

Rural Ontario Municipalities Association Conference Report  
Sunday, January 19 – Tuesday, January 21, 2025  
Sheraton Centre Hotel  
Toronto

Councillors Prenger, Steinhoff-Gray, Hinchberger, Stewart, and Mayor Craig attended this annual conference to hear updates on common interests and to present delegations to Provincial ministries.

To the Education ministry we raised the issue of the proposed secondary school new build and its effect on municipal investment if located in a disadvantageous location.

To the Energy ministry we raised the importance of the local voice in the ongoing planning for a proposed new nuclear build.

And to the Infrastructure and Development ministry we raised the importance of receiving financial support in preparation of the proposed new nuclear build.

With the prospect of a provincial election looming, there were no promises made by any of the ministries. We had intentionally reduced the number of delegations that the municipality had applied for this year as we knew that the ability to garner support for any request was limited,

Much more attention was spent this year in attending the plenary sessions and connecting with other municipal delegates. There is much to be learned by listening to another person's experiences.

Each delegate was able to choose from a menu of subjects pertinent to local government. The plenary / learning sessions that I attended included:

- Beyond the Numbers – asset management planning
- Zone 2 ROMA director's information meeting
- Agriculture economic development
- Ending Rural Homelessness
- Communal sewage disposal information session
- Breakfast with our MPP Lisa Thompson
- Importance of Cyber security
- Land Use Planning – rural focussed
- Tackling Water and Wastewater infrastructure challenges in rural Ontario

There were also a number of presentations from the various political parties, advocacy groups, sponsors, and a great key-note speaker in the person of Chantel Hebert (recognizable from CBC news).

And, it pays to persevere (both in spirit and in person). A delegate has to be present to win the door prize at the end of the convention. To my surprise, after about nine absent delegates' names were drawn, mine was chosen.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth Craig.