

www.PetesSalesAndService.ca  
2107 Pembroke Street West  
613.735.3711

**PETE'S**  
SALES AND SERVICE

MOTOR HARLEY-DAVIDSON  
COMPANIES

"Get what you want"  
**PEMBROKE HONDA**  
1405 Pembroke St.  
Pembroke

1-800-273-0313

**2012 HONDA CR-V**



**Keetch's Building Supplies** Three great locations to serve your building needs  
613-757-2616  
6 North Street, Killaloe

**C.A. Reiche & Sons Ltd.**  
613-735-4104  
Hwy 41, Pembroke

**Country Depot**  
613-628-2272  
Hwy 41-60 West, Eganville

**castle building centres**

# The Eganville Leader

Renfrew County's largest paid circulation newspaper

Independently-owned since 1902

110th Year - No. 32

Wednesday, January 25, 2012

Eganville, Ontario

(\$1.45 + 7 cents GST) \$1.50

## County councillors vote on salary hike

NAW Mayor Opposed To Raise

By Debbi Christinck  
Staff Writer

**Pembroke** -- Renfrew County councillors will be voting on a raise today as county council looks at passing the 2012 budget, and although the raise does see an increase of about \$60,000 for the mayors and Reeves who make up council, it remains a fraction of the \$35 million property owners are paying into county coffers.

The proposal calls for each councillor to receive a base salary of \$3,000 a year. Per diem rates for meetings will continue at \$103 for a half day meeting and \$193 for a full day meeting. As well committee chairs will receive a salary of \$1,000 and vice chairs a salary of \$500. The proposal calls for the warden's salary to increase from \$21,109 to \$25,000. Cost of living increases will be brought in to the per diem rates as well as the warden's salary in 2013.

"It is never a pleasant task for councillors to set salaries for themselves," said Admaston/Bromley Mayor Raye-Anne Briscoe, who chairs the Finance Committee. "In our municipality we had council appoint a public committee and present a report.

"I was pleased with the raises given by our committee," she said. "The press was there and it was reported on and there was never a negative comment."

The proposals would mean a budget of \$417,546 for the reimbursements of county councillors. This includes the increase of \$3,500 for the warden, an additional \$48,000 for the members of council, \$5,000 for the chairs of the committees and \$2,500 for the vice-chairs.

Warden Bob Sweet said when proposing these figures the committee looked at what other county council members in other counties were receiving.

"The amount we receive should reflect the real amount of preparation time involved," he said. "When you look at what we receive, you can see we are behind the rest of Eastern Ontario."

The warden said he also felt com-

mittee chairs need to be recognized for the extra work they do.

"This should be reflected here," he said. "This \$1,000 speaks to the additional workload they have."

Although this salary increase brings the county up, Renfrew County councillors are still paid less than many people at a similar level in Eastern Ontario in other upper tier municipalities, Warden Sweet said.

The recommendation for the salary hike came from Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards Mayor Janice Visneskie, seconded by Arnprior Reeve Walter Stack. Mayor Visneskie said the warden should receive the raise.

"The warden is the CEO of the corporation," she said. "When I talk to my ratepayers and they see the warden gets \$21,000 they laugh when they see a CEO of a major corporation making that."

"There is no apple to apple comparison out there, but this is a beginning," Reeve Stack said. "It is reasonable and a long way from the top of the grid."

Laurentian Valley Mayor Jack Wilson said this recommendation would mean the warden gets a \$3,250 increase while councillors get a \$3,000 increase.

"The warden attends a lot of meetings a month and is not overpaid," he said. "This is something we have to look at."

North Algona Wilberforce Mayor Harold Weckworth said while he had no problems raising the salary of the warden, he did balk at raising his own salary.

"Giving myself a raise is a sensitive issue," he said. "There is a downturn in the economy right now."

Mill workers are being laid off and people on pensions are struggling, he added.

"There are a lot of seniors on a fixed income," he said. "I can see the warden's salary raised, but this is taxpayer money; I can't go to a taxpayer saying we are getting a big boost."

"I can't vote for this," Mayor Weckworth said.

See Page 17



Annual community bonspiel is underway

Louise Shulist concentrates on her husband Ken's signal as she prepares to send a rock down the ice in the annual Killaloe Community Bonspiel which got underway last Saturday. The week-long competition features 32 teams entered by local businesses and organizations and is a major fundraiser for the club. The Shulist team, 3 D Graphics, narrowly defeated McCarthy Propane 6-5 in their opening game.

## New CAO hired for GM Twp.

**Calabogie** -- The search for a new CAO for the Township of Greater Madawaska is over.

Yesterday (Tuesday) the township announced Mark Urbanski was named the new CAO and will begin his employment immediately. "It was very encouraging to see the quality and experiences of the individuals who expressed interest in joining our municipality during the search," Mayor Peter Emon said.

Mayor Emon said Mr. Urbanski has the personal and professional qualities the community is seeking.

"Council, staff and the community wanted an experienced Chief Administration Officer, with a strong background in municipal management, economic development and planning, who was looking forward to the challenge of guiding our dynamic community growth and development over the next decade," he said. "Mr. Urbanski's previous work experiences, his enjoyment working in rural communities, along with his knowledge of our strengths and our areas of future improvements attracted us to him."

See Page 11



Mark Urbanski - new CAO in GM

## OVTA budget comes under scrutiny of county council

By Debbi Christinck  
Staff Writer

**Pembroke** -- Renfrew County councillors want the Ottawa Valley Tourism Association to be more accountable to the county, especially if the county is footing a large portion of the budget and providing other services to the organization.

A request for a budget increase to the OVTA budget sparked a lively discussion during the Renfrew County council budget session last Thursday, with the promise to look at the OVTA more closely in the future.

"The county is making a large contribution to this, but it is supposed to be a community-led initiative," said Arnprior Reeve Walter Stack. "I have a problem with just giving them a \$25,000 increase without a business case to support it."

The OVTA budget for 2012 had an increase of \$24,855 for 2012 and Reeve Stack said he did not think the county should just accept that. The budget, which includes salaries and benefits, was \$195,396 for 2012, up about 14.6 per cent from 2011.

Admaston/Bromley Mayor Raye-Anne Briscoe, who chairs the Finance Committee at county and chaired the budget session, said she supported the \$25,000 increase at the committee level.

"I supported this \$25,000 shortfall, but we need an in-depth review of where our money is going," she said. "We need to get a more accountable and transparent situation."

The staff at the OVTA work as county employees, she noted.

"There is a \$50,000 shortfall and we are being asked for half of that," she said. "We need to look at this thing and how it is governed if we are providing most of the budget."

Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards Mayor Janice Visneskie offered a bit of background on the relationship between the county and the OVTA.

"When the OVTA was established they asked us to assist," she said. "The intent was for it to become self-sufficient."

Instead, the funding from the county has been increased at various times, but there is the goal of self-sufficien-

cy, the mayor said. More recently the OVTA had promised it would not be seeking more money from the county, she said.

There has also been a lot of support for the OVTA throughout the years, she said.

"We did do in-kind which we give and that is not seen on paper," she said. "I don't want it seen as if we are not contributing when we are."

At the same time, tourism is only one industry in the county, she added.

"We do have other industries which might want \$200,000 too," Mayor Visneskie said.

Renfrew Reeve Audrey Green, who sits on the OVTA board as a representative of the county, said she supported the funding. She said she was tired of hearing the criticism of the organization from county council whenever funding was mentioned.

"As soon as you say OVTA it seems like you say a dirty word," she said. "So we need to decide if we want it or not."

In terms of dollars, \$25,000 is a small amount in the \$35 million the

county is asking from county taxpayers, she noted.

"This is a very small amount of money on the tax rate," she said. "This needs to stay in the budget to keep the momentum going till we can come up with some proposals."

The OVTA is looking at some new ideas and plans, she said.

Bonnechere Valley Mayor Jennifer Murphy, who is also a county representative on the OVTA board, said she was also handed a membership objective plan from the OVTA and there is a strategy in place.

"They are moving forward," she said.

Whitewater Reeve Don Rathwell said he has no problems asking for a better financial picture from the OVTA, but was hesitant to not support the funding increase.

"I think the future of our area is not in farming, but in tourism," he said. "We need to help this group which promotes tourism."

Greater Madawaska Mayor Peter Emon said he would like the issue to be looked at more in depth instead

of just simply refusing this funding request for a temporary shortfall.

"Development and Property could develop a study on the future of the OVTA and report back so we could have a discussion on this," he said.

Mayor Briscoe said her suggestion would be to approve the budget request and then look at the issue of governance later.

Reeve Stack said he strongly disagreed with paying the money now and asking for explanations later. He said the \$25,000 should be taken out of the budget and then the OVTA could approach the county with a business plan to ask for the money.

"There is nothing to stop them from coming back and we can look at it then," he said. "We would not accept a request like this from any other department without a business case."

Warden Bob Sweet said the OVTA plays a vital role in the county.

"We are not doing anything to kill one of the most viable industries in Renfrew County which is tourism," he said. "We want to work with the OVTA."

"I don't want people to feel we are

going to kill the OVTA," the warden said. "It is one of the pillars in Renfrew County."

The kind of assistance the OVTA provided to EXPO 150 was invaluable, he said.

"To suggest we are even considering getting rid of tourism is off the table," he said. "But it is confusing when we are told they are not asking for more money and now they are."

In a recorded vote, councillors voted on Reeve Stack's motion to remove the \$25,000 from the budget. The motion was seconded by Mayor Emon who said he would second it for discussion purposes, although he would vote against the motion. In a recorded vote, the only member of council voting to remove the money from the county budget was Reeve Stack.

The funding for the OVTA was approved at the budget session, although the organization will be asked for a more full accounting of their finances and a study done on the role the county is playing in the OVTA. The final county budget should be voted on today (Wednesday).



Stock # B247B  
A/C, CD, PW, PL,  
Sunroof  
keyless entry

\$9,999 plus taxes

**RENFREW CHRYSLER LTD.**



376 O'Brien Road, Renfrew 1-888-432-8532

Stock # B221A  
A/C, CD, PM, PL,  
Sunroof  
keyless entry  
heated front seats

\$15,999 plus taxes



**2006 MINI COOPER S**