



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

June 26, 2025, 6:00 pm
60 Fairview Ave W, Essex, ON N8M 1B6

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

Absent: Member - Desjardins, Tiffany

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

Joe Garon, Chair 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. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

- No conflicts of interest to report

4. Adoption of Published Agenda

4.1 Essex Festival Committee Meeting Agenda for June 26, 2025

FF25-06-32

Moved By Nicole Atkinson

Seconded By Cate Back

That the published agenda for the June 26, 2025, Essex Festival Committee Meeting be adopted as presented.

Carried

5. Adoption of Minutes

5.1 Essex Festival Committee Minutes for June 12, 2025

FF25-06-33

Moved By Katie McGuire-Blais

Seconded By Kim Verbeek

That the minutes of the Essex Festival Committee meeting held June 12, 2025, be adopted as circulated.

Carried

6. Financials

- Jake Morassut, Director, Community Services, reminded committee members that all events that are anticipating a payout at the festival, please forward him the invoices or receipts in order to get required cheques processed in time for distribution at the festival.
- And further, Director Morassut reminded members to submit any cash prize money required and/or float monies to him as soon as possible.

7. Unfinished Business

FF25-06-34

Moved By Richard Tapping

Seconded By Nicole Atkinson

That the verbal updates listed in Agenda Item 7 be received.

Carried

7.1 Operations and Site Management

7.1.1 Festival Grounds Layout

- No discussion or update was had.

7.1.2 Set-up and Take Down

- Joe Garon, Chair advised that some set up may start arriving for set up on Monday, however, most food vendors and entertainment will start to set up on Wednesday.

7.1.3 Perimeter Fencing

Joe Garon, Chair, advised that perimeter fencing will commence on Monday.

7.1.4 Signage

- New signage leading up to gate stating as well as at the shuttle location stating no food, drink, bikes, dogs, etcetera and that bags will be searched in order for people to choose to leave it in their vehicle or at home.

- Lost and Found sign required for information booth.
- Discussion on moving a separate table to the side for security to do bag checks without impeding flow of admission lines.

7.1.5 Admission Fees

- Volunteers will be monitoring the admission gates together with an assigned 'volunteer manager', security will be going through large bags, bottles and containers off to the side so as to not impeded the flow.
- Security will move over to festival tent at 9pm

7.1.6 Park Hours

- No discussion or update was had.

7.1.7 Parking

- No discussion or update was had.

7.1.8 Off-Site Parking

- No discussion or update was had.

7.1.9 Shuttle Transportation

- Joe Garon, Chair, advised that the festival website provides a route map for the shuttle and that the shuttle will be identified with a festival decal as well as ample signage located at the pickup location.

7.1.10 Family Tent

- No discussion or update was had.

7.2 Marketing, Social Media and Advertising

- Joe Garon, Chair, advised that the new website is starting to gain traction and statistic are showing similar numbers from previous years.
- Katie McGuire-Blais, Vice-Chair, advised that she continues to post media updates and event sponsorships daily and will continue to do so throughout the coming days.
- QR code sign to follow new website and other social media sites will be added to the information booth along with a few other signs to direct people to the new pages.
- Jake Morassut, Director, Community Services, advised that he has purchased a double sided-sign holder for a sign with a QR-Code on it to obtain additional information on attendees additional support towards the grant process.

7.3 Sponsorship

- Richard Tapping, Member, advised that we have approximately \$61,500 in sponsorship commitments.

7.4 Volunteers

- Cate Back, Member, advised that approximately 134 volunteers have signed up for the four day event.
- Jake Morassut, Director, Community Services will obtain the necessary BIA Bucks required for distribution to the volunteers.
- Member Back further advised that the volunteer applications will close on Saturday and that Volunteer's have been emailed and advised to pick up their shirts and provided instructions on how to proceed and that all volunteer's working at least a four hour shift will be given a \$10.00 food voucher, snacks have been picked up at Costco and will be distributed to them during their shifts as well as the BIA bucks.
- Tim Stanley, Assistant Manager Facilities and Events will met with Member Back following the meeting to determine where the freezers will go and has advised that he will investigate and obtain bags of ice and the required bottles of water for the volunteers and have the ticket booth open for Member Back on Thursday at 8:30am.

7.5 Vendors

7.5.1 Vendor Rates

- No discussion or update was had.

7.5.2 Food and Beverage Vendors

- Joe Garon, Chair, advised that he has sent all of the food and beverage vendors a 'location map' for their set up and that we have one additional food vender over last years festival.

7.5.3 Non-Food/Craft Vendors

- Katie McGuire-Blais advised that she has been in touch with the Facility Clerk to assess final payments have been received and further advised that she has emailed all of the vendors to provide them with a 'location' map of their booth space as well as their set up times.
- Katie McGuire-Blais further advised that she will mark off the ground for each booth with either paint or a flag in the ground on Tuesday.
- Tim Stanley, Assistant Manager, Facilities and Events advised that he will pick up the required six cans of chalk paint for lines

7.6 Attractions

7.6.1 Youth Talent Show

- Joe Garon, Chair, advised that there will be 15 contestants and the 3 judges have been selected to judge the event.

7.6.2 Kid Zone

- Joe Garon, Chair advised that inflatables will set up on Friday.

7.6.3 Teen Zone

- Joe Garon, Chair advised that folding umbrellas in storage require advance assessment to ensure no damage has occurred in storage.
- Misting tent will be available during the festival.
- Tim Stanley, Assistant Manager, Facilities and Events advised that town staff will be available to string the lights at the top of the tent for ample lighting.

7.6.4 Parade

- Rich Tapping, Member, advised that there are approximately 36 entries with approximately 70 vehicles and that he has emailed all applicants to coordinate the line up on Saturday.
- Joe Garon, Chair, advised that the float is ready in Colenutt's yard and all repairs and new signage are complete.

7.6.5 Dog Show

- Joe Garon, Chair advised that five pet friendly hotel rooms have been secured for the event and that there will be 3 shows.
- Nicole Atkinson, Member, advised that she will be on-site at 8:30am to liaison with the group should they require anything for the event.

7.6.6 Car Show

- Chris Hellinga, Member, advised that he has had approximately 103 entries submitted with more anticipated to just show up for the event without registering.
- Reminder, 4 walkie-talkies and the golf cart are required as well as the picnic tables for the area.
- Judges have been selected and 3 trophies with an additional request to get another trophy done for "peoples choice" trophy and Katie McGuire-Blais, Vice Chair will create a number card for public to scan a QR-code and make a selection.
- Tim Stanley, Assistant Manager, Facilities and Events is to look into obtaining at least one, if not two golf carts for use during the festival with one downtown for the car show and the parade.

7.6.7 Watermelon Contest

- Reminder from Kim Verbeek, Member, that town staff need to pick up the donated watermelons on Sunday prior to 2pm and they require either ice or refrigeration to maintain cold temperature for the event and further she will require a couple tables, and no less than one microphone.

7.6.8 Visual Display (Fireworks)

- No discussion or update was had.

7.6.9 Bingo

- Nicole Atkinson advised that she has ordered the bingo kit and everything is ready for the chocolate bar bingo event.

7.6.10 Rock Climbing Wall

- No discussion or update was had.

7.6.11 Wrestling

- Director, Morassut advised that the contingency location for the wrestling event due to inclement weather would be on the Shaheen Rink floor if necessary.

7.6.12 OLG 50th Anniversary Activation

- Tim Stanley, Assistant Manager, Facilities and Events advised that he has put a reservation on town's payload and will be onsite for their arrival and has been authorized that they will need to off-load equipment early and it can be stored in the Shaheen Rink until required.
- They will have security on site all weekend.

7.6.13 Midway & Amusement Rides

- Joe Garon, Chair, confirmed set up will be in same location as previous festivals and that some of the vendors may start dropping off equipment as early as Sunday.

7.7 Sip 'N Shop Wine Mixer

7.7.1 Decor/Decorations

- Joe Garon, Chair advised that decoration for the stage has been arranged.
- Reminder, that Mosquito Guard will be on-site to do their spray tomorrow at 8am.

7.7.2 Non-Profit Beneficiary

- Community Living will have volunteers collecting garbage and handing out charcuterie cups during the event.

7.7.3 Wineries

- Joe Garon, Chair advised that there are 5 wineries committed.

7.7.4 Caterer/Food Vendors

- Katie McGuire-Blais advised that she has ordered the 6 charcuterie boards have been ordered.

7.7.5 BIA Vendors

- No discussion or update was had.

7.7.6 Hours of Operation

- No discussion or update was had.

7.7.7 Admission Fees

- No discussion or update was had.

7.7.8 Entertainment

- Caricature artist will have his own separate area set up with an area delineated for lining up without being in the way.
- Tarot Card reader will have their own separate tented area set up.

7.7.9 Raffle

- Joe Garon, Chair advised that one prize will be BIA bucks and Rich Tapping, Member, confirmed that \$100 gift card from Ocean's Bottom will be another.

7.7.10 Ticket Pricing

- Ticket sales are around 400 to-date.

7.7.11 Parking

- Joe Garon, Chair advised Essex Ravens will be manning the parking for the event.

7.7.12 Layout

- No discussion or update was had.

7.8 Beer Tent

7.8.1 Hours of Operation

- No discussion or update was had.

7.8.2 Admission

- No discussion or update was had.

7.8.3 Product and Pricing

- No discussion or update was had.

7.8.4 Bar Management

- No discussion or update was had.

7.8.5 Security and Crowd Control

- No discussion or update was had.

7.8.6 Entertainment

- Derek Knapp and Nicole Atkinson, Members, will sell the mainstage entertainment promotional items during the show.
- Reminder from Jake Morassut, Director, Parks and Facilities that required bar floats need to be submitted in advance of the event.

7.8.7 Parking

- The Essex Ravens will be the 'donor' organization for parking on Friday night and Skate Lakeshore, will be the 'donor' organization conducting parking on Saturday night.

7.8.8 Power

- No discussion or update was had.

7.8.9 Layout

- Set up will commence on Wednesday.

7.9 Main Stage

7.9.1 Entertainment

- No discussion or update was had.

7.9.2 Stage Rental

- Set up will commence on Wednesday.

7.9.3 Production

- No discussion or update was had.

7.9.4 Bar Management

- No discussion or update was had.

7.9.5 Security and Crowd Control

- No discussion or update was had.

7.9.6 Parking

- No discussion or update was had.

7.9.7 Power

- No discussion or update was had.

7.9.8 Other Rentals and Operation

- No discussion or update was had.

7.9.9 Layout

- No discussion or update was had.

7.10 Secondary Stage

7.10.1 Location

- No discussion or update was had.

7.10.2 Entertainment

- No discussion or update was had.

7.10.3 Stage Rental

- No discussion or update was had.

7.10.4 Production

- No discussion or update was had.

7.10.5 Power

- No discussion or update was had.

7.10.6 Other Rentals and Operation

- No discussion or update was had.

7.11 3rd Party Events and Partnerships

7.11.1 5K Walk, Run

- All set.

7.11.2 Horseshoes

- All set.

7.11.3 Rotary Pancake Breakfast

- No update or information has been received from organization.

7.11.4 Legion Fish Dinner

- All set.

7.11.5 Brenko's Cornhole

- No discussion or update was had.

8. Adjournment

FF25-06-35

Moved By Cate Back

Seconded By Nicole Atkinson

That the meeting be adjourned at 8:10pm

Carried

9. Future Meetings

- No discussion or update was had.

Chair

Recording Secretary