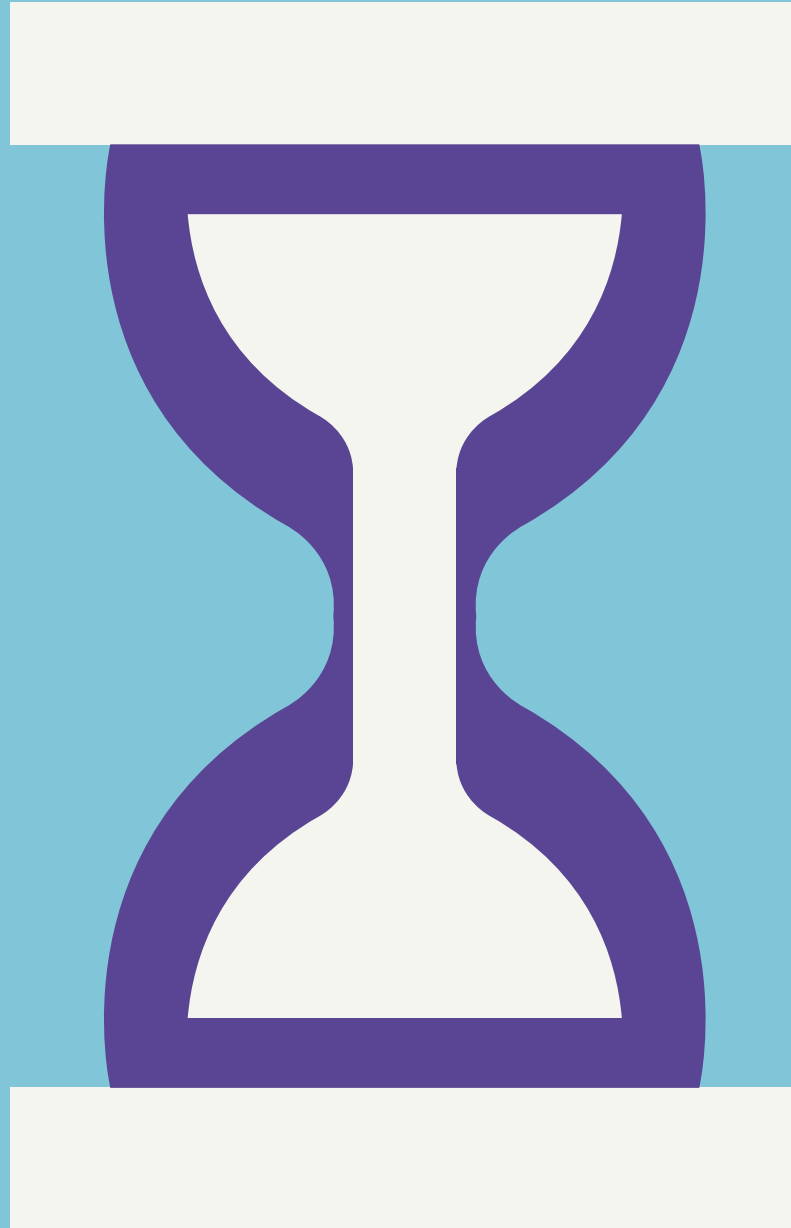
- We work with people 16 years or older who identify as having a disability anywhere in Niagara Region. Yes, we come to you!
- Find and keep jobs for 12 months following secured employment
- Build employment capacities through 1-1 support and/or trainings
- All service is individualized – based on your goals, not ours
- Work with employers to get applicants in the door

HOW WE HELP

- Job searching: application assistance, resume and cover letter writing, employment coaching, interview preparation, Apprenticeship & Second Career
- Job Development/Carving: work closely with employers, access to the hidden job market, funding made available to offset employment costs (pay for employment expenses and wages)
- Job Retention: on-boarding support, workplace training, check-ins, crisis support and maintaining employer relations
- Pre-employment Courses and Training: Referrals to LBS to support, assessing employability and needs, 1-1 individualized approach to pre-employment



WHY US?



- Our program has seen a 65-85% job retention rate when measured at 3 years after securing employment
- We come to you – we will meet you at a location most convenient to you; anywhere in the Region
- All service is individualized - everyone has their own path to employment, no mandatory hoops to jump through and we do whatever it takes for you to be successful
- Offices all over the Region with on-going expansion

LOCATIONS

ST. CATHARINES

● Stokes Community Centre (Goodwill) | 36 Page St

NIAGARA FALLS

● Westlane Secondary School | 5960 Pitton Rd.

Gate Alliance | 6009 Valley Way

WELLAND

● Eastdale Secondary School | 170 Wellington St.

PORT COLBORNE

● Port Colborne Secondary School | 211 Elgin St.

HOW CAN YOU GET IN TOUCH?



CALL/TEXT

905 - 327 - 7642



EMAIL

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FACEBOOK

@DSBN.TTE



WEBSITE

www.lifetimelearning.ca