



The Corporation of the Town of Essex

Regular Council Meeting Minutes

September 15, 2025, 6:00 pm

Location: Essex Municipal Building, 33 Talbot Street South

Present: Mayor Sherry Bondy
Deputy Mayor Rob Shepley
Ward 1 Councillor Joe Garon
Ward 1 Councillor Katie McGuire-Blais
Ward 2 Councillor Kim Verbeek
Ward 3 Councillor Brad Allard
Ward 3 Councillor Jason Matyi
Ward 4 Councillor Rodney Hammond

Also Present: Joseph Malandrucolo, Director, Legal and Legislative Services/Clerk
Jake Morassut, Director, Community Services
Kate Giurissevich, Chief Administrative Officer
Lori Chadwick, Director, Development Services
Kevin Girard, Director, Infrastructure Services
Lauryn Smith, Youth Council Member
Kate Rowe, Director, Corporate Services
Cole Foster, Youth Council Member
Jason Pillon, Fire Chief
Jack Barron, Manager, Information Technology
Janice Aloisio, Administrative Assistant, Community Services

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

Mayor Bondy called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

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. National Anthem

4. Closed Meeting Report

Joe Malandrucolo, Director, Legal & Legislative Services/Clerk reported that on September 15, 2025 at 4:30 PM Council moved into Closed Session as permitted to do

so pursuant to Section 239 2 (g) of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25. as amended to discuss correspondence received from the Ontario Ombudsman being a matter in respect of which a council, board, committee or other body may hold a closed meeting under another Act.

Director Malandrucolo further reported that on September 15 at 5:00 PM Council moved into Closed Session as permitted to do so pursuant to Section 239 2 (b), (e), (f) and (j) of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25. to receive information related to an environmental order made by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks.

5. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

There were no declarations of conflict of interest noted at this time.

6. Adoption of Published Agenda

6.1 Regular Council Meeting Agenda for September 15, 2025

R25-09-416

Moved By Deputy Mayor Shepley

Seconded By Councillor Matyi

That the published agenda for the September 15, 2025 Regular Council Meeting be adopted with the following amendment:

That Agenda Item 16.1 be added to allow for a matter of New Business.

Carried

7. Adoption of Minutes

7.1 Regular Council Meeting Minutes for September 2, 2025

R25-09-417

Moved By Councillor Verbeek

Seconded By Councillor Garon

That the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held September 2, 2025 be adopted as circulated.

Carried

8. Public Presentations

8.1 Megan Shannon, Advisor, Municipal & Stakeholder Engagement, Enbridge Inc.

RE: Natural Gas Expansion Program

Megan Shannon, Advisor, Municipal & Stakeholder Engagement, Enbridge Inc. presented on the Natural Gas Expansion Program (NGEP) and explained that NGEP connects Ontario families and businesses to reliable, affordable natural gas in small-urban, rural, northern, and indigenous communities. She highlighted the success of the first two phases which extended services to an estimated 50 communities and 17,000 homes and businesses. She requested that Council submit a Council-endorsed comment supporting Phase 3 of the Natural Gas Expansion Program.

R25-09-418

Moved By Deputy Mayor Shepley

Seconded By Councillor McGuire-Blais

That the presentation by Megan Shannon, Advisor, Municipal & Stakeholder Engagement, Enbridge Inc. be received; and

That Council endorse the following resolution:

Whereas the Province has posted ERO 025-0923, *Consultation on the Future of Community Natural Gas Expansion*, seeking feedback from municipalities, Indigenous communities, and other stakeholders on how Phase Three (3) could best support access to natural gas for community development;

And Whereas expanding access to natural gas is identified as a tool to support affordability and economic growth in Ontario communities, with Phases One (1) and Two (2) estimated to enable connections for approximately 17,000 buildings across 59 communities, and 16 projects completed to date;

And Whereas the Town of Essex is working toward its housing and employment land goals that contribute to Ontario's broader objective to build at least 1.5 million homes by 2031 and recognizes that timely servicing solutions (including natural gas where appropriate) can help enable these targets.

And Whereas Ontario's energy future relies on a balance of affordability, reliability, and sustainability by leveraging a mix of energy solutions – including natural gas, electricity, and emerging energy technologies, to meet growing community needs;

And Whereas natural gas continues to play a critical role in supporting energy affordability, economic competitiveness, and enabling housing and employment growth across the province.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved That Council:

1. Supports the Ministry's consultation on the Future of Community Natural Gas Expansion (NGEP Phase 3) and endorses access to natural gas as an option to other energy solutions to advance the Town of Essex's housing, employment lands, and economic development objectives;
2. Directs staff to submit comments to ERO 025-0923 reflecting the Town of Essex's priorities, including: priority application types, alignment with Official Plan/Secondary Plans, sites and corridors where gas access would enable development (housing/employment lands), any Phase 1 and 2 learnings (if applicable) and practical barriers (e.g., timing, permitting, costs, land access); and
3. Forwards this resolution to Anthony Leardi, MPP, the Minister of Energy and Mines, the Ontario Energy Board, Association of Municipalities of Ontario, and neighbouring municipalities.

Carried

8.2 AMO Conference Recap by Councillor Verbeek, Councillor McGuire-Blais and Councillor Matyi

Councillor Verbeek provided a verbal report on the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Conference and highlighted important topics including the rapidly changing political landscape and the potential threats to democracy, integrated housing and health support, and the need for physicians.

Councillor Matyi highlighted topics such as smart growth and asset management, emergency preparedness and readiness, accessibility and announced the new electric minibus which is designed as a modern form of transit.

Councillor McGuire-Blais outlined options that were discussed to help enhance property growth and align our municipality with grants.

R25-09-419

Moved By Councillor Hammond

Seconded By Councillor Garon

That the AMO Conference Recap presented by Councillor Verbeek, Councillor McGuire-Blais and Councillor Matyi be received.

Carried

9. Unfinished Business

10. Reports from Administration

10.1 Fire and Rescue Services-2025-09

RE: Fire Engine 3 - Pre-Budget Funding Request

Jason Pillon, Fire Chief, Fire and Rescue Services, presented to Council a pre-budget approval for a new Fire Engine 3 at Fire Station 3 and explained that based on NFPA standards, front line engines should be replaced every 20 years to maintain the NFPA standard.

R25-09-420

Moved By Councillor Verbeek

Seconded By Deputy Mayor Shepley

That Fire and Rescue Services Report 2025-09 entitled Fire Engine 3 – Pre-Budget Funding Request prepared by Jason Pillon, Fire Chief dated September 15, 2025, be received; and

That Council approve the pre-budget approval, in the amount of \$1,300,000.00 including non-refundable H.S.T. to replace Fire Engine 3 at Fire Station #3 to be funded from the Town's Asset Management Reserve.

Carried

10.2 Information Technology-2025-02

RE: IT Strategic Plan Update 2025

Jack Barron, Manager, Information Technology presented an update to Council on the status of the IT Strategic Plan and highlighted the implementation of the Cloud Software Strategy, and the updated phone system.

He discussed future IT Strategic Plans which includes the Great Plains replacement, cloud migration and increasing the capacity of the IT staff, per the Organizational Review.

R25-09-421

Moved By Deputy Mayor Shepley
Seconded By Councillor Allard

That Information Technology Report 2025-02 entitled IT Strategic Plan Update 2025 prepared by Jack Barron dated September 8, 2025 be received.

Carried

10.3 Capital Works and Asset Management-2025-20

RE: Sidewalk at Victoria Avenue and Thomas Street

David McBeth, Manager, Capital Works and Asset Management, provided an update on Administration's attempt to create an easement agreement with a property owner to utilize land for a sidewalk at Victoria Avenue and Thomas Street. He further noted that Administration's attempts to contact the property owner have been unsuccessful.

R25-09-422

Moved By Deputy Mayor Shepley
Seconded By Councillor McGuire-Blais

That Capital Works and Asset Management Report 2025-20 entitled Sidewalk at Victoria Avenue at Thomas Street by David McBeth, Manager, Capitals Work & Asset Management dated September 15, 2025 be received.

Carried

10.4 Drainage-2025-08

RE: Appointment of an Engineer under Section 78 of the Drainage Act for the Sinasac Drain

R25-09-423

Moved By Councillor Verbeek
Seconded By Councillor Matyi

That Drainage Report 2025-08 entitled Appointment of an Engineer under Section 78 and 76 of the Drainage Act for the Sinasac Drain prepared by Lindsay Dean, Drainage Superintendent dated September 15, 2025 be received; and

That Council appoint RC Spencer Associates Inc. under Section 78 and 76 of the Drainage Act to review the Sinasac Drain.

Carried

10.5 Community Services-2025-27

RE: Special Event Notice – Meyer Alley Dedication and Celebration

R25-09-424

Moved By Deputy Mayor Shepley
Seconded By Councillor Allard

That Community Services Report 2025-27 entitled Special Event Notice – Meyer Alley Dedication and Celebration, prepared by Jake Morassut, Director, Community Services, dated September 15, 2025, be received;

That Council approve closing McAffee Street between King Street and Maple Street and on Meyer Alley between McAffee Street and Victoria Street in Harrow on Saturday, October 4, 2025 from 11:30 AM to 5:30 PM for the event;

That Council approve a temporary noise exemption under Noise By-Law #2038 from 11:30 AM to 5:30 PM on Saturday, October 4, 2025, throughout the event location to accommodate the alley dedication and entertainment; and

That Council approve the Meyer Alley dedication and celebration for Significant Event Status for the purposes of applying for a Special Occasion Permit (SOP) for their event on October 4, 2025.

Carried

10.6 Legal and Legislative Services-2025-17

RE: 2026 Regular Council Meeting Dates

R25-09-425

Moved By Deputy Mayor Shepley
Seconded By Councillor Allard

That Legal & Legislative Services Report-2025-17 entitled 2026 Regular Council Meeting Dates prepared by Joe Malandrucolo, Director, Legal and Legislative Services/Clerk dated September 15, 2025 be received; and

That the dates for the 2026 Regular Council Meetings proposed herein be approved.

Carried

10.7 Legal and Legislative Services-2025-18

RE: Declaration of Surplus Lands on Kayoshik Road

R25-09-426

Moved By Councillor Verbeek
Seconded By Deputy Mayor Shepley

That Legal and Legislative Services Report 2025-18 entitled Declaration and Disposition of Surplus Lands on Kayoshik Road prepared by Joe Malandrucolo, Director, Legal and Legislative Services/Clerk dated September 15, 2025 be received; and

That By-Law 2481 being a by-law for the declaration and disposition of surplus lands (Parcel on Kayoshik Road) by the Corporation of the Town of Essex be read a first, a second time and provisionally adopted on September 15, 2025.

Carried

10.8 Office of the CAO-2025-06

RE: Summary of Outstanding Council Reports

Kate Giurissevich, CAO, provided a verbal report on the outstanding requests from Council.

R25-09-427

Moved By Deputy Mayor Shepley

Seconded By Councillor McGuire-Blais

That Office of the CAO Report 2025-06 entitled Summary of Outstanding Council Reports prepared by Kate Giurissevich, Chief Administrative Officer dated September 15, 2025, be received for information.

Carried

11. Reports from Youth Members

Lauryn Smith, Youth Councillor, announced that Essex Home Hardware was awarded the number one Home Hardware store in all of Canada.

12. County Council Update

Deputy Mayor Shepley provided a County Council update on the Housing Needs Assessment over the next 10 years and noted that County Council supported the Elect Respect pledge, the EMS base on Pelee Island, and Invest Windsor-Essex.

R25-09-428

Moved By Councillor Matyi

Seconded By Councillor Hammond

That the County of Essex, Regular Meeting minutes listed in Agenda Item 12, be received.

Carried

13. Correspondence

13.1 Correspondence to be received

R25-09-429

Moved By Councillor McGuire-Blais

Seconded By Councillor Verbeek

That all of the correspondence listed in Agenda Item 13.1 be received, and, where indicated, to further share such information with the community using suitable methods of communication.

Carried

13.1.1 Municipality of Bluewater

RE: Closure of Before and After School Programs

13.1.2 Fort Frances

RE: Opposition to Strong Mayor Powers

13.1.3 Ontario Medical Association

RE: Letter of Thanks

13.2 Correspondence to be considered for receipt and support

13.2.1 Water and Wastewater Operators Appreciation Day

RE: Water and Wastewater Operators Appreciation Day - October 23, 2025

R25-09-430

Moved By Councillor Garon

Seconded By Councillor McGuire-Blais

Whereas, Water Operators are essential to long-term, sustainable access to safe and reliable drinking water in our communities;

Whereas, their work is vital to the health and safety of our communities. They are responsible for monitoring the operation of water systems and facilities, conducting routine maintenance, adjusting treatment processes, identifying and addressing equipment issues, ensuring that the water quality meets or exceeds legislative guidelines and ensures distribution of clean, safe and reliable drinking water.

Whereas, Waste Water Operators are essential to communities to provide citizens with the monitoring and treatment of waste water.

Whereas, their work is vital to ensuring reliable waste water conveyance and treatment by operating waste water facilities and equipment to purify and treat waste water and to dispose of sewage by cleaning and maintaining collections systems, facilities, equipment, tanks, filter beds and other work areas.

Now, Therefore, I Sherry Bondy, Mayor of the Town of Essex on behalf of the Town Council, Community at Large now call upon all citizens of the Town of Essex to observe the day of October 23, 2025 as Water and Wastewater Operators Appreciation Day.

Carried

13.2.2 Rotary Club of Essex

RE: Flag Request from the Rotary Club of Essex: World Polio Day - October 19, 2025

R25-09-431

Moved By Councillor Verbeek

Seconded By Councillor Allard

That the request from the Rotary Club of Essex for their flag to be flown at Town Hall on October 19, 2025, in support of World Polio Day in the Town of Essex be received and supported.

Carried

13.2.3 Essex Municipal Heritage Committee

RE: Resignation of Grant Peters from the Essex Municipal Heritage Committee

R25-09-432

Moved By Councillor Hammond

Seconded By Councillor Matyi

That the resignation of Grant Peters from the Essex Municipal Heritage Committee be received; and

That Council direct Administration to write a letter of appreciation and thanks for his commitment to the Essex Municipal Heritage Committee.

Carried

14. Committee Meeting Minutes

R25-09-433

Moved By Deputy Mayor Shepley

Seconded By Councillor Verbeek

That the Committee Meeting minutes listed in Agenda Item 14, together with any recommendations to Council noted therein, be received, approved and adopted as circulated.

Carried

14.1 Co-An Park - June 25, 2025

14.2 Committee of Adjustment - July 15, 2025

15. Financial

16. New Business

16.1 Mayor Bondy

R25-09-434

Moved By Mayor Bondy

Seconded By Councillor Verbeek

That Council endorse a Windsor Chapter of the Ontario Search and Rescue Volunteer Association to help create a volunteer database for search and rescue missions; and

That Council direct Administration to send a letter to the Ontario Search and Rescue Volunteer Association.

Carried

17. Notices of Motion

17.1 The following Notices of Motion were presented at the September 2, 2025 Regular Council Meeting and are being brought forth this evening for Council's consideration:

17.1.1 Councillor Allard

R25-09-435

Moved By Councillor Allard
Seconded By Deputy Mayor Shepley

Whereas Council and Employees of the Town of Essex have experienced harassment and other reprehensible conduct by members of the public and other third parties.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved That the Town of Essex Council direct Administration to develop a policy to regulate and provide guidelines for addressing the conduct of members of the public and other third parties when dealing with Council and Employees of the Corporation of the Town of Essex.

Carried

17.1.2 Councillor McGuire-Blais

R25-09-436

Moved By Councillor McGuire-Blais
Seconded By Councillor Verbeek

Whereas the Town will be installing a sidewalk on Irwin Avenue between Fairview Avenue East and County Road 23;

And Whereas there is currently no designated pedestrian crossing along County Road 23 connecting Irwin Avenue;

And Whereas the nearest controlled intersections at Talbot Street and County Road 23, and at Fairview Avenue East and County Road 23, lack continuous sidewalks along the east side of County Road 23 to connect to Irwin Avenue;

And Whereas the absence of a crossing walk at this location poses a potential safety risk for pedestrians, including students, residents, and visitors;

Now Therefore Be It Resolved That Council direct Administration to work with the County of Essex to complete an assessment for the installation of a pedestrian crosswalk at Irwin Avenue across County Road 23 and include the installation cost in the 2026 Capital Budget for Council's consideration, as this would be the most cost-effective and efficient way to ensure pedestrian safety and connectivity in this area.

Carried

17.2 The following Notices of Motion are for presentment only and will be brought forward for Council's consideration at the October 6, 2025 Regular Council Meeting:

17.2.1 Mayor Bondy

Moved By Mayor Bondy

That Council direct Administration to revise Closed Meeting Agendas of Council to provide as much information as possible about the general nature of the matters to be considered in Council's resolutions to go into

a closed meeting, without compromising the reason for holding a closed meeting, with such revisions being implemented for all Closed Meeting Agendas published by the Town going forward after the passing of this resolution.

17.2.2 Councillor McGuire-Blais

Moved By Councillor McGuire-Blais

Whereas the Town of Essex Zoning By-Law currently provides parking exceptions and exemptions for existing buildings located on lands in Parking Exception Areas in downtown Essex and downtown Harrow, for example waiving parking requirements for retail establishments; and

Whereas opportunities to construct new developments on vacant lands in Parking Exception Areas in downtown Essex and downtown Harrow are available for infill development; and

Whereas a goal in the Town's Strategic Plan is to leverage our Town's competitive advantages to promote jobs and economic investment.

Now Therefore be it resolved that Council direct Administration to initiate the Zoning By-Law Amendment Process to consider parking exceptions and exemptions for new commercial construction in Parking Exception Areas in downtown Essex and downtown Harrow.

17.2.3 Councillor McGuire-Blais

Moved By Councillor McGuire-Blais

Whereas the Town of Essex supports residential intensification as a means to help make Essex more affordable and provide more housing options for its residents; and

Whereas the main mode of commuting for the employed labour force in private households in the Town of Essex is a motorized vehicle.

Now Therefore be it resolved that Council direct administration to report back to Council on parking requirements for residential uses, considering such factors as unit size, building type, location, and density, and include issues and opportunities with the Town's current parking requirements in its Zoning By-Law.

18. Reports and Announcements from Council Members

Mayor Bondy announced that September is childhood cancer awareness month.

Councillor Verbeek announced that the McGregor Mug Run is Saturday, September 20, 2025 at Co-An Park in McGregor.

Councillor Garon announced that the Essex 73's are starting their regular season on Tuesday, September 16, 2025.

Councillor McGuire-Blais announced that on September 27, 2025 the Essex Soap Box Derby will be taking place from 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM on Wilson Street in Essex.

Councillor Matyi announced that this weekend is the Heritage Colchester Market, Big WiggleFest, Do it for Dad 5K at Colchester Harbour Park and next weekend is the Harrow Open Streets and Daisy & Co 5K Steps for a Cure in Harrow.

19. By-Laws

19.1 By-Laws that require a third and final reading

19.1.1 By-Law 2478

RE: Being a by-law for the declaration and disposition of surplus lands (36 Queen Street and a Portion of 25 Queen Street) by the Corporation of the Town of Essex

R25-09-437

Moved By Deputy Mayor Shepley

Seconded By Councillor Garon

That By-Law 2478 being a by-law for the declaration and disposition of surplus lands (36 Queen Street and a Portion of 25 Queen Street) by the Corporation of the Town of Essex be read a third time and finally passed on September 15, 2025.

Carried

19.1.2 By-Law 2477

RE: Being a by-law to confirm the September 2, 2025, Regular Meeting of Council of the Corporation of the Town of Essex

R25-09-438

Moved By Councillor Matyi

Seconded By Councillor Allard

That By-Law 2477 being a by-law to confirm the proceedings of the September 2, 2025, Regular Meeting Council of the Corporation of the Town of Essex be read a third time and finally passed on September 15, 2025.

Carried

19.2 By-Laws that require a first, second, third and final reading

19.2.1 By-Law 2482

RE: Being a by-law to appoint a Director, Corporate Services/Treasurer for the Town of Essex

R25-09-439

Moved By Councillor Verbeek

Seconded By Deputy Mayor Shepley

That By-Law 2482 being a by-law to appoint a Director, Corporate Services/Treasurer for the Town of Essex be read a first, a second and a third time and finally passed on September 15, 2025.

Carried

19.3 By-Laws that require a first and second reading

19.3.1 By-Law 2480

RE: Being a by-law to confirm the September 15, 2025, Regular Meeting of Council of the Corporation of the Town of Essex

R25-09-440

Moved By Deputy Mayor Shepley

Seconded By Councillor Garon

That By-Law 2480 being a by-law to confirm the proceedings of the September 15, 2025, Regular Meeting of Council of the Corporation of the Town of Essex be read a first and a second time and provisionally adopted on September 15, 2025.

Carried

20. Adjournment

R25-09-441

Moved By Deputy Mayor Shepley

Seconded By Councillor Hammond

That the meeting be adjourned at 8:02 PM.

Carried

Mayor

Clerk