

**Township of South-West Oxford
Council Minutes
April 15, 2025**

Members Present: Mayor: Mayor David Mayberry, Paul
Councillors: Buchner (Ward 1), Peter Ypma
(Ward 2), George Way (Ward 4),
Jim Pickard (Ward 5), Craig Gillis
(Ward 6)

Members Absent: Valerie Durston (Ward 3)

Staff Present: Mary Ellen Greb, CAO/Deputy Clerk
Adam Prouse, Works Superintendent
Brooke Crane, Treasurer
Nicole Chambers, Legislative Services/Records
Management Coordinator

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Mayor David Mayberry and a quorum was present.

Motion to Accept Agenda

Resolution No. 1 Moved by George Way
Seconded by Paul Buchner

RESOLVED that the regular meeting agenda for the April 15th, 2025 meeting of council be approved, as amended to move Item #15 Closed Session ahead of #8 Discussion Items.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

None.

Minutes

April 1st, 2025 - Regular Council Meeting Minutes

Resolution No. 2 Moved by Jim Pickard
Seconded by George Way

RESOLVED that the regular minutes of the April 1st, 2025 council meeting be approved.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Business Arising from the Minutes

CL 21-2025: Business Arising from the Minutes of the April 1st, 2025 Council Meeting

CAO Mary Ellen Greb provided Council with a report to provide them with an overview of the staff actions arising from the minutes of the last Council meeting. In response to requests for clarification on public concerns related to wind farms and energy projects, Council identified key areas of interest to residents: noise and health impacts, use of prime agricultural land, property values, wildlife, visual impacts, groundwater, and stray voltage. Staff will gather additional information on these topics from credible sources (government data and peer-reviewed studies) and provide a report back to Council for consideration.

Resolution No. 3 Moved by Jim Pickard
Seconded by Paul Buchner

RESOLVED that the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford receive report CL 21-2025: Business Arising from the Minutes of the April 1st, 2025 Council Meeting as information.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Delegations and Appointments

6:35 p.m. - Noise By-law Exemption Request: Robert Berry (Sweaburg - Wedding)

CL 22-2025: Noise By-law Exemption Request: Robert Berry (Sweaburg)

CAO Mary Ellen Greb provided Council with a report to present Council with a request received from Robert Berry for an exemption to the Township's Noise By-law to permit the amplification of sound for an outdoor wedding scheduled to take place on Saturday, September 20th, 2025 in Sweaburg.

In response to an inquiry from Council Pickard, the applicant clarified that they live in the Village of Sweaburg on Dodge Line. Council Pickard noted that the applicant will also require a liquor license and a Special Occasion Permit for the consumption of alcohol on Township property.

Resolution No. 4 Moved by Paul Buchner
Seconded by Jim Pickard

RESOLVED that the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford receive report CL 22-2025: Noise By-law Exemption Request received from Robert Berry as information;

AND FURTHER THAT Council authorize an exemption to Section 3.3 of the Township's Noise By-law No. 49-2021 for a wedding reception scheduled to take place on Saturday, September 20th, 2025 from 4:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. located at 474379 Dodge Line (Sweaburg Lions Pavilion);

AND FURTHER THAT Council provide direction to staff to notify enforcement staff and the OPP of the noise by-law exemption approved by Council.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

6:45 p.m. - Meredith Maywood - Tourism Oxford Update: Highlights from 2024 and 2025

Meredith Maywood, Tourism Manager, on behalf of Tourism Oxford, provided an update to Council regarding Tourism in Oxford County. She provided an overview for Council regarding what Tourism Oxford focuses on for Oxford County (management, product development and marketing) and commented on these activities throughout 2024 and going into 2025. Tourism Oxford's 2025 Business Plan includes the launch of a new website and CRM system.

Discussion took place regarding the anticipated increase in Canadian tourism despite geopolitical concerns, with no decrease expected in American visitors. Mayor Mayberry highlighted tourism's positive impact on economic development and culture in the region.

Staff Reports

BD 05-2025: March 2025 Building Report

CAO Mary Ellen Greb provided Council with a report to provide them with a summary of the building permit activities as of March 2025. This includes details on the number of building permits issued and a summary of the associated permit fees, development charges, and construction value collected.

In response to an inquiry from Councillor Way regarding a decrease in permit fees collected relative to construction value (as compared to 2024 data), CAO

Greb explained that permit fees vary by classification type. Staff will provide a breakdown of this information for Council's consideration.

Resolution No. 5 Moved by Peter Ypma
Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED that the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford receive Report BD 05-2025; March 2025 Building Report as information.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

CL 23-2025: By-law Enforcement Activity Report - 1st Quarter (2025)

CAO Mary Ellen Greb provided Council with a report to provide them with an update in relation to the activities in the by-law enforcement division as of March 31st, 2025.

Resolution No. 6 Moved by Paul Buchner
Seconded by George Way

RESOLVED that the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford receive report CL 23-2025: By-law Enforcement Activity Report – 1st Quarter (2025) as information.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

WD 03-2025: 2025 Asphalt Tender Results - Portion of each of Clarke Road and West Hill Line

Works Superintendent Adam Prouse provided Council with a report to seek their approval of the tender from GIP Paving Inc. to pulverize, repave, and gravel shoulder of a portion of Clarke Road (from Dodge Line to County Road 6) and to mill and repave a portion of the West Hill Line (Beachville Road to Fire Hall 3). The work was proposed and was approved as part of the 2025 budget deliberations. Works Superintendent Prouse noted that a total of four bids were received, and there may be an asphalt-cement adjustment at the time of paving.

Resolution No. 7 Moved by Jim Pickard
Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED that the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford receive report WD 03-2025: 2025 Asphalt Tender Results as information;

AND FURTHER that Council approve the tender bid of \$695,445.00 plus applicable taxes from GIP Paving Inc. to perform the work outlined in the approved tender.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Closed Session

The meeting will be closed to the public to discuss subject matter that is:

(b) personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees (Resolution to Direct the CAO).

(e) *litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals, affecting the municipality or local board (Municipal Drain);*

(f) advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose (Strong Mayor Powers).

Resolution No. 8 Moved by George Way
 Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED that Council hold a closed meeting in order to discuss a matter pertaining to:

(b) personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees (Resolution to Direct the CAO).

(e) litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals, affecting the municipality or local board (Municipal Drain);

(f) advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose (Strong Mayor Powers).

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Resolution No. 9 Moved by George Way
Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED that the Council of South-West Oxford reconvene in regular session at 7:29 p.m.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Discussion Items

Ontario to Expand Strong Mayor Powers

Discussion took place regarding the provincial decision to expand strong mayor powers to 26 additional municipalities, with the aim of accelerating housing development to meet the provincial target of building 1.5 million homes by 2031. The province is currently not on track to meet this target.

The Council expressed concerns that the expansion of Strong Mayor Powers could override local decisions on housing, energy, and infrastructure – potentially undermining municipal autonomy. Councillor Pickard raised specific concerns about local energy projects, while Councillor Ypma emphasized the risk to prime agricultural land and food production.

Council members were generally opposed to adopting a provincially mandated housing target, noting it could shift accountability from the province to municipal mayors. There was strong consensus that such powers could erode democratic governance, with decisions best made by the whole of Council rather than a select few.

Councillor Gillis questioned whether recent public comments from the President of AMO accurately reflect the views of all member municipalities.

Staff were directed to contact MPP Ernie Hardeman and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to seek clarification on:

1. whether South-West Oxford has an assigned housing target as of May 1st;
2. the financial implications of rejecting Strong Mayor Powers; and
3. the potential impacts following the 2026 Municipal Election.

Council concluded their discussion by emphasizing the need to balance financial viability of the municipality with the preservation of democratic decision-making.

Resolution No. 10 Moved by Peter Ypma
 Seconded by George Way

RESOLVED that the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford direct staff to write a letter to the President of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario in response to their support for expanding Strong Mayor Powers in Ontario.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

1st Quarter 2025 Strategic Planning Update

Resolution No. 11 Moved by Craig Gillis
Seconded by Peter Ypma

RESOLVED that the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford receive the 1st Quarter 2025 Strategic Planning Update as information;

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Accounts Payable Report

April 15th, 2025 - Accounts Payable Report

Resolution No. 12 Moved by Paul Buchner
Seconded by George Way

RESOLVED that the following Accounts be approved for payment:

Accounts Payable for March 30 to April 12, 2025	\$729,444.32
Bi-Weekly Payroll #7	\$57,206.86

Total: \$786,651.18

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Consent Agenda – April 15th, 2025

#1 - Oxford County Report PW 2025-20 re: Annual Transportation System Performance

#2 - Oxford County Report PW 2025-21 re: 2024 Annual Energy Update

#3 - Oxford County Report PW 2025-18 re: 2024 Annual Waste Management Reports

#4 - Safe and Well Oxford - Upcoming Events:

- *One World Festival*
- *I Am Enough*

#5 - Oxford County 2024 Annual Wastewater Reports

#6 - City of Port Colborne Resolution re: Support Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake re: Amendment to Ontario Heritage Act

#7 - Region of Durham Resolution re: banning the Nazi Swastika in Canada

#8 - City of Peterborough Resolution re: Use of X

#9 - Municipality of St.-Charles Resolution re: Child Welfare Funding

#10 - Municipality of St.-Charles Resolution re: Proposed US Tariffs on Canadian Goods

#11 - Township of North Glengarry Resolution re: Rural Roads Safety Program

Resolution No. 13 Moved by George Way
 Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED that the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford receive Consent Agenda items #1 to #11 inclusive, dated April 15, 2025, as information; and that the items be noted and filed.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Council requested that Oxford County provide the 2024 waste management data for South-West Oxford.

By-laws and Agreements

- *By-Law No. 28-2025 - To appoint persons to the Beachville Parks and Recreation Committee*
- *By-law No. 29-2025 - To appoint persons to the Dereham Centre Hall Board*
- *By-Law No. 30-2025 - To appoint persons to the Beachville Cemetery Board*
- *By-Law No. 31-2025 - To appoint persons to the West Oxford, Harris Street and Sweaburg Cemetery Boards*
- *By-Law No. 32-2025 - To appoint persons to the Brownsville Hall Board*

Resolution No. 14 Moved by Paul Buchner
 Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED that the following By-Laws be introduced and that they be read a first and second time:

- By-Law No. 28-2025 being a By-law to appoint persons to the Beachville Parks and Recreation Committee
- By-law No. 29-2025 being a By-law to appoint persons to the Dereham Centre Hall Board
- By-Law No. 30-2025 being a By-law to appoint persons to the Beachville Cemetery Board
- By-Law No. 31-2025 being a By-law to appoint persons to the West Oxford, Harris Street and Sweaburg Cemetery Boards
- By-Law No. 32-2025 being a By-law to appoint persons to the Brownsville Hall Board.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Resolution No. 15 Moved by Jim Pickard
 Seconded by Peter Ypma

RESOLVED that By-Laws 28-2025 to 32-2025 inclusive be read a third time and finally passed, and that the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to sign the By-Laws and affix the corporate seal.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Notices of Motion – None

New Business

Henrietta St Road Allowance

It was noted that the Township of Zorra retains ownership of part of Queen Street W (road allowance) in Beachville. Staff have reached out to Zorra staff to discuss options for purchasing this parcel.

Council Round Table

Council members shared updates from their respective wards and community involvement. Sweaburg Easter Egg Hunt takes place this Saturday at the ball park. Sweaburg Parks and Recreation's AGM took place this evening. ROEDC meet April 25th. Earth Day and Reuseapalooza event is April 26th at the Lions Pavilion from 8am-12pm. Mount Elgin Hall Board meets April 28th. Work is proceeding on the roof at the Dereham Centre Hall. Drainage concerns being addressed in Beachville. Museum's Easter Egg Hunt takes place this Saturday from 12-2pm rain or shine. Acknowledgement of VP of

Beachville Parks and Recreation Committee for her support and dedication. Museum board meets next week, governance meeting to take place Thursday with council representatives and CAOs of SWOX and Zorra. Engage and Inform Committee will be cleaning-up Dereham Line from Ostrander Road to Dereham Centre on April 29th. Brownsville community yard sale will take place the first full weekend in June. Foldens breakfast takes place April 27th at 9:00 a.m. in partnership with the Sweaburg Lions. SWOX Township Fare Event takes place Saturday, May 24th from 12-3 p.m. at the Mount Elgin Community Centre – event is to promote Township-based businesses. Bower Hill Wind Farm open house takes place May 24th from 9-1 at the Foldens Hall.

Confirmatory By-law

By-Law No. 33-2025 - To confirm all actions and proceedings of Council (April 15th, 2025)

Resolution No. 16 Moved by Paul Buchner
Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED that By-law 33-2025 being a By-law to confirm the proceedings of Council held Tuesday, April 15th, 2025 be read a first, second and third time this 15th day of April, 2025.

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 Craig Gillis
Seconded by George Way

RESOLVED that there being no further business, the Council meeting be adjourned at 8:29 p.m. to meet again on Tuesday, May 6th, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

CLERK: Julie Middleton

MAYOR: David Mayberry

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