



Rideau Lakes

TOWNSHIP OF RIDEAU LAKES
Economic Development Committee
Minutes

Tuesday, April 7, 2026, 10:00 a.m.
Municipal Office, Chantry

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

Members Absent: Mayor Arie Hoogenboom

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 from Mayor Arie Hoogenboom. Councillor Debbie Hutchings, Councillor Linda Carr, and Councillor Paula Banks joined the meeting virtually.

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 2026-07

Moved by Councillor Hutchings
Seconded by Councillor Sue Dunfield

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.

COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS

CoW Rec 116-2026 - HEAR Initiative (For Information)

BUSINESS ARISING

Staff Report ECD 2026-01 - EORTL Partnership: Marie White (For Discussion)

Councillor Linda Carr joined virtually at 10:02

Further to the staff report outlining the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop Partnership deliverables for 2026-2027 and the contributions from the other partners, it was noted that with 2026 budget approvals in place, the Township is ready to proceed with the partnership renewal. Since it is a formal agreement, Council approval is required. Collectively, the partnership is able to apply for funding to leverage partner contributions.

RECOMMENDATION # ECD 2026-08

Moved by Councillor Sue Dunfield
Seconded by Councillor Ron Pollard

Be it resolved that the Economic Development Committee recommends to Council that a by-law be passed to authorize Rideau Lakes to enter into a 2026 memorandum of understanding with Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization (RTO11) to continue as a 2026-2027 partner in the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Tourism Loop Project (EORTL), with a contribution of \$3,000 included in the Economic Development Budget, as presented in ECD Report 2026-01.

Carried

RECOMMENDATION # ECD 2026-09

Moved by Ken Davies
Seconded by Councillor Ron Pollard

Be it resolved that the Economic Development Committee direct staff to send a letter to Leeds Grenville inviting them to participate in the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop (EORTL) project, recognizing that Lanark and Frontenac Counties are partners;

AND FURTHER THAT Leeds Grenville make a contribution of \$10,000 per year to match the other county partner contributions.

Carried

200th Anniversary Working Group - Verbal Update: Councillor Paula Banks (For Discussion)

Councillor Paula Banks reported that the working group drafted a list of events that could be included in the 200th Anniversary celebrations. At the March 10 working group meeting, a Town Crier competition was recommended for consideration. A subsequent working group meeting was held on March 26. To reduce the number of meetings, it was suggested that the 200th Anniversary be a standing item on the Economic Development Committee agenda. The 200th Anniversary Working Group will no longer meet separately. Discussion took place.

Councillor P. Banks called a Point of Order on Chair Maxwell advising that Councillors should not be discussing staff work load as it is the responsibility of the CAO and the Chair should not be debating. CAO, Shellee Fournier provided an explanation on the staff workload.

Ken Davies informed the committee that the Victoria Day Picnic event established in 2008 will take place on May 18 with live music until noon until 2pm at the Jones Falls lock station. There is very little parking.

Ideas:

- Rideau Lakes is in support of the anniversary celebrations and invites the community to tag along using a shared 200th logo (to be developed)
- Reenactments - Newboro and Area Heritage Society (NAHS) is planning to host a reenactment
- Ice cream at Narrows Lock
- Small budget support for promotional material to be considered as part of the budget process
- Strategy to work with CECs and formal working groups of the CEC
- Grant strategy - explore funding and grant writing services

It was noted that the Newboro and Area Historical Society (NAHS), as a third party and charitable organization, may access additional grants.

RECOMMENDATION # ECD 2026-10

Moved by Councillor Sue Dunfield
Seconded by Councillor Paula Banks

Be it resolved that the Economic Development Committee directs staff to add the 200th Anniversary as a standing item on the regular meeting agenda.

Carried

Rideau Canal 200th Anniversary Coordination and Support

RECOMMENDATION # ECD 2026-11

Moved by Councillor Paula Banks
Seconded by Councillor Hutchings

WHEREAS the Rideau Canal, completed in 1832, is recognized as both a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a National Historic Site of Canada and is one of the country's most significant historic waterways;

AND WHEREAS the year 2032 will mark the 200th anniversary of the completion of the Rideau Canal and communities along the canal corridor are expected to participate in commemorative activities leading up to that anniversary;

AND WHEREAS the Township of Rideau Lakes has established that a standing item for the Rideau Canal 200th Anniversary be on the Economic Development Committee Agenda to organize community events and initiatives between 2026 and 2032 recognizing the construction, history, and heritage of the Rideau Canal;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council for the Township of Rideau Lakes support the work of the Economic Development Committee in planning and coordinating community events within the municipality between 2026 and 2032 in preparation for the 200th anniversary of the Rideau Canal in 2032;

AND FURTHER THAT Council request letters of support from Parks Canada and federal representatives responsible for the Rideau Canal National Historic Site acknowledging and supporting the Township of Rideau Lakes' efforts to celebrate the Rideau Canal anniversary;

AND FURTHER THAT Council express the Township's interest in working cooperatively with Parks Canada and other communities along the canal corridor to support and promote anniversary-related events within Rideau Lakes while contributing to the broader celebrations taking place along the Rideau Canal;

AND FURTHER THAT Council invite Parks Canada to collaborate with the Township of Rideau Lakes and the Economic Development Committee on events and initiatives taking place within the municipality as part of the broader Rideau Canal bicentennial celebrations;

AND FURTHER THAT a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the following:

Karen McLeod
Superintendent
Rideau Canal National Historic Site
Parks Canada Agency

Ron Hallman
President and Chief Executive Officer
Parks Canada Agency

Michael Barrett
Member of Parliament
Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes

Carried

Ceremonial Town Crier

RECOMMENDATION # ECD 2026-12

Moved by Councillor Paula Banks
Seconded by Councillor Sue Dunfield

WHEREAS the Township of Rideau Lakes is preparing for the 200th anniversary of the completion of the Rideau Canal in 2032, with community events being planned between 2026 and 2032 through the Economic Development Committee;

AND WHEREAS the ceremonial role of a Town Crier has traditionally been used by municipalities to promote civic events and celebrate local heritage;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council support the reintroduction of a ceremonial Town Crier for the Township of Rideau Lakes as part of community celebrations connected to the Rideau Canal 200th anniversary;

AND FURTHER THAT the Economic Development Committee be authorized to organize a community competition to select a Rideau Lakes Town Crier.

Carried

Rideau Canal 200th Anniversary Planning Supports

The following motion was brought forward:

Moved by Councillor Paula Banks
Seconded by Councillor Hutchings

WHEREAS Council has established the Economic Development Committee to coordinate community initiatives and events between 2026 and 2032 recognizing the construction and completion of the Rideau Canal;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council direct staff to support the Economic Development Committee in developing the planning framework for anniversary events;

AND FURTHER THAT staff assist the Committee in developing a grant funding strategy, including identifying potential funding opportunities and options for professional grant-writing support;

AND FURTHER THAT staff assist the Committee in exploring a corridor-wide funding approach involving municipalities along the Rideau Canal while supporting multi-community projects within the Township of Rideau Lakes;

AND FURTHER THAT staff report back to Council with options for modest budget support for promotional and commemorative materials related to the Rideau Canal anniversary, including items such as informational flyers, handouts, flags, and other materials that may be made available through the Township to support community events between 2026 and 2032.

RECOMMENDATION # ECD 2026-13

Moved by Councillor Sue Dunfield
Seconded by Ken Davies

Be it resolved that the main motion be deferred.

Carried

Spring into Rideau Working Group - Verbal Update: Ken Davies (For Discussion)

Ken Davies informed the committee that promotional material for Spring into Rideau was included in the agenda package and circulated examples at the meeting. Events taking place during April and May are invited to be included in the program. Digital promotions may include how to get involved, and the URL that directs people to the Spring into Rideau webpage can be added. Appreciation was expressed to volunteer Kim Lulashnyk for her work on Spring into Rideau.

RECOMMENDATION # ECD 2026-14

Moved by Ken Davies
Seconded by Councillor Ron Pollard

Be it resolved that the Economic Development Committee recommends to Council that promotional materials for Spring into Rideau be distributed widely at no cost to the municipality.

Carried

Rideau Lakes Business Listing - Update: Marie White (For Information)

Staff highlighted the most recent changes to the Rideau Lakes Business Listing.

15 businesses were added:

- Rideau Lake Pottery
- Kevcon Construction
- JJs Farm - Local Microgreens
- Vase and Votive
- Your Nail Girl
- TJC Electrical
- Satori Farms
- Rideau Wreaths
- Big Al's Detailing
- Andrew Milne Studio
- Seaman's Haven
- Maplecroft Studios
- Margaret Kelk Studio
- Robin Laffier Studio

- Jones Falls Management

Removed:

- Windfall Studio - closed

There are now 474 locally owned and operated businesses in Rideau Lakes.

Action Listing - Update: Marie White (For Information)

Staff provided an update on Economic Development Action items. Celebrate in Rideau Lakes content has been compiled.

MINUTES

Minutes of the March 2, 2026, Economic Development Committee Meeting were distributed to the Committee. Chair Maxwell asked for any errors, omissions or questions.

RECOMMENDATION # ECD 2026-15

Moved by Councillor Ron Pollard
Seconded by Councillor Carr

Be it resolved that this Committee approve the Economic Development Committee Meeting minutes of March 2, 2026 as presented.

Carried

CORRESPONDENCE FOR ACTION/INFORMATION

EORN Cell Gap Project Update (For Information)

NEW BUSINESS

Committee Roundtable

Councillor Linda Carr:

- Can we offer free WIFI in villages
- Stoodleys in Elgin is doing well
- Portland Pizzeria is doing well
- Portland Pub Trivia Night is well attended
- Newboro is fantastic

Public Representative Ken Davies:

- Loon in Newboro is available

Public Representative Dudley Hill:

- The Crosby Roundabout will allow landscaping only

Chair Maxwell:

- Forfar Restaurant and Cheese Shop's new menu has been well received

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

CLOSED SESSION

RECOMMENDATION # ECD 2026-16

Moved by Councillor Sue Dunfield

Seconded by Councillor Ron Pollard

Be it resolved that the Economic Development Committee moves into closed meeting at 12:07 p.m. to discuss the following matters under Section 239 (2) of the *Municipal Act*.

- Closed Session Minutes: September 2, 2025
- Rideau Lakes Business Recognition Awards: Section 239(2)(b) Personal matters about an identifiable individual, including Municipal or local board employee
- Ontario Heritage Trust Lifetime Achievement Awards: Section 239(2)(b) Personal matters about an identifiable individual, including Municipal or local board employee

Carried

REPORT REGARDING CLOSED MEETING

Be advised that a Closed Meeting was held and Committee discussed three (3) items. The minutes from the previous closed session meeting, the Rideau Lakes Business Recognition Awards and the Ontario Heritage Trust Lifetime Achievement Awards under (b) a personal matter about an identifiable individual including municipal or local board employees.

RECOMMENDATION # ECD 2026-17

Moved by Councillor Sue Dunfield

Seconded by Ken Davies

Be it resolved that the Business Recognition Program be revisited for next year, and that the criteria be revised.

Carried

RECOMMENDATION # ECD 2026-18

Moved by Councillor Sue Dunfield

Seconded by Councillor Ron Pollard

Be it resolved that the Economic Development Committee direct staff to find out if compensation for travel is provided to recipients of the Ontario Heritage Trust Lifetime Achievement Awards Ceremony held in Toronto.

Carried

ADJOURNMENT

The Economic Development Committee adjourned meeting at 12:37 p.m.

Marcia Maxwell, Chair

Marie White, Secretary