

# Engage and Inform Committee

## Meeting Minutes

### Wednesday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**Members Present:** Councillor Valerie Durston, Mayor David Mayberry, Councillor Paul Buchner, Deb Riley and Tabitha Kosmal

**Staff Present:** Clerk Julie Middleton

**Regrets:** Jen Thomson, Catherine White

## Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chair Valerie Durston, and a quorum was present.

## Approval of the Agenda

Resolution No. 1      Moved by Tabitha Kosmal  
Seconded by Paul Buchner

RESOLVED that the agenda for the June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Engage & Inform committee meeting be approved.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

### Approval of the Minutes

Resolution No. 2      Moved by Deb Riley  
Seconded by David Mayberry

RESOLVED that the regular minutes of the May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Engage & Inform committee meeting be approved.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

## Business Arising from the Minutes

## SWOX Township Fare Event Debrief

The Committee discussed the survey results from the event. The following was noted:

- Very well-organized event.
- Would have liked to see more vendors there.
- Food vendors suggested that they be on the opposite side of the driveway or closer to the hall.
- Consider something to bring vendors closer to the hall for maximum visibility.
- Consider starting the event earlier: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

- The Committee thought that the timing of the event in May was good so as not to interfere with other events taking place locally in June.
- Consider leaving the feedback survey on the table or in the welcome package at the event – would likely get more feedback.
- Would like to see the event take place annually and consider sending out invitations now for the following year (Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2026). Invitation can be sent out now thanking everyone for their attendance and ask if they would be willing to join us again next year.
- Julie will book the Mt. Elgin Community Centre for next year.
- Create an Event on Facebook and send the Event to the vendors and ask them to help promote their participation at the event – plan to get this out two months in advance.
- Consider setting up a kids play zone: connect four, cornhole, Jenga game, hula hoops, ring toss, tic tac toe etc.
- The Committee members were asked to send along names of any other businesses that should be added to our invitation list – we can build on the fact that we had a good show this year and want to grow it.
- Consider ways to word the invitation so that it is clear that it is not only a craft show but also for local businesses to advertise and professional services.

### **Discussion Items**

#### *Event Planning for 2025:*

#### Potential Changes to Earth Day (Container Sales) - Brownsville

Discussion took place regarding changes to recycling pick-up within the County starting in the New Year. More information will be available in September. The Committee's role for next Earth Day may be to help inform of the changes (to come into effect in January, 2026). Connect with County regarding public messaging for the event. Organics collection will begin in January, 2026 – containers should be available in the third quarter of 2025. Tentative Date – Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Will need to determine if the Committee will partner with Reuseapalooza again in 2026.

#### Continuation of SWOX Township Fare Event

Yes, more comments discussed above.

#### Winter Walk for Warmth

Discussion took place regarding changes to the event for next year – Lawson or Trillium Trail. Consider changing the timing of the event to the Spring or Fall. May be opportunity to partner with the food hub in Ingersoll and help promote the initiative. Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025 from 1 p.m.

Consider renaming:

- Walk with Nature, Walk for Others
- Hike for Hunger and Health
- Stepping into Nature, Stepping Up for Others

Food and monetary donations will be accepted for the Food Hub (name to be determined). The committee members will some thought to the name of the event for September, 2025. The Committee doesn't want to create competition with the Coldest Night of the Year and members would like to participate in the Coldest Night of the Year and encourage others to do so as well – for communication messaging re: changes to the event. Will come forward for more discussion in September, 2025.

### SWOX Christmas Light Contest

The Committee will discuss this in more detail in September, 2025. The Committee agreed the format was better this past year with participants sending in photos of their Christmas light display.

Mayor Mayberry asked if the Committee members could have the list of participants a week or two in advance. Contest judging is tentatively scheduled for December 18<sup>th</sup> from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

### Correspondence

#### SWOX Talks and Village Voice

The Committee reviewed the monthly newsletters and Village Voice ads for May, 2025.

The Committee discussed current sentiments around parks and recreation in Mount Elgin, noting growing concern within the community about the new park and its perceived link to increased development. The Township has several options to consider for park amenities, and community input will be essential moving forward.

Deb shared the difficulties she's encountered while planning the new playground in Brownsville, especially due to the high cost of equipment. She emphasized the challenge of planning for future needs when it's hard to predict what the community will want.

There was also conversation about a disconnect between residents' desire for services and their willingness or availability to help deliver them. Many residents commute and are pressed for time, which contributes to lower engagement. This reflects a broader shift in mindset among newer community members.

The Township's model for delivering parks and recreation services remains unique, heavily relying on dedicated volunteers. In rural areas like this, community involvement is critical to creating the kind of place residents want to live in.

Finally, the group reflected on the expectations of new residents—whether they moved to the area for affordability or in search of a quieter, slower-paced lifestyle—and how that shapes their views on services. The possibility of a door-to-door survey of new residents was discussed.

## New Business

## Committee Membership

Councillor Durston will reach out to Jen Thomson to see if she is still interested in sitting on the Committee.

## Adjournment

Resolution No. 3      Moved by Tabitha Kosmal  
Seconded by Davie Mayberry

RESOLVED that there being no further business, the Engage and Inform Committee adjourn at 2:40 p.m. to meet again on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025 at 1:00 p.m.

DISPOSITON: Motion Carried