



Southwold Economic Development Committee

Agenda

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 at 8:00 am
The Daily Press Cafe, 167 Currie Rd, Dutton

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests
4. Approval of the May 28, 2026 Minutes
5. Economic Development Plan Updates
6. Elgin County Economic Development and Tourism Updates
7. Development and Infrastructure Updates
8. Discussion with Dutton-Dunwich (Henry Dryfhout, Councillor & Tony Houad, CAO)
9. New and Other Business
10. Next meeting date, time and location
11. Adjourn



Southwold Economic Development Committee

Meeting Minutes

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

Present: Deputy Mayor Justin Pennings
Steve Bushell
Tanya Buttinger
Barry Harrison
Stuart Lackey
Scott Young

Staff/Resource: Jeff Carswell, CAO/Clerk
Anne Kleinsteuber, Business Enterprise Facilitator
Aaron Van Orspronk, Director of Infrastructure & Development
Carolyn Krahn, Manager of Economic Development
& Strategic Initiatives

Regrets: Councillor John Adzija

1. Call to Order

Deputy Mayor Pennings called the meeting to order at 7:41 a.m. The Committee expressed appreciation for the opportunity to meet in the newly renovated facility, formerly a Township fire hall and water department building, which was purchased and redeveloped by Heather Harris. The relocation of Evelyn's Sausage Kitchen retail store and the addition of Old Station Kitchen by The Streeter are valued by the Township, the Southwold EDC, and the community.

2. Approval of Agenda

The Committee approved the agenda for the May 28, 2026 meeting.

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

None

4. Approval of the April 23, 2026 Minutes

The Committee approved the minutes as drafted from the April 23, 2026 meeting.

5. Economic Development Plan Update

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

- May 19th – 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 10th, 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
- Project Webpage setup
- Survey is live, will be promoted until mid-June – the survey is another means to gather public input
- July 8th – Economic Development Plan Working Session – Keystone Complex

6. Elgin County Economic Development and Tourism Updates

Carolyn Krahn and Anne Kleinsteuber reported on the following:

- Elgincentives Update – the new CIP is going through the approval process with municipalities, and the new plan should be launched soon. There is \$80,000 in grants available for 2026.
- Employment Lands Study
- Western Ontario Wardens Caucus – Queens Park Day

- Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (GLSLCI)
- Elgin Tourism updates
- OMCA (Ontario Motor Coach Association) Group Tour Opportunities
- Local Business Highlights – “A Place in the Woods” from Southwold was recently highlighted.
- Cultivating Success Event

7. Development and Infrastructure Updates:

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

- a) Fingal Reconstruction Progress and Highlights.
- 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 at the next meeting
- e) The Zoning By-law Update Project has started. This project will be a comprehensive update to the Zoning By-law. To date activity has focused on data collection and reviewing areas to address. It is anticipated that 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. To date 110 people have registered. Local vendors including Made With Love and Evelyn's Sausage Kitchen will be providing food. The evening will also feature local wine from Skye Chase Estate Winery and craft beer from Natterjack Brewing Company and Port Stanley Brewing Company.

9. New and Other Business

Steve Bushel advised that representatives from Dutton-Dunwich are interested in learning more about the Southwold Economic Development Committee. The committee suggested coordinating the next meeting to facilitate a discussion with

Councillor Henry Dreyfhout and CAO Tony Houad.

Scott Young updated the committee on a recent event he attended. The event was for a Boralex Energy Storage Project in Hagersville. The energy storage site is approximately 25 acres and uses industrial scale batteries to store energy when demand and cost is low and supply it to the grid when demand and cost is higher. A project such as this may be suitable and beneficial for the Southwold industrial area, especially if the more marginal, less desirable land areas could be utilized. Projects such as this benefit from local and indigenous support.

10. Next Meeting date, time and location

The next meeting was tentatively booked for June 23 or 24, 2026 at 8:00 am depending on availability of representatives from Dutton-Dunwich. Location to be determined based on Dutton-Dunwich availability.

11. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:11 am.

Chairperson, Justin Pennings

Staff Resource, Jeff Carswell