

County Council Summary

September 28, 2022

Below you will find highlights of the County of Renfrew County Council meeting from September 28, 2022.

Please note that this summary does not constitute the official record of the meeting and approved minutes should be consulted for that purpose.

The [full agenda](#) can be found here.

Meeting [YouTube](#) link

Warden's Address

Key highlights

- Warden Debbie Robinson was pleased to report that the County of Renfrew received the Community Impact Award for the Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (RC VTAC) at the Upper Ottawa Valley Chamber of Commerce 2022 Business Excellence Awards Gala held at Garrison Petawawa. The County was represented by Councillor Michael Donohue, Chair of Health Committee; CAO Craig Kelley; Mathieu Grenier, Deputy Chief Clinical Programs, Emergency Services Department; and David Wybou, Business Development Officer. She noted this year the awards were judged by chamber of commerce executives from across Canada who were not UOV Chamber members, which provided a great opportunity to get not only provincial but national attention for RC VTAC.
- She thanked staff and residents who signed our book of condolences following the passing of Queen Elizabeth II, especially those who shared stories of what the Queen meant to them.
- She noted the past month was spent writing many follow-up letters from delegation meetings at AMO on behalf of the County of Renfrew and the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus. She noted while these meetings with Ministers and Ministry staff are important, the real advocacy work advancing the positions on various issues should be an ongoing venture. Although COVID certainly curtailed activities in the past two years, elected officials are working very hard to make up that ground. With approximately 50 days remaining as Warden, she is determined to use her time as effectively as possible.
- Warden Robinson also acknowledged September 30 as the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and encouraged everyone to reflect on this day which honours the children who never returned home and survivors of residential schools, as well as their families and communities. She also recommended a visit to the Noojimokamig [new-Gee-mah-gah-mig] Garden at the County Administration Building, which is open to all. She sees it as a wonderful place for quiet reflection.

During the month of September, Warden Debbie Robinson attended 19 meetings regarding County business, including, but not limited to:

- On September 7, she attended a special meeting of the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus. Topics of discussion were the Eastern Ontario Regional Housing Networks Project, the Rural Housing Information System Digital Data Tool and of course, the election of CAO Craig Kelley as the Secretary-Treasurer of the EOWC for the remainder of her term as Chair, which continues until sometime in January.
- On September 22, she attended – along with CAO Craig Kelley and Community Services Chair James Brose – a round table meeting with the City of Pembroke as well as external agencies on the issue of homelessness. Also in attendance was Director of Community Services Laura LePine, Ontario Works Manager Andrea Patrick and Manager of Housing and Homelessness Jennifer Dombroskie.

Delegations

- Aimee Bailey, an Algonquin elder, knowledge keeper from the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation and spokesperson for the Circle of Turtle Lodge, appeared virtually and spoke about the significance of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on September 30. She encouraged elected officials and area residents to take time to mark the day in a similar way to Remembrance Day. She called it a day to commemorate and to grieve; for the families to grieve, for the Indigenous people to start to heal about the children that were lost, the potential future opportunities that were lost from those children.

Announcements

- Chief Administrative Officer Craig Kelley provided an end-of-term update on the County of Renfrew [Strategic Plan](#) for the County Council term of 2018-2022.
- Since it was the final County Council meeting prior to the October 24 Municipal Election, Mr. Kelley also recognized the members of County Council who will not be running for a County Council position – Laurentian Hills Mayor Jed Reinwald, Brudenell Lyndoch Mayor Sheldon Keller, Greater Madawaska Mayor Brian Hunt, Madawaska Valley Mayor Kim Love, Whitewater Region Reeve Cathy Regier and Petawawa Mayor Robert Sweet.

Finance & Administration Committee

Presented by: Jennifer Murphy, Chair

- CAO Craig Kelley provided a summary of initiatives he has undertaken since taking over the role on September 1, including preparations for the November 23 inaugural meeting and orientation for the new council in December; co-ordinating agenda items for the September and October meetings of the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus; and working with staff on the November 3 County Day at the Ontario Legislature.
- Media Relations and Social Media Coordinator Tina Peplinskie, who joined the County of Renfrew in mid-April, provided an update on her activities. She has written 15 media releases and reviewed and issued an additional 15 media releases prepared by other departments. She has also been working to create consistent messaging with daily posts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, including posts about upcoming meetings with the YouTube links for meetings.

- KPMG LLP was awarded the Request for Proposal as the external auditor for the County of Renfrew under delegated authority to the Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk. The proposal for auditing services as submitted by KPMG LLP for 2022 is \$77,250 plus HST and represents a \$20,500 increase over the 2021 audit fees. The five-year proposal for 2022 to 2026 totals \$418,150.00 plus HST.
- County Council passed a resolution to set out 2023 Budget Guidelines as follows:
 - annual levy increase of 2.5%
 - restriction in the use of that levy increase to only 2.5% per year for operating expenses
 - utilization of the annual current value assessment (CVA) weighted growth into capital reserves (estimated at 1.48%)
 - new debt for projects in excess of \$3 million
 - annual Provincial funding of at least \$500 thousand
 - annual Federal Gas Tax funding of at least \$2.6 million
 - minimum Capital Reserve balance of \$2 million.
- County Council passed a resolution to approve the Cost-of-Living Allowance (COLA) increase for non-union staff under Employment By-law #1 be set at 2.0% for 2023.
- County Council approved the 2023 budget schedule, with a two-day budget workshop set for February 22 and 23, 2023.
- County Council adopted a by-law to approve the new policy for the Electronic Monitoring of Employees. This policy is necessary for employers with 25 or more employees. Staff has been notified about this policy and informed it is a requirement of the Employment Standards Act.
- County Council adopted a By-Law to enter into a service agreement with Inkblot Technologies Inc. for an Employee and Family Assistance Program for a two-year period from January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2024. The proposal for 2023 and 2024 is valued at \$26,352 plus HST per year (a fixed fee of \$2.44/per employee/per month). This represents a \$54,648 decrease in EFAP costs when compared to the 2022 fixed fee contract with LifeWorks (\$7.50/per employee/per month).

Community Services Committee

Presented by: James Brose, Chair

- The committee received information about the demolition and rebuild of a housing unit at 202 Cecil Street in Pembroke, which is a single family, rent-geared-to-income (RGI) home that is part of the Renfrew County Housing Corporation portfolio. The intention is to rebuild a duplex on the site that would replace the RGI unit and create an additional affordable rental unit. The cost to complete this is funded through Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing – Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) funding.
- The Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System guidelines were updated in August. Some of the new directions were highlighted, including extension to November 1, 2022 for licensees to opt into the program.
- County Council passed a resolution requesting the Minister of the Solicitor General and the Commissioner of the Ontario Provincial Police, as well as the Premier’s Office, expand the Amber Alert system by creating a new alert called the Draven Alert, to protect vulnerable children who have not been abducted but are at high risk of danger, injury or death and alert the public that they are missing.

- County Council considered a resolution to support Private Member's Bill C-233 "Keira's Law" which calls upon the House of Commons to support Member of Parliament Anju Dhillon's Private Member's Bill C-233, that will raise the level of education on domestic violence and coercive control for federally appointed Judges. Keira's Law is named after four-year-old Keira Kagan, who was killed while in the custody of her father in 2020. The matter was deferred to a later meeting until the director can provide additional information.
- County Council passed a resolution requesting the Warden send a letter that outlines the current rates of Ontario Works financial support per residents in Ontario, compared to other rates across Canada and provide comment on how that relates to the current inflation rate and other economic realities in Ontario. This is in response to the announced 5% increase to Ontario Disability Support Program rates and the monthly maximum amount for the Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities Program, however the increase does not apply to the most vulnerable receiving Ontario Works or the Temporary Care Allowance.
- County Council passed a resolution authorizing the County of Renfrew to enter into an agreement with Arnprior Heritage Child Care Centre and Deep Roots Nature & Nursery School for the provision of child-care services.
- County Council passed a resolution authorizing the County of Renfrew to enter into a special needs resourcing agreement with Arnprior Heritage Child Care Centre and Deep Roots Nature & Nursery School.
- County Council passed a resolution to enter into a Wage Enhancement Agreement for the purpose of receiving Wage Enhancement Grant Funding with child-care agencies Centre éducatif Coeur des Jeunes and Deep Roots Nature & Nursery School

Development & Property Committee

Presented by: Robert Sweet, Chair

- The first three Taste of the Valley events were successfully held on August 19 in Barry's Bay, August 26 in Eganville, and September 24 in Renfrew, with approximately 4,000 visitors in attendance. Events were held in Deep River October 1 and Arnprior October 2. The final event of the season will be held in Cobden on October 15.
- Destination Ontario has started providing [Industry Health Check Reports](#) that include up-to-date data about border crossings, visitation, occupancy rates and spending with comparisons to 2019-2021. The purpose of these reports is to track the tourism industry's recovery efforts from the pandemic. While the information is not broken down at the County level, it is broken down by region providing current data for Ontario's Highlands, which includes Renfrew County.
- Over the past year and a half, the Ottawa Valley Tourist Association (OVTA) has provided media support to two Ontario authors who have written various guidebooks about travelling in Ontario.
Laura Byrne Paquet, author and influencer with [OttawaRoadTrips.com](#), has published two books: *Your 100-km Getaway Guide* and *Your Weekend Getaway Guide*. Each book includes chapters about various Ottawa Valley communities within a 100-400 km driving distance from Ottawa, including Arnprior, White Lake and Burnstown, Renfrew, Calabogie and Eganville, Pembroke, Petawawa and Deep River and Barry's Bay.
Author Ron Brown has published the sixth edition of *Backroads of Ontario* and the first edition of *Top 170 Unusual Things To See in Ontario* which features various driving routes and

attractions, including Along the Ottawa River: Arnprior to Pembroke, Tripping the Mighty Madawaska River, The Opeongo Pioneer Road, Newfoundland, Bonnechere Caves and Rockingham Church.

- The OVTA has received additional funding support in the amount of \$58,000 from the Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization for the development of the culinary tourism strategy. The total funding received now covers 100% of the project cost.
- Starter Company Plus spring session had 10 completed participants and 8 participants successfully earn \$4,000 grant awards. Successful grant recipients were Sarah Campanico, Evernew Recovery and Rehabilitation, Petawawa; Rob Campbell, Fire-Que, Renfrew; Carleen Clouthier, Canadian Baby Co., Pembroke; Courtney Enright, Small Town Co., Douglas; Karen Kavanagh, Valley Clean Co., Cleaning Company; Jennifer McGuire, Redneck Recipes, Arnprior; Alexis Sopera, EWE Crafts, Beachburg and Kelly Sperry, Kelly's Salon Services Unbound Inc., Arnprior.
- Enterprise Renfrew County is actively planning Small Business Week events during the week of October 16-20, 2022 in partnership with Renfrew County Community Futures Development Corporation, Upper Ottawa Valley Chamber of Commerce, Local Immigration Partnership and Renfrew and Area Chamber of Commerce, including three virtual sessions and one in-person workshop:
 - Wellness for Entrepreneurs – October 17 (virtual)
 - Purpose Driven Ventures – October 19 (virtual)
 - Leadership for Entrepreneurs and Newcomers – October 20 (virtual)
 - Product Photography Workshop – October 18 (in-person in Pembroke)
- Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) launched the Flood Hazard Identification and Mapping Program to flow federal funding, up to 50% reimbursement for eligible activities, to provinces and territories for eligible flood mapping projects through March 2024. The Province of Ontario has existing light detection and ranging (LIDAR) data for a portion of Renfrew County that can be utilized to create flood hazard identification and mapping. County staff has organized multiple meetings with the local municipalities that are within the LIDAR data area and a number of these municipalities support the County submitting a group application. The Committee directed staff to submit an application to the NRCan Flood Hazard Identification and Mapping Program and if successful, staff will bring back for approval.
- On July 20, 2022, the County hosted its first workshop with interested volunteers from local municipalities to address the changes introduced by Bill 109 with the purpose of a working group to collaboratively identify and implement opportunities to improve/revamp our processes so that we are processing applications in a timely manner, have a consistent approach across the County and avoid the financial implications of the refunding of planning application fees.
- County Council passed a resolution directing staff to initiate the application to consider the draft Official Plan Amendment (OPA) No. 35 in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act.

Health Committee

Presented by: Michael Donohue, Chair

- The committee heard about a number of core initiatives in relation to long-term care
 - Updates to requirements for homes set aside for pandemic-related isolation
 - Ministry of Long-Term Care funding
 - Public health guidance which will apply to all respiratory illnesses

- Vaccine preparedness
- Amendments to Personal Support Worker Permanent Wage Enhancement Funding Policy
- Miramichi Lodge has partnered with Algonquin College, Pembroke Campus to provide educational space on site at the Lodge for a Personal Support Worker program that commenced on September 6, 2022 with nineteen students.
- Nancy Lemire assumed the role of Director of Care at Miramichi Lodge September 5, 2022. She has been in the role in an acting position since June 2021.
- Commander Amber Hultink co-authored an article entitled, “Palliative paramedicine: Comparing clinical practice through guideline quality appraisal and qualitative content analysis, which has been published in the August 8, 2022 issue of Palliative Medicine.
- The Bivalent vaccine was approved for release by RCDHU on September 12. This vaccine is an adapted version of the Moderna Spikevax COVID-19 vaccine. On September 19, it was made available at Assessment Centres for those who are 70 plus, immunocompromised, and Indigenous/Metis groups. There is currently no schedule for release to other cohorts.
- County Council approved Policy G-011 Declarations and Police Record Checks under the Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021 for the Council Members for the Corporation of the County of Renfrew, including the City of Pembroke representatives for the Long-Term Care Homes (Bonnehocher Manor and Miramichi Lodge).
- County Council adopted a By-law authorizing the Warden and Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk to sign the Lease Agreement between the County of Renfrew and Arnprior Regional Health for ongoing tenancy of 275 Ida Street, Arnprior, the current location of the Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (RC VTAC).

Operations Committee

Presented by: Tom Peckett, Chair

- Close Cut Clearing has been completed along County Road 512 (Foymount Road), from Miller Road to County Structure B257 (Harrington Creek Bridge). Unfortunately, despite best efforts, the project has had several schedule setbacks. Due to additional clearing being required, Hydro One and Bell were delayed in commencing layout and design for the utility relocations. County staff continues to work diligently with both utilities to assist in having all poles and lines moved in a timely fashion. County staff had notified the Design Consultant last year that, in order to potentially move forward with a section of road reconstruction in 2022, the project would be at the western most section of road and include the replacement of B257 (Harrington Creek Bridge). Due to staff turnover within the firm, the necessary approvals were not attained for the bridge replacement project but have now been requested so that works may proceed. Staff will continue to endeavour to move the project forward as efficiently as possible. However, due to the delays already incurred, it is not anticipated that road reconstruction will proceed in 2022.
- The RFP for an Engineering Consultant to complete the design for the reconstruction of County Structure C201 (Broomes Creek Culvert) on County Road 7 (Foresters Falls Road) in the Municipal Township of Whitewater Region was awarded under the delegated authority to the Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk. Though not the lowest cost proposed at \$224,784.00, J.L. Richards & Associates’ proposal included much greater detail on the needs of the structure and the dam, as well as the timelines required for the studies prior to replacement of the dam.

- At the June meeting of Operations Committee, two County Structures, B232 (Cochrane Creek Bridge) and C051 (Harris Creek Bridge) were presented which are scheduled for works in 2023 but do not meet criteria of the County’s Policy PW-02 - Bridge Design and Construction. Under the policy, “all bridge structures under the jurisdiction of the County must be situated on a public right of way, which is maintained year round and have a minimum Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) volume of 100 vehicles.” Both of these structures are located on seasonally maintained roads with AADT far below 100. The Committee directed staff to continue with design of County Structures B232 (Cochrane Creek Bridge) and C051 (Harris Creek Bridge), and to review and revise the Bridge Policy to better reflect current practice. Currently there are 17 bridges located on local roads with an AADT less than 100, and 5 of these bridges are located on or at the transition to a seasonally maintained road. There are 38 structure culverts located on local roads with an AADT less than 100, and 4 of these structures are located on or at the transition to a seasonally maintained road.

Additional Information

Craig Kelley, Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk

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