Police Village of Russell Trust

Year-End Activity Report 2025

The PVR is pleased to present an overview of our 2025 activities.
This report is prepared by the current PVR Trustees
who serve until the next municipal elections in October 2026.

2022-2026 Trustees
Police Village of Russell / Syndic du village de Russell

Alison Brown, Treasurer
Julianne Duern Bankley, Co-Chair
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History: The Story of the Police Village

History: The Story of our Police Village

Russell's roots as a Police Village date back to the late 1800s, when these small local bodies were created to maintain public order and introduce early rural services such as wooden sidewalks and basic street lighting. Today, Russell proudly stands as Ontario's last remaining Police Village, carrying forward its distinctive legacy in a modern form.

Instead of overseeing sidewalks and streetlamps, the Police Village of Russell now manages a community trust through an elected Board of Trustees. The PVR Trust was established in 2000 following the sale of Russell's Hydro Electric System to Ontario Hydro. The proceeds created a principal fund of $1 million, which the three elected Trustees are responsible for preserving and investing. Each year, the investment income is allocated to support local community groups and projects that strengthen and enrich Russell.

Since its creation, the PVR has approved **$719,209.97 in funding** for **55 community organizations**, helping to advance initiatives that benefit residents of all ages and contribute to the vitality of our community.

Financials

The value of the fund on December 31st, 2025, was **$**$1,223,230.47
The financial statements are prepared by the certified accounting firm **BDO Canada LLP,** ensuring accuracy and compliance with required standards.

Successful Applications For Funding

In 2025, the PVR approved **$74,388.95** in funding to support various community-focused projects by local organizations and service clubs, including:

1. Canada Day Fireworks, *Russell Agricultural Society*
2. Keep Russell Blooming, *Russell Village Women's Institute*
3. Library Community Garden, *Township of Russell Public Library*
4. Spring Concert, *Russell Community Concert Band*
5. Technology Update, *Russell and District Historical Society*
6. Water Dispensing Station (Russell Fair), *Russell Agricultural Society*
7. Foundation Water-sealing, *Russell Legion*

Project Descriptions

Canada Day Fireworks, *Russell Agricultural Society*
In an ongoing tradition of supporting this cherished community event, the PVR once again contributed to the Canada Day Fireworks hosted by the Russell Agricultural Society, a celebration that brings our community together in a shared expression of national pride. The festivities typically draw well over 5,000 residents and visitors to the fireworks show, offering a vibrant local option to mark the holiday, close to home. Continued PVR funding ensured this long-standing annual celebration remained a highlight for the growing community around us.

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Keep Russell Blooming, *Russell Village Women's Institute*
In keeping with our ongoing support for community-driven beautification efforts, the PVR once again contributed to the *Keep Russell Blooming* project led by the Russell Village Women's Institute. Established in 1936, the Institute has a long history of nurturing local pride. Since 2001, they bring seasonal charm to the village core with more than two dozen hanging baskets and numerous ground planters. This enduring project continues to uplift the appearance of Russell's main streets and bring enjoyment to residents and visitors. PVR's renewed funding helped ensure the tradition remained a colourful highlight of the community in 2025.

Library Community Garden*, Township of Russell Public Library*
The PVR approved funding for the Russell Public Library's Community Garden Project, an initiative launched in 2022 that brings volunteers together to grow fresh produce for the local food bank and offer hands-on learning opportunities for residents of all ages. The library's 80-by-50-foot garden has become a valued space for students, families, and participants in intergenerational mentorship programs to learn about gardening and sustainable practices. For 2025, the project requested support to purchase an additional storage shed for expanding tools and equipment, along with soil and compost needed to maintain healthy garden beds each fall. With volunteers assembling the shed and students helping to spread soil, the project continues to foster community connection, support food security, and provide meaningful outdoor learning in Russell.

Spring Concert, *Russell Community Concert Band*
Russell Community Concert Band's vibrant 2025 Spring Concert showcased the talent of more than 30 local musicians who have been bringing live music to the community since 2009. Their free performances continue to draw enthusiastic spectators and add energy to Russell's cultural life. For 2025, the band prepared *Folk Songs From Around the World*, a lively program of familiar melodies spanning several continents. Funding support helped add new percussion accessories, enriching the band's sound and welcoming incoming percussionists eager to join.

Technology Update, *Russell and District Historical Society*
Supporting technology upgrades at the Keith M. Boyd Museum ensures the volunteers can preserve and share the history of Russell through thousands of artifacts, photos, and documents. Updated equipment is critical to digitizing the collection, maintaining the Past Perfect database, scanning materials for researchers, and preparing handouts for community outreach in schools, the library, and local events. While the Township maintains the Museum building, the Historical Society manages all contents and equipment, relying on volunteers and donations to keep this important community resource running.

Water Dispensing Station (Russell Fair), *Russell Agricultural Society*
With the Russell Fair approaching and an extremely hot weekend forecasted, the Society sought urgent support to provide a water bottle filling station on-site. The station offered fresh, cool drinking water for attendees and volunteers, helping keep everyone hydrated and reducing reliance on single-use plastic bottles. This simple but impactful addition helped create a safer, more sustainable fair experience, enhancing one of the community's largest and most cherished annual events.

Foundation Water-sealing, *Russell Legion*
This project supported essential water-sealing foundation work at the Long-Twiname - Henderson Memorial Branch 372 of the Royal Canadian Legion, allowing them to continue to deliver their wide range of programs, gatherings, and community supports throughout the year. Beyond its role in supporting veterans, the Legion is a true community hub, hosting youth programs, family-friendly celebrations, seniors' daytime activities, non-competitive sports leagues, music nights, community fundraisers, and providing space to local organizations.

Special Initiatives

PVR Scholarship for Civic Engagement

This scholarship was created by the PVR Trustees in 2024 to celebrate students pursuing post-secondary education who have made meaningful contributions to their communities. Candidates are nominated by three teachers and must show a commitment to civic engagement, whether by improving life for others or helping shape the future of their community. The scholarship honours students who may need to balance school with part-time work, recognizing that financial responsibilities or the need for experience can affect traditional academic measures. The award is not based on grades, volunteer hour totals, or the number of clubs and organizations joined, but on genuine initiative and impact. Eligible students may be entering a wide range of educational paths, including trade schools, apprenticeships, or part-time studies, and were considered based on the impact and sincerity of their engagement in one or more of these categories:

1. **Political engagement**: Participation in school council elections, electoral campaigns, or political volunteering.
2. **Community**: Volunteering or contributing to local charity or service organizations.
3. **Civic Skills**: Engaging in advocacy, community problem-solving, or attending local government meetings.
4. **Social Justice Engagement**: Promoting fairness, equity, and equal rights through community activism or education.

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As this report is written before the official announcement of the 2025 recipients, the names will be shared on our website once released. To discover this year's honourees, please visit the **PVR website**.

2025 Board Initiatives and Activities

- **Fiduciary Responsibilities**. Continued careful stewardship of PVR assets by reviewing financial processes and strengthening oversight practices. Working closely with our accounting representatives, we continued updating core procedures for financial reporting to ensure full compliance with current CRA requirements and to maintain alignment with best-practice standards for managing PVR funds.
- **Guidelines and Role Clarity**. Updated the Board guidelines to better reflect current responsibilities and drafted a clear trustee job description to support succession planning. This ensures prospective candidates understand the expectations and duties of serving as an elected trustee for the Board.
- **Website Renewal**. Drafted a full redesign of the PVR website and planned a 2026 transition to a more user-friendly platform to support long-term continuity and smooth succession planning. The refreshed site will improve information flow, highlight special projects, and streamline the funding application process for the community.
- **Historical Application Review**. Initiated a full compilation and analysis of past funding applications to strengthen long-term record-keeping and identify trends in community needs. This work informed a 2026 outreach plan aimed at connecting with organizations that have not previously applied and may benefit from available funds, especially in the current economic climate.

Thank you for reading our 2025 Year-End Activity Report. The Trustees are grateful for the opportunity to serve and look forward to another year of supporting our community.

For more information on the PVR Trust, check out our website, PVR-trust.com.

Regards,

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