



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

May 15, 2025, 6:00 pm  
60 Fairview Ave W, Essex, ON N8M 1B6

Present: Member - Hellinga, Chris  
Member, Cate Back  
Member - McGuire-Blais, Katie  
Member - Atkinson, Nicole  
Councillor - Garon, Joe, Ward 1

Absent: Member - Knapp, Derek  
Member - Verbeek, Kim  
Vice Chair - Tapping, Richard  
Member - Desjardins, Tiffany

Also Present: Jake Morassut, Director, Community Services  
Everett Vanlare, Recording Secretary  
Tim Stanley, Assistant Manager, Facilities and Events

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request. Please contact the Clerk's Office at [clerks@essex.ca](mailto: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**

- No conflicts of interest to report.

**4. Adoption of Published Agenda**

**4.1 Essex Festival Committee Meeting Agenda for May 15, 2025**

**FC25-05-23**

Moved By Nicole Atkinson

Seconded By Katie McGuire-Blais

**That** the published agenda for the May 15, 2025 Essex Festival Committee Meeting be adopted as presented.

Carried

5. Adoption of Minutes

5.1 Essex Festival Committee Minutes for April 17, 2025

FC25-05-24

Moved By Member, Cate Back

Seconded By Chris Hellinga

**That** the minutes of the Essex Festival Committee meeting held April 17, 2025 be adopted as circulated.

Carried

6. Financials

- Jake Morassut, Director, Community Services, informed the Committee of the current contracts that are confirmed for the Festival weekend.

FC25-05-25

Moved By Chris Hellinga

Seconded By Member, Cate Back

**That** the current contracts presented are accepted for the Festival weekend.

Carried

6.1 Grants and Requirements

- Jake Morassut, Director, Community Services, informed the Committee that they have successfully obtained a grant that will cover \$55,000 in entertainment cost.

7. Unfinished Business

**That** the verbal updates listed in Agenda Item 6 be received.

7.1 Operations and Site Management

7.1.1 Festival Grounds Layout

- Joe Garon, Chair, distributed a layout proposal for the Festival that shows a breakdown of the setup on each day of the Festival.

7.1.2 Set-up and Take Down

- No new updates to report.

7.1.3 Perimeter Fencing

- No new updates to report.

7.1.4 Signage

- No new updates to report.

7.1.5 Admission Fees

- No new updates to report.

#### 7.1.6 Park Hours

- No new updates to report.

#### 7.1.7 Parking

- Joe Garon, Chair, confirmed that there is a sports organizations that will assist with parking.

#### 7.1.8 Off-Site Parking

- No new updates to report.

#### 7.1.9 Shuttle Transportation

- No new updates to report.

#### 7.1.10 Family Tent

- No new updates to report.

#### 7.1.11 Proposed items to purchase or invest in outside of 2025 Budget

##### 7.1.11.1 Gateway Signage

- This will not take place in 2025

##### 7.1.11.2 Parade Float Refurbishing

- Joe Garon, Chair, has sent in a possible design for the parade float, a quote should be available for next meeting.

##### 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 look into ordering burgundy table linens to fit the theme of the Sip N' Shop to fit the new cocktail tables.

##### 7.1.11.6 Misc Electrical Cords, Power Bars, etc.

- No new updates to report.

#### 7.1.12 Bike Valet

- Nicole Atkinson, Member, confirmed the Bike Valet is booked and will be available Friday through Sunday.

### 7.2 Marketing, Social Media and Advertising

- Joe Garon, Chair, has reached out to radio stations to begin advertising through radio.

### 7.3 Sponsorship

- Joe Garon, Chair, confirmed that the current sponsorship amount is estimated to be \$61,500.

### 7.4 Volunteers

- Joe Garon, Chair, presented his current t-shirt design for volunteers. Cate Back, Member, is still collecting volunteer numbers to have an accurate order.
- Cate Back, Member, confirmed that there are 56 volunteers that have applied for the Festival Weekend.
- Cate Back, Member, proposed a lost and found policy that would allow individuals who have lost an item to report it lost and describe the item. Incident Reporting form was also shown to the Committee, these forms were distributed and they were agreed upon to be used.

## **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 are 13 vendors confirmed and one available food vendor spot.

### **7.5.3 Non-Food/Craft Vendors**

- Katie McGuire-Blais, Member, confirmed that many of the Non-Food vendors have been confirmed, there are still spots available. Vendor applications are closing May 19, 2025.

## **7.6 Attractions**

### **7.6.1 Youth Talent Show**

- Joe Garon, Chair, confirmed that there are 5 people signed up. The application will be reposted online.

### **7.6.2 Kid Zone**

- Tim Stanley, Assistant Manager, Facilities and Events, confirmed the coloring board is in good condition to be used again this year.

### **7.6.3 Chill Zone**

- Joe Garon, Chair, confirmed the items that will be available in the Chill Zone, Cornhole, Misting Tent, Charging Station, and more.

### **7.6.4 Parade**

- Joe Garon, Chair, wants to reach out to the BIA Members to see if local business's and organization's want to participate in the Parade.

### **7.6.5 Clash of the Voices**

- Joe Garon, Chair, confirmed that there is a sponsor for this event and will be looking for applications.

### **7.6.6 Car Show**

- Chris Hellinga, Member and Katie McGuire-Blais, Member and are looking to expand the Car Show to allow for more cars to

participate. There will be more of an effort made for an official detour route as this expansion will close more of Talbot Street.

- Katie McGuire-Blais, Member, told the Committee that multiple organizations have expressed interest to provide food for for the Car Show, no decision was made.

#### 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

- Nicole Atkinson, Member, will need to buy a new bingo kit for this event.

#### 7.6.10 Pony Rides

- Joe Garon, Chair, discussed what timeframe would work for Pony Rides and has yet to decide on what company will be providing the Pony Rides.

#### 7.6.11 Dog Show

- No new updates to report.

#### 7.6.12 Wrestling

- No new updates to report.

#### 7.6.13 Midway & Amusement Rides

- No new updates to report.

#### 7.6.14 Rock Climbing Wall

- No new updates to report.

#### 7.6.15 Escape Room

- Nicole Atkinson, Member, requested that members of the Committee go and meet the escape room company as they have many different options entertainment wise to offer to the Festival. Joe Garon, Chair, will be getting in contact with this company to get a better idea of how they operate.

### **7.7 Sip 'N Shop Wine Mixer**

- Pre-Sale Tickets were delivered to Community Living. Tickets will be available from the Town of Essex on June 9th for Pre-Sale.

#### 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

- Joe Garon, Chair, confirmed that 3 of the 6 Wineries have confirmed.

#### 7.7.4 Caterer/Food Vendors

- Katie McGuire-Blais, has reached out to local Essex Business's to participate in the Sip N' Shop. There are 3 vendor spaces left.

#### 7.7.5 BIA Vendors

- No new updates to report.

#### 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, is still negotiating with Caricaturist, this should be confirmed for next meeting.
- Katie McGuire-Blais, Member confirmed that a Tarot Card Reader will be available during the Sip N' Shop.

#### 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

- No new updates to report.

#### 7.8.4 Bar Management

- Joe Garon, Chair, told the Committee the Beer Tent Manager has confirmed the Bar will be cashless for the Festival Weekend.

#### 7.8.5 Security and Crowd Control

#### 7.8.6 Entertainment

- Joe Garon, Chair, has confirmed the Killer Hooks will be performing on Friday.

#### 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

- Joe Garon, Chair, confirmed that there will be more acts added with the additional funds from the grant that was Awarded to the Festival.

#### 7.9.2 Stage Rental

- No new updates to report.

#### 7.9.3 Production

- No new updates to report.

#### 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

- No new updates to report.

#### 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

- Joe Garon, confirmed this event will be taking place.

8.2 Horseshoes

- No new updates to report.

8.3 Rotary Pancake Breakfast

- No new updates to report.

8.4 Legion Fish Dinner

- No new updates to report.

8.5 Brenko's Cornhole

- No new updates to report.

9. New Business

- No new updates to report.

10. Adjournment

FC25-05-26

Moved By Chris Hellinga

Seconded By Nicole Atkinson

**That** the meeting be adjourned at 7:37pm.

**Carried**

11. Future Meetings

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

---

Chair

---



