

# SELF-ADVOCATE COUNCIL

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

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### 1. Name of Committee

The Committee shall be named "The Self-Advocate Council". The accepted acronym will be SAC.

### 2. Background and Assumptions

The Self-Advocate Council began as the People First council. In May of 1988 the journey of the council started during an OACL Conference. Suzanne Perrier Clark, Dorothy Gilbert, Donald Casniq and David Scali heard presentations by Peoples First. In September of that same Year an elected body was formed by the council and the first year was dedicated to education and planning. Dorothy whom was elected as the first chairperson to the council became the Northern representative of Peoples First Ontario for this region. The council secured funding through the Knights of Pythias and the council was able to attend their first meeting in Toronto with the Peoples First executive committee. In 1995 the council became inactive due to lack of funding. But in 1996 were able to secure further funding and continued its commitment to being a "Voice" for people with Disabilities. Over the Years the council slowly grew in activities through fund raising events, its Walk for Awareness, Flag Raising ceremonies for Community Living Month each year, and presenting their "Bill of Rights" to people supported in their homes. Donald Casniq whom was one of the founding members to council once said, "Write it Down and do it". It has been something that has guided the council whenever they have taken on new challenges in advocacy, and to be a voice for others. The councils name today has changed to The Self-Advocate Council. But the same ideas and vision continues to move the council forward. The Self Advocate Council now sends a representative 3 times a year to the Community Living Ontario conferences, including the Annual General Meeting. Council members work closely with The Accessibility Council for The City of Thunder Bay, Councillor's at Large, Provincial advocacy councils, Community Living Ontario Council, The Thunder Bay Regional Hospital as well as The Lakehead University just to name a few. If today we are Self-advocates, the future may be something that is more embracing for all with a disability. The idea and rights of ALL to be equal and included is one everyone in society shares in of its meaning. There are no limits to what the future may hold for the council. Only the idea that it will become greater than anyone could ever have imagined, for All Self-Advocates, to celebrate, and smile.

On December 14, 2001, the Ontarians With Disabilities Act, 2001(O DA, 2001) was passed by the Provincial Government.

The Self-Advocate Council was established to advise Community Living Thunder Bay on the development and implementation of the Accessibility Plan in accordance with the Ontarians With Disabilities Act, 2001 (Report No. 2002.334 - Community Recreation).

### **3. Resources and Finances**

An annual budget of approximately \$25,000.00 will be allocated for the Self-Advocate Council. These funds are required to provide venues for meetings; program supplies and Council supports.

The Council will have a financial report presented to its membership each year in March prior to its submission of its Annual Proposal for funding to the LACL Foundation. The Council may request a financial report or presentation at any time during the course of a fiscal year.

### **4. Deliverables**

The Committee's deliverables are as follows:

1. Present to community groups providing information for all people, organizations and business employees in Thunder Bay on request
2. Assist self-advocates who are supported in their homes through presentations of the Bill of Rights.
3. Advocate for people's rights through Community Living Ontario Council, policies of Community Living Thunder Bay, Provincial and Federal acts and charters
4. Provide community leadership on issues related to people with disabilities as they relate to the City of Thunder Bay's programs, services, and facilities.
5. Advise people of their rights and address any issues they may have through advice, information or seeking out resources for use in advocating for people's rights.
6. Respond to issues and concerns raised by individual self-advocate (i.e. community services, students issues, etc.
7. Seek out resources for use in advocating for people's rights.
8. Be responsible for finding various funding sources and initiatives in order to cover the Council's operating costs.
9. The Council will make recommendations to Government on the Ontario Disabilities Act, Ontario Disability Support Act, and other areas of Advocacy issues or concern.
10. The Committee will provide feedback to Community Living under the AODA, 2005.

11. The council will give presentations per request and also in orientations of new staff for Community Living Thunder Bay.

## **5. Membership and Responsibility**

### **Council membership**

The Council will be made up of 10 voting Council members.

Community membership will include representation from The advisor and council delegate / representative.

### **Ex-Officio members**

- A staff member of Community Living Thunder Bay will be the administrator to the Council, and will provide administrative support including co-ordinating the distribution of agendas and minutes, correspondence to and on behalf of members, and booking of meeting rooms.
- A staff member of Community Living Thunder Bay will provide information to the Council, provide a liaison function on access issues with Community Living Thunder Bay and the Council where required, and facilitate the review of the Self-Advocate Council Action Plan with the Council.

### ***Terms of Office***

There is no limit to how long a person can be a member to the council.

An executive to council may only hold his or her seat for up to 6 years. Executive positions are voted on by council members in an open forum every 2 years for those nominees whom wish to run.

### ***Chair/Vice-Chair***

The voting members of the Committee will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair every 2 years.

A Council member may serve more than 6 consecutive years in a position should there be no other applicants for their position.

### ***Attendance***

The Council shall meet a minimum of 18 times per year.

The Council Meets every 2 weeks at Monty Parks from 3 pm to 4 pm from September to June.

Meetings are not held in July and August, with the exception of fundraising events or special meetings which may be planned in advance upon the Council's decision.

Members are expected to attend all regularly scheduled meetings of the Council as is reasonably possible, advising the Chair in advance of any absence. Should a member fail to attend three consecutive meetings their appointment to the Council will be subject to review.

Task Forces established to meet the objectives of the Council may meet more frequently as required.

## **6. Governance**

### ***Reporting Relationship from the Council to Community Living Thunder Bay***

Updates, projects and initiatives will be reported back to the Council through Council minutes.

A representative from the Self-Advocate Council meets with The Community Living Ontario Council every year.

The Council is responsible to be present during The Annual General Meeting for Community Living Thunder Bay.

The Council Reports to Community Living Thunder Bay and Board of Directors every two months.

The Council is responsible for its annual reports to Community Living Ontario, The LACL Foundation Board of Directors and to the Self-Advocate Council membership.

***Voting Rights***

Voting on motions and questions before the Council shall be in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order.

***Quorum***

A quorum of half the voting members plus one voting member shall be required for carrying out business. All other members may participate in discussions and debates on matters before the Council and provide information, advice and assistance to the Council.

***Terms of Reference***

The Terms of Reference are to be reviewed by the Council at the beginning of every year at which time any changes will be approved upon a vote of the membership.

**7. Contact**

The Self-Advocate Council Advisor will be the administrative resources for the Council.

Correspondence and agenda materials are to be directed to The Self-Advocate Council Advisor, Chair, Co-Chair, and Secretary to council.

*March 13, 2016*