



TOWNSHIP OF RIDEAU LAKES
Economic Development Committee
Minutes

Monday, July 7, 2025, 10:00 a.m.
Municipal Office, Chantry

Members Present: Ken Davies, Dudley Hill, Councillor Deborah Anne Hutchings, Councillor Marcia Maxwell, Councillor Sue Dunfield, Councillor Ron Pollard

Members Absent: Mayor Arie Hoogenboom, Councillor Linda Carr, Councillor Paula Banks

Staff Present: Shellee Fournier, CAO, Marie White, Economic Development and Cultural Heritage Coordinator

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Maxwell called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Regrets received from Mayor Arie Hoogenboom, Councillor Linda Carr and Councillor Paula Banks.

ADDITIONS/AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

The Chair called for any additions or amendments to the agenda. None were heard.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

RECOMMENDATION # ECD 2025-31

Moved by Ken Davies
Seconded by Councillor Ron Pollard

Be it resolved that the Economic Development Committee adopt the Agenda as presented.

Carried

DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

Chair Maxwell asked if anyone had a pecuniary interest and none were declared.

BUSINESS ARISING

Publications - Update re Early History Statement: Marie White (For Information)

Committee received a copy of the report entitled, "Review of Draft Text for Township of Rideau Lakes" received from the Algonquins of Ontario dated April 2025 for information purposes and for potential inclusion in the 2026 Rideau Lakes Heritage Road Map.

Members of the committee noted a couple of corrections to the report:

- In the introductory paragraph of Section A, the former townships are listed. Please note that the community of Newboro was missed, and "Bastard and South Burgess" is referred to as two separate townships. At the time of the 1998 amalgamation the townships were, and should read as follows: "Bastard and South Burgess, Newboro (later absorbed into North Crosby), North Crosby, South Crosby and South Elmsley."
- In the third paragraph of section A:
 - please replace "towns and villages" with "villages and hamlets."
 - In the same paragraph, Westport is listed in error. Please note that the community of Westport is politically separated and should be omitted.
 - some Hamlets are listed, but not all. There are eight hamlets; Chantry, Crosby, Forfar, Harlem. Philipsville, Jones Falls. Morton and Rideau Ferry.
 - Historic Settlements such as California are not mentioned.

Points of clarification:

- Frontenac Arch refers to the exposed strip of Precambrian rock, while the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve refers to the geologically sensitive area defined for conservation efforts.
- Flora and Fauna refers to plants and animals.

The Early History Statement as presented does not mention or address the presence of other groups that have resided in Rideau Lakes, such as the Iroquoian speaking peoples. Members of the committee shared that Bedford Mills, just south of Rideau Lakes at Massasauga Road, is noted as an area of indigenous significance.

MINUTES

Minutes of the June 2, 2025 Economic Development Committee Meeting were distributed to the Committee. Chair Maxwell asked for any errors, omissions or questions.

RECOMMENDATION # ECD 2025-32

Moved by Councillor Hutchings
Seconded by Dudley Hill

Be it resolved that this Committee approve the Economic Development Committee Meeting minutes of June 2, 2025 as presented.

Carried

ACTION LISTING: Marie White, Economic Development and Cultural Heritage Coordinator

Staff provided an update on Economic Development Action items.

CORRESPONDENCE FOR ACTION/INFORMATION

EDCO Eastern Region Professional Development Event - October 2, 2025

A draft Agenda is posted and event registration open.

Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop - Tourism Assessment Report - Township of Rideau Lakes

Staff provided an overview of the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Project:

- The assessment report details the section of the loop within Rideau Lakes. Trail expert Jane McCulloch of Terminus Consulting travelled the Cataraqui Trail from Lombardy to Chaffeys Lock in May 2024.
- A partnership MOU that outlines deliverables was signed prior to the Township's investment of \$3,000 in 2025.
- The assessment is geared to the partnership's future ability to draw international visitors. In addition to cycling, current multi-uses of the trail include equestrian, snowmobile, hiking, and in some areas motorized vehicles such as All Terrain Vehicles. International visitors stay longer and therefore associated with higher spend per trip, which means more dollars infused into our local economies.
- The Cataraqui Trail has been noted as the most beautiful and scenic part of the loop. To include this authentic natural experience, it benefits the entire loop. Therefore, there is support to collectively invest in resurfacing the Cataraqui Trail.
- For this reason, EORTL is interested in a sustainable financial model / financial support for the Cataraqui Trail.

- The CRCA's Masterplan notes a minimum standard of 5/8 gravel, however stone dust is ideal for all users - so choosing hybrid cycling as the standard for surfacing is actually benefitting all user groups. Although cycling may not be listed as one of top 5 target markets for Rideau Lakes, hybrid cyclists are the right target market for this group project because cyclists are acceptable in all jurisdictions of the loop. It is not only the common denominator, but it is the market that is seeking an experience that this area can offer. Marrying the location's assets with the people who would appreciate them is a strong approach.
- The loop is desirable, as most rail trails are linear.
- The idea is to develop a 5-year plan that will result in a Signature Trail.
- As a year round attraction, the loop as a tourism product has the potential to extend our tourism season and have a real economic impact comparable to the Rideau Canal that draws 900,000 visitors each year. They are both place-specific experiences that cannot be replicated in any other destination. This project is a strategic investment and checks all the boxes for product development - one element of our overall economic development plan. It also supports the development of learning experiences for visitors, quality of life for residents, and creating an environment for businesses to thrive and more.
- The \$3,000 contribution from the Township is leveraged with funding (such as Fed Dev) that advances the project for all the partners. The investment to have this documentation in place will help us to apply for more federal, provincial, and regional funding.
- Beyond promoting experiences along the Cataraqui Trail, the municipality's role will be to plan for a trail network that connects the loop with off shoot trails into all of our villages.
- This fall, 5 in-person community engagement sessions will be held, one in rideau lakes, (September-October) and there will be an opportunity for branding input.
- The landing page will be published on comewander.ca
- Tours will be planned along loop in 2026, an opportunity to promote experiences along Cataraqui Trail (i.e. March Marigolds). Local businesses may expand to address gaps in services or accommodations.

Committee members would like to see the loop on a map (For example, the Cataraqui Trail is on the Rideau Lakes Road Map).

It was suggested that the CECs be involved in the conversation.

Consider local churches "champing" as a year round solution to fill the gap in accommodation.

The report nicely lays out the strengths and weaknesses. The group is working to bring UCLG on board.

Contact the Rideau Trail Association for trail development in Newboro.

NEW BUSINESS

Committee Roundtable

Public Representative Ken Davies:

- Attended Newboro Canada Day, Fireworks in Westport (is there financial support for Fireworks display by the Westport Legion? Yes, through the Community Grant program)

Shellee Fournier:

- Rideau Canal Lockage is free until Labour Day as part of the "Canada Strong" promotion.

Councillor Ron Pollard:

- Rideau Canal traffic impacts water levels in Bobs Lake and Wolfe Lake
- Sand Lake and dam is always full

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

From the Gallery: Canada Day Breakfast in South Elmsley was a huge success.

CLOSED SESSION

Moved by Councillor Sue Dunfield

Seconded by Dudley Hill

Be it resolved that the Economic Development Committee of the Township of Rideau Lakes moves into closed meeting 10:39 a.m. to discuss the following matters under Section 239 (2) of the Municipal Act.

(b) Personal matters about an identifiable individual, including Municipal or local board employee.

Carried

Economic Development Committee Closed Meeting Minutes

Nominations for Bill Thake Memorial Award for Economic Development Leadership

REPORT REGARDING CLOSED MEETING

RECOMMENDATION # ECD 2025-33

Moved by Councillor Ron Pollard

Seconded by Councillor Hutchings

Be it resolved that a Closed Meeting was held and Committee discussed two (2) items. The Minutes from the previous closed session meeting and the Bill Thake Award under a personal matter about an identifiable individual including municipal or local board employees. There is nothing to report on this item.

Carried

ADJOURNMENT

The Economic Development Committee adjourned meeting at 11:31 a.m.

Marcia Maxwell, Chair

Marie White, Secretary