



**Essex-Windsor Solid Waste Authority
Regular Board Meeting
MINUTES**

Meeting Date: Tuesday, December 2, 2025

Time: 4:00 PM

Location: Essex County Civic Centre
Council Chambers, 2nd Floor
360 Fairview Avenue West
Essex, Ontario N8M 1Y6

Attendance

Board Members:

Gary McNamara –Chair	County of Essex
Hilda MacDonald	County of Essex
Michael Akpata	County of Essex
Rob Shepley	County of Essex
Kirk Walstedt	County of Essex
Gary Kaschak –Vice Chair	City of Windsor
Kieran McKenzie	City of Windsor
Jim Morrison	City of Windsor

EWSWA Staff:

Michelle Bishop	General Manager
Steffan Brisebois	Manager of Finance & Administration
Cathy Copot-Nepszy	Manager of Waste Diversion
Tom Marentette	Manager of Waste Disposal
Natalie Bczynski	Project Manager
Teresa Policella	Executive Assistant

City of Windsor Staff:

Jim Leether	Manager of Environmental Services
Mark Spizzirri	Manager of Performance Management and Business Case Development

County of Essex Staff:

Melissa Ryan	Director of Financial Services/Treasurer
David Sundin	Solicitor/Interim Director, Legislative and Legal Services
Claire Bebbington	Deputy County Solicitor

Absent:

Drew Dilkens	City of Windsor (Ex-Officio)
Mark McKenzie	City of Windsor
Tony Ardovini	Deputy Treasurer Financial Planning
Stacey McGuire	Acting Executive Director of Operations

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

2. Motion to Move In-Camera

Moved by Kirk Walstedt

Seconded by Rob Shepley

That the Board move into closed meeting pursuant to Section 239 (2) (f), (k) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended for the following reasons:

- (f) advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose.
- (k) a position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the municipality or local board.

**98-2025
Carried**

Moved by Kieran McKenzie

Seconded by Jim Morrison

That the EWSWA Board *rise* from the Closed Meeting at 4:34 PM.

**101-2025
Carried**

3. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

The Chair called for any declarations of pecuniary interest, and none were noted. He further expressed that should a conflict of pecuniary nature or other arise at any time during the course of the meeting that it would be noted at that time.

4. Approval of the Minutes

Moved by Rob Shepley

Seconded by Gary Kaschak

That the minutes from the Essex-Windsor Solid Waste Authority Regular Meeting, dated November 4, 2025, be *approved and adopted*.

**102-2025
Carried**

5. Business Arising from the Minutes

No items were raised for discussion.

6. Correspondence

There were no correspondences for December 2, 2025.

7. Delegations

There were no delegations for December 2, 2025.

8. Waste Disposal

A. Update: Cell 5 North Construction at the Regional Landfill

The Manager of Waste Disposal provided an update on the design, engineering, and construction of Cell 5 North. After the initial tender was awarded to Sterling Ridge Infrastructure Inc. in July 2024 for \$12,035,300 plus HST. A revised upset limit of \$13,182,126 million plus HST was approved in March 2025 due to underestimated quantities. The budget increase was due to additional excavation and grading triggered by unusable sandy clay, expanded capping and slope grading, and additional sand removal, backfilling, topsoil, and seeding. Construction began in July 2024 and was completed in late October 2025. Despite the request for an increase, actual construction costs came in significantly lower than expected. The total cost to engineer and construct Cell 5 North was \$12.59 million, resulting in a favourable variance of \$1.42 million against the revised total budget of \$14.01 million. The Chair asked if there were any questions. No questions were asked.

Moved by Hilda MacDonald
Seconded by Michael Akpata

That the Board **receive** this report as information for the completion of the Cell 5 North Construction Project at the Regional Landfill (Tender Contract 9-2024).

**103-2025
Carried**

B. Reverse Osmosis Status Update and Proposed Procurement Strategy

The Manager of Waste Disposal provided an update on the Reverse Osmosis (RO) Leachate Treatment pilot project, the ongoing polishing study, and the proposed procurement strategy for establishing a permanent, long-term leachate treatment solution. The pilot project has demonstrated strong performance, supporting the transition toward a permanent onsite treatment solution. The polishing study began in November, and initial results are very promising. Further evaluation and data collection will continue to confirm long-term performance.

A permanent RO treatment plant is identified as the preferred long-term approach. Estimated capital costs are between \$11–14 million, with projected annual operating costs of approximately \$1.3 million. These plans align with recommendations approved by the Board in July 2025. The polishing study remains underway, and Administration will continue reviewing results as they become available.

The RO system currently in use is rented as part of the pilot project. An extension of the agreement with Rochem will be required to maintain operations until a permanent facility is constructed and commissioned. Administration has been in ongoing discussions with Rochem regarding this extension.

Kieran McKenzie asked what the risk is that the polishing study will not produce satisfactory results or that government regulations regarding discharge to the drain may change.

The Manager of Waste Disposal stated that there is always some risk. The polishing system being used is a small-scale version of proven technology, and preliminary results have been very strong.

Kieran McKenzie asked if the process being pursued was a more sustainable option compared to alternatives.

The Manager of Waste Disposal replied yes. The RO system separates liquid into permeate (clean water) and concentrate (contaminated water). The focus is on managing the concentrate. Reducing the contaminating lifespan at the Regional Landfill would involve evaporative technology and expanding the gas collection system, which would also improve cost-effectiveness.

Mr. Kaschak asked how many loads are currently being delivered to the City?

The Manager of Waste Disposal stated that the current approval from the City of Windsor Pollution Control is that 12 loads of leachate from the Regional Landfill can be hauled to the Lou Romano Water Reclamation Plant daily between Monday and Friday, with 9 loads of untreated leachate and 3 loads of treated permeate. On Saturday, 3 loads of untreated leachate are being sent to the Lou Romano Water Reclamation Plant. One additional load of untreated leachate is also being hauled to the Little River Pollution Control Plant. Leachate will need to be double-handled (i.e. processed through the RO and hauled to treatment plants) until such time that it is approved by the MECP for discharge to the ditch.

Mr. Kaschak asked how long the approval process will take.

The Manager of Waste Disposal stated that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) requires six months of data to approve the discharge plan. The process will begin as soon as possible.

Moved by Kieran McKenzie
Seconded by Rob Shepley

That the Board **receive** this report as information and that the Board:

1. Authorize the Authority to proceed with an extension of the rental of the mobile RO equipment being used for the Pilot Project;

2. Authorize Administration to prepare procurement documents in preparation for the design and build of the facilities and equipment required to operate a permanent full-scale RO System;
3. Authorize and direct Administration to develop a financing strategy for a permanent RO System for the Board's consideration in 2026; and
4. Conditionally approve the Direct Purchase of RO equipment from Rochem Americas Inc. for the permanent RO System and authorize Administration to pay a deposit to Rochem, subject to the Permeate Polishing Study producing satisfactory results to allow for the discharge of the leachate to the drain.

**104-2025
Carried**

C. Update on Landfill Fires and Prevention Strategy

The Manager of Waste Disposal provided an update on the status of landfill fires and presented the prevention strategy. He provided a summary of historical and current fires at the landfill. He noted that landfill fires are not something new, but they do present challenges to Authority staff.

Recently Authority Administration has met with the Town of Essex to discuss the increased volumes of fires at the landfill. The cause of some of the fires is difficult to identify, but there have been several fires believed to be related to the disposal of lithium-ion batteries.

The Authority also recently completed construction of Cell 5N and on August 4, 2025, began landfilling from Cell 4N into Cell 5N from west to east. Placement of garbage on the cell floor requires initial placement to be 10-12 feet thick so as not to damage the cell floor, while normal lift thickness would be 1-2 feet. In review of at least 3 recent fires, it can be assumed that an uncompacted edge of garbage, combined with high winds and an ignition source (battery) is what caused these fires. Once the cell floor was covered, which took approximately 2 months, the edges were tapered and covered with soil. Since this time, Administration has had discussions with staff and equipment operators that all exposed edges must be tapered, packed and covered and that the active work face be kept to a minimum to ensure adequate cover material is placed each day.

With the assistance of the Town of Essex Fire Department, Authority Administration has purchased additional equipment to maintain preparedness in the event of future fires. In 2026, the Authority's Promotion and Education Budget reallocated funds to increase the Hazardous and Special Products Program to specifically target the proper disposal of batteries. Social media campaigns will push out messaging to increase awareness of improper battery disposal.

Mr. Shepley asked if education alone would be enough, or if there is anything more that can be done beyond education, and if the fires are not related to batteries?

The Manager of Waste Disposal stated that Administration always tries to determine the cause of each fire, but it's very difficult to pinpoint the cause. While most fires occur at the active tip face, last year, there was a fire in an area that hadn't been landfilled for over a year. The focus will be on ensuring staff are properly covering garbage to help reduce risk as much as possible.

Mr. Shepley commented that there has been some suggestion that the auto-shredder fluff that is used could be contributing to the fires

The Manager of Waste Disposal stated he does not see evidence of that. If auto shredder fluff (ASR) is left in the right conditions, it can burn like anything else, but he has never seen a fire caused by ASR. It is usually mattresses that continue to smoulder.

The General Manager noted that the Authority has been receiving ASR for many years as approved daily cover and, to her knowledge, has never had a fire caused by it. Proper fire management comes down to covering garbage at the end of each day. The Authority continues to work with municipal partners to educate residents about keeping batteries out of household garbage. This messaging is critical as batteries are now in everything, and people often dispose of them in the trash. The Authority is not alone in this issue as other municipalities are facing the same challenges, and the Authority will continue to educate residents.

There were no further questions.

Moved by Rob Shepley
Seconded by Gary Kashcak

That the Board **receive** this report as information.

**105-2025
Carried**

9. Waste Diversion

A. Circular Materials Take Back Collaborative

The Manager of Waste Diversion provided an update indicating potential for a *Take Back* program to recycle carts and boxes as municipalities transition to single-stream recycling. She noted that advocacy efforts have resulted in Circular Materials (CM) acknowledging the need to address the issue. CM requested an exploratory meeting, and several meetings have since taken place, including a recent meeting with CM and IPL to discuss potential structures for a Take Back program. Staff outlined the Authority's responsibilities within the proposed program. CM is developing a financial

proposal, which the Authority expects to receive by the end of the week. Curbside collection will not be included as part of CM's the Take Back program. The objective of the program is to ensure that carts and boxes are diverted from the Regional Landfill and that there is no cost to residents. No additional financial implications are anticipated at this time.

The Chair asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Walstedt acknowledged the efforts to address the issue and asked whether curbside collection could be considered further.

The Manager of Waste Diversion noted that CM confirmed it would not participate in curbside collection but indicated there may be an alternative option involving a remote drop-off location.

Mr. Morrison asked whether multiple alternate drop-off locations across the region could be explored.

The General Manager noted that the proposal remains in draft form and suggested pursuing an agreement with CM to ensure proper collection of boxes. She recommended reviewing CM's financial proposal once available and, depending on that figure, other options could potentially be explored.

Mr. Walstedt left the meeting at 5:24 p.m.

The General Manager also stated that staff have been providing residents with information on repurposing carts and boxes.

Kieran McKenzie questioned whether CM's provision of varying service levels in other municipalities may indicate similar options under a Take Back program.

The Manager of Waste Diversion stated that progress to date reflects regional advocacy efforts and is unaware of the program being offered in other areas.

The Chair left the meeting at 5:28 pm, and the Vice Chair assumed the position of Chair until the Chair's return at 5:40 pm.

Moved by Jim Morrison

Seconded by Rob Shepley

That the Board **receive** this report for information and **endorse** Authority Administration's engagement with Circular Materials to finalize an agreement in support of a Take Back program.

106-2025
Carried

B. Circular Materials Update Regarding Cart Sizes (Verbal update)

The General Manager advised that she, as well as the City of Windsor Mayor, have spoken with Circular Materials (CM) regarding a potential reconsideration of different cart sizes (smaller option). Mr. Allen Langdon, CM's CEO, indicated an update would be provided by the end of the week. The Board will be updated as information becomes available.

The Chair asked if there were questions. No questions were asked.

Moved by Jim Morrison

Seconded by Rob Shepley

That the Board **receive** the verbal update as information.

**107-2025
Carried**

C. Green Bin Program: Yeti Grand Prize Draw 2025

The Manager of Waste Diversion stated that as part of the promotion and education for the Green Bin Program, the Authority participated in events throughout the region. Authority staff attended events such as the Essex Fun Fest, Tecumseh Corn fest, Meet the Machine, and Earth Day events. Residents had the opportunity to receive a ballot for the grand prize draw if they participated in or engaged in the Green Bin Program events, such as downloading the Recycle Coach app. The Chair selected a ballot from the 485 ballots that were received. The winner will be notified by email.

10. Finance & Administration

A. Status of Manager of Waste Disposal Recruitment (Verbal report)

The General Manager provided an update on the recruitment process for the Manager of Waste Disposal, due to his upcoming retirement. The position was initially posted in September, however, no candidate was successfully identified through the first posting. As a result, the job was reposted with a closing date of December 5, 2025. The current Manager of Waste Disposal will continue in the role until a suitable successor is appointed.

Moved by Rob Shepley

Seconded by Kieran McKenzie

That the Board **receive** the verbal report as information.

**108-2025
Carried**

11. New Business

The Chair noted that Mr. Walstedt term on the Board will end December 31, 2025. He thanked Mr. Walstedt for representing the County of Essex and recognized his contributions in 2025.

12. Other Items

No items were raised for discussion.

13. By-Laws

A. By-Law 18-2025

Moved by Hilda MacDonald

Seconded by Kieran McKenzie

That By-Law 18-2025, being a By-law to:

1. Authorize the Authority to proceed with an extension of the rental of the mobile RO equipment being used for the Pilot Project;
2. Authorize Administration to prepare procurement documents in preparation for the design and build of the facilities and equipment required to operate a permanent full-scale RO System;
3. Authorize and direct Administration to develop a financing strategy for a permanent RO System for the Board's consideration in 2026; and
4. Conditionally approve the Direct Purchase of RO equipment from Rochem Americas Inc. for the permanent RO System and authorize Administration to pay a deposit to Rochem, subject to the Permeate Polishing Study producing satisfactory results to allow for the discharge of the leachate to the drain.

**109-2025
Carried**

B. By-Law 19-2025

Moved by Hilda MacDonald

Seconded by Kieran McKenzie

That By-Law 19-2025, being a By-law to Confirm the Proceedings of the Board of the Essex-Windsor Solid Waste Authority be given three readings and be **adopted** this 2nd day of December, 2025.

**110-2025
Carried**

14. Next Meeting Dates

Tuesday, January 6, 2026
Tuesday, February 3, 2026
Tuesday, March 3, 2026
Wednesday, April 15, 2026
Tuesday, May 5, 2026
Tuesday, June 2, 2026
Tuesday, July 7, 2026
Wednesday, August 12, 2026
Tuesday, September 1, 2026
Tuesday, October 6, 2026
Tuesday, November 3, 2026
Tuesday, December 1, 2026

15. Adjournment

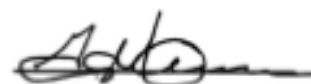
Moved by Rob Shepley

Seconded by Jim Morrison

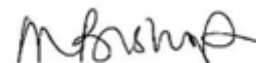
THAT the Board stand ***adjourned*** at 5:45 PM.

111-2025
Carried

All of which is respectfully submitted.



Gary McNamara
Chair



Michelle Bishop
General Manager