



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

**Wednesday, June 4, 2025**

**6:00 PM**

**Council Chambers, 2nd Floor**

**360 Fairview Avenue West**

**Essex, Ontario N8M 1Y6**

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

- Council:
- Joe Bachetti, Deputy Warden
  - Tracey Bailey, Councillor
  - Sherry Bondy, Councillor
  - Kimberly DeYong, Councillor
  - Chris Gibb, Councillor
  - Hilda MacDonald, Warden
  - Gary McNamara, Councillor
  - Crystal Meloche, Councillor
  - Michael Prue, Councillor
  - Dennis Rogers, Councillor
  - Rob Shepley, Councillor
  - Larry Verbeke, Councillor
  - Kirk Walstedt, Councillor
  - Mark Carrick, Councillor (Alternate Member)
- Absent:
- Michael Akpata, Councillor
- Administration:
- Allan Botham, Director, Infrastructure & Planning Services
  - Katherine Hebert, County Clerk
  - Justin Lammers, Chief, Essex-Windsor EMS
  - Darrel Laurendeau, Director, Information Technology
  - Kyla Pritiko, Director, Human Resources
  - Melissa Ryan, Director, Financial Services / Treasurer
  - 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 and Special Meeting**

A Closed Meeting was held at 4:00 PM and a Special Meeting was held at 5:00PM on June 4, 2025 to consider Official Plan Amendment #8 - 720-730 Mersea Road 8, Municipality of Leamington.

**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 other members of County Council attended the meeting at the County of Essex Administration Building, Council Chambers, with the exception of Sherry Bondy who attended from a remote location.

Michael Akpata was absent. Mark Carrick attended as the Alternate Member for the Town of LaSalle.

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

Warden MacDonald welcomed everyone to the meeting noting that June is Pride Month. The Warden the public to attend special activities planned at each of the County of Essex member municipalities to celebrate their unique features and communities.

**7. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest**

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest raised.

**8. Adoption of Regular Meeting Minutes**

**167-2025**

**Moved By** Rob Shepley

**Seconded By** Gary McNamara

That the minutes of the May 21, 2025 Regular Meeting of Essex County Council be adopted as presented.

**Carried**

## **9. Delegations and Presentations**

### **9.1. Tourism Windsor-Essex Pelee Island (TWEPI)**

Gordon Orr, Chief Executive Officer and Jason Toner, Vice President of Marketing & Communications, Tourism Windsor-Essex Pelee Island, provided a presentation regarding the current and upcoming attractions and activities for the Essex-Windsor region and the 2025 [Official Visitor's Guide](#).

The TWEPI Annual Report was highlighted including statistics surrounding financial impacts that tourism provides to the region. It was further outlined the ways with which TWEPI offers expertise and support to the local tourism industry.

## **10. Communications**

### **10.1. Correspondence**

**168-2025**

**Moved By** Larry Verbeke

**Seconded By** Chris Gibb

That the correspondence listed on the Regular Agenda for June 4, 2025, be received and any noted action approved.

**Carried**

#### **10.1.1 Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)**

- [AMO Watchfile Newsletter](#)
- [AMO Policy Update – OPP Billing Review, Strong Mayor Powers Training, Bill 6 Advocacy, New Federal Minister of Housing & Infrastructure, New Ontario TCIP Program](#)
- [AMO Policy Update - Bills 5 and 2 - Unleash our economy by protecting communities - AMO Submission to the Standing Committee on the Interior](#)
- [Provincial Budget Priorities](#)
- [AMO Calendar - Education Events](#)

#### **10.1.2 Town of Amherstburg**

May 27, 2025 - Letter to County of Essex RE Future Funding Consideration - Fit-up Costs for New Amherstburg Library Branch

**10.1.3 Enabling a Municipal Response to Tariffs**

- Bruce County
- Grey Highlands

**10.1.4 Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus (WOWC)**

- [May 2025 Newsletter](#)

**10.2. Resolutions**

**10.2.1 Town of LaSalle**

February 4, 2025 (Received on May 23, 2025) correspondence and resolution RE [Northern Health Travel Grant Program](#) expansion to Windsor-Essex County

**169-2025**

**Moved By** Crystal Meloche

**Seconded By** Mark Carrick

That Essex County Council Receive and File the correspondence from the Town of LaSalle, dated February 4, 2025; and,

Provide a letter of support to the Ministry of Health, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and all Local MPPs.

**Carried**

**11. Consent Agenda**

**170-2025**

**Moved By** Kirk Walstedt

**Seconded By** Rob Shepley

That the recommendation in the Administrative Report listed as item 11.1 on the Consent Agenda for June 4, 2025, be approved.

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

**Carried**

**11.1. Summary of Outstanding Reports - June 4, 2025**

Report number 2025-0604-LLS-026-KH Summary of Outstanding Reports, dated June 4, 2025 from Katherine Hebert, County Clerk.

**12. Reports and Questions**

**12.1. Affordable Housing Strategy Update and Housing Needs Assessment Presentation**

Report number 2025-0604-LLS-R27-DMS, Affordable Housing Strategy Update and Housing Needs Assessment Presentation, dated June 4, 2025 from David Sundin, Director, Legislative and Legal Services/County Solicitor

David Sundin provided a status update regarding the Regional Affordable Housing Strategy (RAHS) and Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) report, and introduced the consultants who worked on the project analysis and report.

The following consultants were in attendance for the report presentation:

- Larry Silani, Partner, Miller Silani Inc
- Ed Starr, Partner, SHS Incorporated
- Matt Pipe, Manager, Housing Policy and Research, SHS Incorporated
- Bahar Shadpour, Senior Manager, Housing Policy and Research, SHS Incorporated.

As part of the RAHS, SHS Consulting Inc. has developed the County specific HNA.

SHS Consulting Inc. provided a detailed review of the ongoing project and reports. It was noted that several Federal funding opportunities are contingent on the applicant municipality having a strategy in place. These are quantitative and qualitative tools to help understand the housing pressures in the County of Essex, and will aid in guiding strategic investment to address Demand, Supply, and Affordability of housing in the region, in relation to current and future population growth projections, income, and housing needs.

Discussion took place with regard to the statistics and trends as well as with the consultation process in general. It was noted that a

strategy and policy are critical components to addressing the needs of the region. It was further noted that a public awareness campaign is needed, regarding affordable housing options and initiatives so that the community has a better understanding of the housing needs in the region.

**171-2025**

**Moved By** Gary McNamara

**Seconded By** Rob Shepley

That Essex County Council receive Report Number 2025-0604-LLS-R27-DMS, Regional Affordable Housing Strategy Update and Housing Needs Assessment as information and approve the Housing Needs Assessment appended to this Report.

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

**Carried**

**12.2. Essex County, Chatham-Kent Boundary Agreement**

Report number 2025-0406-IPS-R12-AB, Essex County, Chatham-Kent Boundary Agreement, dated June 4, 2025 from Allan Botham, Director, Infrastructure and Planning Services

Allan Botham provided Council with information regarding the updated boundary agreement between the County of Essex and the Municipality of Chatham-Kent. The agreement refers to Road 1 that divides the two municipalities along the eastern border of the County of Essex.

It was further explained that the previous agreement under By-law 07-2000, requires several updates which includes changing the names of the municipalities to properly reflect post amalgamation nomenclature as well as other minor changes.

**172-2025**

**Moved By** Crystal Meloche

**Seconded By** Chris Gibb

That Essex County Council receive Report Number 2025-0604-IPS-R12-AB, Essex County Chatham-Kent Boundary Agreement as information and authorize the Warden and the Clerk to execute the Boundary Agreement on behalf of the County.

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

**Carried**

### **12.3. Transfer of a Portion of County Road 42 to the City of Windsor**

Report number 2025-0604-LLS-R28-DMS, Transfer of a Portion of County Road 42 to the City of Windsor, dated June 4, 2025 from David Sundin, Director, Legislative and Legal Services/County Solicitor

David Sundin provided Council with the background on the segment of County Road 42 ownership and explained that the transfer of that portion of roadway was an administrative oversight that should have been adjusted in 2003 following a municipal boundary adjustment. Both the City and County have managed their portions of the roadway in every aspect of operations correctly since the boundary adjustment took place, and it is only administratively where the change was inconsistent.

#### **173-2025**

**Moved By** Kimberly DeYong

**Seconded By** Chris Gibb

That Essex County Council receive Report Number 2025-0604-LLS-R28-DMS, Transfer of a Portion of County Road 42 to the City of Windsor as information; and,

That Council approve the transfer of the Roadway to the City of Windsor, and authorize the Warden and the Clerk to execute such documents as may be required to effect said transfer.

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

**Carried**

### **13. Unfinished Business**

There was no Unfinished Business for June 4, 2025.

### **14. New Business**

#### **14.1. Public Reporting of Closed and Special Meetings**

A Closed Meeting of Essex County Council was held at 4:00 p.m., pursuant to Section 239 (2) (a), (b), (c), (f) and (k) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended.

Council received information related to report number 2025-0604-LLS-R24-DMS and Council provided Administration with direction with regard to report 2025-0604-LLS-R29-DMS.

The Closed Meeting adjourned at 4:56 PM.

Following the Closed Meeting, County Council convened for a Special Meeting pertaining to Official Plan Amendment - File Number OPA-08 pertaining to property under the municipal address of 720-730 Mersea Road 8 in the Municipality of Leamington.

The Special Meeting adjourned at 5:15 PM.

#### **14.2. Hiring a Consultant for County Road Rationalization Study**

On May 7, 2025, Crystal Meloche brought forward the following Notice of Motion:

**Moved By** Crystal Meloche

**Seconded By** Mark Carrick

Whereas, the County of Essex's road system is an essential component of the region's transportation infrastructure, and a well-structured understanding of the road network is critical to future planning, funding, and sustainable development; and,

Whereas, a thorough road rationalization study is required to assess and determine which roads should be classified as county roads, identify the criteria and factors that influence such determinations, examine funding responsibilities, and provide a framework for planning and managing a future road network that best serves residents and businesses; and,

Whereas, an unbiased, objective review of the current system is essential to ensure that the study's findings and recommendations are impartial, accurate, and reflect the best interests of the County of Essex and its stakeholders; and,

Whereas, a consultant with expertise in transportation infrastructure, road network planning, and public sector funding models is best positioned to undertake this study and provide an

independent, evidence-based evaluation of the county road network; and,

Whereas, the County of Essex is currently undertaking a Transportation Master Plan, and current technologies are available to support the identification and analysis of regional versus local travel patterns. Now therefore it be resolved that, the Council of the County of Essex authorize the hiring of a qualified, independent consultant to conduct a comprehensive road rationalization study that will assess the current county road system, define appropriate classification criteria, provide funding recommendations, and propose a future road network plan for the County;

And be it further resolved that, the study include a full evaluation of current road classifications, funding mechanisms, and future transportation needs, with the goal of ensuring that the County's road system is efficient, sustainable, and aligned with the needs of residents, businesses, and anticipated growth;

And be it further resolved that, the consultant be required to undertake the study with a focus on impartiality, transparency, and evidence-based analysis to ensure that recommendations are realistic, balanced, and in the best interest of the County of Essex;

And be it further resolved that, the consultant be required to actively engage with all lower-tier municipalities throughout the study to understand and incorporate local transportation needs and priorities;

And be it further resolved that, should the study recommend the addition or removal of transportation corridors from the county road network—transferring responsibility between the upper-tier County and lower-tier municipalities—an appropriate transfer mechanism be developed and recommended by the consultant;

And be it finally resolved that, the consultant be required to review the current Connecting Link Agreement and, through consultation with relevant stakeholders, provide recommendations on updating and improving the agreement to better reflect current and future transportation planning objectives.

*(no vote taken – see \*procedure matter)*

Discussion took place with regard to the progress made on the Transportation Master Plan which is the basis and data collection mechanism which will inform the Road Rationalization Study. In the

recent past several collaborative meetings have taken place between County and lower tier municipalities Chief Administrative Officers, Treasurers and Infrastructure teams to ensure the County has incorporated the perspectives of our locals into the analysis, and to ensure a transparent process.

It was estimated that the information would be available for consideration prior to the 2026 budget meeting.

Members of Council expressed the need to stay the course on the current progress, as it has been moving toward completion since the County CAO has made this a priority during her tenure.

*\*Councillor Meloche asked to withdraw the motion, however a Member objected, therefore pursuant to 13.4.18 of the Procedure By-law 2024-26, the question of whether to permit the motion to be withdrawn was called by the Warden.*

**175-2025**

**Moved By** Crystal Meloche

**Seconded By** Mark Carrick

That the Motion moved by Crystal Meloche and seconded by Mark Carrick be withdrawn.

**Carried**

**176-2025**

**Moved By** Crystal Meloche

**Seconded By** Tracey Bailey

That Essex County Council postpone the discussion of engaging a consultant for a Road Rationalization Study to the 2026 Budget Deliberation meeting.

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

Opposed (1): Gary McNamara

**Carried**

**15. Adoption of By-Laws**

**177-2025**

**Moved By** Chris Gibb

**Seconded By** Kimberly DeYong

That By-laws 2025-25 and 2025-27, be given three readings, and having been read a first, second and third time, be finally passed and enacted.

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

**Carried**

**15.1. By-law Number 2025-27**

Being a By-law to Authorize the Execution of a Boundary Road Agreement Between the Corporation of the County of Essex and the Corporation of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent

**15.2. By-law Number 2025-25**

Being a by-law to confirm the proceedings of the Council of the Corporation of the County of Essex, Regular, Special and Closed Meetings, for June 4, 2025

**16. Notice of Motion**

There were no Notices of Motion for June 4, 2025

**17. Adjournment**

**178-2025**

**Moved By** Larry Verbeke

**Seconded By** Kimberly DeYong

That the Essex County Council meeting for June 4, 2025 be adjourned at 7:56 PM.

**Carried**

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Hilda MacDonald,  
Warden, County of Essex

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Katherine J. Hebert,  
County Clerk

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Date Signed