



## **Essex County Council Regular Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, January 18, 2023**

**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, Deputy Mayor - Town of LaSalle
  - Joe Bachetti, Deputy Warden / Deputy Mayor - Town of Tecumseh
  - Tracey Bailey, Mayor - Municipality of Lakeshore
  - Sherry Bondy, Mayor - Town of Essex
  - Kimberly DeYong, Deputy Mayor - Town of Kingsville
  - Chris Gibb, Deputy Mayor - Town of Amherstburg
  - Hilda MacDonald, Warden / Mayor - Municipality of Leamington
  - Gary McNamara, Mayor - Town of Tecumseh
  - Crystal Meloche, Mayor - Town of LaSalle
  - Michael Prue, Mayor - Town of Amherstburg
  - Dennis Rogers, Mayor - Town of Kingsville
  - Rob Shepley, Deputy Mayor - Town of Essex
  - Larry Verbeke, Deputy Mayor - Municipality of Leamington
  - Kirk Walstedt, Deputy Mayor - Municipality of Lakeshore
- Administration:
- Mary Birch, Interim CAO & Director, Legislative and Community Services/Clerk
  - Allan Botham, Director, Infrastructure & Planning Services
  - Jayne Brooks Keller, Administrator - Sun Parlor Home
  - Adam Craig, CEO and Chief Librarian - Essex County Library
  - Kristie Cronin, Director of Human Resources
  - Jeanie Diamond Francis, Manager, Community Services
  - Katherine Hebert, Deputy Clerk
  - Don McArthur, Manager, Communication and Organizational Development
  - David Sundin, County Solicitor
  - Crystal Sylvestre, Administrative Assistant, Legislative and Community Services
  - Sandra Zwiars, Director, Financial Services/Treasurer
  - Rebecca Belanger, Manager of Planning Services

**1. Closed Meeting**

A Closed Meeting was held at 5:00 PM on January 18, 2023.

**001-2023**

**Moved By** Michael Akpata

**Seconded By** Crystal Meloche

That Council move into a closed meeting pursuant to Section 239 (2) (d) and (h) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended for the following reason(s):

- labour relations or employee negotiations;
- information explicitly supplied in confidence to the municipality or local board by Canada, a province or territory or a Crown agency of any of them.

**Carried**

**005-2023**

**Moved By** Larry Verbeke

**Seconded By** Crystal Meloche

That Council adjourn, and rise from the January 18, 2023 Closed Meeting at 6:00 PM.

**Carried**

**2. Moment of Reflection**

**3. Singing of 'O Canada'**

**4. Land Acknowledgement Statement**

We begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations, comprised of the Ojibway, Odawa and Potawatomie Peoples.

To recognize the land is an expression of gratitude to those whose territory you reside on, and a way of honouring the Indigenous people who have been living and working on the land from time immemorial.

We value the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all the Original Peoples of Turtle Island.

**5. Recording of Attendance**

Warden MacDonald and all members of Council attended the meeting at the Essex County Civic Centre, Council Chambers.

**6. County Warden’s Welcome and Remarks**

Warden MacDonald welcomed everyone to the first meeting of 2023. The Warden began her address by reflected on the accomplishments of County staff that provided essential services over the snowy holiday season. She highlighted the efforts of the Roads Maintenance staff that provided winter control services to ensure that travelers and commuters could reach their destinations. Staff of Sun Parlor Home braved the elements to ensure that the residents and visitors to the Home enjoyed their holiday celebrations. Essex-Windsor EMS staff navigated snow covered roads to attend emergencies and transfer patients to hospitals and provided support to hospital staff.

The Warden thanked all County staff for setting a positive tone to start the year.

**7. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest**

**7.1 Sherry Bondy - 2023 Budget Update and Final Approval**

Sherry Bondy declared a conflict, related to being a former employee of the Essex County Library and being entitled to retroactive pay as a result of a pay equity settlement.

**8. Adoption of Regular Meeting Minutes**

Minutes from the December 21, 2022 Essex County Council - Regular Meeting.

**006-2023**

**Moved By** Crystal Meloche

**Seconded By** Michael Prue

That the minutes of the December 21, 2022 Regular Meeting of Essex County Council be adopted as presented.

In Favour (14): Michael Akpata, Joe Bachetti, Tracey Bailey, Sherry Bondy, Kimberly DeYong, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Dennis Rogers, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, and Kirk Walstedt

**Carried**

## 9. Delegations and Presentations

### 007-2023

**Moved By** Larry Verbeke

**Seconded By** Chris Gibb

That the delegation on the County of Essex Official Plan Review - 2023 Update be allowed to present to County Council.

In Favour (14): Michael Akpata, Joe Bachetti, Tracey Bailey, Sherry Bondy, Kimberly DeYong, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Dennis Rogers, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, and Kirk Walstedt

**Carried**

### 9.1. County of Essex Official Plan Review - 2023 Update

Rebecca Belanger, Manager, Planning Services and Larry Silani, Official Plan - Planning Advisor, to make a presentation regarding the County of Essex Official Plan Review - 2023 Update. (See *Agenda Item - Reports and Questions Number 12.1*)

Rebecca Belanger updated Council on the report that was brought forward in February of 2022 regarding the comprehensive work plan for the County of Essex Official Plan Update.

Ms. Belanger explained that the review would be completed in three phases. Phase 1 was complete and included the Phase 1 Background Report prepared by Miller Silani Inc and the Growth Analysis Report prepared by Watson and Associates Economists Ltd. Phase 2 would include the policy options report and additional technical studies; followed by Phase 3 which would include steps to draft and adopt the new County Official Plan.

Ms. Belanger provided an overview of the actions taken throughout Phase 1 including workshops, meetings and consultations with upper and local tier Councils, local tier Senior Planning staff and various stakeholders to provide the necessary input to prepared the reports.

Larry Silani provided council with information regarding the key takeaways that were obtained during Phase 1; for use in Phase 2 and 3. Mr. Silani commented that the County of Essex is unique to other communities in the province by being a peninsula surrounded on three sides by the United States. The report provided considered this unique geography to arrive at a list of strengths and weaknesses of the County. Mr. Silani pointed out that the report

projected 20-30 years into the future and was focused on land use policies to protect the rich natural resources and strengths of the County. Mr. Silani outlined the challenges facing the County of Essex including housing affordability and servicing constraints. Larry explained the goal was to continue to grow by streamlining processes while protecting the agricultural land space and ensuring the building and design of amenities serve residents and the environment.

Ms. Belanger outlined the next steps in the work program to complete the Official Plan by the end of 2023.

Discussions included the impacts of Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022, to the plan review process and the efforts planned to streamlining the permitting and approval processes at the two levels of government.

## **10. Communications**

### **10.1. Correspondence**

**009-2023**

**Moved By** Tracey Bailey

**Seconded By** Chris Gibb

That the correspondence listed on the Regular Agenda for January 18, 2023, be received and any noted action approved.

**Carried**

#### **10.1.1 Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing**

- December 22, 2022 - Ontario's Housing Supply Crisis and Legislative Update
- January 4, 2023 - Ontario Building Code, Building Inspector Internship Program

#### **10.1.2 Ontario Sheep Farmers**

Correspondence from John Hemsted, Chair, Ontario Sheep Farmers

#### **10.1.3 Bill 23 - More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022**

- Town of Newmarket
- Municipality of North Perth
- Northumberland County

- Greater Napanee
- Loyalist Township

**10.1.4 Bill 3 - Strong Mayors, Building Homes Act**

- Lake of Bays Muskoka
- Municipality of Wawa
- Town of Coburg

**10.1.5 City of Kingston**

December 15, 2022 - Resolution RE Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act, 2016

**10.1.6 Lanark County**

December 15, 2022 - Support for Provincial Declaration of an Epidemic in relation to Violence Against Women (VAW) and Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

**10.1.7 Town of Plympton-Wyoming**

December 21, 2022 - Resolution RE CN Railway Contribution Requirements under the Drainage Act and Impacts on Municipal Drain Infrastructure in Ontario

**10.1.8 Municipality of Tweed**

December 14, 2022 - Natural Gas Prices, Petition to Regulate Gas Bill Costs Across Ontario to be in Parity to Other Districts with lower rates

**10.1.9 Township of Warwick**

November 16, 2022 - Resolution RE CN Railway Contribution Requirements under the Drainage Act and Impacts on Municipal Drain Infrastructure in Ontario

**10.1.10 City of Windsor - Housing Department**

Leamington Emergency Shelter Program

**10.1.11 Town of Essex**

December 1, 2022 - Resolution RE Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022

**10.1.12 Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (GLSLCI)**

2022 Year in Review - Making Waves

**10.1.13 Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA)**

- January 3, 2023 - [Nominations Report on the 2023 - 2027 ROMA Board of Directors Elections](#)
- January 7, 2023 - [ROMA AGM and Conference Notice](#)

**10.1.14 Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)**

AMO Watchfile Online:

- [December 22, 2022](#)
- [January 5, 2023](#)
- [January 12, 2023](#)

AMO Communications:

- January 5, 2023 - [AMO Policy Update – New Affordable Child Care Spaces, Information from Province on More Homes Built Faster Plan, Energy Reports Released, Annual Emergency Exercise Requirement, Golf Car Consultations Underway](#)
- January 6, 2023 - [AMO New Councillor Training](#)
- January 10, 2023 - [Take Advantage of Councillor Training at the ROMA Conference](#)

**10.2. Resolutions**

There were no resolutions for the consideration of Council for January 18, 2023.

**11. Consent Agenda**

**010-2023**

**Moved By** Gary McNamara

**Seconded By** Dennis Rogers

That the information item(s) listed as item(s) 11.1 on the Consent Agenda for January 18, 2023 be received.

**Carried**

**11.1. Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee (HHAC)**

- 2022 Annual Report to City Council
- HHAC Highlights

## **12. Reports and Questions**

### **12.1. Essex County Library Board**

Essex County Library Board Minutes, dated November 9, 2022,  
Deputy Warden Joe Bachetti, Chair

**011-2023**

**Moved By** Crystal Meloche

**Seconded By** Sherry Bondy

That the minutes of the Essex County Library Board for November 9, 2022 be received.

**Carried**

### **12.2. County of Essex Official Plan Review - 2023 Update**

Report number 2023-0118-IPS-R01-RB, County of Essex Official  
Plan Review - 2023 Update, dated January 18, 2023 from Rebecca  
Belanger, Manager, Planning Services

**008-2023**

**Moved By** Gary McNamara

**Seconded By** Michael Akpata

That Essex County Council receive Report number 2023-0118-IPS-  
R01-RB from the Manager, Planning Services with regard to the  
County of Essex Official Plan Review process.

In Favour (14): Michael Akpata, Joe Bachetti, Tracey Bailey, Sherry  
Bondy, Kimberly DeYong, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Gary  
McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Dennis Rogers, Rob  
Shepley, Larry Verbeke, and Kirk Walstedt

**Carried**

### **12.3. 2023 Budget Update and Final Approval**

Report number 2023-0118-FIN-R01-SZ, 2023 Budget Update and  
Final Approval, dated January 18, 2023, from Sandra Zwiers,  
Director, Financial Services/Treasurer

Sandra Zwiers recapped the adjustments requested at the budget  
deliberation meeting of December 7, 2022 and the resulting impact  
to the 2023 budget value.

Ms. Zwiers updated Council on information received since the  
December 7, 2022 budget deliberation meeting, specifically  
information pertaining to Essex County Library pay equity  
settlement. Ms. Zwiers explained that drawing the required funds



from both Library and County accrued payroll reserve funds and rate stabilization reserves would satisfy the expense and have no impact to the proposed 2023 budget.

Information received on December 9, 2022 indicated that the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund (OCIF) contribution to the County would be reduced by the maximum allowable decrease of 15 percent. Ms. Zwiers explained that administration was aware of the threshold range and considerations were made in the 2023 budget to, if required, draw the shortfall from the Infrastructure Capital reserve as a one-time expense.

**012-2023**

**Moved By** Joe Bachetti

**Seconded By** Gary McNamara

That Essex County Council approve the following transfers from reserves:

1. Transfer \$505,000 from the County's Accrued Payroll account to support ECL's retroactive pay equity / job evaluation payments.
2. Transfer approximately \$135,000 from the County's Rate Stabilization Reserve to support ECL's retroactive pay equity / job evaluation payments.
3. Transfer \$312,388 from the County's Capital Reserve to support the 2023 loss of OCIF grant allocation.

And further that the 2023 Budget Estimates for the Essex County Library Board be approved; and

And further that the 2023 Net Operating and Capital Requirement for the County of Essex be approved in the amount of \$123,599,230.

In Favour (13): Michael Akpata, Joe Bachetti, Tracey Bailey, Kimberly DeYong, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Dennis Rogers, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, and Kirk Walstedt

Opposed (Abstain) (1): Sherry Bondy

**Carried**

**12.4. Staffing Requests – 2023 Budget**

Report number 2023-0118-CAO-R01-MB, Staffing Requests - 2023 Budget, dated January 18, 2023, from Mary Birch, Interim CAO.

Interim CAO, Mary Birch highlighted the positions proposed in the staffing request report, noting the funding of the positions was approved in the 2023 budget deliberations.

**013-2023**

**Moved By** Crystal Meloche

**Seconded By** Rob Shepley

It is the recommendation of the Interim Chief Administrative Officer that County Council:

Approve the hiring of the following positions:

- Records and Information Management Analyst
- Human Resources Assistant
- Mechanic / Operator;

And authorize the development of a recruitment strategy to fill the new positions.

**Carried**

**13. Unfinished Business**

There was no unfinished business for January 18, 2023.

**14. New Business**

**14.1. Public Reporting of Closed Meeting**

A Closed Meeting of Essex County Council was held at 5:00 PM., prior to the regular Council meeting this evening, pursuant to Section 239 (2) (d) and (h) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended for the following reason:

- (d) labour relations or employee negotiations;
- (h) information explicitly supplied in confidence to the municipality or local board by Canada, a province or territory or a Crown agency of any of them;

Council was provided with information on labour relations and contract negotiation matters, a matter for which information was received from the Province in confidence and an update regarding the CAO recruitment process.

**14.2. AMO Zone 1 Board Candidate**

Sherry Bondy requested support of County Councillors in her campaign to obtain a position on the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Board of Directors as a representative for Zone 1.

**15. Adoption of By-Laws**

**014-2023**

**Moved By** Larry Verbeke

**Seconded By** Kimberly DeYong

That By-laws 2023-01 through 2023-03, having been read a first, second and third time, be finally passed and enacted.

**Carried**

**15.1. By-law Number 2023-01**

Being a By-law to Authorize the Borrowing of Money to Meet Current Expenditures of the Council of the Corporation of the County of Essex.

**15.2. By-law Number 2023-02**

Being a By-law to Appoint Auditors of the Corporation of the County of Essex for the Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 2022

**15.3. By-law Number 2023-03**

Being a By-law to Confirm the Proceedings of the Council of the Corporation of the County of Essex, for January 18, 2023.

**16. Notice of Motion**

There were no Notices of Motion for January 18, 2023.

**17. Adjournment**

**015-2023**

**Moved By** Michael Prue

**Seconded By** Dennis Rogers

That the Essex County Council meeting for January 18, 2023 be adjourned at 7:31 PM.

**Carried**

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Hilda MacDonald,  
Warden, County of Essex

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Mary Birch  
Director, Legislative and Community Services/Clerk

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Date Signed