

**Attendance:** Jeffrey Normore (Chair), Juanita Ford, Joshua Menchions, Trisha Rose, Camille Rose, Kathleen Parewick, Allison Noseworthy, Terri Jean Murray (DPO), Karen Davis (DPO), Kate Dawe (DPO)

**Regrets:** Les Gilholme

## **Introduction**

The newly appointed Chair welcomed reappointed members and new members to the meeting. Documents provided for review in advance of meeting including Board's Terms of Reference, Accessible Customer Service Standard Development Committee Terms of Reference, and December 11, 2023, Board Meeting Summary Report. Orientation packages were distributed to new members prior to meeting.

## **Board Updates:**

- Accessible Customer Service Standard Development Committee:
  - The selection process is underway. There are 9 potential representatives who will be contacted by the Chair to confirm their interest in joining the Committee.
- Accessibility Plan:
  - DPO is continuing to support Agencies, Boards and Commissions and Municipalities in completing accessibility plans.
  - The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Accessibility Plan was made public December 31, 2023. The accessibility plan was circulated to the Board for their reference.
- Newfoundland and Labrador Disability Benefit (NLDB):
  - DPO and the Public Engagement and Planning division held an engagement session with the Network of Disability Organizations (Network) to discuss barriers in accessing the NLDB. One of the identified barriers included the requirement of the Disability Tax Credit (DTC) to be eligible for the NLDB. The Network identified barriers to accessing the DTC. These barriers include, and are not limited to, the lack of access to a medical practitioner to complete forms and the cost associated with completing forms. DPO will continue to work with the Network to identify, prevent and remove barriers to accessing the NLDB.
- Framework of Decision Making:
  - Public consultations will be launched on the EngageNL website November 2024.

- Grants 2024-2025:
  - DPO provided a brief update on the Accessibility Grants. DPO gathered feedback from the Network within an engagement session to help identify, prevent and remove barriers and increase the uptake in applications from Disability Organizations.
- Accessibility Standards Canada (ASC):
  - NL and ASC continue to collaborate. ASC is currently developing Accessible Programs and Service standard(s), including Customer Service. The Board requested to invite ASC to the next Board meeting to discuss Accessible Programs and Services standard development and to seek further information regarding the Built Environment standard(s).

### **Business Arising:**

The Board reviewed and approved three documents. These documents included:

- Accessibility Standards Advisory Board Terms of Reference (Revised)
- Board Summary Report December 2023
- Accessible Customer Service Standard Development Committee Terms of Reference

Board discussions included:

- Agreement from Board Chair to continue monthly updates to the Board.
- In the December 2023 meeting, the Board discussed the possibility of changing the meeting schedule to accommodate four full-day in person meetings instead of two virtual half-days and two in person full-day meetings for the next fiscal year. Board intends to make a formal request.
- The next in person meeting will be December 9, 2024. Future tentative meeting dates identified; February 3, 2025 (virtual) and March 3, 2025 (in person).

### **Action Items:**

- Board Chair will contact potential representatives for the Accessible Customer Service Standard Development Committee.
  - Board Chair will draft a letter to the Minister requesting potential change to board meeting frequency.
- Board requested DPO to:
  - Prepare an orientation package for Accessible Customer Service Standard Development Committee including jurisdictional scan and resources.

- Invite ASC representatives and ASC Board Chair to attend the next Board meeting.
- Invite the Minister Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities to the next meeting.