



**Rural Initiatives and Planning Advisory Committee
Minutes**

**April 22, 2025, 12:30 p.m.
Council Chambers
450 Sunset Drive
St. Thomas ON**

Members Present: Warden Grant Jones
Deputy Warden Ed Ketchabaw
Councillor Mark Widner
Councillor Richard Leatham
Donna Lunn, EFA Representative

Staff Present: Blaine Parkin, Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk
Peter Dutchak, Director of Engineering Services
Katherine Thompson, Manager of Administrative
Services/Deputy Clerk
Jenna Fentie, Legislative Services Coordinator
Jessica Silcox, Corporate Communications & Engagement
Coordinator

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m. with the Manager of Administrative Services/Deputy Clerk presiding.

2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

The Manager of Administrative Services/Deputy Clerk opened the floor for nominations for Chair. Councillor Widner nominated Warden Jones, and Warden Jones accepted the nomination. No further nominations for Chair were received. Warden Jones assumed the Chair following the vote, and called for nominations for Vice-Chair. Councillor Leatham nominated Deputy Warden Ketchabaw as Vice-Chair, and Deputy Warden Ketchabaw accepted the nomination.

Resolution Number: RIPA25-01

Moved by: Councillor Widner
Seconded by: Councillor Leatham

RESOLVED THAT Warden Jones be elected as Chair of the Rural Initiatives and Planning Advisory Committee for 2025.

Motion Carried.

Resolution Number: RIPA25-02

Moved by: Councillor Leatham

Seconded by: Councillor Widner

RESOLVED THAT Ed Ketchabaw be elected as Vice-Chair of the Rural Initiatives and Planning Advisory Committee for 2025.

Motion Carried.

3. Approval of the Agenda

Resolution Number: RIPA25-03

Moved by: Deputy Warden Ketchabaw

Seconded by: Donna Lunn

RESOLVED THAT the agenda for the April 22, 2025 Rural Initiatives and Planning Advisory Committee meeting be approved as presented.

Motion Carried.

4. Adoption of Minutes

Resolution Number: RIPA25-04

Moved by: Councillor Leatham

Seconded by: Councillor Widner

RESOLVED THAT the minutes of the April 30, 2024 Rural Initiatives and Planning Advisory Committee meeting be adopted.

Motion Carried.

5. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

None.

6. Delegations

None.

7. Reports/Briefings

7.1 Director of Engineering Services and Corporate Communications and Engagement Coordinator - Request for Improved Signage for Agricultural Equipment and Share the Road Communications Plan

Greg Fentie, President of the Elgin Federation of Agriculture was present.

The Director of Engineering Services presented the report recommending that County staff work with representatives from the Elgin Federation of Agriculture to implement signage at strategic locations where agricultural equipment frequents during busy planting and harvest seasons in order to address the Elgin Federation of Agriculture's request for improved roadway signage for agricultural equipment.

The Corporate Communications and Engagement Coordinator provided a presentation with a suggested communications plan to enhance messaging regarding road safety during harvest and planting season.

Resolution Number: RIPA25-05

Moved by: Councillor Widner

Seconded by: Donna Lunn

RESOLVED THAT staff provide the Committee with proposed designs for signage tabs to be installed on Elgin County's gateway signage that promote agricultural road safety; and

THAT the County of Elgin work with the Elgin Federation of Agriculture and the Ontario Provincial Police to develop criteria that could be used for installing custom roadway warning signage to be discussed at a future meeting of the Rural Initiatives and Planning Advisory Committee; and

THAT staff develop a communication campaign with input from the Elgin OPP to remind drivers to share roadways with agricultural equipment and to broadcast the messaging on municipal websites and social media during planting and harvesting seasons annually; and

THAT these recommendations be sent to County Council for consideration.

Motion Carried.

8. Other Business

Warden Jones commented on the success of the AgScape career exploration event that was hosted last week by the Elgin Federation of Agriculture at the Joe Thornton Arena in St. Thomas. Greg Fentie, President of the Elgin Federation of Agriculture noted that the purpose of the event was to provide students from grades 7-9 the opportunity to learn about the career opportunities available

across various agriculture sectors. Mr. Fentie noted that approximately 800 students attended the event over two days, and thanked the County of Elgin for their financial support for the event.

9. Correspondence

None.

10. Closed Meeting

None.

11. Motion to Rise and Report

None.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Rural Initiatives and Planning Advisory Committee will be held at the call of the Chair.

13. Adjournment

Resolution Number: RIPA25-06

Moved by: Deputy Warden Ketchabaw

Seconded by: Councillor Widner

RESOLVED THAT we do now adjourn at 2:10 p.m. to meet again at the call of the Chair.

Motion Carried.

Blaine Parkin,
Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk.

Warden Grant Jones,
Chair.