



Minutes

Municipality of Thames Centre

Economic Development Advisory Committee

May 23, 2024, 9:00 A.M.

**Municipal Office - Council Chambers
4305 Hamilton Road, Dorchester, ON**

Members Present: T. Heeman, Chair/Council Representative
A. McClean, Vice-Chair/Community Representative
S. McMillan, Council Representative
J. Baribeau, Community Representative
C. Green, Community Representative
C. Hicks-Webster, Community Representative
J. Iglesias, Community Representative
D. Reiche, Community Representative
G. Thorel, Community Representative

Members Absent: J. Crosby, Community Representative
H. Wilson, Community Representative

Staff Present: D. Barrick, Chief Administrative Officer
S. Henshaw, Recording Secretary
M. Bancroft, Director of Planning and Development Services
S. Zylstra, Communications Coordinator

1. Call To Order

Chair Heeman called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

2. Approve Agenda

Resolution # EDAC-009-24

Moved by: S. McMillan

Seconded by: A. McClean

THAT the May 23, 2024 Regular Meeting Agenda of the Economic Development Advisory Committee **BE APPROVED** as circulated.

Carried.

3. Disclosure Of Pecuniary Interest

No pecuniary interests were disclosed.

4. Approval of Previous Minutes

4.1 February 29, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes

Resolution # EDAC-010-24

Moved by: J. Baribeau

Seconded by: Sharron McMillan

THAT the minutes of the Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting held on February 29, 2024, **BE ADOPTED** as presented.

Carried.

5. Presentations/Delegations

No items.

C. Hicks-Webster arrived at 9:07 a.m.

6. Reports of Staff

6.1 Community Improvement Plan

M. Bancroft, Director of Planning and Development Services, provided an update on the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) and advised that this item is going to Council for consideration of approval on May 27, 2024.

The implementation by-law would go to Council for consideration of approval at the June 10, 2024 meeting.

The Committee inquired on when implementation would start once the CIP is approved.

M. Bancroft advised that once the by-law is passed, there is a 20-day appeal period, which extends the starting time for implementation to July.

Implementation will involve a marketing strategy executed by the Municipality.

There was some discussion regarding the intake of applications taking place in the fall, in advance of the 2025 Budget Deliberations.

Resolution # EDAC-011-24

Moved by: Sharron McMillan

Seconded by: G. Thorel

THAT the verbal update report regarding the Community Improvement Plan **BE RECEIVED.**

Carried.

7. Committee Business

7.1 Roundtable Discussion

The Committee held a roundtable discussion on potential future objectives of the committee.

The Committee discussed providing input on the Trails Master Plan & Recreation Master Plan, as well as what attracts people to Thames Centre, including infrastructure trails, walkability and tourism.

The Committee discussed commercial zoning and potential commercial development, as well as how to look at trails and commercial areas in conjunction with one another (an example being the success of the local business, “The Frozen Cow”).

The Committee discussed focusing on a few issues now, until the committee is more established, as well as using existing resources from Middlesex County.

The Committee discussed communicating grant opportunities to local businesses, as well as identifying and highlighting future gaps for connectivity of Fibre internet.

The Committee discussed assisting with creating a Business Improvement Area (BIA) designation or connecting to the local Chamber of Commerce, whether through a chapter or small chamber.

The Committee discussed engaging with the public to better understand the struggles and desires of local businesses, and how to best support them.

The Committee discussed connecting Thorndale to the Fanshawe trails system, as well as beautification, including the installation of murals, which create attractions for tourism.

The Committee provided direction to staff to invite local resources as delegations to future meetings, being Middlesex County's Economic Development Department and the South Central Ontario Region (SCOR) Economic Development Corporation.

The Committee discussed the limited amount of excess land that the Municipality currently owns.

D. Barrick, Chief Administrative Officer, provided some background regarding Council's already approved 2024-2027 Strategic Plan, including the recommendations under the pillar of Economic Development.

The Committee discussed how its business can align with the Strategic Plan, and how to also work towards understanding the history of previous Economic Development activities within Thames Centre.

The Committee discussed how the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan was implemented and how the public was consulted during that process. Staff advised that copies of the Strategic Plan and public survey results would be sent to the committee.

The Committee discussed other resources available, such as London's Economic Development office and the Boys & Girls Club of London.

The Committee discussed creating a public survey with respect to a needs assessment for local businesses and local youth.

M. Bancroft, Director of Planning and Development Services provided a background on Thames Centre's Official Plan and its implementation, as well as an update on recent development activity within the Municipality.

Upon consensus, the Chair requested that a Special Meeting be held in June, with time and date to be determined, to discuss existing and ongoing priorities within Thames Centre, as well as County activities regarding Economic Development and existing consultation efforts that have been undertaken.

The Committee provided direction to staff to consult with the Ontario Business Improvement Area Association (OBIAA) to investigate chapter requirements.

Member McClean left the meeting at 9:55 a.m.

Resolution # EDAC-012-24

Moved by: J. Baribeau

Seconded by: C. Green

THAT the Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) work together with the Boys & Girls Club of London to develop questions for a youth activities' survey to obtain feedback.

Carried.

8. Correspondence

No items.

9. Unfinished Business

Due to time constraints, Chair Heeman directed S. Henshaw, Recording Secretary, to carry forward Agenda Items 9.a. and 9.b. to the agenda of the next regular scheduled meeting for discussion.

9.1 Thames Centre - Environmental Advisory Committee

Note: This item was originally included in the February 29, 2024 meeting agenda of this committee under "Correspondence", and was referred to this agenda by the committee for further discussion.

Resolution passed by the Environmental Advisory Committee at the regular meeting held on February 5, 2024:

THAT the Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) recommends to Council the creation of a recognition program for land stewardship;

AND THAT two awards be given on an annual basis:

- Green Champion Award to a qualified individual who has demonstrated excellence in advancing a green initiative and is a resident of Thames Centre; and
- Community Champion Award to a qualified applicant who has demonstrated environmental leadership within a community organization within Thames Centre.

THAT a third award category be created to award a business that has initiated ongoing environmental initiatives or projects in Thames Centre;

AND THAT this resolution be forwarded to the Economic Development Advisory Committee.

9.2 Ontario - Consultation : Rural Economic Development Survey

Note: This item was originally included in the February 29, 2024 meeting agenda of this committee under "Correspondence", and was referred to this agenda by the committee for further discussion.

Please visit: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/consultation-rural-economic-development-strategy>

10. New Business

10.1 S. Henshaw - Advancing Committee Business (Verbal)

S. Henshaw, Recording Secretary, provided a reminder to the Committee on the procedural rules of how committees are able to discuss business. Committee business can only be advanced during scheduled meetings (not through emails, etc.), which ensures openness and transparency.

The Committee discussed how to advance committee business, through contacting the Chair to call a special meeting to discuss.

The Committee discussed the process of how committee meeting minutes are formally approved.

11. Closed Session

Resolution # EDAC-013-24

Moved by: D. Reiche

Seconded by: C. Hicks-Webster

THAT the Economic Development Advisory Committee adjourn to Closed Session at 10:27 a.m. pursuant to:

Section 239(2)(b) of the *Municipal Act*, in order to consider "personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees".

Carried.

12. Report Out of Closed

Chair Heeman reported out of Closed Session at 10:29 a.m. that consideration was given to information regarding personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees.

Resolution # EDAC-014-24

Moved by: D. Reiche

Seconded by: J. Baribeau

THAT the Economic Development Advisory Committee direct staff to **ACCEPT** Member Helen Wilson's request for a Leave of Absence for the remainder of the 2024 calendar year.

Carried.

13. Scheduling of Meetings

Chair Heeman noted the Special Meeting to be held in June, with time and date to be determined.

Thursday, September 12, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.

Thursday, December 12, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.

14. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss it was:

Resolution # EDAC-015-24

Moved by: D. Reiche

Seconded by: C. Green

RESOLVED THAT the meeting adjourn at 10:29 a.m.

Carried.