

**City of Niagara Falls  
Seniors Advisory Committee Meeting  
Thursday May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

The meeting of the Seniors Advisory Committee of the City of Niagara Falls was held in the Blue Room of the Coronation Centre on Thursday May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019 with Wendy McPherson chairing. Wendy welcomed all in attendance. Meeting called to order at 2:00 pm.

**Present:** Karen Fraser, Ewald Kuczera, Wendy McPherson, Anne Wylie, Francine Beattie, Otto Penner, Stewart Black, Noreen Bald, Jack Widder, Councillor Wayne Campbell, Hanya Nagy and DJ Brooks

**Regrets:** Councillor Chris Dabrowski, Kathy Moldenhauer, Fred Hodder and Donna Mills

**Absent:**

**Minutes: a motion** “to approve the minutes of the April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019, Seniors Advisory Committee meeting” was made by Ewald Kuczera - seconded by Stewart Black and **carried.**

**Guest Speakers – Carla Stout** (Manager of Transit Operations)

Carla began by explaining she has no prepared presentation, rather, that as a staff resource she is available to the committee to answer questions and give insight on the transit operations within the City of Niagara Falls and the greater Region of Niagara.

Highlights of Carla’s information session include;

- Currently, there is no process for selling a bus pass to a ‘Niagara Falls Resident’, someone either has a pass or they do not. There is no distinction between resident and non-resident.
- The term Metrolinx refers to the provincial body in charge of transit procurement. Presto is a brand name, a company that makes a fare product that is accepted on the GO train system. Niagara Falls does not use the Presto brand for their fare product card.
- Currently, the City of Niagara Falls Transit group works collaboratively with the Region, St. Catharines, Welland, and the other municipalities but there is a mandate to have an organizational structure defined for a future unified/integrated Regional Transportation and pass system.
- When considering free passes for a demographic Carla explained that anything that would affect the budget as such would be a Council decision, but if there were ways in which she could provide relief for certain members she would look for potential ways to do so with the committee.
- With the expected merger of the Transportation system into a regional system Carla strongly suggested the Niagara Falls SAC work with other Age-Friendly advocacy groups to find a common message to lobby the Regional Transit group.

- Otto asked if within a regional system if Niagara Falls specific system fare deals would need to be privately funded. Carla advised that the future system would be across Niagara with no separated fare discounts by City.
- Ewald asked what the Transportation department would define as off-peak hours. Carla explained that 10am – 3pm for the months of October to April would be deemed as off-peak. May to September the tourist sector ramps up minimizing any off peak time.
- The Chair-a-Van system was also discussed. Carla explained that over the last year they have implemented a new automated dispatching system, as well as a back office reporting system (Novis). Through these implementations they have realized some economies over the last year which should make getting into chair-a-van services easier. The expectations for Chair-a-van in a regional system is that at the bare minimum the service will remain the same but there is some optimism that the service may get better.
- Karen asked about benches and shelters at the bus stops. Carla explained that previously there was no capital budget available for these types of projects but a new \$50,000 a year budget has been approved for these types of improvements. If there are specific stops members of the SAC want looked into the locations can be forwarded to Carla for review through Hanya/DJ.
- The largest takeaway from the discussion was that collaboration with other Age-Friendly committees will be essential on the topic of Transportation with the upcoming merger to a Regional Transportation system.

Wendy thanked Carla for her time and the valuable information.

## **Business Arising from Minutes**

### **a. Age-Friendly Community Survey**

- i. Hanya spoke briefly to the 2016 survey that was produced at the Coronation Centre. Results were presented in an email to the Committee on April 25<sup>th</sup>. Discussion ensued around preparing a new survey but due to time restraints the conversation was tabled to a future meeting.

### **b. Region Wide Forum for Local Municipal Seniors and Age Friendly Advisory Committee Leaders**

- i. After the transportation discussion there was significant interest in the event as it provides an opportunity to begin the transportation discussion with the other municipal age friendly groups in a face to face manner.
- ii. Councilor Campbell, Stewart, Wendy, Karen, Ewald, Otto, Noreen, and Hanya all expressed interest in attending.

### **c. Strategic Plan**

- i. The need to identify Committee Members top 3 priorities were deferred until next meeting. As such, so was any discussion on the strategic plan.

## **New Business**

### **a. Transportation**

- i. Ewald suggested that a motion be put in place to solidify the committee's thoughts on transportation and the direction in which the group wants to lobby towards.

**A motion** "recognizing that there is a potential of a single region wide transportation system, the Niagara Falls SAC recommends free seniors travel, in off-peak hours, in the new amalgamated fee schedule" was made by Ewald Kuczera - seconded by Councillor Wayne Campbell and **carried**.

## **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 3:45pm on a motion from Stewart Black; seconded by Karen Fraser and carried.