



The Corporation of the Town of Essex
Essex Festival Committee Meeting Minutes

April 17, 2025, 6:00 pm
60 Fairview Ave W, Essex, ON N8M 1B6

Present: Member - Hellinga, Chris
Member, Cate Back
Member - Knapp, Derek
Member - McGuire-Blais, Katie
Member - Verbeek, Kim
Member - Atkinson, Nicole
Vice Chair - Tapping, Richard
Member - Desjardins, Tiffany
Councillor - Garon, Joe, Ward 1

Also Present: Jake Morassut, Director, Community Services
Everett Vanlare, Recording Secretary

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request. Please contact the Clerk's Office at clerks@essex.ca or 519-776-7336 extension 1100 or 1101.

1. Call to Order

2. Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that this land is the traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations (comprised of the Ojibway, the Odawa, and the Potawatomi Peoples), and of the Huron-Wendat Peoples. We value the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all of the Original Peoples of Turtle Island who have been living and working on the land from time immemorial.

3. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

4. Adoption of Published Agenda

4.1 Essex Festival Committee Meeting Agenda for April 17, 2025

FC25-04-19

Moved By Nicole Atkinson
Seconded By Derek Knapp

That the published agenda for the April 17, 2025 Essex Festival Committee Meeting be adopted as presented.

Carried

5. Adoption of Minutes

5.1 Essex Festival Committee Minutes for March 20, 2025

FC25-04-20

Moved By Richard Tapping, Vice-Chair

Seconded By Member, Cate Back

That the minutes of the Essex Festival Committee meeting held March 20, 2025 be adopted as circulated.

Carried

6. Financials

- No new updates to report.

7. Unfinished Business

- Joe Garon, Chair, will follow up with a group that provides Bubble Soccer at events and get a price for next meeting.

7.1 Operations and Site Management

7.1.1 Festival Grounds Layout

- No new updates to report.

7.1.2 Set-up and Take Down

- No new updates to report.

7.1.3 Perimeter Fencing

- Joe Garon, Chair, will confirm the amount of fencing that is required next meeting.

7.1.4 Signage

- No new updates to report.

7.1.5 Admission Fees

- Joe Garon, Chair, provided the Committee with options on how the admission gate could be streamlined with a pre-paid/cashless line and a separate cash line to encourage a cashless entrance. There was no decision on how the gates will be operated.

7.1.6 Park Hours

- No new updates to report.

7.1.7 Parking

- Cate Back, member, asked the Committee if Committee Members could be provided a specific parking pass so parking volunteers are able to identify which cars are allowed in prohibited areas. Joe Garon, Chair, will create a pass for Committee Member s

7.1.8 Off-Site Parking

- No new updates to report.

7.1.9 Shuttle Transportation

- Katie McGuire-Blais, Member, will provide the shuttle transportation option to vendors that will require additional parking for the Festival.

7.1.10 Family Tent

- Kim Verbeek, Member, requested that the Committee buys a tent with walls for the Family Tent to provide privacy. The Committee will look into options.

7.1.11 Proposed Items to purchase or invest in outside of 2025 Budget

7.1.11.1 Gateway Signage

- Joe Garon, Chair, requested a proposal for a potential sign that would be placed at the entrance of the Festival.

7.1.11.2 Parade Float Refurbishing

- Jake Morassut, Director, Community Services, provided an updated to the Committee that the parade float can be repaired with minimal cost.

7.1.11.3 Branded Entrance Tents

- No new updates to report.

7.1.11.4 Branded Entrance Table Skirting

- No new updates to report.

7.1.11.5 Cocktail Tables and/or Branded Cocktail Table Linens

- Joe Garon, Chair, will continue shopping for Cocktail Tables and test out different tables from different companies.

7.1.11.6 Misc Electrical Cords, Power Bars, etc.

- Joe Garon, Chair, will create an inventory for cord in the Storage Room in order to see what is missing and will be replaced.

7.1.12 Bike Valet

- No new updates to report.

7.2 Marketing, Social Media and Advertising

- Katie McGuire-Blais, Member, confirmed to the Committee that the Facebook page has reached over a 1000 followers. A giveaway contest was confirmed, where vendor vouchers the cost of and admission is provided to the winners of the contest. The contest will be held monthly in order to gain more followers.

7.3 Sponsorship

- Richard Tapping, Vice Chair, has confirmed sponsorships are coming in, including a \$5,000 main stage sponsorship from Libro Credit Union. Year-to-year sponsorships come and go, but is confident we will reach our goals.

7.4 Volunteers

- Cate Back, Member, provided a breakdown of volunteer items she would like incorporated into the 2025 Festival. Cate has requested items for the Volunteers, items such as shirts in multiple sizes, snacks and water. These items will be confirmed at a later meeting. Volunteer Manager's will be implemented, this position is intended to alleviate pressure on the Committee Members during the Festival.

FC25-04-21

Moved By Chris Hellinga

Seconded By Tiffany Desjardins

That Volunteer Manager's are provided with BIA Bucks as compensation for a more demanding role. The entire weekend will require \$920 to buy \$1,150 worth of BIA Bucks.

Carried

7.5 Vendors

7.5.1 Vendor Rates

- No new updates to report.

7.5.2 Food and Beverage Vendors

- Joe Garon, Chair, confirmed that there was 29 applications for food vendors and there was a lot of great new options and returning vendors. Different food types were discussed and new options that would allow for different food types.

7.5.3 Non-Food/Craft Vendors

- Katie McGuire-Blais, Member, has confirmed Non-Food Vendors are almost full and will be confirmed by next meeting.

7.6 Attractions

7.6.1 Youth Talent Show

- Tiffany Desjardins, Member, suggested implementing divisions. The Committee decided that the divisions will be Junior, 5-8 years of age, Senior 9-12 years of age and Duo/Groups are 5-12 years of age.

7.6.2 Kid Zone

- Katie McGuire-Blais, Member, received an invoice for the inflatable structures for the kid zone, the total will be \$5,074 before tax. More seating is needed for the Kid Zone and two large picnic tables will be made available.

7.6.3 Chill Zone

- Nicole Atkinson, Member, provided the Committee with an update with the attractions that were popular during last years festival. There will be an additional charging station available for the Chill Zone.

7.6.4 Parade

- Joe Garon, Chair, presented a quote from a group that offered to be in the parade and provide entertainment in the fairgrounds to the Committee, there was no decision made.

7.6.5 Clash of the Voices

- Joe Garon, Chair, confirmed there will be two different performance categories.

7.6.6 Car Show

- Chris Hellinga, Member, will be meeting with a member of Heritage Village to help form a subcommittee.

7.6.7 Watermelon Contest

- No new updates to report.

7.6.8 Visual Display (Fireworks)

- No new updates to report.

7.6.9 Bingo

- No new updates to report.

7.6.10 Pony Rides

- No new updates to report.

7.6.11 Dog Show

- Joe Garon, Chair, presented a quote from Super Dogs for \$3,500 for a Dog Show.

7.6.12 Midway & Amusement Rides

- Jake Morassut, Director, Community Services, confirmed that the advanced passes will have a \$5 discount.

7.6.13 Wrestling

- Joe Garon, Chair, confirmed that the wrestling company is Border City Wrestling for the 2025 Festival.

7.6.14 Rock Climbing Wall

- Katie McGuire Blais, provided a price for the rock climbing wall, the total will be \$6,332.

7.6.15 Escape Room

- Nicole Atkinson, Member, will request a quote from a local business for a mobile escape room

7.7 Sip 'N Shop Wine Mixer

7.7.1 Decor/Decorations

- No new updates to report.

7.7.2 Non-Profit Beneficiary

- No new updates to report.

7.7.3 Wineries

- No new updates to report.

7.7.4 Caterer/Food Vendors

- Katie McGuire Blais, Member, asked the Committee if switching out a different cut of meat to maintain the same price point on Charcuterie boards, the Committee agreed to maintain the same price and opt for a different cut of meat.

7.7.5 BIA Vendors

- Katie McGuire Blais, Member, has opened this event to outside Vendors and has reached out to the Essex Streetscape vendors would like to participate.

7.7.6 Hours of Operation

- No new updates to report.

7.7.7 Admission Fees

- No new updates to report.

7.7.8 Entertainment

- Joe Garon, Chair, confirmed there will be a caricaturist present for the event instead of the Photo Booth.

7.7.9 Raffle

- No new updates to report.

7.7.10 Ticket Pricing

- No new updates to report.

7.7.11 Parking

- No new updates to report.

7.7.12 Layout

- No new updates to report.

7.8 Beer Tent

7.8.1 Hours of Operation

- No new updates to report.

7.8.2 Admission

- No new updates to report.

7.8.3 Product and Pricing

- Joe Garon, confirmed that the Beer Tent will be cashless and that Molson will be providing the product.

7.8.4 Bar Management

- No new updates to report.

7.8.5 Security and Crowd Control

- No new updates to report.

7.8.6 Entertainment

- Joe Garon, Chair, confirmed that there will likely be two separate production companies providing sound and lighting for the festival this year; One on the Main Stage and another on the Secondary Stage and the beer Tent Stage.

7.8.7 Parking

- No new updates to report.

7.8.8 Power

- No new updates to report.

7.8.9 Layout

- No new updates to report.

7.9 Main Stage

7.9.1 Entertainment

- No new updates to report.

7.9.2 Stage Rental

- No new updates to report.

7.9.3 Production

- Joe Garon, Chair, confirmed that there will likely be two separate production companies providing sound and lighting for the festival this year; One on the Main Stage and another on the Secondary Stage and the beer Tent Stage.

7.9.4 Bar Management

- No new updates to report.

7.9.5 Security and Crowd Control

- No new updates to report.

7.9.6 Parking

- No new updates to report.

7.9.7 Power

- No new updates to report.

7.9.8 Other Rentals and Operation

- No new updates to report.

7.9.9 Layout

- No new updates to report.

7.10 Secondary Stage

7.10.1 Location

- No new updates to report.

7.10.2 Entertainment

- Joe Garon, confirmed that 57 acts have applied.

7.10.3 Stage Rental

- No new updates to report.

7.10.4 Production

- No new updates to report.

7.10.5 Power

- No new updates to report.

7.10.6 Other Rentals and Operation

- No new updates to report.

8. Third Party Events

8.1 Walk-a-Thon

- Jae Morassut, Director, Community Services, confirmed this event is booked.

8.2 Horseshoes

- No new updates to report.

8.3 Rotary Pancake Breakfast

- No new updates to report.

8.4 Wacky Olympics

- No new updates to report.

8.5 Legion Fish Dinner

- No new updates to report.

8.6 Brenko's Cornhole

- No new updates to report.

9. New Business

- No new updates to report.

10. Adjournment

FC25-04-22

Moved By Nicole Atkinson

Seconded By Richard Tapping, Vice-Chair

That the meeting be adjourned at 7:55pm.

Carried

11. Future Meetings

- May 15, 2025 - 6pm ECSC - Barnett Meeting Room

- June 12, 2025 - 6pm ECSC - Barnett Meeting Room
- June 26, 2025 - 6pm ECSC - Barnett Meeting Room

Chair

Recording Secretary