Police Village of Russell Trust

Year-End Activity Report 2023

The PVR is excited to share our 2023 activities, a year full of dynamic challenges and significant milestones. Highlights include celebrating Russell's 125th anniversary and refining various initiatives. This report, prepared by the current PVR Trustees who will serve until the next municipal elections in October 2026, provides an overview of our accomplishments and updates.

2022-2026 Trustees
Police Village of Russell / Syndic du village de Russell
Julianne Duern Bankley, Co-Chair
Stephanie MacMillan, Co-Chair
Alison Brown, Treasurer

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Finances

The value of the fund on December 31st, 2023 was $1,122,882.78.
The full year-end financial report is posted online.

Successful Applications for Funding

In 2023, the PVR approved $47,125 in funding to support various community-focused projects by local organizations and service clubs, including:

1. Welcome To Russell signs, *Kin Club of Russell*
2. MacDougall Park Renewal Plan, *Russell Horticultural Society*
3. Keep Russell Blooming, *Russell Village Women's Institute*
4. Opening Day Festival, *Russell Soccer Club League*
5. Poutmasters Fishing Derby, *Kin Club of Russell*
6. Canada Day Fireworks, *Russell Agricultural Society*
7. Autumn in the Country, *Russell Agricultural Society*
8. Russell Street Blades, *Kin Club of Russell*

Special Initiatives

In 2023, Russell joyously commemorated the 125th anniversary of the Police Village of Russell (PVR). Shortly after the new Trustees took office in November 2022, the newly appointed Board quickly organized a forum to rally local volunteer-based organizations operating within the PVR boundaries. This forum sparked exciting discussions, gauged interest, and generated vibrant ideas. The PVR adopted a hands-off approach, letting funded organizations lead their own projects. As a result, 4 dynamic initiatives celebrating Russell's milestone were launched, fostering community spirit, volunteerism, and jubilant celebrations of our rich heritage.

Appointment of a New Trustee

Following Trustee Mike Miller's resignation in June 2023, the remaining board members appointed a new trustee as allowed by Section 334 of the Municipal Act 1990[1]. This process was deemed by the Board to be more cost-effective than holding a vote for the limited electorate living within the defined boundaries of the PVR[2]. The board developed clear criteria, roles, and a selection process. After interviewing three candidates, Alison Brown was appointed in October 2023 as the new Treasurer. Together, with ultimately four Trustees working together for the 2023 year, the following additional initiatives and activities were completed:

2023 Initiatives and Activities

- **Website Enhancement:** Updated content to improve information flow, highlight special projects, and streamline the funding application process.
- **Guidance Documents:** Developed succession planning documents, including updates to PVR Guidelines and Protocols, and clarified PVR Trustee roles and responsibilities.
- **Online Information Management:** Established a SharePoint-based system for shared email and records access, facilitating equitable access and effective succession planning.

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[1] Section 334 of the previous Municipal Act 1990 specifically provides that:
"If a vacancy occurs in the office of trustee, **the remaining trustees or trustee shall appoint, by writing, a trustee to fill the vacancy**. R.S.O. 1990, c. M.45, s. 334". While the Municipal Act, 1990 has been repealed, Section 456(2) of the Municipal Act, 2001 with respect to Police Villages, specifically provides that Section 334 of the old Act remains in force (as well as s. 332 to 357 of the old Act).

[2] The boundary for the **Police Village of Russell** (map) was established in 1898 when the Municipal Council of the United Counties of Prescott and Russell granted Police Village status to the Village of Russell under the provisions of the Municipal Act. Only residents living within the boundary for the PVR are eligible to vote for a Trustee, elected at the time of Municipal elections in Ontario.

- **Application Process Revamp**: Shortened and simplified the application process, made it easily accessible online, and created templates for correspondence with consistent evaluation criteria.
- **Marketing Logo Coordination**: Coordinated production of a digitized logo file to support future promotional opportunities for the PVR.
- **Scholarship Draft:** Developed a draft for a scholarship to celebrate and encourage civic engagement among youth, available to students attending high schools within the PVR boundary.
- **Special Initiatives Web Page:** Drafted a plan to highlight special initiatives on the PVR website.
- **Policy Exploration:** Explored options for establishing a policy on Workplace Violence and Harassment.

History: The Story of the Police Village

Back in the late 1800s, Police Villages in Ontario were created to ensure public order, wooden sidewalks, minor street lighting, and other rural advancements. Russell, proudly the last standing Police Village in Ontario, continues to embrace its distinctive legacy. In 2000, following the sale of Russell's Hydro Electric System to Ontario Hydro, the PVR Trust emerged. Composed of a dedicated 3-member board elected during municipal elections, this Trust preserves a principal fund of $1 million. From this fund, the Trustees judiciously allocate investment revenues to empower local community groups, fostering projects that enrich and uplift our beloved Russell. Since 2000, PVR Trustees have approved $630,000 in funding for 55 community organizations.

For more information on the PVR Trust, check out our website:

- Apply for Funding
- Special Initiatives
- Meetings and reports
- Approved Projects

Regards,

Julianne Duern Bankley | Stephanie MacMillan | Alison Brown
2022-2026 Trustees, Police Village of Russell / Syndic du village de Russell