



THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

MINUTES

Regular Council Meeting
Monday January 12, 2026
7:00 p.m. Council Chambers, Fingal, Shedden/Via Video Link

COUNCIL PRESENT: Mayor Grant Jones
Deputy Mayor Justin Pennings
Councillor Sarah Emons
Councillor Scott Fellows

ALSO PRESENT: Jeff Carswell, CAO/Clerk
Michele Lant, Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer
Aaron Van Oorspronk, Director of Infrastructure and Development
Services
Corey Pemberton, Director of Building and Community
Services/Chief Building Official
Jeff McArthur, Director of Emergency Services/Fire Chief
June McLarty, Deputy Clerk

REGRETS: Councillor John Adzija

Mayor Jones called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ADDENDUM TO AGENDA: None

DISCLOSURES: None

ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

Council Minutes – Adopt

2026-03 Deputy Mayor Pennings – Councillor Emons

RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of
December 8th, 2025 are hereby adopted.

CARRIED

Committee Minutes – Review

2026-04 Councillor Fellows – Deputy Mayor Pennings

RESOLVED THAT Council had reviewed the draft Minutes of the War Memorial Committee Meeting of November 20th, 2025 and the draft Minutes of the Young at Heart Committee Meeting of December 11th, 2025

CARRIED

DELEGATION:

7:02 p.m. – 7:29 p.m.

Suday Jain, Watson & Associates Economists Ltd, **Asset Management Plan Additional Review**

Mr. Jain presented Council with additional information on the proposed Asset Management Plan. This information included two possible scenarios of having the Asset Management Plan phase-in period extending from either 10 years or 15 years. Mr. Jain also reported that once Council makes a decision on what period the plan is to include, a final report will be brought back for approval.

DRAINAGE:

Court of Revision - Edison Drain 2025

Appoint Members for Court of Revision

2026-05 Deputy Mayor Pennings – Councillor Emons

RESOLVED THAT Council of the Township of Southwold appoints Grant Jones as Chairman, Justin Pennings and Sarah Emons as members of the Court of Revision for the Edison Drain 2025.

AND THAT Council adjourn and form the Court of Revision for the Edison Drain 2025 at **7:30 p.m.**

CARRIED

Adjournment of Court of Revision

2025-06 Councillor Emons – Deputy Mayor Pennings

RESOLVED THAT the Court of Revision for the Edison Drain 2025 adjourns at **7:33 p.m.**;

AND THAT the regular meeting of Council reconvenes.

CARRIED

Appointment of Engineer – Burwell Drain

2026-07 Deputy Mayor Pennings – Councillor Emons

RESOLVED THAT Council received the request for a major improvement under Section 78(1.1) of the Drainage Act for the Burwell Drain and has decided to proceed with the project; and,

THAT Council now appoints the engineering firm Spriet Associates to prepare the necessary reports: and,

THAT notice will be sent to all required to be notified under the Drainage Act of Council's actions.

CARRIED

REPORTS:

FIR 2026-01 Activity Report – December 2025

Jeff McArthur, Director of Emergency Services/Fire Chief presented this report to Council for information purposes.

FIR 2026-02 Shedden Station 4th Bay

2026-08 Councillor Emons – Deputy Mayor Pennings

RESOLVED THAT Report FIR 2026-02 relating to the Shedden Station 4th Bay, be received for information; and,

THAT approval be given for staff to proceed with the pre-construction agreement as submitted by Westbuilt Structures Inc.

CARRIED

FIR 2026-03 Talbotville Station Technical Advisory Committee Update

2026-09 Councillor Fellows – Councillor Emons

RESOLVED THAT Report FIR 2026-03 relating to the TSTAC be received for information; and,

THAT the Talbotville Station Technical Advisory Committee (TSTAC) be dissolved.

CARRIED

IDS 2026-01 Activity Report – December 2025

Aaron VanOospronk, Director of Infrastructure and Development Services presented this report to Council for information purposes.

IDS 2026-02 Membrane Filter Replacement

2026-10 Deputy Mayor Pennings - Councillor Emons

RESOLVED THAT Report IDS 2026-02 relating to the membranes at the Talbotville Wastewater Treatment Plant, be received for information; and,

THAT the Mayor and Council of the Township of Southwold accept the Proposal from Newterra at a cost of \$207,044.00 (plus applicable taxes) to replace the Train one MicroClear cassettes with Zeeweed technology.

CARRIED

IDS 2026-03 2025 Drainage Reapportionment Confirmations

2026-11 Councillor Fellows – Deputy Mayor Pennings

RESOLVED THAT Council for the Township of Southwold hereby accepts the drainage reapportionment undertaken for the Consent Applications E29/24, E6/25, E16/25, E17/25, E21/25, E29/25 and E33/25 ; and,

THAT these reapportionments will become effective upon stamping of the applicable deed; and,

THAT a copy of this resolution and drainage reapportionment be filed in each applicable drain file.

CARRIED

FIN 2026-02 OPP Estimate

2026-12 Councillor Fellows – Deputy Mayor Pennings

RESOLVED THAT the 2026 OPP Cost Estimate be received for information.

CARRIED

FIN 2026-03 Financial Indicator Review

Michele Lant, Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer presented this report to Council for information purposes.

CBO 2026-01 Activity Report – December 2025 and Year-End Comparison

Corey Pemberton, Director of Building and Community Services presented this report to Council for information purposes.

CBO 2026-02 Memorial Forest

2026-13 Councillor Fellows – Councillor Emons

RESOLVED THAT Council adopt the recommendations of the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority regarding management of the Keystone Complex Memorial Forest; and,

THAT Director of Building and Community Services/CBO be directed to manage the Memorial Forest as set out in the recommendations; and,

THAT the Memorial Forest Management Plan be provided to the Keystone Complex Committee for information.

CARRIED

CAO 2026-01 Activity Report – December 2025

Jeff Carswell, CAO/Clerk presented this report to Council for information purposes.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- AMO RE: OMERS Governance Changes & Bill 68 Municipal Resource Toolkit
- Municipality of Central Elgin RE: Regional Consolidation of Conservation Authority
- Province of Ontario RE: Conservation Authority Engagement Session

Overview

- Kettle Creek Conservation Authority RE: Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities
- Township of O'Connor RE: Support for Township of Southwold's Consolidation of Conservation Authorities Resolution.

OMERS Governance Changes & Bill 68

2026-14 Councillor Emons – Councillor Fellows

WHEREAS the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System (OMERS) Pension Fund serves over 1,000 employers and over half a million employees and retirees from diverse groups including: municipal governments, school boards, libraries, police and fire departments, children's aid societies, and electricity distribution companies; and

WHEREAS the long-standing jointly-sponsored governance model with two corporate boards has provided stability, accountability, and fairness for both plan members and employers for more than two decades; and

WHEREAS the Government of Ontario has passed legislative changes to OMERS' governance structure through Bill 68; and

WHEREAS these changes would replace the current OMERS Sponsors Corporation with a new Sponsors Council that would lose its corporate status and independent resources; and

WHEREAS the proposed model could allow pension decisions affecting municipal employers and employees to be made without meaningful municipal oversight, increasing financial risk for municipalities and local taxpayers; and

WHEREAS municipalities are already under significant fiscal strain and cannot absorb additional pension costs without consequences for property taxes or local services;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Township of Southwold does not support the legislative changes to the OMERS Act contained in Bill 68 and requests that the Government of Ontario reconsider the advisability of proceeding with these changes;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Township of Southwold's Council supports the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) in calling on the

Government of Ontario to:

1. Ensure Sponsors retain full control without restrictions over their appointments to the new Sponsors Council and Administration Corporation;
2. Guarantee the Sponsors Council's independence from the plan administrator and access to resources needed to perform its duties; and
3. Limit the Minister's regulation-making authority over plan design and the Sponsors Council's internal affairs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this resolution be circulated to:

- The Honourable Rob Flack, Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs;
- The Honourable Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance; and,
- The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO).

CARRIED

Council reviewed the other items under Correspondence.

BY-LAWS:

- By-law No. 2026-02, being a by-law to authorize borrowing from time to time to meet current expenditures during the fiscal year ending December 31st, 2026.
- By-Law No. 2026-03, being a by-law to provide for an interim tax levy, to provide for the payment of taxes and to provide for penalty and interest of 1.25 percent.
- By-law No. 2025-04, being a by-law to enter into an amending agreement with Infrastructure Ontario
- By-law No. 2026-05, being a by-law to execute an agreement with the Solicitor General – Fire Protection Grant
- By-law No. 2026-06, being a by-law to appoint a Committee of Adjustment

By-laws

2026-15 Councillor Emons – Deputy Mayor Pennings

RESOLVED THAT By-laws No. 2026-02, 2026-03, 2026-04, 2026-05 and 2026-06 be read a first and second time, considered read a third time and finally passed this 12th day of January, 2026.

CARRIED

OTHER BUSINESS

- Notice of Elgin County Transportation Master Plan

STAFF DIRECTION

Staff was given direction from Council to provide comments to the County on the Transportation Master Plan.

Asset Management Plan

Council further discussed the options for the Asset Management Plan.

CLOSED SESSION:

2026-16 Councillor Fellows – Deputy Mayor Pennings

RESOLVED THAT Council of the Township of Southwold now moves again into a session of the meeting that shall be closed to the public at **8:34 p.m.** in accordance with Section 239 (2) of the Municipal Act, S.O. 2001, c. 25 for discussion of the following matters;

- 239(2) (c) a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the municipality or local board (Multiple properties)
- 239(2) (h) information explicitly supplied in confidence to the municipality or local board by Canada, a province or territory or a Crown agency of any of them; (Ministry of Infrastructure)
- 239(2) (b) personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees (HR Matters)

CARRIED

Adjournment of Closed Session

2026-17 Deputy Mayor Pennings – Councillor Fellows

RESOLVED THAT Council of the Township of Southwold adjourns the Closed Session of the Regular Council meeting at **10:35 p.m.**

CARRIED

STAFF DIRECTION

Staff was directed by Council to the items that were discussed in the Closed Session.

Confirmation By-law

2026-18 Councillor Emons – Deputy Mayor Pennings

RESOLVED THAT By-law No. 2026-07 be read a first and second

time, considered read a third time and finally passed this 12th day of January, 2026.

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT:

2026-19 Deputy Mayor Pennings – Councillor Emons

RESOLVED THAT Council for the Township of Southwold adjourns this Regular meeting of Council at **10:37 p.m.**

CARRIED

Original signed by:

Mayor
Grant Jones

Original signed by:

CAO/Clerk
Jeff Carswell