



## **Southwold Economic Development Committee**

# **Agenda**

**Thursday, May 28, 2026 at 7:30 am**  
**Old Station Kitchen/Evelyn's Sausage Kitchen, Shedden**

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1. Call to Order
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests
4. Approval of the March 26, 2026 Minutes
5. Economic Development Plan Update
6. Elgin County Economic Development and Tourism Updates
7. Development and Infrastructure Updates:
  - a. Fingal Reconstruction
  - b. Shedden/Fingal Sanitary Servicing
  - c. WWTP Updates for Shedden & Talbotville
  - d. Parks and Trails Master Plan Project Update
  - e. Zoning By-law Update Project has started
8. 2026 Cultivating Success Networking Event Updates
9. Pat (Old Station Kitchen/The Streetery) & Heather (Evelyn's Sausage Kitchen) – Business Introductions (subject to availability)
10. New and Other Business
11. Next meeting date, time and location
12. Adjourn



## Southwold Economic Development Committee

# Meeting Minutes

**Thursday, April 23, 2026 at 8:00 am  
Council Chambers/Webex Meeting**

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Present: Deputy Mayor Justin Pennings  
Councillor John Adzija  
Steve Bushell  
Barry Harrison  
Tanya Buttinger  
Scott Young

Staff/Resource: Jeff Carswell, CAO/Clerk  
Anne Kleinsteuber, Business Enterprise Facilitator  
Aaron Van Orspronk, Director of Infrastructure & Development  
Tanya Wilson, Elgin Business Resource Centre

Regrets: Stuart Lackey

### **1. Call to Order**

Deputy Mayor Pennings called the meeting to order at 8:04 am.

### **2. Approval of Agenda**

The Committee approved the agenda for the April 23, 2026 meeting.

### **3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest**

None

#### **4. Approval of the March 26, 2026 Minutes**

The Committee approved the minutes as drafted from the March 26, 2026 meeting.

#### **5. Economic Development Plan Update**

CAO Jeff Carswell provided an update on Economic Development Plan Project, including:

- The agreement with McSweeney has been signed
- Staff have met with the consultant and are providing background information and beginning to plan out the project

#### **6. Elgin County Economic Development and Tourism Updates**

Anne Kleinsteuber, Business Enterprise Facilitator with Elgin County Economic Development and Tourism reported on the following:

- Elgin County Business Guide has been launched
- The 2026 St. Thomas/Elgin Taste Guide is available
- Staff attended the St. Thomas Home Show
- County Businesses were well represented at the St. Thomas Chamber of Commerce Impact Awards with two County business receiving awards:
  - Business of the Year: Evelyn's Sausage Kitchen
  - Circle of Excellence Award: The Yarmouth Group
- Business Before 9 event attendance
- West Elgin Business after 5 event attendance
- The Elgincentives update is underway. The Public meetings for the update are leading to many inquiries from businesses about when the new program will launch and it will be open for applications.
- The Local Business Spotlight series are continuing. Township business "A Place in the Woods" was recently highlighted
- Upcoming Cultivating Success Event – June 16<sup>th</sup>. Sponsorship packages are available.

#### **7. Development and Infrastructure Updates:**

Aaron Van Orspronk, Director of Infrastructure & Development reported on the following items:

- a) Fingal Reconstruction Progress and Highlights. The EFA, County and Township met regarding layout changes and impacts on agricultural equipment. Based on input from the EFA, several layby areas are being added, along with additional signage about agricultural uses and sharing the road. Once plans are completed, they can be shared with the Committee.
- b) Updates on the Shedden/Fingal Sanitary Servicing Project – PVX will be back to repair sections of Union Road. The plan is for this work to be completed before the Rosy Rhubarb Festival.
- c) WWTP Updates for Shedden & Talbotville
- d) Parks and Trails Master Plan Project Update – Final updates based on input from the Parks and Keystone Committees are being incorporated for the final draft for Council approval.
- e) The Zoning By-law Update Project has started. This project will be a comprehensive update to the Zoning By-law. The project is being led by Re:Public Urbanism. The intent is to modernize the by-law, try to make it simpler and easier to understand, ensure regulation is limited to what needs regulation and recognize current provisions that are routinely being amended through zone changes and minor variances. Input and feedback from the Committee will be sought throughout this project.

## **8. 2026 Cultivating Success Networking Event Updates**

The 2026 Cultivating Success Networking Event will be held on Tuesday, June 16th, 2026 at Nature's Oasis Retreat. The guest speaker will be Peter Katz. The registration form is available and can be promoted locally.

## **9. New and Other Business**

None

## **10. Next Meeting date, time and location**

The committee discussed holding meetings at local businesses. Chairperson Pennings will reach out to Heather Harris about holding a future meeting at Evelyn's Sausage Kitchen/The Old Station Kitchen. The next meeting was tentatively booked for May 21 or 28, 2026 at 8:00 am.

**11. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 8:59 am.

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Chairperson, Justin Pennings

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Staff Resource, Jeff Carswell

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## Township of Southwold – Economic Development Plan Update

### Key Activities

- May 19<sup>th</sup> – McSweeney & Associates facilitated a staff workshop, attended by a variety of staff, including County Planning and County Economic Development
  - Kevin McPhillips from McSweeney was taken on a Township tour to familiarize the consulting team with the area
- Focus Group Sessions – Wednesday June 10<sup>th</sup>, Keystone Complex – Facilitated by McSweeney & Co.
  - Approximately 100 invites to the Focus Group Sessions sent out to local businesses, organizations, and groups – [Elgin Business Directory](#) was the primary source, plus Township known contacts
  - Good initial interest in workshops, additional messages will be sent out over coming weeks, leading up to the workshops to confirm attendance – participants are encouraged to RSVP, rather than just show up
  - Committee Action - Encourage business to participate, pass along any contacts that you want to ensure are included
- [Project Webpage](#) setup
- [Survey](#) is live, will be promoted until mid-June – the survey is another means to gather public input
- July 8<sup>th</sup> – Economic Development Plan Working Session – Keystone Complex
  - All participants at the forums will be invited back for the Working Session
  - To present the results from the consultations and research in the form of a SCOAR analysis.
  - To discuss potential strategic priorities and actions for the Township.