

Val Fox

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Sent: Tuesday, May 29, 2018 10:03 AM
To: Val Fox
Subject: ROMA MidTerm in Wawa

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ROMA MIDTERM MEETING - Wawa

May 16-18



From May 16-18, 2018 the Board of the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) travelled to Wawa, Ontario in order to deepen our understanding of northern municipal issues, meet northern leaders and to immerse ourselves in the beauty, history and economy of this community on the north shore of Lake Superior. Some members chose to drive, and during their 1200 km journey, got to see the significant level of investment in improving Ontario's northern highways – the construction season is in full gear.



Wawa's municipal staff and local businesses welcomed us with great service, excellent food and impressive assets. Who knew that you could get great chicken roti at the Kinniwabi Pines Restaurant, or for that matter, whitefish, chicken Kiev, or perogies! Mayor Ron Rody and CAO Chris Wray made the municipal bus available and provided us with excellent guides in both Brian Lachine and local historian Johanna Rowe.



Like many places in Ontario, Wawa and the Michipicoten harbour area first flourished because of the rich fishing grounds at the river mouth, and the fur trade. Later, iron deposits were discovered in the area, and shipping connected the community to Sault Ste Marie and points further south and west. Wawa is now a key stopping point now for people travelling the TransCanada highway, with many motels and restaurants. The Wawa Motor Inn was our headquarters, right across from Young's General Store.



From the Inn we had the opportunity to travel to see magnificent beaches, waterfalls, blueberry farms and to learn about some of the community's famous visitors in the past, including Glenn Gould, A.Y. Jackson, and Alan Rickman.



A.Y.Jackson painted from this spot.



A glimpse of artifacts,
including early tools.



The ROMA board tackles issues that affect ALL rural and northern communities, including broadband, reducing energy costs, natural gas expansion, the 'Local Say/Local Share' campaign, the transition from OMB to Local Planning Appeal Tribunal, police modernization, infrastructure funding, and much more.

We lobby, in partnership with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) to encourage the province to bring a 'rural lens' to the development of policy and regulations that affect Ontario's smaller and northern municipalities.

This outreach trip was an opportunity for our Board to get a firsthand experience with the distances, smaller population, large infrastructure requirements, boom-bust economies, and many more northern challenges.



We had the pleasure of meeting Mayors and councillors from communities along the Superior shore, and from the Michipicoten First Nation. And of course we were treated to pickerel, blueberries and other northern specialties; the mighty Gitche Manitou touched each of us in some way. It was a memorable experience, and part of ROMA's commitment to increase outreach and communications, visit more communities, and raise the profile of Ontario's rural municipal issues.



Chris Wray,
ROMA Executive Director
Bill Bilton, Zone 1
Chris White, Zone 2
Robert Pasuta, Zone 3
Allan Thompson, Zone 4
Liz Danielsen, Zone 5

Ron Holman,
ROMA Chair (Zone 7)
Ric Bresee, Zone 6
Eli El-Chantiry, Zone 8
Bill Vrebosch, Zone 9
Liz Huff
Mark Wales



Part of the **AMO** Family



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Great to have you on my list as more info comes from ROMA

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