

**THE CORPORATION OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF BONNECHERE VALLEY
MINUTES
COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 16, 2025 1:30 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, MUNICIPAL BUILDING AND VIA ZOOM
CONFERENCING**

PRESENT Mayor Jennifer Murphy
Deputy Mayor John Epps
Councillor Merv Buckwald
Councillor Tracey Sanderson
CAO/Clerk Annette Gilchrist
Treasurer/Deputy CAO Sandra Barr

REGRETS None

GALLERY None

CALL TO ORDER COMMITTEE MEETING
Chair, John Epps called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA
MOVED BY Tracey Sanderson
That: The agenda be accepted, as presented with the addition of Correspondence B.6 Eganville & District Seniors Request for Letter of Support. Carried

PECUNIARY INTEREST OR GENERAL NATURE THEREOF

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
MOVED BY Jennifer Murphy
That: The Minutes of the Committee Meeting on September 2, 2025 be accepted as presented. Carried

DELEGATIONS
Driftscape Demo Presentation by Reid Gibson-Wray. Annual cost of software is 2983 plus HST = \$3370.79. Committee agreed to move forward. Staff will look into a partnership on this project with our neighbors North Algona Wilberforce and seek out community sponsorship.

REPORTS
Recreation & Culture
Kevin McGrath, Manager of Recreation and Culture, was present and gave his report.
a) All the Summer students have finished for the season;
b) The ice plant was started on Monday September 8th and staff started making ice. The first day of ice rentals will be Saturday, September 20th, with a full day of Minor Hockey scheduled;
c) The first public skate will be Friday, October 10th, which is a PA Day;
d) The first senior/parent and tot skate will be Monday, October 20th;
e) We've started reaching out to local businesses to sponsor Public Skating.
f) September 30th the arena will be closed for National Day for Truth and Reconciliation;
g) Eagles Nest – there have been a few rentals in the last couple of weeks;
h) Our municipal Christmas party is scheduled for Saturday, December 6th. Staff will be obtaining catering tenders for the dinner;
i) The raft was taken out at Rotary Beach on September 10th;

- j) Ottawa Tourism is having a photo shoot on the Bonnechere River with our Paddleboards to promote tourism in small towns;
- k) Tourist Information Centre is closed for the season;
- l) We have a group coming to Gerald Tracey Park to talk about Climate Action on September 20th;
- m) The Splash Pad will be shut down by the end of September;
- n) All pins have been removed from the ball fields;
- o) Horticulture Society had a plant sale September 13th;
- p) On September 21st, staff are having a Ribbon cutting Ceremony for the 80th Anniversary of the Eganville Legion Branch 353;
- q) Staff finished the Lest We Forget crosswalk in the entrance driveway of Legion Park;
- r) The Play structure for Legion Field is ready for the second week of October;
- s) The planter boxes on the Bridge will be taken down by the end of the month;
- t) The Farmer's Markets continue into October. The Museum presented a special Night Market on Saturday, September 13th from 5-9 pm; and
- u) Grass maintenance will be slowing down due to staff working on getting the arena ready for the season.

Recreation Report Received.

Finance

Sandra Barr, Treasurer/Deputy CAO, was present and gave her report.

- a) The September 10, 2025 Provisional Budget Report and the Balance Sheet as of August 31, 2025 were provided to Committee;
- b) Completed the 2024 Statistic Canada Surveys on Core Infrastructure;
- c) Update on I-City Online Citizen Portal - On August 20 & 21, and again on September 9, staff participated in setup and training sessions for our new I-City Online Citizen Portal. After more than three years of waiting, our software provider has now completed the setup, installation, and staff training. We plan to roll out the portal to water and sewer customers with the next billing cycle on October 1, and to property tax accounts in March 2026. Once enrolled, residents will have the option to: Receive their bills via email as a PDF or receive a notification that their bill is available for download in the portal. If a resident selects either of these digital options, a paper bill will no longer be printed or mailed. Through the portal, users will also be able to view their account balances and payment history, and download copies of their bills at any time;
- d) On August 25th Sandra attended a meeting with fellow Treasurer's at the County of Renfrew to discuss tax policy and other financial issues;
- e) Calculated and billed out two property tax Supplemental tax billing batches, totaling \$22,875.87;
- f) A loan application has been completed with Infrastructure Ontario to borrow \$200,000 for the purchase of the 2024 Freightliner rear load garbage and recycling truck. Included in the meeting package for tonight is a by-law to authorize this loan;
- g) On September 12th the township received its fifth transfer payment of the Community Infrastructure Fund in the amount of \$81,735.

Finance Report Received

Administration

Annette Gilchrist, CAO/Clerk, was present and gave her report.

- a) Annette attended 5 AMO sessions at the Conference plus regular plenary and networking programs as well as 3 delegations with Ministries of Finance, Environment and Energy. The five sessions attended included: AMO's Civility and Anti-Harassment Strategy, Activating provincial support for emergency preparedness and response, Ministry of Emergency Preparedness and Response, Women's Networking Breakfast, Partnerships to Develop the Municipal Staff Talent Pipeline, MPAC's Vision for Data-Driven Municipal Success. I brought back some resources for Emergency Management and Youth learning opportunities in the water and wastewater sector as well as free training opportunities offered on planning to municipal staff. Annette will

continue to follow up on both the Environment and Energy Delegations and she expects to received recommendations on solutions from them both by the end of the year;

- b) Annette will have an updated report in October on the Official Plan Amendment for Lake Clear following the Public Meeting August 21st;
- c) Filling Vacant Council Seats - As per Section 259 of the Municipal Act, the first step when resignations have been submitted to the Clerk is to have Council accept the resignations and declare the seat(s) vacant as per section 262(1). This was completed on September 2, 2025. After a seat has been declared vacant, council has the prerogative to appoint individuals to fill the vacant seats or to hold a by-election. This is solely a decision of Council. Section 263(5) establishes the rules that apply to filling vacancies.

1. Within 60 days after the day a declaration of vacancy is made with respect to the vacancy under section 262, the municipality shall,

- a. appoint a person to fill the vacancy or
- b. pass a by-law requiring a by-election to be held to fill the vacancy

Section 264 of the Municipal Act, 2001, provides that a person appointed or elected to fill a vacancy shall hold the office for the remainder of the term (2025/2026) of the person he or she replaced.

Direction is required to approve the method the Council will proceed with to fill the Councillor vacancy.

The intent of the legislation is to have the Council vacancy filled, and Council has a statutory duty to ensure this occurs.

To be appointed to fill the vacancy, a person must be:

- a Canadian citizen;
- at least 18 years of age;
- a resident of the Township of Bonnechere Valley, or be the owner or tenant of land, or the spouse of the owner or tenant of land;
- not prohibited from voting in a municipal election by any legislation; and,
- not prohibited from holding the office under the Act or any other legislation.

For Council's consideration please see the following options:

Option 1 has an associated cost of approximately \$25,000

Option 2 no additional costs

Option 3 would have minimal advertising costs

Option 4 no additional costs

Option #1 Pass a By-Law requiring a By-Election to be held to fill the Council Vacancy Council has sixty (60) days to pass a by-law authorizing a by-election, that deadline is October 31, 2025. The Municipal Elections Act ("MEA") states that if such a by-law is passed, the nomination day would occur a maximum of sixty (60) days from the passing of the by-law with voting day occurring forty-five (45) days after nomination day. The MEA states that a by-election must be held "as far as possible" in the same manner as the regular election. (mail in and in person voting 2022) A by-election may be the most democratic option to fill the vacancy, but will also be the most costly. Costs include postal fees for Canada Post to mail the Voter Information Letters and Election workers, and associated training requirements. Though the by-election would be for a single vacant council seat, the cost would be very similar to the previous election as the same steps are required, including mailing the voter information letters and updating the Voter's List.

Option #2 Appointment of a Candidate from the 2022 Municipal Election.

If the council chooses to pursue this option, the Clerk would confirm the individual's qualifications and interest in accepting the appointment. If successful, the newly appointed Council Member would take the Declaration of Office at the first meeting following the appointment. This would follow the same process as Direct Appointments but only names from the list of Candidates from the 2022 Municipal Election would be accepted.

Option #3 Appointment by Call for Applications. Council would approve an appointment process that would permit eligible persons to apply for an appointment to the council. This open call for applications would be advertised and could include an interview/presentation to the council in an open Council Meeting. This format is based on best practices in other Ontario Municipalities. Attached is a draft procedure for Councils consideration.

Option #4 Direct Appointment by Council-no application. Council members would bring names forward for the vacancy and approve an appointment process where the council appoints an eligible individual without an application process and without referencing the most recent election results. Council was provided with a draft procedure for their consideration.

- d) Also provided to Committee was a Report on the Township's Strategic Actions;
- e) Swim Program - The Swim Program is completed and had good attendance. The Adults/Seniors Aquafit was not well attended. We hope to continue the Swim Program in 2026. Aquafit may be something to revisit next year;
- f) Camp Smitty - Day Camp is completed. I have reached out to the camp to see how the summer went on their end. I hope to continue this partnership;
- g) Youth Summit - The planning committee met on September 9th. Registration is now open.;
- h) Music in the Park is now over for the season. The last evening was a musical tribute in honour of Guy Jamieson and Steve Agnew by friends and family, which was very well attended;
- i) The proposed date for the Christmas Tree Lighting is November 28th, 2025. *Administrative Report Received.*

Water & Sewer Department

Daryl Verch, Water & Sewer Manager, was not present. Report submitted.

- a) The Eganville Drinking Water System continues to operate in full compliance with all requirements;
 - b) Staff continuing to flush water hydrants;
 - c) Exercising main valves and doing directional flushing;
 - d) Repaired and extended two service boxes;
 - e) Staff repairing fire hydrants;
 - f) The Eganville Wastewater System continues to operate in full compliance with all requirements as set out in the Certificate of Approval;
 - g) Staff continuing to check the sanitary manholes.
- Water & Sewer Report Received.*

CORRESPONDENCE

(A) Correspondence "A"

1. EORN Cell Gap Update Renfrew County August 2025
2. County Council Summary August 2025
3. FCM Communique
4. AMO Policy Update Sept 3
5. AMO Policy Update Sept 11
6. AMO Watchfile Sept 11
7. AMO Watchfile Sept 4
8. County Construction Update September 2025

9. FCM Communique Sept 9
10. Thank you from BUPL and EAHS
11. ROMA Communications

(B) Correspondence "B"

1. Enbridge Consultation and Draft Letter
2. Renfrew County DSB Outdoor Learning Project
3. Advocacy for Provincial Scrap Metal Legislation and Bail System Reform, 2025
4. Ontario Volunteer Service Awards
5. McCauley Mountain Road Request
6. Eganville & District Seniors Request for Letter of Support

(C) Correspondence "C"

- B.2 Committee agreed to a letter of support for the Renfrew County DSB Outdoor Learning Project and a support resolution be brought to tonight's Council meeting.
- B.4 Committee agreed to advertise on social media for recommendation for Ontario Volunteer Service Awards and then staff will bring to a closed meeting of committee to chose a nominee.
- B.6 Committee agreed to provide Eganville and District Seniors a letter of support to apply for a New Horizons grant for a "Cooking Connections" program. This will be cooking programs we take into the community, closer to seniors, where specific dietary and cultural meals are made together. We will be addressing social inclusion and isolation, transportation barriers and educational components to cooking to help with food stability in NAW, BV and Whitewater Townships

NEW/UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- (1)** Deputy Mayor Epps AMO Report – John attended the AMO meeting on behalf of Bonnechere Valley on August 18 and 19, 2025. As before he commuted into Ottawa both days instead of booking a room at the hotel.

We were welcomed by Ottawa Mayor Mark Sutcliffe and Pikwakanagan Band Councillor Merv Sarazin. The keynote speaker, Andrew Coyne, continued his assessment of Canadian politics from where he had left off last year. A good summary of how the actions of the United States administration is shaping our future. Other speeches were made by AMO President Robin Jones and Lt. Governor Edith Dumont.

John attended the Women's Leadership Forum. Featured were three outstanding leaders: the president of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, an Ontario Senator, and a chair of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

Just before lunch they were addressed by Premier Doug Ford. He gave a brief summary of the government's progress and plans for the future.

My rural caucus working lunch was with the Independent Electricity System Operators team. They presented a concise summary of Ontario's power needs into the next decade and some of the strategies planned to cope with a 75% increase in power demand.

Jennifer McKelvey, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, spoke on the plans to build much needed new housing in Ontario.

Along with Annette Gilchrist, John attended the panel on developing the municipal staff talent pipeline. It is very challenging to find, recruit, and retain good staff for all municipal positions. We heard possible solutions from the director of Waterloo's Centre for Work Integrated Learning, the trainer at Walkerton Clean Water Centre, and the chair of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute.

John enjoyed the working lunch on partnering with the OMA to strengthen local health access. Some of the problems are unchanged from last year. John was able

Jennifer will remind everyone that to kick off Legion Week, we will be meeting at Legion Field on Sunday, September 21st at 1:00 p.m. to formally unveil the new sign, sidewalk and beautiful Canadian Flag on the side of the Youth Building. The official launch to Legion Week is following this event at the Legion at 2:00 pm.

On September 24th at 3:00 p.m., the County of Renfrew is holding its second annual Renfrew County Day. This afternoon will include a Paramedic Sierra Team display, Paint a Plow, a job fair and more.

ESTABLISH NEXT MEETING DATE

The next Meeting will be held on Tuesday October 7, 2025.

MEDIA SESSION

CLOSED SESSION

MOVED BY Merv Buckwald

THAT: Committee proceed in Closed Session in accordance with the Municipal Act 2001, section 239.2 to deal with the matters as indicated below:

- b) Personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal employees
- (f) Advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose
- (k) a position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations

Carried

MOVED BY Merv Buckwald

THAT: Council moves out of Closed Session at 4:56 p.m. to rise and report that Council met to receive information and give staff direction regarding nomination for Ontario senior citizen achievement award, Benoit Road and approved minutes from September 2, 2025.

Carried

CONCLUSION

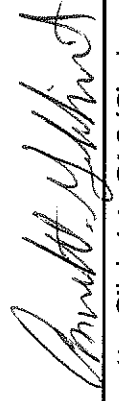
MOVED BY Jennifer Murphy

THAT: the meeting adjourns at 4:56 p.m.

Carried



John Epps/Chair



Annette Gilchrist, CAO/Clerk