



**GBA Membership Committee  
Conference call April 7<sup>th</sup>  
Minutes**

The GBA Membership Committee held a conference call on April 7, 2016.  
The following participated;

Rupert Kindersley	Sans Souci	GBA Director, Committee Chair
Marc Cooper	West Carling	GBA Director
Alan Waffle	Honey Harbour	GBA Director
Alan Burke	Key River	GBA Director
Paul Morgan	South Channel	GBA Director
Lindsay Richards	Bay of Islands	GBA Director
Celese Fletcher	South Channel	
Chris Hawley	Cognashene	
Rob Reed	Bayfield Nares	
India Stone	Honey Harbour	
Gregg Scott	Sans Souci	
Jessie Metelka	Blackstone Lake	
Patrick Thoburn	Bay of Islands	
Bob Duncanson	Madawaska Club	GBA Executive Director

Regrets were received from;

Jamie Drayton	Manitou
Karen Turkstra	Key River
Heather Gagnon	McGregor Bay
Erica Allen	PABIA
Karen Phillips	Woods Bay

some of whom have forwarded comments that are attached to these minutes.

1. After introductions each participant was asked to provide a brief introduction of their association and specifically the state of their membership vis-a-vis the number of property owners in their community.

**Bayfield Nares:** Rob Reed reported that BNIA has 196 Full time members and 36 Associate members which together represent approximately 80% of the ratepayers in the area. They track who has left and have an informal system whereby Board members call these people to determine why they left and encourage them to reenlist.

**Bay of Islands:** Lindsay reported that they have 165 Members but they don't have information on how many ratepayers are in the area. She thinks they have most of them as members.

**Blackstone Lake:** Jessie stated that there are 130 ratepayer properties on their lake. About 27% of these are members of their association. This is down considerably over the recent years in part because of a divide in values and a change in leadership. They have some plans in place that they hope will turn around the downward trend including a new web site and supporting social media. They are also considering a dock to dock solicitation of ratepayers. The challenge is time to do all of this.

**Cognashene:** Chris reported that the Cognashene Cottagers Association represents about 2/3 of the ratepayers in their area (see additional notes below).

**Honey Harbour:** India stated that the Honey Harbour Association has 218 Full Members and 25 Associate Members. They don't know what percentage of the ratepayer base this represents. There has been a downward trend in membership however they have had trouble with their data. They have beefed up their web site and use email blasts (mail chimp) to get messages out once or twice per month. They have also stated to use an electronic membership renewal form.

**Key River:** Alan noted that Key River Area Association is a bit different than other GBA Member Associations as their members have the option to pay the GBA dues or not. There are 150 property sites/cottages and 100 members, 40 or so of whom pay GBA dues. The area is very spread out but most cottagers use one of two marinas so communication is fairly easy.

**Madawaska Club:** The Madawaska Club at Go Home Bay has approximately 145 members which represents a large percentage of the community (85%+). It has an active recreation and social program including a lending library, craft classes, yoga, sailing, regatta and regatta party, church services, etc. The site fee is \$595 which is the highest in the GBA. This is because the Club has a full time caretaker and a lot of vacant land that it pays taxes on. They have an active web site and facebook page that is used for things such as arranging rides to and from the cottage on weekends.

**Sans Souci:** Greg reports that SSCA has 405 members which is about 51-55% of the total ratepayer base for the area. They have a separate category of membership for children who are under 30 for which they charge \$50 per year.

**South Channel:** Celese said that South Channel membership had been sliding over recent years and is now starting to increase. Members are currently at 95 which is 30% of the ratepayer base. They attribute the slide to a perceived lack of value add for the price of the membership dues. Some felt that the association was there to collect funds and pass them to the GBA. They have recently launched a new newsletter that seems to be having people want to connect to the association. They are also considering working with Massassauga Park to have trail maintenance activities for the youth, a possible poker run and a native plant identification guide (working with the GBBR on the last item).

## 2. What has Worked and What Has Not?

**Bayfield Nares:** BNIA have an annual summer/AGM, regatta, directory (which is seen to be very valuable), rock walks, 6 or so environmental events per summer (ie Phragmites removal initiative), website & Facebook. They have moved to PayPal for annual renewals and this seems to be working well. They do not have specific information on demographics but they are targeting multiple generations.

Cognashene: Uses PayPal and gives members a slight discount for using this service. They do considerable work with the data from PayPal. Chris will speak to their Treasurer to see if some of their experiences and information can be shared with other associations. (see additional notes below)

Bay of Islands: They charge \$80 per member and \$40 for Associate members. They do not have any communal property or meeting place. They hold their AGM at a local restaurant. The post AGM dinner is at a different cottage each year, is very well attended and popular. There is an auction as part of these dinners. Community came together and membership grew when there was a threat from a fish farm. Land development is not seen to be a threat at present. They also use PayPal and this is very effective in retaining membership.

Blackstone Lake: This association is finding engagement of members of the community (young and old) to be a challenge. The younger group is very uninterested in cottage association affairs. The older set has not responded to a move to electronic communications. They will be or have reverted to using hard copy mail for older members. Jessie is finding the need to devote a lot of time to the association is difficult. She needs a few good volunteers to whom she can delegate tasks.

Cognashene: Very active and reactive membership. The annual fee is \$155. They have created a map of the community that has identification information for each site including GPS coordinates and 911 information. This has been very popular. They have a newsletter, web site and are working on a new neighbours welcome package that will include the community map. These will be distributed to each new neighbour in person. They run an extensive recreation program that is an extra cost to users and is run on a break even basis. They survey members on issues such as water levels, water quality, septic re-inspection. They are going to hold block parties to socialize at a local level and discuss issues.

Sans Souci: They work with real estate agents and have them buy/subsidize one year's membership in SSCA for each new neighbour who buys through the agent. SSCA has an annual regatta, arts and crafts, yoga, church, sailing camp, day camp & pot luck dinners. The tennis program is separate from the association. They have a yearbook and regular newsletters. They tried dock to dock promotion of the association but feel that neighbour to neighbour would be more successful. They are working on this.

Honey Harbour: They run a winter patrol to protect properties. This is seen to be a valuable benefit of membership. They also have a quality newsletter that is in digital format.

South Channel: Paul Morgan stressed that each association board needs a communication expert to drive the process such as South Channel now has. An active board needs to generate material to communicate but there needs to be a strong editor to pull it together and make it happen. It was suggested that associations might want to share eBlasts amongst themselves as there may be some from one association that are appropriate for other associations to also issue.

West Carling: Marc reported that West Carling membership has slipped considerably of late. They are working on welcome packages. WC suffers from not having a focal point and being very spread out. Their association as recently agreed to help manage the local lighthouse. This is seen as a possible rallying point to gather members.

### 3. GBA Initiatives

Marc Copper provided a brief overview of the recent updates to GBA's social media including a redesigned Update newsletter, the introduction of monthly electronic newsletters, the inclusion of a free subscription button on the home page of our web site, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and InstaGram.

### 4. Other Items and Next Steps

- It was suggested that young people in some communities may have their own networks set up with their friends. Feeding information into these and the various associations channels on such things as car rides to and from the GTA might be of interest to the younger set and start to get them to engage with the associations and GBA.
- Chris will share information on CCA's experience with PayPal. Others who have used this service are encouraged to do likewise.
- Several participants asked to have the email addresses of the other participants circulated so that side networking can happen. A list is attached to the email for these minutes.
- Minutes will be circulated including notes from the two who could not participate and notes from anyone else who has additional information to share.
- It was agreed that we should have the next call in September, unless there is a demand for another call before the summer.

### **Notes from Karen Turkstra – Key River**

#### KRAA

- large geographical area with a lot of Crown and First Nations Land
- approximately 100 members of which about 40% are also GBA members
- have a website and Facebook for perusal and input/comments/updates
- use mass email list for bcc updates as well
- each year there is a fishing derby for kids with BBQ and awards. The AGM is the same day and there is a community potluck picnic later in the day
- almost all of our members are water access only so we have signage at 2 marinas and at the Key Harbour Lodge advertising the KRAA and its benefits to the community.
- I think we get most of our new members via face to face requests (neighbours asking neighbours etc) and our President is the owner of Key Harbour Lodge so he recommends membership to his local clients who gas up or buy sundries from his business
- we have GBA updates at all of our meetings (in person and teleconference) via Alan Burke. We have invited the GBA to our AGM in the past to speak about initiatives and wildlife.

### **Notes from Jamie Drayton – Manitou**

- Small association, only approx 45 cottages
- Membership is strong at 80-90%
- Introduced secondary memberships last year to pull in younger cottagers and those families sharing properties - successful to date (10-12 new secondary memberships)
- Membership is fairly simple in our association due to size - everyone knows each other and cottages rarely change hands
- What works for us regarding new cottagers is that the president of the association paddles to their dock, introduces him/herself and the association and asks if they'd join
- We have 2 association events each year that bring everyone together - the annual meeting (with social and lunch) and regatta
- We have some big patches of phrag and are working with GBF to clear (main local threat)

## **Additional Notes from Chris Hawley - Cognashene**

~400 members of ~635 rate payers. Fees \$155.00, associate fee \$135.00, using PayPal and hard copy renewals.

Characteristics of Association:

We do not have a club house, but a beach we lease from the township with a floating dock.

Very active/reactive website. Revamped within last 2 yrs., with board web master. It can do surveys as well.

Portfolio's very active:

President

Treasurer

Membership: marketing new developments, give out new members packages personally.

Services: fire pump monitoring, winter patrol which now includes photos of cottages, notes, 3X per winter, OPP communications, garbage info etc.

Environment: from survey importance we monitor, educate on important issues of water levels, water quality, phrag issues, fisheries etc.

Planning: controversial but works with the GB Township on COA applications and OPA amendments

Communications: one of top 4 important factors from survey. We offer our magazine, Cognashene Cottager, hard copy of map, Directory of members info (as they wish re privacy), news letters 3-4X/yr, Eblasts as necessary to inform membership of important new issues, again very active/reactive web site, developing map on line including 911 numbers and GPS coordinates of all cottages.

Rec program: active for July and August. Works to break even financially speaking, but usually CCA needs to contribute annually. Different costs for full, associate, and non-members.

Activities include; swimming program, sailing, rec activities on rainy days, long distance swim, regatta, sailing race.

Member at large: assists as necessary with other portfolios, with goal to take over a portfolio.

Activities to attract new members, and not!

Having a planning portfolio can be very contentious. Although we have had to be involved in COA applications due to Township planning department concerns, their department is much better now and hopefully our involvement will be less necessary.

Word of mouth always works, as we all probably do.

New Members packages hand delivered really work. They include our Cottager, Directory, map environment pamphlets, 911 info.

We constantly survey our members via our web site on developing concerns.

This year we plan on having local block parties. Topics to be discussed may be phrag, Asian carp, septic inspections, 911 info, foliage maintenance. If for no other reason just connect.

The best thing we did was to do our large survey asking our membership what was important to them and what they expected from their board. We found that the most important issues were:

Water levels, water quality, winter patrol, and environment. Communications was also very notable. That gave us a direction to follow.

Thank you for this opportunity to share ideas. I am available for details on any of the above notes including pay pal, where I can direct you to our Treasurer who has the details.

## Notes from Karen Phillips - Woods Bay

The area:

- Approximately 158 properties in Woods Bay community neighbourhood
- Combination of seasonal and full-time; majority seasonal; and some of the families that were living year round, water access, have since sold and moved away from Woods Bay
- Large number of water access properties (Water based neighbourhood)
- Most full-time residents provide support services to the community (i.e. marinas, contracting, barging, etc.).
- The area is highly influenced by the presence of the Massasauga Provincial Park
- We have families that have been coming to the area for generations, however over the past few years we have seen a number of cottage sales and new families coming to the area
- Approximately 78 memberships in 2015; approximately 50% membership participation
- Introduced Auxiliary membership at 2015 Annual General Meeting
- In 2016 we have 55 paid memberships so far (54 regular + 1 corporate)
- In 2016 we have introduced the Auxiliary membership to attract younger members and increase their involvement; 13 Auxiliary memberships in 2016
- Historically, new members have been recruited through direct invitation and through an annual Wine & Cheese party
- In preparation for the 2016 year, the WBCA designated a board member who focuses specifically on social events
- We continue to personally invite members to join the WBCA and share a membership package with those who are new to the area (cottage resales)
- During past 5 years, individual cottagers have initiated community building events (i.e. cocktail parties, dinners, concert events) which has helped to connect the community in a more substantial way
- The WBCA facilitates the following events to build community:
  - i. Annual General Meeting followed by a community BBQ
  - ii. Travelling Dinner Party
  - iii. Summer Family Event (2016 the GBBR is participating and educating our community regarding environmental activities and initiatives)
  - iv. Wine & Cheese Party for new members
  - v. Water Quality Testing
  - vi. Fire pump locations, maintenance & training
- The WBCA also works very closely with The Friends of the Massasauga Park (FOMP), and participates in events to support the park (i.e. fundraising music concerts).
- The WBCA produces regular newsletters and a membership directory every spring

High Profile Threats in our area:

1. Phragmites: We have three stands of phrag in our area, of which we are working closely with Heather Sergeant from Georgian Bay Forever (and she is also a local cottager on Woods Bay) to identify, monitor and properly manager & dispose of it
2. Water Levels: An ongoing conversation
3. Natural State Zoning: the WBCA is concerned about the ambiguity and misleading nature of natural state zoning in our area

## Notes from Erica Allen – PABIA

- 670 Full members - introduced a JR membership (19-34) in 2015 at a reduced rate, we have 56 Junior members for 2016
- Not sure % of ratepayers as we part of the Township of the Archipelago which is vast but suspect participation is high. Amalgamated with Sturgeon Bay cottagers assoc. fall 2015
- All members are GBA Members as it is a combined membership
- Host numerous community events to attract and maintain members – weekly sailing races, JR and SR regattas, Naturalist talks, distance swim, Flying Scott sailing school
- Website with events, environmental issues, planning issues ,reporting on Landuse,( township reviewing the Official Plan) facebook page , weekly eblasts, annual directory in combination with Ojibway club
- Host free pancake breakfast for ALL prior to AGM
- Services we provide which attract and maintain membership: install and maintain navigational markers, three winter cottage patrols, marine Patrol on the water daily, weekly water testing, cleanup of picnic areas, updated cottage map referencing cottage owners and access to fire pump locations.
- Solicit new members through letter writing campaigns, face to face requests, solicitation at regattas