



Essex County Council, Regular Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 5, 2025

6:00 PM

Council Chambers, 2nd Floor

360 Fairview Avenue West

Essex, Ontario N8M 1Y6

<https://video.isilive.ca/countyofessex/live.html>

- Council:
- Michael Akpata, Councillor
 - Joe Bachetti, Deputy Warden
 - Tracey Bailey, Councillor
 - Sherry Bondy, Councillor
 - Kimberly DeYong, Councillor
 - Chris Gibb, Councillor
 - Gary McNamara, Councillor
 - Crystal Meloche, Councillor
 - Michael Prue, Councillor
 - Rob Shepley, Councillor
 - Larry Verbeke, Councillor
 - Kirk Walstedt, Councillor
 - Paul Tiessen, Councillor, Municipality of Leamington (Alternate Member)
- Absent:
- Hilda MacDonald, Warden
 - Dennis Rogers, Councillor
- Administration:
- Allan Botham, Director, Infrastructure & Planning Services
 - Katherine Hebert, County Clerk
 - Justin Lammers, Chief, Essex-Windsor EMS
 - Darrel Laurendeau, Director, Information Technology
 - Don McArthur, Manager, Communication and Organizational Development
 - Kyla Pritiko, Director, Human Resources
 - Melissa Ryan, Director, Financial Services / Treasurer
 - Natasha Sheeler, Director, Health and Community Services/Administrator
 - David Sundin, Director, Legislative and Legal Services /

County Solicitor
Crystal Sylvestre, Manager, Records and Accessibility /
Deputy Clerk
Sandra Zwiers, Chief Administrative Officer

1. Closed Meeting

There was no Closed Meeting scheduled for November 5, 2025.

2. Moment of Reflection

Remembrance Day Tribute - Lest We Forget.

Council viewed a Remembrance Day Tribute video while observing the moment of silence in honour of Canadians who have and continue to serve our country. Lest We Forget.

3. Singing of 'O Canada'

4. Land Acknowledgement Statement

We acknowledge the land on which the County of Essex is located is the traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations, comprised of the Ojibway, Odawa and Potawatomie Peoples.

We specifically recognize Caldwell First Nation and other First Nations which have provided significant historical and contemporary contributions to this region.

We also value the contributions of all Original Peoples of Turtle Island, who have been living and working on this land from time immemorial.

5. Recording of Attendance

Deputy Warden Bachetti and members of Council attended the meeting at the County of Essex Administration Building, Council Chambers.

Warden MacDonald and Councillor Rogers were absent. Paul Tiessen attended as an alternate member for the Municipality of Leamington.

6. County Deputy Warden's Welcome and Remarks

Deputy Warden Bachetti noted that County Council members attended a tree lighting ceremony for Hiatus House, which had been supporting people who experience family violence for nearly 50 years. The County's Administration Building would be illuminated purple throughout November to support increasing awareness about domestic abuse.

The Deputy Warden encouraged all residents to take time November 11 to pay respect for the people of Essex County who answered the call

when it came time to defend freedom and our way of life. Remembrance Day is a time to remember our Veterans and those who continue serve.

7. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest raised.

8. Adoption of Regular Meeting Minutes

313-2025

Moved By Rob Shepley

Seconded By Gary McNamara

That the minutes of the October 15, 2025 Regular Meeting of Essex County Council be adopted as presented.

Carried

9. Delegations and Presentations

There were no delegation scheduled for November 5, 2025.

10. Communications

10.1 Correspondence

314-2025

Moved By Larry Verbeke

Seconded By Crystal Meloche

That the correspondence listed on the Regular Agenda for November 5, 2025, be received and any noted action approved.

Carried

10.1.1 Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)

- [AMO Watchfile Newsletter](#)
- [AMO Policy Advocacy Updates](#)
- [AMO Education Workshops](#)
- [AMO Training Events](#)

10.1.2 County of Essex Transportation Master Plan: Notice of Public Information Centre 3

Additional information is available at:
countyofessex.ca/TransportationMasterPlan.

Date: Thursday, November 13, 2025

Time Session 1: 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Time Session 2: 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Location: County of Essex Administration Building,
Third Floor Lobby Area, 360 Fairview Avenue West,
Essex, ON, N8M 1Y3

10.2 Resolutions

There were no resolutions for consideration for November 5, 2025.

11. Consent Agenda

315-2025

Moved By Crystal Meloche

Seconded By Kimberly DeYong

That the recommendations in the Administrative Reports listed as items 11.1 through 11.3, on the Consent Agenda for November 5, 2025 be approved.

Carried

11.1 Electricity and Natural Gas Update-Commodity Price Hedging Strategy

Report number 2025-1105-FIN-R31-MR, Electricity and Natural Gas Update-Commodity Price Hedging Strategy, dated November 5, 2025, from Melissa Ryan, Director, Financial Services/Treasurer

11.2 Procurement Services Quarterly Report for Q3 - 2025

Report number 2025-1105-FIN-R32-SP, Procurement Services Quarterly Report for Q3 - 2025, dated November 5, 2025, from Sandy Pillon, Manager, Procurement Services

11.3 Summary of Outstanding Reports - November 5, 2025

Report number 2025-1105-LLS-R55-KH, Summary of Outstanding Reports, dated November 5, 2025, from Katherine Hebert, Clerk

12. Reports and Questions

12.1 Proposed Updates to the Attendance Support Policy

Report number 2025-1105-HR-R13-KP, Proposed Updates to the Attendance Support Policy, dated November 5, 2025 from Kyla Pritiko, Director, Human Resources

Kyla Pritiko outlined the revised Attendance Support Policy noting that the Policy had been revised several times since its inception in 2004.

The proposed version had been developed in consultation with the County's stakeholders including its Union partners. The proposed policy offers methods for increased transparency, consistent application and management of the process, and focusses on early support for staff to avoid long term absences.

316-2025

Moved By Chris Gibb

Seconded By Michael Prue

That Essex County Council receive report number 2025-1105-HR-R13-KP, Proposed Updates to Attendance Support Policy and supporting documents as information; and

That Essex County Council direct Administration to reclassify the Attendance Support Policy from a Corporate to an Administrative Policy, in alignment with the Policy and Procedures framework.

In Favour (13): Michael Akpata, Joe Bachetti, Tracey Bailey, Sherry Bondy, Kimberly DeYong, Chris Gibb, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, Kirk Walstedt, and Paul Tiessen

Carried

12.2 Strategic Plan implementation Update 2025

Report number 2025-1105-CAO-R10-SZ, Strategic Plan implementation Update 2025, dated November 5, 2025, from Sandra Zwiers, Chief Administrative Officer

Sandra Zwiers outlined the history of the Strategic Plan that was implemented in 2023. The Plan has a focus on advancing the goals and initiatives in a lasting and positive way, in alignment with the vision, mission and values. Since implementation, more than eighty percent of identified tasks have been completed or are in progress.

As part of the Strategic Plan initiatives, a workshop will be held in Q1 of 2026 to offer Council the opportunity to review the status, analyze the fit and direction of the original goals, and to contemplate the future of this inaugural plan.

317-2025

Moved By Gary McNamara

Seconded By Chris Gibb

That Essex County Council receive report number 2025-1105-CAO-R10-SZ, Strategic Plan Implementation Update as information.

In Favour (13): Michael Akpata, Joe Bachetti, Tracey Bailey, Sherry Bondy, Kimberly DeYong, Chris Gibb, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, Kirk Walstedt, and Paul Tiessen

Carried

12.3 County of Essex Advocacy Strategy

Report number 2025-1105-LLS-R56-DM, County of Essex Advocacy Strategy, dated November 5, 2025, from Don McArthur, Manager, Communications and Organizational Development

Don McArthur provided a detailed overview of the proposed Advocacy Strategy. The strategy outlines tangible opportunities as well as a prescribed timeline for such efforts.

318-2025

Moved By Crystal Meloche

Seconded By Paul Tiessen

That Essex County Council receive Report Number 2025-1105-LLS-R56-DM, County of Essex Advocacy Strategy, as information; and,

That the proposed Corporate Policy 2025-016 County of Essex Advocacy Strategy Policy, attached to this report as Appendix A, be adopted in conjunction with By-law 2025-45 at the appropriate time; and,

That Administration be directed to provide a Report to Council on potential 2026 advocacy priorities to coincide with the 2026 Budget deliberations.

In Favour (13): Michael Akpata, Joe Bachetti, Tracey Bailey, Sherry Bondy, Kimberly DeYong, Chris Gibb, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, Kirk Walstedt, and Paul Tiessen

Carried

12.4 CAO Performance Appraisal Policy

Report number 2025-1105-HR-R12-KP, CAO Performance Appraisal Policy, dated November 5, 2025 from Kyla Pritiko, Director, Human Resources

Kyla Pritiko explained that the system for appraisal had been developed in conjunction with Vokes Leadership Group

319-2025

Moved By Larry Verbeke

Seconded By Michael Akpata

That Essex County Council receive report number 2025-1105-HR-R12-KP, CAO Performance Appraisal Policy as information; and,

That Essex County Council approve and adopt the CAO Performance Appraisal Policy appended to this report.

In Favour (13): Michael Akpata, Joe Bachetti, Tracey Bailey, Sherry Bondy, Kimberly DeYong, Chris Gibb, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, Kirk Walstedt, and Paul Tiessen

Carried

13. Unfinished Business

There were no matters of Unfinished Business to address for November 5, 2025.

14. New Business

There were no matters of New Business brought forward for November 5, 2025.

15. Adoption of By-Laws

320-2025

Moved By Chris Gibb

Seconded By Kimberly DeYong

That By-laws 2025-44 through 2025-46 be given three readings, and having been read a first, second and third time, be finally passed and enacted.

In Favour (13): Michael Akpata, Joe Bachetti, Tracey Bailey, Sherry Bondy, Kimberly DeYong, Chris Gibb, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, Kirk Walstedt, and Paul Tiessen

Carried

15.1 By-law number 2025-44

Being a By-law to adopt Corporate Policy 2025-015 Chief Administrative Officer Performance Appraisal Policy for the Corporation of the County of Essex.

15.2 By-law Number 2025-45

Being a By-law to adopt Corporate Policy 2025-016 County of Essex Advocacy Strategy Policy for the Corporation of the County of Essex.

15.3 By-law Number 2025-46

Being a By-law to confirm the proceedings of the Council of the of the Corporation of the County of Essex, Regular Meeting, for November 5, 2025.

16. Notice of Motion

There were no Notices of Motion brought forward for November 5, 2025.

17. Adjournment

321-2025

Moved By Chris Gibb

Seconded By Gary McNamara

That the Essex County Council meeting for November 5, 2025 be adjourned at 6:44 PM.

Carried

Hilda MacDonald,
Warden, County of Essex

Katherine J. Hebert,
County Clerk

