

**Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee of
Lincoln, West Lincoln, Pelham, Thorold, Niagara-on-the-Lake,
Grimsby and Port Colborne
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 18, 2025
City of Thorold City Hall, Committee Room 1
3540 Schmon Parkway
6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

Present: Joey Hewitt (Thorold), Rhys Evans (Pelham), Laura Slade (Port Colborne) Lauren Bubnic (NOTL), Rebecca Hill (Lincoln), Jennifer Thiessen (Lincoln), Janice Desroches (Thorold), Jennifer Korstanje (Grimsby), Nicholas Debono, Clerk, City of Thorold, Donna Herrington and Rachel Herrington (The Herrington Group)

Regrets: Dan Whipple (Pelham) Dave Antaya (NOTL), Dianne Rintjema (Lincoln) Lisa Peso (Grimsby)

Guests: Dave Pantano, Treat Accessibly and Margaret Nicholson, Accessibility Coordinator, City of St. Catharines, Wayne Olsen, Councillor, Town of Pelham

As Dan was not present, Rhys acted as Chairperson.

1. **Call to order.** Rhys called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

2. **Approval of the Agenda**

Be it resolved that the agenda is approved as presented. Moved by Laura Slade, seconded by Joey Hewitt. CARRIED.

3. **Approval of the Minutes of May 8, 2025**

Be it resolved that the Minutes of May 8, 2025, are approved as presented. Moved by Janice Desroches, seconded by Joey Hewitt. CARRIED.

4. **Dave Pantano, Treat Accessibly**

Dave Pantano is a member of the Fort Erie AAC and is also part of the Treat Accessibly movement. The movement attempts to provide accessible trick or treating opportunities and Halloween activities. You can participate by organizing your own local village with your neighbourhood and by encouraging your Council

and Mayor to proclaim October 16, 2025, Treat Accessibly Day. Treat Accessibly signs are available at local Pet Valu stores. For more information go to Treataccessibly.com.

5. Margaret Nicholson, City of St. Catharines, Accessibility Coordinator

Margaret serves as St. Catharines' Accessibility Coordinator and is introducing herself to all local AAC's. She can be reached at Accessibility@stcatharines.ca.

Business Arising from the Minutes:

None

New Business:

6. Community Guides/Website Accessibility Pages

This issue comes from Lauren Bubnic who noticed NOTL's Recreation Guide has minimal accessibility information. We could propose changes for the next printing. This is a good opportunity to work with the municipalities to improve accessibility in these guides and to also address information we make available through our JAAC webpages. Donna suggested the development of a subcommittee to address this issue. Rhys, Jennifer and Laura agreed to be on the subcommittee. Donna will follow up.

7. Royal George Theatre – NOTL renovation

NOTL is doing a major renovation of the Royal George Theatre. This project will include accessibility, including meeting the Gold Level of the Rick Hansen Foundation accessibility standard. Donna is not familiar with this standard and feels like the committee should have more information. She asked if the committee would like a presentation about the accessibility portion of this project. The committee agreed, and Donna will ask for a presentation for our November meeting.

8. 2026 – 2030 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP)

The JAAC needs to prepare it's next MYAP by the end of next year. Donna will be focusing on this issue in the next year and will be conducting public consultation in each of the member municipalities. This process will begin in early 2026.

9. Pelham Pool and Parks

Rhys brought a number of questions forward about Harald Black Park:

1. What is the current status of AODA compliance at Harold Black Park and the pool?
2. Have any improvements been made recently, or are any planned based on the results of recent audits?
3. What specific barriers have been identified at this location (e.g., pathways, signage, washroom access, pool entry, etc.)?
4. Are there timelines in place for addressing these issues?
5. Are there any resource or budget considerations that may impact planned improvements going into 2026?

Donna mentioned that she has been in touch with staff about that Park and has shared the audit report completed in 2022 for staff reference. She will forward these questions to appropriate staff and bring back the response to the committee.

10. West Lincoln's Seniors Active Living Fair – September 26, 2025

West Lincoln is again hosting a Seniors Active Living Fair. The JAAC will have a table at this event. Donna asked for volunteers to attend with her. Joey and Janice agreed to attend. Donna will send details to them.

11. Community News

- Laura asked when there will be another Port Colborne representative on the JAAC. Donna will follow up with staff.
- Sept 20 – Final Speedway event – Free @ Merrittville Speedway 9-4
- Age Friendly Committee will be asking the City of Thorold to install a Wind Phone. One is available at Pleasantville Memorial Gardens
- Janice mentioned that September 21 is Indigenous Gardening Day. She will circulate information to committee members about this and other events.

- 12. Next Meeting – Thursday, November 13, 2025**, from 6:30-8:30 pm.
Location: City of Thorold City Hall, Committee Room 1, Thorold ON. Format to be hybrid (in person/Zoom).

13. Motion to Adjourn

Laura Slade motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m. Seconded by Joey Hewitt. CARRIED.