

From: ODETTE Deveau <deveauodette@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, August 25, 2019 10:07 PM

To: Ronnie Leblanc

Subject: Beach access



Clare Organization Representing Persons with Disabilities

1649 Highway 1, Box 6

Church Point, N.S. B0W 1M0

c.o.r.d@hotmail.ca

(902)769-3674

August 25, 2019

Dear Mr. LeBlanc,

I have been working on the letter below for some time and was ready to send it when I saw on the Municipal website that there has been a Special Council Meeting on August 5, 2019. I noticed that Beach Access was on the Agenda. I am unaware of what plans or thoughts council already has in mind but I am going to send the information and thoughts that I collected. I am very pleased to see that Beach Access is on council's agenda for reasons I have below.

The Municipality of Clare has miles of beautiful shoreline and beaches. We are lucky to live near the ocean, to make a living from the sea and spend family time on the beaches during the summer. It is easy for us to take this for granted while, for others, it is difficult to enjoy the benefits of the beach. Those living with limited flexibility and mobility, or who use wheeled mobility devices, such as wheelchairs have no easily accessible beach they can visit in Clare because there are no wheelchair ramps and they are unable to drive their chairs on the sand.

Going to the beach is not only a fun activity, it's a beneficial one. The sun and the waves combined work to completely relax your body, release you from your aches, and free you from daily stresses. Salt water has unique antibacterial and antifungal properties making it excellent for external and internal infections. Seawater has high levels of minerals like magnesium, iodine and potassium which help to produce these therapeutic effects, and help to heal and detoxify the body. The rhythm of the waves calm brain activity and the color of the water brings on feelings of serenity and peace. Being barefoot on sand when visiting the beach helps stimulate the many nerve endings under our feet while grounding us and restoring our natural energy flow.

Last summer, on the news, I saw that in Inverness they now have an accessible beach. They have a ramp, a mobi-mat that goes on the sand, and mobi-chairs that can go on the sand and float in the water. Recently, I visited Rissers Beach on the South Shore and there is a mobi-mat on that beach. This equipment would allow all our residents and tourists to enjoy the beach and to benefit socially, mentally and physically.

I am writing this letter as a Director of Clare Organization Representing Persons with Disabilities with full support of the other Board members, as a support worker for persons living with disabilities, and as a resident of Clare. Being able to say that Clare is a community who offers services and equipment for everyone to enjoy one of our precious resources, the beach, would make me and my associates excited and proud. I would like for you to consider making one of our beaches accessible using some of the equipment mentioned above or to start with, consider adding some beach accessible wheelchairs and walkers to the equipment the Recreation Department rents out. Mavillette Beach has nice boardwalks to get to the beach but they all end with stairs. One of these could be modified with a ramp. Being a Provincial Park, and with the Government of Nova Scotia Accessibility Plan there should be funds available to help make this public place accessible to all. I think it would be wonderful for our community and could generate more visitors. According to a Statistics Canada Survey in 2017, the top 4 disabilities in Nova Scotia were Pain related at 19.8%, Flexibility at 14.2%, Mobility at 13.3% and Mental Health related at 11.8%.

Here are some links that show what Inverness has at their beach and where they purchased them. As well as a link to the poster from the Statistic Canada survey.

<https://invernesscapebreton.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Inverness-Beach-Accessible-Equipment-2.pdf>

<https://aquacreekproducts.com/catalog/#page/24>

<https://www.rehabmart.com/search/?q=beach+walker>

<https://www.mobi-mat-chair-beach-access-dms.com/mobi-chair-floating-beach-wheelchair/>

<https://www.mobi-mat-chair-beach-access-dms.com/recpath/>

<https://novascotia.ca/accessibility/stats-on-disability-in-Nova-Scotia.pdf>

Thank you for your time and for work already done on this subject. Looking forward to hear what is to come for our residents living with limited mobility, including seniors.

Sincerely,

Odette Deveau

deveauodettee@gmail.com

c.o.r.d@hotmail.com