

County Council Summary

August 28, 2024

Below you will find highlights of the County of Renfrew County Council meeting August 28, 2024

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 [August County Council package](#) can be found on our website.

[August meeting](#) YouTube link.

Warden's Address

Key highlights

- Over the summer, Warden Peter Emon had the privilege of attending 52 meetings and events on County business. Reflecting on these experiences, he was reminded of the vibrant and diverse nature of our communities. Each town and village has its own charm, and he is deeply grateful to the volunteers who dedicate their time and energy to organizing such engaging events. He noted Renfrew County truly shines as a fantastic summer destination, and it is all thanks to the collective effort and enthusiasm of our local residents.
- On June 28, he attended the Work to End Intimate Partner Violence event in Barry's Bay. He said we are becoming all too aware of Intimate Partner Violence tragedies in our communities and we need to work together to find an end.
- He celebrated Canada Day in Admaston/Bromley along with acknowledging the milestones of several volunteer firefighters.
- On August 2, he attended the groundbreaking for the 96-bed Four Seasons Lodge in Deep River. He said this is huge news for long-term care in our County, and he was happy to attend alongside County Councillors Grills, Giardini, Serviss and Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke MPP John Yakabuski.
- On August 27, he and the CAO attended Algonquin College's Dean's Luncheon at the Pembroke Campus. The Warden said it was a great opportunity to discuss many community challenges with leaders from across several sectors in Renfrew County. The County looks forward to strengthening its relationship with the College as we move forward on several new initiatives in the future.
- August was spent preparing for delegations at the AMO Conference through AMO, EOWC and the County. He participated in [five delegation meetings](#) with the County and additional [meetings on behalf of the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus](#). He thanked MPP Yakabuski for his engagement at the delegation meetings along with other members of County Council.
- The Warden introduced Deputy Mayor Daina Proctor from the Township of Horton, who has recently taken the County of Renfrew oath of office. She will be stepping in, as the Alternate Member, for Mayor Dave Bennett during his absence.

Delegations

- The Warden presented \$5,000 in proceeds from the 17th annual Warden’s Golf Tournament held in June to Autism Ontario East Region and the Renfrew County Housing and Homelessness Fund – Mesa. Tahseen Ali, Fund and Volunteer Coordinator for Autism Ontario East Region, made a presentation explaining what the organization does and how the funds will be used. Community Services Managers Jennifer Dombroskie, Margo Smith and April Muldoon and Mesa Coordinator Barb Tierney accepted the cheque for the Housing and Homelessness Fund – Mesa.
- Ottawa Valley Tourist Association (OVTA) Board Chair Stefi Van Wijk and Vice-Chair Meghan James [provided an update](#) (pages 37-49) on tourism promotion activities of the destination marketing organization for Renfrew County, the City of Pembroke and Upper Ottawa Valley. It is a not-for-profit membership-based organization with a mandate to promote and grow tourism in the Ottawa Valley.

Announcements

- County Councillor Glenn Doncaster highlighted the accomplishments of Deep River resident Kyle Tremblay, who is currently competing at the Paralympic Games in Paris. He is the only Canadian to qualify for Para-Archery. In the preliminary round on August 29, he set a new personal best. Warden Peter Emon wrote a letter of congratulations and encouragement to Mr. Tremblay.

Health Committee

Presented by: Michael Donohue, Chair

- On May 22, 2024, the County of Renfrew, in collaboration with the Ottawa Valley Ontario Health Team (OVOHT) and the Renfrew County and District Health Unit, hosted an event to officially launch Mesa; highlighting the collaborative approach to compassionate care and building a healthier, more resilient community. The [final Mesa Gathering report](#), combines knowledge collected at the event from more than 180 participants, representing 49 agencies that provide services to community members facing addictions, mental health challenges and homelessness. It summarizes contributions from presentations, lived experience, local and regional expertise, stories, discussions and input guiding nine initial recommendations.
- The Emergency Services Department was successful in an application for an Ontario Community Emergency Preparedness Grant to help communities and organizations purchase critical supplies, equipment, and deliver training and services to improve local emergency preparedness and response. The goal of the grant was to purchase a gravity-feed sandbag processing machine, supplies and equipment to be shared among all local municipalities and First Nations. The machine is gravity fed, has four stations for filling and has a two-yard capacity. Bags can be efficiently filled and tied on the machine's working space. This has a capacity to make 700-900 bags per hour with less effort than filling manually. This machine will be available to all municipalities to sign out and use. A training program will be available, and setup and instructions will be provided on request. A multi-purpose flat deck trailer has been purchased to transport the sandbagger.

The balance of the application focuses on services such as coordination of staff operators/volunteers from the County of Renfrew and participating local municipalities and partners for the delivery of shared public education, training, planning and coordination for flood mitigation, readiness, response, and recovery efforts across the County of Renfrew and its 17 member municipalities and the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation.

- County Council passed a resolution supporting Ontario's Big City Mayors (OBCM) in their campaign to draw attention to the opioid crisis and homeless encampments by requesting that the Province:
 - Appoint a responsible ministry and Minister with the appropriate funding and powers as a single point of contact to address the full spectrum of housing needs as well as mental health, addictions and wrap around supports.
 - Have this Minister strike a task force with broad sector representatives including municipalities, healthcare, first responders, community services, the business community and the tourism industry to develop a Made in Ontario Action Plan.
 - Provide municipalities with the tools and resources to transition those in encampments to more appropriate supports, when deemed necessary.
 - Commit to funding the appropriate services these individuals need, community by community where there are gaps in the system.
 - Invest in 24/7 Community Hubs / Crisis Centres to relieve pressure on emergency centres and first responders.
- County Council supported the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and Ontario Medical Association Joint Resolution Campaign on Physician Shortage and urges Province of Ontario to recognize the physician shortage in the County of Renfrew and Ontario, to fund health care appropriately and ensure every Ontarian has access to physician care.

Community Services Committee

Presented by: Anne Giardini, Chair

- The County of Renfrew's Mesa initiative is a comprehensive plan to better support individuals struggling with mental health, addictions, and homelessness. The goal is to provide wraparound support services to individuals, enhancing their housing stability and overall health. Through the collaborative approach with three Departments within the County of Renfrew – Emergency Services, Community Services, and Property and Development working in partnership with service providers in the community, there has already been a notable increase in coordination of care. The County of Renfrew continues to work collaboratively with the City of Pembroke, Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation and the Province of Ontario to breakdown the silos and leverage the expertise and resources that exist within the community to work towards better outcomes for all residents of the County.
- The County of Renfrew is taking significant steps forward by launching a series of housing initiatives designed to support individuals grappling with mental health challenges, addictions, and homelessness. These programs aim to provide stable, supportive housing solutions and connect residents with vital resources to aid their recovery and well-being. Despite these promising efforts, a warming centre is still required to safeguard those who may not yet be ready to engage with service providers or participate in treatment and other support programs. During the severe winter months, a warming centre would ensure that these vulnerable individuals remain safe and protected from the harsh elements, providing an essential lifeline

until they are prepared to start their journey towards stability. The Committee directed staff to review options for a warming centre for the period of November 2024 – April 2025 and to initiate discussions with the City of Pembroke and interested service providers (including The Grind Pembroke) regarding these options and bring back information in September.

Development & Property Committee

Presented by: James Brose, Chair

- The first event in the 2024 [Taste of the Valley](#) series was held on Saturday, August 10 in Barry's Bay with more than 45 vendors participating. The next event in the series is set for September 7 in Killaloe, followed by September 28 in Petawawa, October 19 in Cobden, and December 14 in Renfrew.
Municipalities interested in hosting a Taste of the Valley event in 2025 or 2026 are invited to submit an [Expression of Interest](#) before 4 p.m. on September 27, 2024. Expressions of Interest must indicate the year (2025 and/or 2026) and up to three preferred dates on a Saturday, between the last weekend in July and September 30, and/or the second Saturday in December, avoiding holiday weekends. Municipalities can submit for both years, however, only one event per municipality per two-year cycle will be awarded.
- Registration launched this month for the [Municipal Agriculture Economic Development and Planning Forum \(MAEDPF\)](#), being held October 22-24, 2024 at the Best Western Pembroke Inn and Conference Centre. The event, co-hosted by the County of Renfrew and Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness (OMAFRA), includes a welcome reception the evening of October 22, bus tour to various agricultural sites on October 23, and conference day on October 24. There are [sponsorship opportunities \(page 159\)](#) available for organizations and municipalities interested in supporting the event.
The MAEDPF is open to municipal and First Nations economic development and planning staff from across rural Ontario who support the agriculture sector, individuals involved with agriculture economic development and policy making and those working in the food, farming and agri-food value chain.
- On August 1, 2024, Business Development Officer David Wybou and County Forester Lacey Rose recorded a webinar to promote Renfrew County's BDO Zone "AA" rating for woody biomass. The webinar aired on August 8 via [Digest TV](#).
- The responses to the recent Expression of Interest for Affordable Housing have provided valuable insights into various approaches for addressing our affordable housing needs. Notably, some proposals were from consultants suggesting feasibility studies. These studies could help us assess the value of existing assets and develop strategies for replacing them with new assets. Overall, the EOIs received were diverse and generated considerable interest, reflecting the productive outcomes of the Housing Summit. A total of 13 proponents submitted 18 proposals, showcasing innovative ideas and potential paths to move forward for addressing our housing needs. Staff will further review, considering the prospective proposals identified in the EOI.
- County Council authorized the Chief Administrative Officer/Deputy Clerk to enter a joint settlement agreement with Tomlinson and the Township of Horton. Tomlinson submitted joint applications to the Township of Horton and the County of Renfrew for planning approvals, a zoning by-law amendment (ZBA) and official plan amendment (OPA) for the development of a pit along Storyland Road.

Finance & Administration Committee

Presented by: Jennifer Murphy, Chair

- County of Renfrew Municipal Day is scheduled for September 26, 2024, at the County Administration Building from 3-5 p.m. and 6-8 p.m. County of Renfrew staff is currently assembling the presentations and materials that will be delivered throughout the day. This is not a public meeting, nor a Council meeting. It is strictly to provide information to all municipal council members and municipal senior staff on the County's activities and core responsibilities, and our partners. Invites have been extended to Renfrew County District Health Unit, Ottawa Valley Ontario Health Team, EOWC, EORN, and EOLC, as well as the City of Pembroke.
- County Council approved amended Corporate Policies – Criminal Record Check for Prospective Employees and Bereavement Leave.

Operations Committee

Presented by: Glenn Doncaster, Chair

- With a focus on public safety a number of municipalities across Ontario have, or are in the process of, implementing Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE). County of Renfrew staff have investigated the possibility of Automated Speed Enforcement on County roads and found that it is feasible in school zones and designated Community Safety Zones. By partnering with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), Local Authority Services (LAS), an ASE could be implemented in as little as 12 months. They offer a turnkey, not-for-profit, ASE program inclusive of cameras, data handling and ticket processing. Following the issuance of the ticket by the processing centre (printed and mailed), the defendant can then pay their fine at the Provincial Offences Court or proceed to dispute the charge. ASE benefits from a lower dispute rate than other Provincial Offence charges. Given the reduced Provincial Offences charges being laid, Courts Administration and Prosecution anticipate they have the capacity to administer this workload.
- County Council passed a resolution requesting a letter under the Warden's signature be sent to the Minister of Transportation in support of the request from the Corporation of the Municipality of West Nipissing in regard to the replacement of the Champlain Bridge, located on Highway 17, west of the Town of Sturgeon Falls. The Municipality of West Nipissing requesting to have the Champlain Bridge assumed by the Province.
- County Council approved a contract for the supply and delivery of one vibratory dual drum roller as submitted by J.R. Brisson Equipment Ltd., Stittsville, Ontario in the amount of \$151,962, plus applicable taxes.

Additional Information

Craig Kelley, Chief Administrative Officer/Deputy Clerk

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