

County Council Summary

August 31, 2022

Below you will find highlights of the County of Renfrew County Council meeting from August 31, 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

During the months of July and August, Warden Debbie Robinson attended 29 meetings regarding County business, including, but not limited to:

- On July 6 she spoke to members of the Kiwanis Club of Pembroke about the importance of running for office in our upcoming municipal elections.
- On July 15, she presided over a meeting of the EOWC (Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus) in the City of Cornwall. The meeting resulted in a refocusing of our EOWC priorities, placing a greater emphasis on the housing challenges being faced by municipalities in eastern Ontario.
- On July 27, she participated in a meeting of the AMO Health Task Force. The Warden noted her desire to remain on the task force once her term in office is completed, but that decision has not been made by AMO.
- On August 4, she attended the opening of the Water and Dirt Festival at the Pembroke Millennium Boardwalk. She was joined by Mayor James Brose and County staff members Erin Norris and Emily England. It was the first time Petawawa, Pembroke, Laurentian Valley and North Algona Wilberforce partnered for this 10-day festival that included flatwater and whitewater races, BMX and skateboard competitions as well as Kayak Fishing, Trail Running and fundraisers.
- From August 13 -17, she attended the AMO Annual Conference held in Ottawa, along with many members of County Council. The first in-person conference since 2019, it attracted more than 2,000 participants and resulted in more than 700 delegations with various provincial ministers and their staff. The County of Renfrew was fortunate to have two delegation meetings during the conference – one with Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Infrastructure, Amarjot Sandhu to discuss the challenges facing the County of Renfrew, especially in relation to unprecedented growth in some of the local municipalities and the second with Minister of Health Sylvia Jones regarding Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre. Minister Jones was joined by a number of her staff who were extremely attentive during the 37 minutes with the Minister.
- During the AMO Conference, the Warden also had an EOWC meeting as well as a joint caucus meeting with the Western Ontario Wardens. The EOWC was fortunate to secure three

delegation meetings. One with the Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing regarding affordable and attainable housing; a meeting with the Honourable Sylvia Jones, regarding Ontario Health Team Governance and Structure and Human Resource challenges within the Health Care Sector; and a meeting with the Honourable Jill Dunlop, Minister of Colleges and Universities regarding Health Care Human Resources and in particular the lack of access to primary care.

- The Warden also met with Federation of Canadian Municipalities' (FCM) President Taneen Rudyk, who is a Councillor for the Town of Vegreville, Alberta. They discussed the need to continue to improve federal-municipal ties, housing and homelessness, rural community issues and advocacy across Canada.

Announcements

- The Reconciliation Garden at the County Administration Building, known as Noojimokamig (“A Place to Heal”), was official opened. The programme included a Smudging Ceremony by Aimee Bailey of Circle of Turtle Lodge, who consulted on the project. She also provided an interpretation of the garden, including the significance of the seven Grandfather/Grandmother stones. The Garden depicts the teachings of truth, humility, honesty, wisdom, respect, courage and love. It also features traditional plants, herbs, and medicines, including a cedar tree in the centre of the garden, and benches in the shape of a traditional healing wheel. Noojimokamig is meant to be a place of healing, where people could learn together, participate in traditional ceremonies and reflect. The ceremony can be viewed at the beginning of the [County Council meeting](#).
- County Council celebrated the retirement of CAO/Clerk Paul Moreau after nearly 12 years with the County of Renfrew, first as Director of Development and Property and then as Director of Social Services. Family, friends and former colleagues gathered in the council chamber to wish Paul well as he embarks on this next chapter. CAOs of the local municipalities also attended a farewell reception.
- County Council supported the resolution from the Township of Greater Madawaska opposing the proposal of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for the Province of Ontario that changes the composition of municipalities within the Federal electoral district of Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke including the removal of the Township of Greater Madawaska. The Warden was also directed to send a letter to the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission outlining the County’s concerns.

Finance & Administration Committee

Presented by: Jennifer Murphy, Chair

- Treasurer Jeff Foss provided an updated list of 20 fiscal pressures that will have an impact on the ability to deliver a 2023 budget within the 3% levy target established in the Long-Term Financial Plan. Council was asked to review the items and provide staff with budget guidelines at the September Finance and Administration Committee meeting. Staff is seeking direction on a

target municipal levy increase for 2023 and a target 2023 non-union COLA (Cost of Living Allowance) increase.

- County Council passed a resolution to set November 23, 2022 as the date for the inaugural meeting of County Council following the October 24 municipal election.
- County Council approved the County of Renfrew Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for 2022 to 2026.

Community Services Committee

Presented by: James Brose, Chair

- Margo Smith has accepted the position of Manager of Child Care and Early Years. She previously served as supervisor of Ontario Works and has been with the Community Services Department for 24 years.
- County Council approved the elimination of 11 administration positions and addition of 12 revised administration positions (one new position). These changes will transform staffing and services to align with a life stabilization and housing retention focus.
- County Council passed a resolution to accept the Pembroke Multi-Residential concept as presented by +VG Architects for the Integrated Community Housing Complex in Pembroke. Staff was directed to proceed with the Tender Process to build the new housing units, located at Lea Street and Douglas Street in the City of Pembroke, on lands owned by the Renfrew County Housing Corporation, and County Council further approved the reallocation of \$250,000 from the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI) program to be applied towards the new build.
- County Council passed a resolution to amend the County of Renfrew New Licence Home Agreement by-law and enter into an agreement with a service provider in Haley Station.

Development & Property Committee

Presented by: Robert Sweet, Chair

- Jason Davis assumed the role as Director of Development and Property effective September 1. He has 20 years experience with the County, serving most recently as the Manager of Forestry, GIS and Trails.
- November 3, 2022 will be Renfrew County Day at Queen's Park. It was originally planned for 2020 but postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This will provide an opportunity to showcase the economic development strength of Renfrew County. The 2023 Ontario Winter Games in Renfrew County will be highlighted, with members of the Games' organizing committee bringing promotional items that will be presented to the Premier and to the sitting MPPs.
- Taste of the Valley is returning with in-person events. Two events have already taken place (Barry's Bay and Eganville) with four remaining events – Renfrew on September 24, Deep River on October 1, Arnprior on October 2 and the finale in Cobden on October 15.
- Farms Open, a new initiative of the Renfrew County Agricultural Economic Development Committee and supported by the Ottawa Valley Food Co-op and County of Renfrew, is planned for September 18, 2022. This one-day open-house style event intends to showcase the advantages of local food, the art and science of producing it, and develop relationships between consumers and producers.

- Heather Inwood-Montrose, Small Business Advisor, has been actively undertaking outreach and partnership development by recently completing 45 municipal and social service organization visits to promote programs and services. This has resulted in increased referrals and inquiries across the regional footprint. In July, Enterprise Renfrew County (ERC) delivered a virtual workshop series for existing and future entrepreneurs that attracted more than 100 attendees. ERC has partnered with the Town of Petawawa's Container Market to sponsor the Youth Market for youth entrepreneurs and promote the Summer Company program.
- A significant amount of work was undertaken by Forestry staff to assess conditions of several Renfrew County Forest Tracts after the May 21, 2022 windstorm. The most damage was sustained at Centennial Lake Tract, which is now undergoing a salvage harvest operation to make use of downed timber. Following this experience, the Division purchased a small drone, which will be able to help assess future forest health and disturbance conditions in a more efficient way.
- The County hosted its first workshop with interested volunteers from local municipalities to address the changes introduced by Bill 109: More Homes for Everyone Act, 2022. The purpose of the working group is to collaboratively identify and implement opportunities to improve/revamp processes so that the Planning Division is processing applications in a timely manner, have a consistent approach across the County and avoid the financial implications of the fee refunds. The key objectives and deliverables are to have updated Official Plan policies in place by January 1, 2023.
- The County has been working with the Townships of Bonnechere Valley, Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards (KHR), and North Algona Wilberforce (NAW) to create new zoning by-laws for the municipalities as required by the Planning Act. The Township of Bonnechere Valley adopted the by-law and there were no appeals, and therefore the new by-law is now in effect. Draft by-laws and mapping have been prepared and sent to NAW and KHR. Planning staff attended a meeting with KHR to discuss the new by-law with Council and staff. Angie Schultz, GIS Coordinator has created a new interactive zoning map that is/will be available to view on the local Township's websites once the new zoning by-laws have been approved. These [interactive maps](#) allow ratepayers, developers and staff to view the zoning by searching by property and can also view the zoning of a property overlaid on air photography.
- The Ontario Ministry of Transportation has created an online portal that allows applicants/stakeholders to submit applications, general inquiries, and pre-consultation requests. This system centralizes all requests, then re-allocates them to the appropriate staff, which will be a combination of which staff has responsibility over specific portions of provincial highways, workload management, and staff coverages (holidays, assignments, etc.). As MTO navigates staffing changes and working through a backlog of applications, using [Highway Corridor Management System \(HCMS\)](#) to its full capacity will be a benefit to the MTO and all stakeholders, including municipalities, industry/companies, and the general public. While Corridor Management Officers and Planners will still work directly with our municipal counterparts, MTO asks that whenever referring applicants/non-regulatory stakeholders to the MTO to provide the link to the public HCMS portal: (<https://www.hcms.mto.gov.on.ca/>). MTO will be making an effort to reach out to the building/planning staff and road superintendents of each local municipality.
- County Council adopted a by-law to amend Corporate Policies and Procedures for the County of Renfrew and enact Policy GA-13 – Land Use Agreement – County of Renfrew Owned Trails. The policy was written in response to the Algonquin Trail Advisory Committee's direction to prepare a

Policy for the Algonquin Trail to facilitate future requests for use of the Algonquin Trail and K & P Recreational Trail surplus lands. The purpose of this Policy is to provide guidelines for staff when dealing with land use requests from landowners from properties abutting the County trail and if warranted, the processing of applications to recognize existing uses upon trail property owned by the County of Renfrew.

- County Council adopted a By-law to enter into an Esri Regional Government Enterprise Agreement for a three-year period in the amount of \$207,000 plus HST. The costs will be taken from the Municipal Modernization Program (Intake 2 and Intake 3). Staff has consulted with the local municipalities and can advise that all 17 municipalities confirmed they are willing to enter into an agreement to participate in the Small Local Government Enterprise License Agreement under the County of Renfrew's umbrella license.

Health Committee

Presented by: Michael Donohue, Chair

- Staff at Clinical Assessment Centres continue to swab, test, and provide assessments for possible COVID-19 and STREP A cases. Following an assessment, Paramedics consult with RCVTAC to discuss the patient's eligibility for antivirals, antibiotics, or any other possible treatment plans. The Cobden site has opened and is available to the community twice each week, providing service to the surrounding communities. The Laurentian Valley and Arnprior sites run daily and the mobile assessment sites in Horton, Barry's Bay, and Deep River run on a weekly basis.
- The Paramedic Service continues the collaboration with the Renfrew County and District Health Unit to provide walk-in COVID-19 vaccine clinics in Renfrew, Arnprior, Laurentian Valley, Chalk River, and Barry's Bay.
- The Paramedic Service provided a rapid response team of Community Paramedics to Valley Manor in Barry's Bay to assist with a significant COVID-19 outbreak.
- Work continues at Miramichi Lodge and Bonnechere Manor to ensure compliance in a number of areas – Emergency Planning, Menu Planning, Continuous Quality Improvement Initiative, Police Record Checks, Public Websites, Care Conferences and Annual Physical Exams – in response to the Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021 and Ontario Regulation 246/22, which came into force in April.
- County Council passed a resolution to continue the Long-Term Care Homes Vaccination Policy until October 19, 2022 because of the increasing prevalence of COVID -19 and the risk posed to vulnerable populations.
- County Council passed a resolution directing the Warden send a letter to the Provincial and Federal Ministers of Health regarding the physician shortage in rural Ontario. The focus of the letter is a request for the federal and provincial governments to work with municipalities to develop creating solutions to ensure all Canadians have timely access to the care they need. The resolution requests the creation of a province-wide task force dedicated to identifying innovative health-care initiatives already operating as well as develop new ways of ensuring access to primary care that is not solely dependent on family physicians.
- County Council adopted a by-law approving the new collective agreement between the Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 4698, the County of Renfrew Paramedic Service and the County of Renfrew for the term January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2023.

Operations Committee

Presented by: Tom Peckett, Chair

- County Council reviewed a letter from President Keith Pugh of the American Public Works Association (APWA), thanking the County of Renfrew for its support of the organization through the participation of Lee Perkins, Director of Public Works and Engineering. Perkins has been appointed as chair of the APWA's Snow Conference Review Committee.
- County Council received an update on an initiation by the Carson Trout Lepine and Greenan Lakes Association to remove phragmite along County Road 62 (Combermere Road) just south of Barry's Bay. Staff from the Southwest Patrol supplied traffic control signage, safety vests and will remove and properly dispose of the bagged phragmites once the specified solarization has been achieved.
- County Council approved the purchase of a new service truck from Fraser Durham Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram Inc., Oshawa, Ontario, in the amount of \$\$145,065.
- County Council passed a resolution to endorse in principle the restructuring plan in the Public Works and Engineering Department which includes the addition of a Civil Designer, an Engineering Technician and an Operations Coordinator. Business cases will be brought to the 2023 budget deliberations for consideration.

Ontario Winter Games Committee

Presented by: Peter Emon, Chair

- A reminder the Ontario Winter Games are coming to Renfrew County February 2-5 and February 9-12, 2023. The Games will attract approximately 2,000 athletes, competing in more than 20 sports taking place at venues throughout Renfrew County, in addition to 1,000 coaches, officials and managers who will support the Games. Games merchandise is now available for purchase online at renfrewcounty2023.ca.



Renfrew County
2023

Ontario
Winter Games

Jeux d'hiver de
l'Ontario

Additional Information

Craig Kelley, Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk

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