



Minutes

In-Person Meeting, Town Hall, Petawawa ON February 4, 2025

Present:

Richard McNish, Chair
Murray Rutz, Councillor
Cindy Sell
Val Hyska
Jillian McLellan
Christina Schramm
Jamie Moody

Regrets:

Adam Driscoll, Councillor
Gerald Hoffman
Zoe Nolan
William Grandy

Also Present:

Christine Mitchell, Manager of Economic Development
Rudy Kadlec, Economic Development Coordinator
Chris Mantha, Director of Public Works
Trevor Woodtke, Asset/Energy Management Coordinator

Welcome and Election of Chair

Christine Mitchell called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

1. Election of the PBAN Chair

A review of the election process was provided. Christine opened the nomination process for the committee to nominate a Chair.

Moved by Cindy Sell
Seconded by Jill McLellan

That, Richard McNish be nominated for the position of Chair.

Richard accepted the nomination.

No other nominations were received. A vote was held. Richard McNish was selected as Chair.

Carried

Richard assumed control of the meeting.

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Jamie Moody

Seconded by Cindy Sell

That the agenda for the February 4, 2025, meeting of PBAN be approved.

Carried

Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

Presentation

Chris Mantha, Director of Public Works, and Trevor Woodke, Asset/Energy Management Coordinator shared the upcoming opportunities and collaborations for businesses to coincide with the 2026 AORS event. The event will be hosted in the first week of June 2026 at the Civic Centre. Based on past participation, the event draws 2000 + visitors and 300 vendors and will be an opportunity for business engagement and economic spin-off. Renfrew County has one of the strongest Road Supervisor networks with 80 members. Proceeds from the event support the AORS with a portion going to local charities.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Murray Rutz

Seconded by Val Hyska

That the minutes of December 3, 2024, be approved.

Carried

New Business

1. PBAN Draft Terms of Reference

A review of the PBAN Terms of Reference occurred. There was discussion around code-of-conduct training for members of PBAN. It was noted that the training is only available in-person by the Town's integrity commissioner. PBAN members also discussed absenteeism and adding the phrase "if a member is inactive, they will be contacted by the Chair or staff and a suitable arrangement will be sought out on a case-by-case basis." Proposed adjustments to the terms of reference will go to Council for endorsement.

Christine reported that Gerald Hoffman, representing the industrial/commercial sector, has resigned from PBAN due to conflicting schedules regarding new employment. Recruitment of a new member will begin after the terms of reference are endorsed by Council.

2. 2024 Year in Review and Program Report Review

Christine summarized the following documents:

- i. **2024 Business Openings, Closures & Relocations**
This document highlighted the change in the commercial businesses within the community over 2024.
- ii. **Commercial Land Summary Synopsis**
This document showed the limited availability of rentable ready commercial space. The revitalization of the Victoria Mall property with 67,000 sq ft of retail space is a prime asset, if properly positioned, to support more commerce offerings in the community. The document summarizes properties that owners are willing to develop in a build-to-suit scenario, commercial properties for sale and vacant commercial land publicly listed for sale.
- iii. **Petawawa FICE Summary**
This document summarized the Community exchange program that PBAN members and municipal staff undertook in 2024 with partner community North Grenville. The document highlights the short and long-term actions that will make our community more navigable and a welcoming place to visit. Members of PBAN asked about hours of operation and the staffing plans for the new Comfort Station. It was noted the Comfort Station, under the management of the Culture, Recreation, and Tourism department, will be staffed by the Tourism Ambassador in the summer of 2025.
- iv. **Community Improvement Plan (CIP) Summary**
Adopted by By-law in October 2021 the CIP program is a grant program that Petawawa landowners or commercial retail property lessees can request for projects that improve the external elements of their properties. Between 2021 and 2024 Council supported 22 projects and awarded \$132,556.97 in eligible grants for projects that totaled \$759,631.01 in value.
- v. **Container Market Summary**
It all began as a boutique business market concept presented to Council in 2019 and approved in 2020. It was halted due to the global pandemic. Seeing a need in the community for a modified version of the project, a pilot project was endorsed at the Kin Hut location. The five 10x10 units were purchased thanks to sponsorships equalling, \$17,250, from community businesses. The project's success in 2021 led to a Canada Community Revitalization Grant of \$250,000 which urbanized the front parking lot, adding lighting, cull-tec-system, pathways, paving, curbing, and new amenities to the site. In 2024 the project received \$10,000 in funding from the My Main Street program which allowed two 7x7 units and a gazebo to be brought to the site.

The project has netted \$277,250 in grant/sponsorship dollars, with a municipal spend of \$124,285 in expenses associated with the cull-tech-system which was an ineligible expense. From 2021 – 2024 the rentals have realized \$58,560 in revenue and an estimated \$81,000 in visitor spending (this is based on \$1,000 spending per week over 81 operational weeks). This reflects \$541,095 in direct economic impact. A total of 455 rental opportunities supporting 140 unique vendors with six (6) seasonal jobs created. The site has hosted numerous events and supported businesses in direct sales, direct marketing, branding, and a business incubation space.

3. 2025 PBAN Workplan

A review of the vision and the objectives of the 2018 Economic Action Plan occurred and a discussion of PBAN support for the 2025 projects was noted:

- Business Retention & Expansion (BR+E) project
- Update Economic Development Action Strategy
- Container Market operations
- Business to Business networking event series (Business Connects)
- Petawawa Ramble
- Veteran Business Vendor program
- Petawawa Letter Sign Project

Ongoing/Returning Business

1. Business Grants/Programs and Resources

E-News posts are circulated to registered businesses and links are provided on the municipal website here: [Business E-News - The Town of Petawawa](#)

These e-news posts have been circulated since the last meeting.

- [Business News December Edition](#) (November 28, 2024)
- [Business News December Edition 2](#) (December 16, 2024)
- [Business News January Edition 1](#) (January 7, 2025)
- [Business News January Edition 2](#) (January 21, 2025)
- [Business News February Edition 1](#) (February 3, 2025)

The following programs, grants, and resources are available to businesses and affiliate organizations.

- i. [Enabling Opportunity: Ontario's Rural Economic Development Strategy | ontario.ca](#)
Announced at ROMA the Ontario Rural Strategy has three (3) pillars: Safe Strong Rural Communities, Business Development and Attraction and Growing the Rural Workforce. Anticipate ROD Rural Ontario Development Program (formerly RED) to come out with these priorities.

- ii. [Capital Grant | Ontario Trillium Foundation](#): Applications open February 5th and close March 5, 2025, for projects that update buildings, enhance spaces, and purchase fixed and non-fixed equipment so people and communities can thrive.

2. BR&E

Christine provided an update noting the successful engagement of Phoenix Van Hoff as the BR&E Coordinator. Phoenix is currently conducting the surveys with the businesses. So far ten interviews have been completed with three more booked. The goal is to reach 40+ interviews. Project details can be found here: [County of Renfrew: Petawawa Business Retention and Expansion \(BR+E\) Program](#)

Information (Business Openings/Milestones/Celebrations)

- Dog House Brewing Company relocated to 3067 Unit #1 Petawawa Blvd. They are open for retail services at present.
- Battery Pro is intending to relocate to 3454 Petawawa Blvd.
- The Burritos unit at 10 Canadian Forces Drive is seemingly advancing, they received approval for the new required HVAC system.
- Flightline Darts is opening at 3460 Unit 2 Petawawa Blvd.
- Great Ape Empire is preparing the space at 3532 Petawawa Blvd.

Events

1. Upcoming Events, Workshops and Engagements

- Follow the E-Business News pages for upcoming workshops [Business E-News - The Town of Petawawa](#)
- Follow the Town of Petawawa Business Events page [Business - The Town of Petawawa](#)
- Follow the Petawawa Business Facebook Page www.facebook.com/petawawabusinesses

2. Outdoor Holiday Tailgate Market

An estimated 3,000+ people attended the 2024 Holiday Tailgate Market. Through generous donations, \$1387 was raised which were given to the Valour Foundation and Watch My Six Service Dogs.

Round Table

Jamie reported a decrease in corporate/government room stays in 2024 that impacted the overall year operations. Snowmobile leisure stay bookings started late in January 2025. The implementation of the new Municipal Accommodation Tax is integrated without incident. As part of ongoing franchisee upgrades, two electric vehicle charging stations will be installed at

the hotel in 2025. Jamie noted that projected communications to open an extended stay accommodation in the west end of Pembroke would create a challenge for the existing hotels in the area. Jamie noted that he has been supporting Calabogie Peaks Resort with operation support.

Cindy reported that the new part-owner at RE/MAX has been active with sponsorship opportunities and will be updating local billboards. She noted the ongoing discussion regarding the amalgamation of the Renfrew County Real Estate Board with the Kingston, Cornwall, and Ottawa areas. In January 2025, there were four residential sales in Petawawa through MLS with the average sale price at \$441,000. In 2024, the average residential sale price in Petawawa was \$511,916.

Val reported that she is stepping back from her Board participation in the Upper Ottawa Valley Chamber of Commerce as she needs to focus on her business. Val did express the importance of having a Petawawa presence on the UOVCC and encouraged anyone interested to submit their interest to become a board member. Speaking on tariffs, it was mentioned the Independent Grocers staff are answering questions about made-in-Canada products. There are no expected interruptions to inventory due to potential tariffs, at this point. The grocery store did not see an increase in business during the "tax holiday". Val also spoke about the volunteer support needed by the Petawawa Pantry Food Bank for drivers to collect food donations.

Murray reported that Council engagements have been keeping him busy. He reported that Festival Hall has a new manager, Dorian Pierce of Kitchissippi Productions. Murray reported that Jennifer Layman has not renewed a marketing contract with the Pembroke & Area Airport and that the OVWRC is transitioning with the change to the collection of recyclable materials which is now provincially contracted to Circular Materials. Murray noted that residents should get out and enjoy the Cabin Fever events.

Christina mentioned they've been busy supporting families with work-related absences and as posting season approaches. For her personal business development, Christina has started to take Olympic lifting coaching courses.

Jillian reported that 80 percent of the pet food at their business, is Canadian manufactured and owned. In response to the potential of tariffs, they have heard from the American products producers, that they are initially planning to absorb extra costs. Jill is a board member of the OVTA and they are planning an in-person meeting in Petawawa at the new Dog House Brewery location in March. This will be an opportunity to showcase this tourism business and what has been happening in the community. Jill has already been planning for the Hell or High-Water event in May. Jill did report that The Extreme Slalom Event as part of Water & Dirt 2025 has already been cancelled due to a conflicting event series at Wilderness Tours. It just does not make sense to have both events as the majority of participants would have to select to participate in one event or the other, creating a divide and reducing both events' effectiveness in marketing the region.

Richard reported seeing light at the end of the tunnel on the expansion project. While there have been many obstacles, they now have a retail service open. They estimate, based on

queries, that they lost 15 bookings due to opening delays. The largest obstacle was the delays from Hydro One and its processes. There was no step-by-step checklist that could be followed to expedite the process. Richard noted that the federal regulation to adjust the licencing was more difficult than the provincial one.

Adjournment

Moved by Murry Rutz

Seconded by Cindy Sell

The meeting adjourned to the call of the Chair at 11:42 am.

The next meeting will be on March 4th, 2025