

Engage and Inform Committee Meeting Minutes Wednesday, October 8th, 2025

Members Present: Councillor Valerie Durston, Mayor David Mayberry, Councillor Paul Buchner, Deb Riley, Tabitha Kosmal, Catherine White (1:25 p.m.) and Mayor David Mayberry (1:31 p.m.)

Staff Present: Manager of Legislative Services/Clerk Denny Giles

Regrets: Jen Thomson

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:08 p.m. by Chair Valerie Durston, and a quorum was present.

Approval of the Agenda

Resolution No. 1 Moved by Tabitha Kosmal
Seconded by Deb Riley

RESOLVED that the agenda for the October 8th, 2025, Engage & Inform committee meeting be approved.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Approval of the Minutes

Resolution No. 2 Moved by Paul Buchner
Seconded by Tabitha Kosmal

RESOLVED that the regular minutes of the September 3rd, 2025, Engage & Inform committee meeting be approved.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Business Arising from the Minutes

Reuseapaloozaha Event De-Brief (September 27, 2025)

The Committee discussed the recent Reuseapaloozaha Event that took place on September 27th. A suggestion was made to locate the Township information table to a different location when the event is held at Mount Elgin Community Centre again, because

many people didn't realize the Township was there providing information on the upcoming changes to Waste and Recycling.

Hike for Hunger & Health Event – October 18th, 2025 – Lawson Tract

Event planning:

- Refreshments:
 - Apple cider – David confirmed this was taken care of
 - Cookies – Valerie, David and Julie to provide
 - Cups – Julie will prepare mugs for Valerie to pick-up and bring to the event
- Fire – A representative from South-West Oxford Fire and Emergency Service will be there for public education and medical support.
- Partnerships:
 - Ingersoll Nature Club has confirmed their participation in the event
- Suggestion that Cycles of Life be invited since their cause is food insecurity, Denny will send an email inviting them.
- Suggestion that Bryan Smith Reuseapaloozaha be invited as the charitable efforts of those events are to help with food insecurity.
- Youth Activity – Tabitha confirmed preparations are underway to prepare a scavenger hunt (animal tracks, pictures). Prizes will be available for kids and participants will receive a bootle bag.
- Tables – David confirmed he would bring the tables
- Committee agreed to begin setup at 12:00 p.m. on October 18th.

Correspondence

SWOX Talks and Village Voice

The Committee reviewed the monthly newsletters and Village Voice ads for September 2025. No further comments were provided.

Discussion Items

2026 Budget Considerations

Resolution No. 3 Moved by David Mayberry
 Seconded by Deb Riley

RESOLVED that the Township of South-West Oxford request that Council include the following in the draft 2026 Budget for Committee initiatives:

Engage and Inform Committee – Miscellaneous \$7,500

(to purchase materials for welcome packages – recycling boxes and garbage bag tags – and events including the Hike for Hunger & Health, Essay Writing, Christmas Lights Contest and 2026 Community Country Market, and additional funding for community engagement initiatives).

Transfer from Waste Management Reserves \$750
(to cover the reduced price of materials on Earth Day events – green cones, composters, rain barrels)

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Mock Council Meeting - Oxford Reformed Christian School - Monday, October 27th, 2025

Chair Durston advised the Committee of this upcoming event. Councillors George Way and Jim Pickard are volunteering as well as Mayor Mayberry.

Catherine White left the meeting at 1:42 p.m.

Standing Items

The Committee discussed the challenge of recruiting volunteers to sit on committees, adding there is less community engagement until there is something that people are upset about. The Committee could aim to brainstorm ideas of trying to get people involved and engaged with positive things happening in the community.

Committee Member Deb Riley commented that part of problem is the small towns have become bedroom communities as people travel outside for work and have significant commutes, by the time they get home they, with too many other competing priorities, people aren't interested in volunteering.

Mayor Mayberry added the importance of making people feel like they belong in the community.

Committee Member Tabitha Kosmal added that continuing to host events is good for the community to attempt getting more engagement from community members.

Councillor Buchner suggested some Committee funding opportunities to promote block parties where people gather to get to know their neighbours.

The Committee agreed that once the budget is adopted, prepare an informative visual, or explanation for Village Voice to help residents understand where tax dollars are going and the reasons for any increases.

New Business

Adjournment

Resolution No. 4 Moved by David Mayberry
Seconded by Deb Riley

RESOLVED that there being no further business, the Engage and Inform Committee adjourn at 2:43 p.m. to meet again on November 5th, 2025, at 1:00 p.m.

DISPOSITON: Motion Carried