



Council Meeting Minutes

Date: January 6, 2026
Time: 9:00 AM
Place: Council Chambers

Council Members Present: David Mayberry – Mayor
Paul Buchner – Councillor, Ward 1
Valerie Durston – Councillor, Ward 3
George Way – Councillor, Ward 4
Jim Pickard – Councillor, Ward 5
Craig Gillis – Councillor, Ward 6

Council Members Absent: Peter Ypma – Councillor, Ward 2

Staff Members Present: Julie Middleton – Clerk
Denny Giles – Manager of Legislative Services/Clerk
Brooke Crane – Treasurer
Daniel Leduc – Deputy CBO/Drainage Superintendent
Adam Prouse – Public Works Superintendent
Shane Caskanette – Fire Chief & CEMC

Staff Members Absent:

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Mayor David Mayberry and a quorum was present.

MOTION TO ACCEPT AGENDA

Council Meeting Agenda - January 6th, 2026

Resolution No.1

Moved by George Way
Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED THAT the regular meeting agenda for the January 6th, 2026, meeting of Council be approved.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

Councillor Buchner declared a pecuniary interest with respect to the Court of Revision - Whaley Drain Branch 'A' (Section 78) and By-law No. 73-2025 due to his family owning property that is being assessed for the drainage works.

MINUTES OF THE PRECEDING MEETING

December 16th, 2025 - Regular Council Meeting Minutes

Resolution No.2

Moved by Jim Pickard
Seconded by Paul Buchner

RESOLVED THAT the regular minutes of the December 16th, 2025, council meeting be approved.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

CL 01-2026: Business Arising from the Minutes of December 16, 2025

Clerk Denny Giles provided Council with a report on an overview of the staff actions arising from the minutes of the last Council meeting.

Resolution No.3

Moved by George Way
Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford receive report CL 01-2026: Business Arising from the minutes of December 16th, 2025, as information.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

DELEGATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

9:05 a.m. - Sarah Hamulecki, Manager of Strategic Initiatives & Intergovernmental Relations and Marcus Ryan, Warden, County of Oxford re: Safe and Well Oxford Plan Update

Sarah Hamulecki and Warden Marcus Ryan presented the updated Community Safety Well Being Plan legislated through the Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019. It was noted that the County of Oxford is not legislated to have a plan, but each municipality

within Oxford County is, and each municipality previously adopted resolutions asking Oxford County to lead a joint plan.

The plan update began in early 2025. Strategy Corp. was selected to undertake the review where they engaged members of the public through a survey, and made direct consultations with community groups, agencies, stakeholders, and members of Council and staff from the lower tier municipalities in Oxford County. The plan is a guiding principle for member municipalities, but overall has no control for any implementations.

Councillor Pickard commented the updated plan was very well done and raised questions about how issues of affordability and economic stability are being addressed, noting that these topics are frequently discussed. In response, Sarah explained that responsibility for these areas is still to be determined and is not being directly undertaken by the County, although some organizations are addressing aspects such as food insecurity. She added that it is still unclear what economic stability efforts will look like, but that connections are being made and progress is expected to develop over time. Warden Ryan highlighted the broader challenge that the roles of different levels of government have become increasingly blurred and questioned what municipalities can realistically do within this context.

Councillor Way commented that there may be frustrations on both sides, both among those making recommendations and those seeking answers; and emphasizing that progress will take time and that many of the issues involved are beyond municipal control, stressing the importance of ensuring the public understands that certain matters cannot be directly addressed by the municipality.

Councillor Gillis commented on the challenges associated with implementing the plan, particularly in relation to the limitations of what municipalities can and cannot do. In response, Sarah Hamulecki stated that while the plan outlines intended outcomes, measuring success will be difficult.

Mayor Mayberry commented that governments at all levels have a responsibility to be concerned with the safety and well-being of their residents. He expressed full support for a county-wide plan, emphasizing that these challenges are best addressed collaboratively, as small municipalities cannot solve them on their own and the issues extend well beyond the scope of a single municipality.

9:30 a.m. - Court of Revision: Whaley Drain Branch 'A'

Resolution No.4

Moved by Craig Gillis

Seconded by Jim Pickard

RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford recess at 9:39 a.m., to allow the Court of Revision for the Whaley Drain Branch 'A' to commence.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Council reconvened at 9:41 a.m., following the Court of Revision.

CAO 05-2026: Safe and Well Oxford Plan Update

CAO Julie Middleton presented the report to Council advising the purpose is to provide an update on the Safe and Well Oxford Community Safety and Well-Being Plan and to seek Council's approval of the updated Plan, as well as continued endorsement of Oxford County's role in leading its implementation on behalf of the Township.

Councillor Pickard sought confirmation on whether the Township had a financial commitment associated with the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. CAO Julie Middleton advised there was no current financial commitment though advised there has been discussions in the past about municipalities contributing financially. If that proposal moves forward, Council will be informed through a staff report.

Resolution No.5

Moved by Jim Pickard
Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford receive Report CAO 05-2026: Safe and Well Oxford Plan Update as information;

AND FURTHER THAT Council approve the updated Safe and Well Oxford Plan attached to this report as Appendix A;

AND FURTHER THAT Council continue to endorse Oxford County as the lead for implementation of the Safe and Well Oxford Plan on behalf of the Township, including the addition of one (1) full-time equivalent position as approved through Oxford County's 2026 budget.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

9:40 a.m. - Gibson Ingram, Vice President, Growth with GrantMatch Corp.

CAO 04-2026: GrantMatch – Government Funding Identification and Application Support

CAO Julie Middleton presented the report to Council seeking authorization to enter into an agreement with GrantMatch Corp. to assist the Township in identifying and pursuing potential external funding opportunities for upcoming capital projects.

Gibson Ingram from GrantMatch Corp., was present and informed Council that they currently work with over 130 municipalities across Canada and their business model does not require a retainer fee from the Township. If the Township is successful in receiving grant funding through the agreement with GrantMatch Corp., a percentage of funding would be remitted back to GrantMatch Corp.

CAO Julie Middleton advised Council this partnership is a great learning opportunity for staff to know what is available grant wise as GrantMatch Corp., identifies the grants available for us.

Councillor Pickard inquired what success rate GrantMatch has. Gibson Ingram responded that GrantMatch achieves approximately a 50% grant approval rate, which is double the municipal industry average of about 25%. GrantMatch has a team of 45 dedicated professionals who specialize in grant research and writing. The approach GrantMatch takes focuses on building clear, compelling grant narratives that are closely aligned with community needs and priorities and GrantMatch will conduct a full assessment of the Township's capital budget to identify suitable funding programs, such as the Ontario Trillium Foundation Capital Grant Stream, which can provide up to \$200,000 and is well suited for projects like the development of the new Mount Elgin Park. Gibson Ingram also advised Council that a key component of GrantMatch's service is the continuous analysis and review of available grant opportunities throughout the year.

Council was informed that the recent federal budget dedicated a historical amount to the public sector with over 50 billion dollars in spending for Canadian infrastructure. New financial commitments have been made available for municipalities.

Mayor Mayberry noted that grant eligibility often prioritizes new projects and asked whether funding is available for maintenance-related efforts such as playground replacements and the rebuilding of bridges and roads. Gibson Ingram responded stating that rebuilding bridges and roads is a common area of involvement for GrantMatch, funding opportunities for these types of maintenance projects are generally more limited than those for new initiatives.

Gibson Ingram confirmed that before any grant is submitted on behalf of the Township, staff get to see and review the final version of the application.

Resolution No.6

Moved by Craig Gillis
Seconded by Paul Buchner

RESOLVED THAT Council of the Township of South-West Oxford receive Report CAO 04-2025: GrantMatch – Government Funding Identification and Application Support, for information;

AND FURTHER THAT Council authorize the CAO to execute an agreement with GrantMatch Corp., in a form substantially similar to the agreement attached as Appendix B to this report.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

STAFF REPORTS

CAO 02-2026: For Information: Regional Engagement Session – Conservation Authority Regional Consolidation

CAO Julie Middleton presented the report to Council providing an overview of the Regional Engagement Session on Conservation Authority Regional Consolidation attended by staff, including a summary of the information presented by the province and a summary of feedback shared by session participants. This report is provided for information to support Council's awareness of the proposed provincial direction and the issues being raised through the consultation process.

Resolution No.7

Moved by Jim Pickard
Seconded by Valerie Durston

RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford receive report CAO 02-2026: For Information: Regional Engagement Session – Conservation Authority Regional Consolidation as information.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

CAO 03-2026: For Information: Wet Road Access – Pigram Line

CAO Julie Middleton presented the report Council providing information regarding the municipal obligations and Conservation Authority requirements related to the “wet road” section of Pigram Line located within a regulated floodplain, including the formal requirements outlined by the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) should the Township wish to consider addressing wet road access.

Resolution No.8

Moved by George Way
Seconded by Valerie Durston

RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford receive report CAO 03-2026: For Information: Wet Road Access – Pigram Line as information.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

CL 02-2026: By-law Enforcement Activity Report - 4th Quarter (2025)

Clerk Denny Giles presented the report to Council providing information regarding by-law enforcement activities up to the end of December 31st, 2025.

Resolution No.9

Moved by Paul Buchner
Seconded by Jim Pickard

RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford receive report CL 02-2026: By-law Enforcement Activity Report - 4th Quarter (2025) as information.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Council recessed at 10:17 a.m.

Council resumed at 10:24 a.m.

CAO 01-2026: Strategic Planning Session Report: Setting Priorities for 2026

CAO Julie Middleton presented the report to Council for Council's Strategic Planning Session for 2026 which provided an opportunity for members of Council to review previously circulated information and establish clear priorities for the final year of this term of Council.

2026 Municipal Election

Mayor Mayberry emphasized that the 2026 Municipal Election is fast approaching and confirmed that he will not be seeking re-election. He added that the Township needs to proactively consider who in the community may be interested in running for municipal office and stressing that a deliberate effort is required to ensure good governance. Councillor Pickard echoed Mayor Mayberry's comments and questioned what the 2027 council will look like. He stressed the importance of actively encouraging community members to engage in local government, noting that change is inevitable and strong leadership, particularly from the next mayor, is critical.

Councillor Gillis highlighted the need to better educate the public on municipal roles and responsibilities, including the distinction between municipal and county governance, and suggested public engagement as a key tool. In response, Council discussed hosting public information sessions lasting 30 minutes to an hour, with sessions to be held in both the north and south ends of the Township.

Councillor Durston suggested a strong social media outreach strategy, including posting across local Facebook pages in addition to the Township's page.

Council directed staff to return with recommendations for dates for the South-West Oxford candidate information sessions.

Stale-Dated Building Permits

Mayor Mayberry raised the issue of stale-dated building permits and noted that they would not be fully cleaned up this year, asking council to consider setting a reasonable goal, such as addressing all open applications that are five years old or newer, or those open between five and ten years.

Councillor Gillis stated that staff is aware of Council's expectations on this matter and should be allowed to manage the project and cleanup process, with progress reports provided back to Council.

New Administration, Childcare and Library Facility

Mayor Mayberry sought clarity on the current status for the new administration building and what the next steps are. Staff advised that a detailed report will be brought forward at the next meeting and explained that the RFPQ for a construction manager had generated 28 prequalification submissions, which are now being narrowed down to advance to the next phase. The next step will involve issuing an RFP for a detailed financial proposal covering Phase 1 services, including completion of detailed design, construction-ready drawings, a cost estimate for the building, and fees for services throughout construction.

Councillors expressed mixed perspectives on timing and financial risk. Councillor Durston questioned whether this is the right time to proceed with a new build and asked at what point the project could be paused. Councillor Buchner and Councillor Way supported moving forward, noting that the current building lacks capacity and that delaying the project will only increase costs, with Councillor Way expressing a preference to see construction begin in 2026.

Councillor Gillis and Councillor Pickard commented on the significant financial commitment and the need to prioritize taxpayer interests by clearly defining what is essential versus optional. Staff clarified that while preliminary estimates exist, proceeding through Phase 1 is necessary to determine an accurate cost.

Mayor Mayberry acknowledged the uncertainty and concern that accompany major projects but noted that postponing the build a decade earlier was a costly mistake and that the facility is needed regardless of timing, highlighting the importance of establishing a clear roadmap and moving ahead.

Council discussed all proposed building components, including whether childcare would remain part of the project. Several Councillors highlighted the strong community need for childcare, with support expressed for maintaining a multi-use facility that serves a range of community needs, which council generally viewed as more beneficial to residents than other potential capital investments.

Councillor Gillis highlighted the large barn project at the museum and that efforts are underway to get the tender out to get the project completed.

Councillor Pickard inquired about the Master Fire Plan. Fire Chief Shane Caskanette advised the consultant was wrapping up work on the plan and would be coming back to Council to present the final version soon.

Councillors inquired about the Secondary Plan for Mount Elgin. CAO Julie Middleton advised staff were working with Township Planner Laurel Davies-Snyder to finalize the plan.

Councillors inquired about the green building initiative with WalterFedy. CAO Julie Middleton advised the grant is complete and submitted, and the hope is to have a response by February if the Township was successful or not.

Councillors inquired about the new Mount Elgin Park and what the status of that project is. CAO Julie Middleton advised that public consultation is now complete and the consultant will be making adjustments to the drawings based on feedback received and providing final drawings to the Township along with an estimated cost of construction. Julie advised there is a potential opportunity for a phased in approach of construction for the new Mount Elgin Park.

Councillor Way inquired about the lands next to The Straw Boss and whether approval has been given for development. CAO Julie Middleton advised there has been no formal application submitted for the property and that only concept designs have been presented for the property, but it hasn't been confirmed what they would like to do with the lands. Julie added there are challenges due to the grounds being very wet and hydrogeology reports will be required to determine whether the ground can hold structures.

Councillor Pickard inquired about advancing stormwater infrastructure. CAO Julie Middleton advised that the Township is working with Rob Walton for the development of an operations and maintenance plan for the stormwater infrastructure and should be complete by mid-2026.

Councillor Pickard inquired about the Centreville Pond. CAO Julie Middleton advised that Upper Thames River Conservation Authority has been advised the Township wants to proceed with dam removal and naturalization.

Resolution No.10

Moved by Jim Pickard
Seconded by Valerie Durston

RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford receive report CAO 01-2026: Strategic Planning Session Report: Setting Priorities for 2026 as information;

AND FURTHER THAT Council provide direction to staff regarding priorities and focus areas for the final year of the 2022–2026 Council term.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Invitation from Mayor Josh Morgan

Mayor Morgan would like to extend an invitation to Mayor Mayberry to attend a meeting January 16, 2026 from 10:30am-12pm related to proposed changes to Ontario's

Conservation Authorities- we need an alternate member of Council to attend on his behalf.

Councillor Buchner expressed a willingness to attend, and Council unanimously supported Councillor Buchner attending on behalf of Mayor Mayberry for the Township.

CONSENT AGENDA

#1- Township of Drummond/North Elmsley - Consolidation of Conservation Authorities

#2- Tay Valley Township - Consolidation of Conservation Authorities

#3- Municipality of Huron Shores - Rent Protection for Tenants

#4- Township of Zorra - Consolidation of Conservation Authorities

#5- Municipality of South Huron - Consolidation of Conservation Authorities

#6- AMO - Bill 68, Changes to OMERS

#7- Oxford County - Consolidation of Conservation Authorities

#8- Smiths Falls - Consolidation of Conservation Authorities

#9- Kettle Creek Conservation Authority - ERO Posting 025-1257

#10- Grey Sauble Conservation Authority - ERO Posting 025-1257

#11- City of Hamilton - Drowning Prevention and Swim Safety in Ontario

#12- Township of Hamilton - Consolidation of Conservation Authorities

#13- Township of Machar - Consolidation of Conservation Authorities

#14- City of Brantford - Letter to PM Mark Carney - Call for Reform and Publication of Sex Offender Registry

#15- Municipality of Meaford - Consolidation of Conservation Authorities

#16- Smiths Falls - Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund (OCIF)

#17- Township of Scugog - Consolidation of Conservation Authorities

#18- United Counties of Stormont Dundas Glengarry - Consolidation of Conservation Authorities

#19- Town of Cobourg - Consolidation of Conservation Authorities

#20- Town of The Blue Mountains - Consolidation of Conservation Authorities

#21- Township of Perry - Removal of HST/GST from New Homes

#22- United Counties of Leeds and Grenville - Municipal Accountability Act

#23- Smiths Falls - Re-instate Eligibility for Curbside Blue Box Collection

Resolution No.11

Moved by Paul Buchner

Seconded by Jim Pickard

RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford receive items #1 to #23 of the Consent Agenda dated January 6th, 2026, for information, and that they be noted and filed.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE REPORT

January 6th, 2026 - Accounts Payable Report

Resolution No.12

Moved by George Way

Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED THAT the following Accounts be approved for payment:

<i>Accounts Payable for December 14th, 2025-January 2nd, 2026</i>	<i>\$3,663,722.46</i>
<i>Payroll #25 - General</i>	<i>\$83,270.76</i>
<i>Payroll #12 - Council</i>	<i>\$8,669.82</i>
<i>Payroll #11 - Fire</i>	<i>\$25,207.39</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$3,780,870.43</i>

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

BY-LAWS AND AGREEMENTS

By-Law No. 73-2025 - A By-law to provide for Drainage Works (Whaley Drain Branch 'A') - 3rd reading

Councillor Buchner left the meeting due to declared conflict of interest and did not participate in the vote.

Resolution No.13

Moved by Craig Gillis
Seconded by George Way

RESOLVED THAT the following By-law be read for a third time, and finally passed:

- *By-law No. 73-2025 - A By-law to provide for Drainage Works (Whaley Drain Branch 'A')*

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Councillor Buchner returned to the meeting.

By-Law No. 70- 2025 - A By-law to provide for Drainage Works (East Branches of the Hiram Allin Drain) - 3rd reading

Resolution No.14

Moved by Jim Pickard
Seconded by George Way

RESOLVED THAT the following By-law be read for a third time, and finally passed:

- *By-law No. 70-2025 - A By-law to provide for Drainage Works (East Branches of the Hiram Allin Drain)*

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

By-Law No. 01-2026 - A By-law to authorize Borrowing for the Township of South-West Oxford

By-Law No. 02-2026 - A By-law to provide for Interim Tax Levies for the year 2026 for the Township of South-West Oxford

Resolution No.15

Moved by Valerie Durston
Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED THAT the following By-law's be read a first, second and third time and finally passed:

- *By-law No. 01-2026 - A By-law to authorize Borrowing for the Township of South-West Oxford*
- *By-law No. 02-2026 - A By-law to provide for Interim Tax Levies for the year 2026*

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

NOTICE OF MOTION

NEW BUSINESS

COUNCIL ROUND TABLE

Council members shared updates from their respective wards and community involvement.

Councillor Durston advised of the upcoming FOOD Project Tour on January 13th in Ingersoll for the Engage and Inform Committee, as well as any Councillors that wishes to attend.

Councillor Pickard advised of the Sweaburg Parks and Recreation Committee meeting coming up on February 4th. He commented that there had been a lot of discussions with residents regarding gravel pits and silica dust from the gravel pits being a human health hazard.

Councillor Gillis commented there had been a lot of resident inquiries about the garbage and recycling schedule. He inquired about the sidewalk plow operations in the Township and what constitutes using the blower versus using the plow. Works Superintendent Adam Prouse explained it depends on the amount of snow the Township receives. If too much snow accumulates, the plow isn't as effective and the blower is used.

Councillor Buchner commented on the busy holiday season at Brownsville Community Centre, and added that someone attempted to break into the sharing cupboard at the community centre, but was not able to get into it.

Councillor Way commented that hall rentals were finishing up after a busy holiday season at Folden's Hall.

Mayor Mayberry informed Council the first County Council meeting of 2026 was scheduled for January 14th.

CLOSED SESSION

CONFIRMATORY BY-LAW

By-Law No. 03-2026 - A By-law to confirm all actions and proceedings of Council (January 6th, 2026)

Resolution No.16

Moved by Paul Buchner
Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED THAT the following By-law be read a first, second and third time and finally passed:

- *By-law No. 03-2026 - To confirm all actions and proceedings of Council (January 6th, 2026)*

AND FURTHER THAT the Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized to sign the By-law and affix the corporate seal.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

ADJOURNMENT

Resolution No.17

Moved by Valerie Durston

Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED THAT there being no further business, the Council meeting be adjourned at 11:54 a.m., to meet again on Tuesday, January 20th, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. in Council Chamber at the Municipal Office.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

MAYOR: David Mayberry

CLERK: Denny Giles

This document is available in alternate formats upon request.