



**Town of Petawawa  
Council-In-Committee Meeting Minutes  
February 23, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.  
Council Chambers**

**Present:**

Mayor Gary Serviss  
Deputy Mayor Theresa Sabourin  
Councillor James Carmody  
Councillor Lisa Coutu  
Councillor Adam Driscoll  
Councillor Murray Rutz

**Regrets:**

Councillor Karen Donovan

**Also Present:**

Colin Howard, CAO  
Dawn Recoskie, Director of Legislative Services/Clerk  
Kate Bennett, Legislative Services Coordinator  
Meaghan O'Quinn, Director of Finance/Treasurer  
Jamie Knott, Acting Deputy Fire Chief  
Colin Coyle, Manager of Recreation, Culture and Tourism  
Jodie Gervais, Human Resources Coordinator  
Larry TerMarsch  
Patricia Seawright  
Berylyne Mills  
Kevin Holm

The Council-In-Committee meeting was opened by the Mayor at 6:30 p.m.

**Land Acknowledgement**

The land acknowledgement including a Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action was read.

## **Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest**

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

## **Public Meeting**

### 1. 2026 Municipal Budget

The Public Meeting was opened by the Mayor at 6:32 p.m. Mayor Serviss indicated the meeting was called to receive public input on the draft 2026 Municipal Budget for the Town of Petawawa. Dawn Recoskie, Director of Legislative Services/Clerk, advised that notice was provided as required under By-law 235/03 to advertise Council's intention to adopt the 2026 Municipal Budget on March 2, 2026 and to also provide notice of the Public Meeting scheduled for February 23, 2026.

Mayor Serviss addressed Council, staff, and residents as follows:

*"Thank you for joining us tonight for the 2026 Municipal Budget for the Town of Petawawa. It's always encouraging to see residents engaged in the future of our community. Your input, your questions, and your expectations help shape the decisions we make around this Council table.*

*On behalf of Council, I want to begin with a clear message: our 2026 budget is built on two guiding principles – fiscal responsibility and the continued delivery of a high level of services and modern infrastructure that our residents expect and deserve.*

*We understand that households are feeling financial pressures. Rising costs for groceries, fuel, housing, and utilities are real. As a municipality, we are not immune to those same pressures. Inflation continues to impact construction materials, fleet equipment, fuel, insurance, wages and contracted services. Infrastructure costs have risen. Regulatory requirements have expanded. OPP costs have risen by 11% for 2026 which has resulted in a 1.25% levy increase before budget deliberations began. OMPF and OCIF government funding was reduced for another consecutive year. Yet our responsibility remains the same: to manage public dollars wisely, transparently, and prudently. Every dollar collected through property taxes must deliver value. That is not just an expectation – it is an obligation.*

*The 2026 budget reflects careful planning and disciplined decision-making. Council and staff have reviewed every department, every capital project, and every operational line to ensure we are prioritizing essential services while planning responsibly for the future.*

*In this budget, we are focused on maintaining the core services that define quality of life in Petawawa:*

- *Reliable water and wastewater systems*
- *Safe and well-maintained roads and infrastructure*

- *Effective fire protection and emergency services*
- *Strong recreation programming and well-kept parks and facilities*
- *Responsible growth management and planning*

*These are not luxuries. They are foundational services that support families, businesses, and community well-being. At the same time, we are looking ahead. Petawawa continues to grow. Growth brings opportunity – new families, new housing, new businesses – but it also brings pressure on infrastructure and services. Our budget includes strategic investments that support sustainable growth while protecting the character and livability of our community.*

*A key focus this year is long-term infrastructure planning. Across Ontario, municipalities face an infrastructure gap. Roads, bridges, water systems, and facilities must be maintained and eventually replaced. Deferring maintenance may seem like savings in the short term, but it ultimately costs more. This budget continues our commitment to asset management – investing today to prevent larger costs tomorrow.*

*Fiscal responsibility does not mean standing still. It means making smart, measured investments at the right time. We have worked to balance operational needs with capital priorities. We have pursued efficiencies wherever possible. We continue to seek provincial and federal funding opportunities to offset the burden on local taxpayers. We also remain committed to maintaining healthy reserve funds to protect the Town against unexpected challenges.*

*Transparency is another pillar of responsible governance. Tonight’s meeting is part of that commitment. We want residents to understand where their tax dollars go and why certain investments are necessary. A municipal budget is more than numbers on a page. It is a reflection of community values. It represents choices – about safety, about recreation, about infrastructure, about growth, and about resilience.*

*Council has approached this budget with seriousness and care. We asked difficult questions. We weighed competing priorities. And throughout the process, we kept one goal in mind: protecting the long-term financial health of Petawawa while sustaining the services that make our town a great place to live.*

*Together, we can ensure that Petawawa remains financially sound, well-served, and prepared for the future.*

*Thank you for your time, your involvement, and your continued commitment to our community. I now invite our Treasurer to provide an overview of the key highlights of the 2026 Municipal Budget.”*

Meaghan O’Quinn, Director of Finance/Treasurer, provided an overview of the draft 2026 Municipal Budget for Council and members of the public, noting the proposed

2026 tax increase of 6.52% will reflect an annual increase of \$168.00 over 2025 on a residential home with an assessed value of \$500,000.

Dawn Recoskie reported no written comments were received from the public regarding the proposed 2026 budget.

Mayor Serviss asked to hear comments from members of the public. No one came forward to speak for or against the proposed 2026 budget.

Mayor Serviss asked to hear comments or questions from members of Council. There were no comments from Council. Mayor Serviss indicated that Council thoroughly reviewed the proposed 2026 budget at its budget workshop.

Council adopted the following motion:

**Moved by Murray Rutz**

**Seconded by Theresa Sabourin**

That the proposed 2026 Operating and Capital Budget be presented to Council for approval at the March 2, 2026 Regular Meeting of Council; and

That the 2026 Water and Wastewater Budgets be presented at the same meeting; and

That staff is directed to present the 2026 Tax Rate By-law to Council for approval at a Regular Meeting of Council in the second quarter of 2026.

**Carried**

Mayor Serviss declared the Public Meeting closed at 6:56 p.m.

## **Fire and Emergency Services**

### 1. Monthly Activity Report

Jamie Knott, Acting Deputy Fire Chief, provided an overview of the report. ADFC Knott reported 14 incidents for the month of January, including four (4) carbon monoxide alarms, four (4) smoke alarms, two (2) motor vehicle collisions, and one (1) oven fire. ADFC Knott highlighted the monthly platoon training which focused on ice water rescue.

**Moved by Lisa Coutu**

**Seconded by James Carmody**

That the Fire and Emergency Services monthly activity report be accepted as information.

**Carried**

## **Recreation, Culture and Tourism**

### 1. Monthly Activity Report

Colin Coyle, Manager of Recreation, Culture and Tourism, provided an overview of the various services, programs and rental activities realized over the month of January. Mr. Coyle highlighted staff training, grant applications, and the Town's liquor license renewal.

**Moved by Murray Rutz**

**Seconded by Adam Driscoll**

That the Recreation, Culture and Tourism monthly activity report be accepted as information.

**Carried**

### 2. RCT-01-2026 – Municipal Accommodation Tax

Colin Coyle provided an overview of the report. Mr. Coyle indicated the following initiatives are being suggested for Council approval for 2026 for the Town's portion of the MAT tax: expansion of Canada Day programming; expansion of Civic Centre Days activities; partial support of wayfinding signage; redesign and printing of Town maps; expansion of Petawawa Point rental fleet; Petawawa Point artistic signage (replacement); and expansion of Trail of Lights; with any remaining funds to be used for marketing and promotional tourism initiatives to further promote Petawawa as a destination location.

**Moved by Lisa Coutu**

**Seconded by Adam Driscoll**

That Council endorses and adopts the recommendations of staff and of the Ottawa Valley Tourist Association contained in Staff Report RCT-01-2026 with respect to the allocation of revenues generated through the Municipal Accommodation tax, directing that the funds collected in 2025 be utilized to support recommended tourism and recreation-related initiatives for the 2026 calendar/budget year.

**Carried**

### 3. RCT-02-2026 – Petawawa Point Revitalization 2026

Colin Coyle provided a presentation to Council regarding the proposed Petawawa Point revitalization.

**Moved by Lisa Coutu**

**Seconded by Murray Rutz**

That Council accepts the Petawawa Point Revitalization presentation as information and authorizes the proposed budget of \$92,000.00 for the 2026 portion of the revitalization workplan.

**Carried**

4. RCT-03-2026 – Reciprocal Use of Facilities Agreement with the Renfrew County District School Board

Colin Coyle presented the draft by-law and updated reciprocal agreement with the Renfrew County District School Board pertaining to the shared use of facilities.

**Moved by Theresa Sabourin**

**Seconded by Adam Driscoll**

That Council approves the reciprocal use of facilities agreement with the Renfrew County District School Board as presented, and that Council formally adopts the agreement by by-law at a future meeting of Council.

**Carried**

5. RCT-04-2026 – Separated Dog Park

Colin Coyle presented options to Council to develop an additional half-acre separated dog park adjacent to the existing dog park to accommodate small dogs at an estimated cost of \$20,000 to \$30,000.

**Moved by James Carmody**

**Seconded by Adam Driscoll**

That Council declines the creation of a half-acre separated dog park for small dogs.

**Carried**

**Legislative Services**

1. Monthly Activity Report

Dawn Recoskie, Director of Legislative Services/Clerk, provided an overview of the report. Ms. Recoskie highlighted various calls for service for animal control and by-law enforcement over the month of January and reported on false alarms realized over the month. Colin Howard, CAO, reported on recruitment activities, and highlighted statistics regarding commissioner of oaths, community flag requests, and certificate requests. Mr. Howard further reported the Town's new website was launched on January 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Moved by Murray Rutz**

**Seconded by James Carmody**

That the Legislative Services monthly activity report be accepted as information.

**Carried**

2. LEG-06-2026 – Election-Related Resources Policy

Dawn Recoskie provided an overview of the report.

**Moved by Theresa Sabourin**

**Seconded by James Carmody**

That Council approves the Election-Related Resources Policy for the 2026 Municipal Election as presented, and that Council formally adopts the policy by by-law at the next meeting of Council.

**Carried**

### **General Matters**

1. Growing Renfrew County Catholic District School Board Schoolyard Canopies with Re-Nature program – Correspondence from Jamie Thomson, Director of Development, Re-Nature Foundation

Mayor Gary Serviss presented the item of correspondence and explained this is a similar request that Council considered and endorsed at its August 19, 2025 Council-In-Committee meeting for the Renfrew County District School Board. The Re-Nature Foundation is requesting support from Council in applying for the Growing Canada's Community Canopies (GCCC) program through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), on behalf of the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board, by submitting a letter of intent and adopting a resolution of support to submit with their grant application. There is no cost to the municipality.

**Moved by Lisa Coutu**

**Seconded by Murray Rutz**

Whereas, Council of the Corporation of the Town of Petawawa has the following interest: Improving our schoolyards by creating outdoor learning spaces and tree canopy environments.

And Whereas, the Re-Nature Foundation is undertaking the "Growing Renfrew County Catholic District School Board Schoolyard Canopies with Re-Nature" program, which will be building outdoor learning spaces and planting trees at the elementary schools in the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board.

Now Therefore Be it Resolved, that Council of the Corporation of the Town of Petawawa acknowledges and supports the funding opportunity from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' "Growing Canada's Community Canopies" initiative for the "Growing Renfrew County Catholic District School Board Schoolyard Canopies with Re-Nature" program, which will be building learning spaces and planting trees at the elementary schools in the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board, in partnership with the Town of Petawawa.

Council of the Corporation of the Town of Petawawa also recognizes that the lifetime contribution from the "Growing Canada's Community Canopies" initiative will not exceed \$10 million for tree planting within our municipality, inclusive of a maximum contribution of \$1 million for infrastructure activity costs, and that if approved this project will be counted towards that limit.

**Carried**

### **Closed Meeting**

**Moved by Theresa Sabourin**

**Seconded by Lisa Coutu**

That the meeting be closed pursuant to Section 239 (2) (d) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, S.O. 2001, c.25, as amended, to discuss labour relations or employee negotiations with the United Food and Commercial Workers Canada, Local 175 to provide for a collective agreement with the Town of Petawawa Volunteer Firefighters.

**Carried**

Council went into closed session at 8:15 p.m.

Council reconvened to open session at 8:34 p.m.

### **Business Arising from Closed Session**

A closed meeting was held. The matter discussed concerned collective agreement deliberations between the Town and United Food and Commercial Workers Canada, Local 175. There is nothing further to report.

### **Adjournment**

**Moved by Adam Driscoll**

**Seconded by James Carmody**

That the meeting be adjourned.

**Carried**

The meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Signature of the Clerk      (Original Signed)