



Full GBA Membership Committee Minutes

May 3, 2018 Teleconference

Attending		Absent	
GBA Directors		GBA Associations Reps	
Bay of Islands Community	Lindsay Richards, Chair	Bayfield Nares Islanders'	Sara Carter
West Carling	Marc Cooper	Mad Club at Go Home Bay	Pete Smith
Pointe au Baril Islanders'	Mike Berton	Manitou	Liz Drayton
Sans Souci & Copperhead	Eric Armour (joined later)	McGregor Bay	Heather Gagnon
Honey Harbour	John Maynard	NGBA	Mike Porter
Executive Director	Rupert Kindersley	Pointe au Baril Islanders'	Erica Allen
GBA Associations Reps		Wah Wah Taysee	Gord Forstner
Honey Harbour	Sue Maynard	Cognashene Cottagers	Sue Carter
Key River Area	Karen Turkstra		
Sans Souci & Copperhead	Gregg Scott		
South Channel	Luc Voorn		
West Carling	Donna Tucker		
Woods Bay	Karen Phillips (left early)		

After introductions it was noted that these conference calls for the full membership committee commenced in the spring of 2016, so this is the fifth call.

Membership numbers

It was noted that the GBA membership numbers had been distributed prior to the call and show a decline of 85 (2.9%) in full members from the previous year, but an estimated increase of 17 members (5%) in other membership categories (excluding Cognashene and Honey Harbour, who include their Associate members (who pay the full GBA dues) in with their Full member numbers). Outside of Honey Harbour and Cognashene, Manitou Associate members pay \$25 (50%) of GBA dues but all other categories pay \$0.

Increasing Full (paying) membership

There is some good progress on the other membership categories, but there is a clear need to reverse the downward trend in Full (paying) membership.

Donna asked whether we had ever approached the large number of associations on the west side of Georgian Bay. Rupert advised that there had been some discussions, but, at present the strategy is to focus on the gaps in coastal coverage on the east and north shores, because the issues and priorities of those associations on the west coast are different, due primarily to the completely different ecology of that area.

With regard to identifying the gaps on the east and north shores, Marc advised that the updated association map for the new GBA website is almost complete and he hopes to have it completed by website launch (some associations have not yet submitted their boundaries, but Marc will estimate these and they can subsequently be adjusted).

John Maynard spoke about the challenge for all associations to reach out to and engage the younger generations through good use of social media channels. Sue Maynard advised that part of this communication challenge is to ensure that the older generations continue to receive what they want – such as hard copies of UPDATE.

Name harmonization for other membership categories

Lindsay noted that there is a lack of consistency in the names associations use for their other categories and wondered if it might be possible to harmonize these. After discussion it was agreed that there would be too much resistance to changing the names of established categories, so this proposal was dropped.

GBA website format for associations + facebook, new twitter and instagram guides

The website format developed by Marc for GBA associations will be redistributed, together with the facebook guide.

Marc provided a new **Twitter Guide** that was sent out to the committee before the call and went through this providing the following pointers:

- The photo you use is important and should clearly identify your association – logo, iconic lighthouse, community centre, well known landmark ...
- Follow like-minded individuals and organizations as this builds relevant content and lets people know that you have a Twitter presence.
- The guide is for desktop set up - there is a link to a mobile app in the guide and a link to Hootsuite, which assists with content distribution across all social media channels.

Marc is developing an Instagram guide which will be distributed when done.

Gregg suggested that we should track any correlation between using Twitter and other social media and membership numbers, particularly those other membership categories designed for younger generations. If an association does not have these channels then they are probably not reaching this audience. It was agreed that GBA and its associations should look at the entire audience, determine how they want to receive communications and then deliver it to them in the formats that will work best. It was noted that the GBA Communications Committee has been and will continue to work on this and get information out to the associations.

Review of membership benefits

Rupert reviewed the membership benefits – details at: <http://www.georgianbayassociation.com/gba-membership-benefits/>

Action First Aid can provide a variety of different presentations and training sessions to fit association needs and this is of great interest to older members. In addition the price of the defibrillators that they supply (~\$1,400) makes it affordable for any members to have one at their cottage, if they want to have that piece of mind.

The Rice Insurance 15% discount applies to all personal insurance, home & car as well as cottage and boats and can be significant. Rupert advised that by switching to them he now saves ~\$150 per month.

The Coleman 30% discount on online purchases is also useful.

GBA has a strategy of continuing to expand this service for members, in many cases adding new advertisers, which helps to increase GBA revenues.

Rupert suggested that associations profile these services when trying to attract new members and retain existing members, as the financial advantages are potentially significant and could easily cover the cost of association membership.

Conference calls

A discussion took place on the best conference call providers. Rupert advised that a friend of his with considerable expertise in this sector had advised him that Accutel (used by GBA) is still one of the top rated companies in this space. Others confirmed that they have used Accutel with good results.

Round table discussion & input on Guardians of the Bay (GOTB) activities planned for 2018

Name	Assoc'n	Fighting Phrag	Clean -Up	Rock/ Nature Walk	Kids Events	Water Testing	Forest Health	Other
Karen	Key	√		√				Walleye habitat restoration; Water Level updates; fighting Henvey windfarm
Sue*	CCA	√	√	√	√			Joint events with GBLT
Sue*	HH	√	√	√	√			Joint events with GBLT
Donna	WC			√	√			Joint events with GBBR; referencing GOTB in publications; will send link to "Striking Balance" video
Gregg	SSCA	√		√		√		
Mike	PaBIA	√			√		√	Marine patrol; identifying invasive plant and aquatic species
Luc	South	√		√		√	√	
Lindsay	BICA	√	√					See note on Clean Up

* John and Sue Maynard are members of both Cognashene and Honey Harbour associations. Many of the GOTB activities above generally help identify an association as environmentally responsible and as advocates for a healthy environment, which assists membership efforts.

Fighting Phragmites

Activities included tours and mapping of phragmites patches to assist identification and assembling groups for eradication, allied with providing education and information on how best to deal with phragmites and its disposal.

Note: GBA is forming a Phragmites Network with input from GBF and is looking to form a similar committee structure as has been done for membership – i.e. one participant from each GBA association and using conference calls as a means of exchanging info and ideas.

Clean-Up – Rock/Nature Walks

Lindsay advised that Bay of Islands has participated in an MOECC grant program via their municipality, NEMI, to provide funds for shoreline rejuvenation and clean up. It is a 2 week program with 100 volunteers expected and the grant covers equipment, transport and out of pocket expenses. Both clean-up and rock/nature walk activities are often combined with invasive species identification and mapping, identifying forest health issues and are done as joint projects with GBLT or GBBR.

Kids Events

Seen as an important way to get the younger generations involved and engaged at an early stage. Involve similar activities/collaborations as clean-up and rock/nature walks above.

Water Testing

Important to note that GBA may put in place a similar structure to the Phragmites Network above, in order to help with consistency and exchange info and ideas. The current aim is to use the Lake Partners water testing protocol throughout the Bay.

Forest Health

Majority of activity is identifying and mapping forest diseases and invasive species.

Membership Tool Kit - round table discussion to generate ideas for what could be in it and what associations are doing now in this respect

The purpose of the tool kit is to put together a package of information for prospective association members, and to assist with membership retention, which demonstrates what the association can do for members and the advantages of membership – services, information, benefits, protecting the environment, local ratepayer functions (municipality, councilors) and wider advocacy (GBA).

[Note – the discussion covered much of the ground previously set out in the “What Works” primer and previous Membership minutes (all available on the membership Committee page on the GBA website), so these minutes will only detail additional news, thoughts and ideas that surfaced.]

Karen – Key River – advised that membership is up 10% in 2018 and has mainly been achieved via face-to-face efforts by existing members. Key River distribute literature successfully via their marinas, do eblasts detailing the benefits + send out the water levels reports. They have found that pictures in particular help with increased website etc. traffic.

Sue – Honey Harbour/Cognashene – advised that changes in cottage ownerships due to high turnover is a challenge. Rupert pointed out that this can become an advantage if all the local real estate agents are persuaded to subsidize one year’s membership for new buyers – usually real estate agents are strong supporters of associations so this is an easy sell. HH/CCA brochures detail township as well as HH/CCA services. The HH/CCA winter patrols are a popular and valuable service that helps with membership.

John Maynard - Honey Harbour/Cognashene - thought we should ask all associations to share what they currently have in their Membership [Tool]Kit and develop guidelines from that.

Donna – West Carling – advised that their Membership Committee met throughout the winter by conference call and have drafted a plan that draws heavily on the GBA What Works strategies and used it as a framework to structure a plan for West Carling. The FOCA website was also helpful in drafting the plan and is a good resource for our committee. Important to identify gaps in GBA shoreline coverage so the map is going to be important. Suggest using reps in those gaps to help expand membership, if there is no association there. W. Carling intends to update its membership "Recruiting Brochure" by adding information about local services and local products, and renaming it as a "Welcome" Kit.

Gregg – SSCA – advised that introducing the online PayPal payment option for dues renewal has been popular. Suggested: developing talking points for dock to dock membership efforts; updating brochures when needed; outlining benefits of membership is important; and also stressed the importance of identifying gaps in GBA shoreline coverage.

Eric – SSCA – suggested that members of the committee should all visit the websites of all the associations and the GB5 and sign up to receive updates/newsletters where that is an option. SSCA provides a magnetic business card to members that can be placed on your fridge and has emergency numbers, GPS location and island number, as safety is an important issue. **John Maynard** agreed that reviewing other association websites will help with ideas and website improvements.

Mike – PaBIA – Many events, including 2 major regattas, pancake breakfast, and a sailing tournament all help to attract new members and retain membership. PaBIA finances a marine patrol and channel markers. Suggested associations should also reach out to renters to become members, as many of them are regular, renting every year.

Luc – South Channel – emailed their brochure to committee members and suggested all do the same so we can compare and get ideas. S. Channel regularly distributes info on social events, recruits kids to help with info distribution, and works with real estate agents as above. Stressed the effectiveness of face to face membership efforts.

Lindsay – BICA – summarized the discussion that took place and noted that hand-outs, face-to-face/dock-to-dock efforts, sharing information, improving communications (particularly to the younger generations), updating/improving websites, brochures, membership directories, and social events (including those aimed at the younger generations) were all common themes discussed and also important for BICA.

Lindsay also noted that there were several action items to be followed up from the above discussions on the Membership Tool Kit.

How do we drive new membership?

John Maynard suggested, and it was agreed, that we should include a discussion on how we drive new membership as a standing item for these calls. It was noted that a Crisis, whether local or GB wide, helps increase membership. Important to review and compare penetration rates between associations and look at ways of increasing them.

There being no further business the **conference call closed** and Lindsay thanked those that participated.