

Council and Committee Monthly Summary

February 2025

Below you will find highlights of the County of Renfrew County Council and Committee meetings held February 12 and February 26, 2025 under the new Committee of the Whole Structure.

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

The full [Council and Committee packages](#) can be found online.

The [February 12, 2025](#) and [February 26, 2025](#) meetings are on YouTube.

Warden's Address

Key highlights

- On February 12, Warden Peter Emon recognized February as Black History Month – a time to honour and celebrate the rich history, achievements, and contributions of Black individuals and communities. He noted the month served as an opportunity for reflection, education, and action, acknowledging the resilience, excellence, and ongoing struggles for equity and justice. He also affirmed Council's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and the ongoing work of addressing systemic barriers.
- The Warden was honoured to attend the King Charles III Coronation Medal Presentation, along with Councillor Debbi Grills, for William Croshaw, former Reeve of Head, Clara and Maria Township. He first served on Township Council in 1996 and was elected Reeve in 1999. Over the years, Mr. Croshaw served as Chair of Health Committee that oversaw Bonnechere Manor, Miramichi Lodge and the Emergency Services Department. Mr. Croshaw was also an active volunteer for Miramichi Lodge's Bingo fundraiser and dedicated to his community.
- He attended and celebrated the twinning of the Great Canadian Kilt Skate in Petawawa to commemorate the special partnership between the County of Renfrew and Renfrewshire, Scotland. He thanked the Town of Petawawa for being an excellent host.
- The Warden and CAO Craig Kelley attended a virtual Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus (EOWC) call. Discussions included actions of Caucus with regards to the United States and tariffs against Canada. The Warden noted the EOWC Chair has met by telephone with the New York Association of Counties. They have established contact and exchanged information with the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative. This association counts Mayors, Chairs, Governors and the Premier as part of their membership. He noted the Caucus has started to engage with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and will provide information to the local Chambers. The thrust of the initiative will be to buy local and buy Canadian.

Delegations

At the February 26 meeting, Council heard from the following interested parties:

- Kristen Niemi, Director of Education, Renfrew County District School Board, and Board Chair Leo Boland provided an update on RCDSB activities. They touched on good news stories through aspects of the board priorities of Inspire – Community Engagement and Partnerships, Achieve – Excellence in Teaching and Learning and Empower – Equity and Well-Being; highlighted partnerships between the RCDSB and County of Renfrew and encouraged elected officials to attend upcoming community consultations for the 2026-30 Strategic Plan. The full presentation can be found online at: <https://bit.ly/RCDSBPresentation>.
- Melissa Marquardt, the County’s Manager of Economic Development, brought County Council up to date on the Think Local Campaign, which has been initiated in response to the threat of U.S. tariffs on Canadian goods. More information can be found online at: <https://investrenfrewcounty.ca/THINKLocal>.

2025 Budget

- During the annual budget workshop on February 6, County Council approved the [2025 County of Renfrew](#) budget with a total of \$236 million in expenditures. The approved County levy for 2025 is increasing by 5.5%.

Development & Property Committee

Presented by: James Brose, Chair

- County Council adopted a by-law implementing a Municipal Consultation Strategy for County of Renfrew Official Plan Amendments. This strategy is intended to provide clarity on the public engagement process for Official Plan amendments.
- County Council accepted the updated Terms of Reference for the Renfrew County Agriculture Economic Development Committee. Following the retirement of three longstanding committee members, the Committee recognized the need to update the Terms of Reference to include an Executive Committee, comprised of a Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer. Priority areas of focus for the Committee in 2025 include the development of a strategic action plan, installing educational signage along the Ottawa Valley Recreational Trail, as well as overhauling the Renfrew County Farm News.
- County Council passed a resolution authorizing the Warden sign the joint letter of support advocating for sustainable funding for the Canadian Association of Nuclear Host Communities (CANHC), of which the County of Renfrew and Town of Deep River are members; and directed the letter be sent to MP Cheryl Gallant, Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke. The Canadian Association of Nuclear Host Communities (CANHC) is a not-for-profit association that represents a broad cross-section of communities with a common interest as a host (or potential host) of nuclear technology in Canada. CANHC supports local governments by acting as a resource for all current, future, and interested nuclear host communities while maintaining the best interests of their communities in an ongoing proactive relationship with the Canadian nuclear industry and regulators.

Corporate Services Committee

Presented by: Jennifer Murphy, Chair

- County Council adopted the revised By-law for the Remuneration of Members of the Council of the County of Renfrew effective January 1, 2025. The Remuneration By-law for members of Council states that “All future council remuneration increases will be consistent with percentage increases as per Employment By-law #1, except where noted”.
- County Council approved several changes to the Non-Union Staff Salary Grid within Employment By-law #1, including the reclassification of one position and the creation of seven new positions.

Community Services Committee

Presented by: Anne Giardini, Chair

- County Council adopted a By-law to enter into a Transfer Payment Agreement with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for the Encampment Response Initiative. On January 27, the County learned the Ministry approved its business case for one-time funding of \$216,000 to support operational expenses related to the Mesa Warming Centre up to March 31, 2025, to help with ending encampments and improving housing outcomes for vulnerable residents.

Operations Committee

Presented by: Glenn Doncaster, Chair

- County Council directed staff to proceed with an application under the Community Sports and Recreation Infrastructure Fund (CSRIF), Stream 2, New Builds and Signature New Builds, for the reconstruction of the trail crossing AT032 (Bisset Creek and Highway 17) located on the Algonquin Trail, in the United Townships of Head, Clara and Maria.
- County Council directed staff to pursue and submit applications for funding under any eligible Provincial and/or Federal programs that are, or may become, available for which development or maintenance of County Recreational Trails and associated bridges, may be eligible.
- County Council recommended that the Public Works and Engineering Department continue with in-house design for projects that fit within the scope of current capacity and knowledge.
- County Council recommended that sharing of winter road maintenance remain as status quo and that staff continue to work with the local municipalities to review current routes for duplication and efficiencies.
- County Council adopted a by-law designating a portion of County Road 63 (Stewartville Road) in front of McNab Public School in the Township of McNab/Braeside, as a Community Safety Zone.
- County Council adopted a by-law designating County Road 51 (Petawawa Boulevard) between civic address 2175 Petawawa Boulevard and 2427 Petawawa Boulevard, a distance of approximately 1.7km, as a Community Safety Zone. This is in the area of Pine View Public School.

Additional Information

Craig Kelley, Chief Administrative Officer/Deputy Clerk
613-735-7288