

Council and Committee Monthly Summary

October 2025

Below you will find highlights of the County of Renfrew County Council and Committee meetings held October 8 and October 22, 2025.

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 [October 8, 2025](#) and [October 22, 2025](#) meetings are on YouTube.

Warden's Address

Key highlights

- Warden Peter Emon celebrated the success of the Renfrew County Municipal Day Event on September 24. He noted it was wonderful to see so many residents, staff, and service partners come together. He thanked everyone who attended, and also staff, who organized a fun and educational experience for children and adults alike.
- The Warden congratulated the recipients of the Upper Ottawa Valley Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards, including former member of provincial parliament, John Yakabuski, for receiving the lifetime achievement award.
- He highlighted a visit from Klaus Meyer, a paramedic from Germany who spent several days with the County of Renfrew Paramedic Service. He noted Klaus joined the team for ride-alongs, toured our paramedic bases, and had the opportunity to witness the Sierra Team in action. The visit was not only a chance to display the unique challenges and innovative approaches we employ in delivering paramedic care across our county, it was also a meaningful opportunity for research collaboration and partnership building, Warden Emon added.
- Warden Emon celebrated recent graduates of the Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) 2025 Rural Change Makers - a group of 22 young leaders from across rural and northern Ontario. Among them are several from Renfrew County, including Abbie Lakhan (Petawawa), Christina Raddatz (Douglas), Rachel Richer (Laurentian Hills), and Sarah Richer (Eganville). These individuals are making meaningful contributions to their communities, and their involvement in this program speaks volumes about the future of rural leadership.
- He highlighted the ongoing advocacy efforts through the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus (EOWC) as [Parliament Hill Advocacy Day](#) was held on October 21 with meetings with federal officials and Members of Parliament to discuss urgent priorities impacting the 103 small urban and rural eastern Ontario communities that make up the EOWC.

Delegations

- At the October 8 session of County Council Nick Gooderham, General Manager at Ottawa Valley Forest, provided an [update](#) on Ottawa Valley Forest Inc. (OVFI). Established in 1998, OVFI is a forest management company owned by a consortium of local wood processors and logging contractors. It holds the Sustainable Forest Licence for the Ottawa Valley Forest, which spans approximately 322,000 hectares—40% of Renfrew County—with 234,000 hectares actively managed. Key responsibilities include the development and implementation of Forest Management Plans, annual scheduling and reporting of forestry operations, forest renewal activities including tree planting and tending, and compliance inspections and data collection. In terms of the local economic impact, OVFI and its shareholders employ over 500 people directly, 75 jobs with seasonal renewal contracts and a 2025 Deloitte survey estimates 800 forest sector jobs in Renfrew County.
- Dean Felhaber, President, Ben Hokum and Son Limited, accompanied by John Yakabuski, presented the company's proposal for a biomass cogeneration facility in North Algona Wilberforce Township. The plant will generate carbon-neutral electricity using 150,000 green metric tonnes per year of mill residues and low-grade pulpwood, with 12.5 megawatts of electrical energy exported to Ontario's grid and 1 megawatt of electrical energy used on-site. Key highlights of the proposed project include a \$65 million investment with a projected \$53 million/year economic impact, 30 to 40 full-time rural jobs, offsets of 32,000 tonnes of CO₂ annually, utilization of underused biomass, enhanced forest health and reducing fire risk and alignment with Ontario's goals for clean energy, rural development, and sustainable forestry.

Announcements

- There is still time to submit nominations for the 2025 Warden's Community Service Awards. These awards recognize individuals, non-profit organizations, and for-profit businesses that demonstrate exceptional dedication to our community through volunteerism, leadership, and support. The deadline to [submit nominations](#) is October 31 and residents are encouraged to consider nominating someone who makes a difference in Renfrew County. Let's celebrate those who go above and beyond to make our communities stronger.

Operations Committee

Presented by: Glenn Doncaster, Chair

- County Council approved that the General Repairs budget under the 2025 Capital Program be used to increase the budget for Campbell Drive Culvert (County Structure C134) and award contracts as follows:
 - Manufacture, Supply, and Delivery of Mechanically Stabilized Earth (MSE) wall as a Change Order to the existing Contract for the same materials at Robertson Line Twin Pipes (County Structure C136), to Maccaferri Canada Limited, Cambridge, Ontario, in the amount of \$58,504.76, plus applicable taxes;
 - Aggregate Supply and/or Supply and Delivery to Miller Aggregates Limited, McNab/Braeside, Ontario, at an upset contract limit cost of \$82,212.50, plus applicable taxes;
 - Hot Mix Asphalt Supply and Placement to McCrea Excavating Ltd., Pembroke, Ontario, in the amount of \$22,400, plus applicable taxes;

- Supply, Delivery and Installation of Steel Beam Guiderail and End Treatments to Peninsula Construction Inc., Fonthill, Ontario, in the amount of \$86,020, plus applicable taxes.
- Committee received information about Winter Maintenance Agreements for 2025-2026 as follows:
 - Township of Carlow/Mayo – for services of 1.2 km on County Road 517 (Dafoe Road) - complete.
 - Pat Stewart Trucking Inc. for services of 2.49 km on County Road 635 (Swisha Road) - in progress.
 - Algonquin of Pikwakanagan First Nation for services of County Road 70 (Kokomis Inamo) - complete.
 - Town of Arnprior for services for services of County Road 1 (Madawaska Boulevard/Elgin Street) and County Road 2 (Daniel Street North and South/ White Lake Road) - in progress.
 - Town of Deep River for services on County Road 72 (Ridge Road) and County Road 73 (Deep River Road) - complete.
 - Town of Renfrew for services on County Road 20 (Bruce Street) and County Road 52 (Raglan Street South) - complete.
- The approved contracts/tenders were as follows:
 - For paving the salt dome entrance as submitted by McCrea Excavating Ltd., Pembroke, Ontario in the amount of \$105,055.00,
 - For roof repairs at the Calabogie Patrol Yard as submitted by Blackladder Construction, Pembroke, Ontario in the amount of \$2,890.00, excluding taxes.
 - For the repair of overhead doors at the White Water Road Patrol as submitted by Draper Doors, Harrowsmith, Ontario, in the amount of \$17,888.50.
- Staff is preparing for the upcoming winter season, with the Public Works and Engineering Department targeting 50% operational capacity by November 1, 2025, and full readiness by November 15. Mechanics are ahead of schedule with truck preparations. Night patrols are set to begin November 16, 2025, and continue through April 2, 2026.

Community Services Committee

Presented by: Anne Giardini, Chair

- The Ontario Municipal Social Services Association prepared a [discussion paper](#) regarding EarlyON Child and Family Centres, which provide free, high-quality programs for families with children aged six and under across Ontario. It highlights the importance of EarlyON as a low-barrier, provincially funded program that supports child development, parenting, and community connections. The paper outlines survey findings from municipal service system managers and offers recommendations to the Ministry of Education to address funding gaps, workforce support, curriculum updates, equitable access in rural areas, and IT system standardization. The document emphasizes the critical role EarlyON plays in family well-being and community support while advocating for sustainable investments to meet growing demand.
- As information, the Committee received the [Renfrew County and District Drug Strategy Progress Report](#), outlining progress made during the first three quarters of 2025. The report highlights significant reductions in the number of suspected drug toxicity deaths and opioid-related emergency department visits compared to the same period in the previous two years.

Development & Property Committee

Presented by: Rob Weir, Vice-Chair

- County Council approved a resolution to establish a HYPE Reserve Account to support its regional incentive program – Helping Your Place Excel (HYPE); with funds budgeted for the 2025 HYPE Program being transferred to the HYPE Reserve. Due to the nature of some approved applications under the HYPE Program extending from one fiscal year to the next, staff recommended the creation of a HYPE Reserve to allow for better management of the funds for approved projects.
- County Council endorsed the Township of Whitewater Region's efforts to assess and unlock the economic potential of the former Timminco Mine Site, including evaluating mineral viability, as well as the feasibility of severing uncommitted lands for industrial development. The Township of Whitewater Region has identified the former Timminco Mine Site, located near Haley Station, as a strategic opportunity for future industrial and mineral development. The site contains a high-purity dolomitic marble (magnesium) deposit and is adjacent to existing industrial infrastructure, including Magellan Aerospace, natural gas, high-voltage electricity, and the planned Highway 17 twinning.
- Women in Wood, co-founded by County Forester Lacey Rose, was the recipient of the 2025 Forest Products Association of Canada [Partnership Award](#). Women in Wood is celebrating its 10th year as a network for women who work in, with, and for the woods, with a current membership of more than 3,700 all over the world.
- [Registration is now open](#) for the annual Ottawa Valley tourism conference taking place on November 3, 2025, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Ottawa River Barn, Foresters Falls, Township of Whitewater Region. Under the theme – *Valley Voices: Shaping Tourism Together* – presenters will include the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario (TIAO), Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization (OHTO) and Ottawa Valley Tourist Association (OVTA) staff, who will share information about the recently launched provincial tourism strategy, as well as local and regional tourism marketing opportunities.

Corporate Services Committee

Presented by: Jennifer Murphy, Chair

- The County of Renfrew has been selected to host a youth intern through Environmental Leadership Canada's Municipal Climate Internship (MCI) program for the 2025–2026 cohort. This nationally recognized initiative supports municipalities in advancing climate action while providing youth (ages 18–30) with professional experience in environmental leadership and local governance. The internship will run full-time from January to July 2026, offering a six-month placement.
Participation in the MCI program will enhance staff capacity to advance climate and environmental initiatives. It also provides an opportunity to support and mentor a future environmental leader, contributing to workforce development and youth engagement in the region. Furthermore, the County's involvement in this nationally recognized program reinforces its commitment to climate action and sustainability, increasing its visibility as a proactive and environmentally conscious municipality. The [application deadline](#) is November 3, 2025.

- County Council approved the updated Asset Management Plan and Long-Term Financial Plan. With this resolution, pre-budget approval was granted to proceed with the 2026 projects and purchases contained within the updated Asset Management Plan and Long-Term Financial Plan, totalling \$61,923,112. Similar to 2025, this pre-budget approval allows for early tendering for projects for potential better pricing; earlier start for those projects that have long order times; clarity for staff to allow for workload planning; multi-year carryover projects to proceed uninterrupted by the budget cycle; and for the project list to be circulated to the local municipalities for consideration under the Infrastructure Expansion Policy.
- County Council approved an amended Staff Training and Development Policy. This policy update is part of the Senior Leadership Team's ongoing review of policies, with the goal of making meaningful, positive changes for staff. Aligned with our Why Statement, each policy reflects our commitment to cultivating a compassionate, collaborative, creative, and inclusive environment. The policy is available from Human Resources.
- County Council approved changes to the Non-Union Staff Salary Grid within Employment By-law #1 to increase the student (under 18) wage from \$16.20 to \$16.60 per hour; and increase the student (18 and over) wage from \$17.20 to \$17.60 per hour.
- County Council approved a resolution in support of the [Association of Municipalities of Ontario \(AMO\)'s advocacy](#) around automated speed enforcement (ASE) cameras within Community Safety Zones. The County of Renfrew has paused its plan to bring Automated Speed Enforcement to school zones in Petawawa, Renfrew and Laurentian Valley.

Health Committee

Presented by: Michael Donohue, Chair

- Steve Osipenko, Commander with the County of Renfrew Paramedic Service, was awarded the Governor General's Emergency Medical Services Exemplary Service Medal in recognition of outstanding career accomplishments in the field of emergency medical services. This prestigious national honour is awarded to only 180 recipients across Ontario each year. This recognition reflects Steve's long-standing dedication and professionalism and serves as a testament to the high standard of service provided by our paramedic team.
- County Council directed the Warden to send a detailed letter advocating to the Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, the Honourable Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and copied to Billy Denault, MPP, Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke regarding predictable and sustained funding for paramedic services and related programs, including the Dedicated Offload Nurses Program; advance notification of funding changes, including reductions or terminations, to allow for responsible planning and service continuity and transparent communication mechanisms between the Province and municipalities regarding health-related funding decisions.
The Warden will also request a formal meeting with the Ministry of Health during the County's Queen's Park Day in November to discuss long-term funding strategies for paramedic services, share local impacts and challenges related to offload delays and staffing pressures and reinforce the County's commitment to collaborative solutions that align with provincial health priorities.

Additional Information

Craig Kelley, Chief Administrative Officer/Deputy Clerk

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