



Essex County Council, Regular Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 4, 2024

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:
- Allan Botham, Director, Infrastructure & Planning Services
 - Jayne Brooks Keller, Administrator, Sun Parlor Home
 - Jeanie Diamond Francis, Manager, Community 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
 - Crystal Sylvestre, Coordinator, Legislative and Community Services
 - Sandra Zwiers, Chief Administrative Officer
 - Dee Blais, Administrative Assistant to the CAO

1. Closed Meeting

There was no Closed Meeting held on September 4, 2024

2. Moment of Reflection

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**

Warden MacDonald and 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 meeting.

The Warden reminded Council and residents that the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee would be hosting the Outdoor Accessibility Fest-for-All in Colchester on September 13, 2024. This special event aims to raise awareness around opportunities and information that promote inclusion in activities, services and spaces for all residents.

Residents were reminded to complete the Windsor-Essex Regional Affordable Housing Strategy Survey by September 9, 2024 to help shape future housing plans.

September also marked Suicide Awareness Month with support from the Canadian Mental Health Association Windsor-Essex County and Essex-Windsor EMS local Suicide Awareness Walks were scheduled for September 29, 2024.

7. **Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest**

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest raised.

8. **Adoption of Regular Meeting Minutes**

Minutes of the August 14, 2024 Essex County Council Regular Meeting.

215-2024

Moved By Rob Shepley

Seconded By Kirk Walstedt

That the minutes of the August 14, 2024 Regular Meeting of Essex County Council be adopted as presented.

(Voted by show of hands)

Carried

9. **Delegations and Presentations**

216-2024

Moved By Larry Verbeke

Seconded By Kimberly DeYong

That the delegation from the Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus be permitted to make a presentation to Council.

(Voted by show of hands)

Carried

9.1. Western Ontario Warden's Caucus (WOWC)

Kate Burns-Gallagher, Executive Director, WOWC provided an update on the WOWC 2024-25 Strategic Priorities

Two pieces of correspondence were offered:

1. Social and Economic Prosperity Review Advocacy for Municipalities
2. News Release - Rural Municipal Leaders Support 'Solve the Crisis' Campaign to Address Homelessness and Mental Health

Kate Burns-Gallagher provided an update regarding the Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus (WOWC) Key Priorities for 2024-2025. WOWC represents 15 municipalities with over 1.6 million residents, and advocates for sustainable economic development in Western Ontario.

Key priorities for 2024-2025 include requesting provincial support for reinstating development charges for housing, clarity on infrastructure investments, equitable workforce funding, dedicated mental health resources, and ongoing support for rural broadband expansion.

WOWC's advocacy efforts include engaging with government officials, forming strategic partnerships, and participating in initiatives like the Regional Economic Development Strategic Plan and the Homelessness Prevention Program.

10. **Communications**

10.1. Correspondence

218-2024

Moved By Joe Bachetti

Seconded By Gary McNamara

That the correspondence listed on the Regular Agenda for September 4, 2024, be received and any noted action approved.

(Voted by show of hands)

Carried

10.1.1 County of Essex - Official Plan Meeting Notice

[Statutory Public Meeting Notice](#)

Essex County Council will hold a statutory public meeting, pursuant to Section 26(3) of the Planning Act, R.S.O., 1990, as amended, for the purposes of discussing the proposed new Official Plan. The public meeting will be held as follows:

Thursday, September 5, 2024 at 6 p.m.
County of Essex Council Chambers, Civic Centre
360 Fairview Avenue West, Essex, ON, N8M 1Y6

The Public Meeting is intended to provide an opportunity for the public to offer comments regarding the draft of the new Official Plan.

A copy of the draft Official Plan, together with reports that have been prepared as part of the Official Plan Comprehensive Review, are available on the [County's Comprehensive Official Plan Review page](#).

10.1.2 Outdoor Accessibility Fest-for-All

Invitation to Members of Council and the Public:

Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee is hosting the [Outdoor Accessibility Fest-for-All](#) at the Colchester Park in Harrow

Event date September 13, 2024

10.1.3 Residents Invited to Complete Affordable Housing Survey

The County of Essex and City of Windsor are developing a Regional Affordable Housing Strategy in consultation with local municipalities and are inviting residents to provide input through a survey.

[More Information Here](#)

SHS Consulting has been hired to assist and, as a first step, is conducting a survey of Essex County and Windsor residents that will provide a better understanding of housing needs and challenges in the region. By participating in this survey, residents will provide an understanding of what kinds of housing people in Essex County and Windsor need, what problems they face finding quality housing that they can afford and what they want for the future. This information will assist in improving housing for everyone in the region. All information collected through the survey will be kept confidential. Participants will not be asked for their name or contact information. Participation is voluntary.

The deadline for completing the survey is Sept. 9, 2024, at 11:59 p.m. Go to the survey here: [Windsor-Essex Regional Affordable Housing Strategy - Resident Survey](#)

10.1.4 Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)

- AMO [Watchfile Newsletter](#)
- AMO [Policy Updates](#)
- AMO Calendar - [Education Events](#)

10.1.5 Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (GLSLCI)

- August 2024 - Making Waves Newsletter
- August 1, 2024 [News Release RE Dearborn Heights partners with Cities Initiative to develop flood control and habitat restoration designs for the North Branch of Ecorse Creek](#)

10.1.6 Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island (TWEPI)

[TWEPI Fall Event Guide 2024](#)

10.1.7 Invest WindsorEssex (IWE)

[2023 IWE Annual Report](#)

10.1.8 Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury

Resolution regarding the request for creation of a province-wide long-service medal program for police and paramedics, modelled after the existing award for firefighters.

217-2024

Moved By Kimberly DeYong

Seconded By Crystal Meloche

That County Council supports the creation of a province-wide long-service medal for paramedics and police officers, modeled after the existing awards for firefighters and County Council encourages all lower-tier municipalities to endorse and support this initiative.

(Voted by show of hands)

Carried

10.1.9 Municipality of Stirling-Rawdon

August 21 2024 - Resolution RE Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act 1996

10.1.10 City of Cambridge

August 15, 2024 Letter and Market Research Study RE Mental Health and Addictions Crisis

10.2. Resolutions

There were no resolutions for September 4, 2024.

11. Consent Agenda

219-2024

Moved By Larry Verbeke

Seconded By Chris Gibb

That the Administrative Report listed as agenda item 11.1 and the minutes listed as items 11.2 through 11.3 on the Consent Agenda for September 4, 2024, be received and approved as presented.

(Voted Electronically)

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

11.1. Summary of Outstanding Reports

Report number 2024-0904-LCS-R26-KH, Summary of Outstanding Reports for September 4, 2024, from Katherine Hebert, Clerk

11.2. Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee

Minutes of the July 18, 2024 Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting

11.3. Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan

Minutes of the Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety and Wellbeing Systems Leadership Table meeting, dated March 21, 2024

12. Reports and Questions

12.1. AMO Conference Delegation Update

Report number 2024-0904-CAO-R10-SZ, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Conference Delegation Update, dated September 4, 2024 from Sandra Zwiers, Chief Administrative Officer

Sandra Zwiers provided a report regarding the County of Essex advocacy efforts with provincial leaders at the 2024 AMO Conference held in August 2024.

The County presented delegations on key regional issues; including improvements to transportation infrastructure, expanding healthcare access, and enhancing EMS dispatch management.

The goal of each delegation was to secure provincial support and collaboration.

Advocacy efforts were part of a strategic approach to address growing needs in Essex County due to rapid development and population growth. Sandra noted that while no immediate commitments were made, these discussions create opportunities for future partnerships and funding to support regional priorities.

220-2024

Moved By Chris Gibb

Seconded By Michael Prue

That Essex County Council receive report number 2024-0904-CAO-R11-SZ, 2024 AMO Conference – Delegation Update, as information.

(Voted Electronically)

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

12.2. Roadway Expansion Plan Funding Model

Report number 2024-0904-FIN-R19-MR, Roadway Expansion Funding Model, dated September 4, 2024 from Melissa Ryan, Director, Financial Services/Treasurer

Melissa Ryan outlined a proposed funding model to support a 20-year Roadway Expansion Program. The program was developed to address infrastructure needs driven by regional growth.

The plan required an estimated \$40 million annually; the current County levy was covering less than half of this requirement. To bridge the gap, the report proposed a blend of funding sources; including phased debt financing, gradual levy increases, and strategic use of reserve funds.

Alternate opportunities to strengthen funding, such as development charges were being explored. Melissa noted that incorporating a flexible approach ensures the County can adapt to changing economic conditions and funding opportunities while maintaining prudent fiscal management and supporting long-term growth.

221-2024

Moved By Michael Akpata

Seconded By Larry Verbeke

That Essex County Council receive report number 2024-0904-FIN-R18-MR, Roadway Expansion Plan Funding Model as information.

(Voted Electronically)

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. Procurement Updates for Contracts Exceeding Budget

Report number 2024-0904-R18-FIN-MR, Procurement Updates for Contracts Exceeding Budget, dated September 4, 2024 from Melissa Ryan, Director, Financial Services/Treasurer

As required under the updated County Procurement Policy, Melissa Ryan outlined procurement projects that exceeded their approved budget for the period of January 1 to July 31, 2024.

The policy required reporting on projects that were over budget and outline how overages were funded.

At the time of the report, overages were managed with funding realized through efficiency gains in other areas, thereby negating the need to draw funds from the rate stabilization reserve.

A subsequent report would be presented for the full calendar year at a future meeting under the Consent Agenda.

222-2024

Moved By Michael Prue

Seconded By Gary McNamara

That Essex County Council receive report number 2024-0904-FIN-R18-MR, Procurement Updates-Contracts Exceeding Budget as information.

(Voted Electronically)

In Favour (13): Michael Akpata, Joe Bachetti, Sherry Bondy, Kimberly DeYong, Chris Gibb, Hilda MacDonald, Gary McNamara, Crystal Meloche, Michael Prue, Dennis Rogers, Rob Shepley, Larry Verbeke, and Kirk Walstedt
Opposed (1): Tracey Bailey

Carried

13. Unfinished Business

There was no Unfinished Business for September 4, 2024.

14. **New Business**

14.1. Public Reporting of Closed Meeting

There was no Closed Meeting held on September 4, 2024.

15. **Adoption of By-Laws**

223-2024

Moved By Tracey Bailey

Seconded By Sherry Bondy

That By-law 2024-40, be given three readings, and having been read a first, second and third time, be finally passed and enacted.

(Voted Electronically)

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

15.1. By-law Number 2024-40

Being a by-law to Confirm the Proceedings of the Council of the Corporation of the County of Essex for the Regular Meeting held September 4, 2024

16. **Notice of Motion**

16.1. AMO Delegations

Sherry Bondy introduced the following Notice of Motion:

That Essex County Council direct administration to bring a report to council in advance of the annual AMO conference so that members of County Council can discuss and build consensus on shared priorities to be brought up with Ministers at the annual conference.

16.2. Speed Limit Reduction on County Road 46 at County Road 19

Joe Bachetti introduced the following Notice of Motion:

That County Administration reassess the prescribed rate of speed at the intersection of County Rd 46 and County Rd. 19; and,

That the rate of speed on County Rd 46 be reduced to 60km/hr leading into the intersection at County Rd 19; and,

That signs be posted in both directions to notify drivers of the rate of speed.

17. **Adjournment**

223-2024

Moved By Rob Shepley

Seconded By Kimberly DeYong

That the Essex County Council meeting for September 4, 2024 be adjourned at 7:19 PM.

(Voted by show of hands)

Carried

Hilda MacDonald,
Warden, County of Essex

Katherine J. Hebert,
County Clerk

Date Signed