



Pointe au Baril Islanders' Association

2018 Membership Survey

Executive Summary

March 2019

Research Background

PaBIA unites together our water access community to promote, protect and preserve this unique and natural region.

As such, PaBIA is dedicated to advocate for the natural environment, promote the safety of our Members on and off the water, raise the awareness and participation in a multitude of community-oriented events and is committed to transparency with our Members via timely communications.

In addition, PaBIA has also had a voice in our local municipal government when it comes to land development issues. With a Membership of over 715 households, representing over 2000 individuals, PaBIA has an opportunity to find common ground on issues and work with stakeholders toward successful solutions that benefit the entire community.

By conducting membership surveys, PaBIA wishes to learn from its Members and their families so that we may clearly understand and prioritize key issues and opinions of our Membership.

Ten years ago, in 2008, an original survey was conducted with PaBIA Members. The PaBIA Board decided it was time for a new survey to gain current opinions and identify any changes over time. This second 2018 survey poses questions on the Township of the Archipelago Official Plan and Land Use similar to those from 2008. Additional questions have been added concerning Emergency Response, Environmental concerns (septic use), and PaBIA Municipal Representation and Communication practices.

In both the 2008 and 2018 surveys, care has been taken to ensure statistically meaningful results that fairly represent the views of our Membership, and provide a sound footing from which to guide the organization and its efforts.

Survey Background

This Executive Summary is intended to outline key learnings and comparisons to the 2008 survey results. More detailed charts and commentary are attached for further clarity. For the full survey's detailed results, go to PaBIA's website.

In total, 713 PaBIA Membership households received the survey. (1 survey per Household Membership.)

- 666 received an email invitation with a link to the online survey on Survey Monkey.
- 47 surveys were sent through the postal service to members without an email address.

For perspective, online surveys normally attracts an average 10-20% response rate.

This survey attracted a 43% response rate reflecting a very strong interest and engagement from our Members. This rate does however fall below the 2008 52% response achieved.

Responses were tabulated in total and by sub-groups as well as compared to 2008 results where applicable. Any statistically significant difference is noted at the 95% confidence level. Only sub-groups showing significant differences are included in the findings.

Findings

Land Use

The results from the 2018 PaBIA survey reflect the same direction given by Members in 2008 with the wish to keep the unique nature of the Township of the Archipelago. While in strong agreement with the Official Plan concerning the goals and ideals around land use and development, over half of PaBIA respondents would like stronger restrictions and stricter enforcement.

Official Plan

Over 80% of the PaBIA respondents agree with the Official Plan of the Township of the Archipelago which makes statements about the goals and ideals around land use and development in the area. The 2018 results closely align with the 2008 results.

Respondents who have been PaBIA Members longer, been coming to Pointe au Baril longer and are older, are all in stronger agreement with the Official Plan than the balance of Membership. The largest portion (44%) feel the Official Plan is being adhered to “fairly well”.

The Comprehensive Zoning Bylaws (CZBL)

While most (61%) think the Bylaws are “about right”, 33% of the respondents think the Bylaws are “somewhat lenient” or “too lenient”. The question in 2018 was changed slightly from 2008 but produced similar results.

Respondents were divided on whether they thought the Bylaws are being adhered to, but fully 44% don’t know the answer.

All members were then asked if the restrictions should be tightened to prevent development or not. When compared to the 2008 results, although the question was worded somewhat differently, the results remain the same. About 50% of the respondents feel the restrictions should be tightened.

Those PaBIA respondents who spend more than 60 days at their cottage and those 65 years of age or older are even more inclined to want tighter restrictions on development.

When given a chance to comment on the restrictions, most comments had to do with the size of the main cottage, notes about boathouses, concerns about enforcing Bylaws and suggestions for how to measure or change Bylaws.

CZBL - Severance of Existing Properties

About half (51%) did not feel that the current severance eligibilities were consistent with the ideals of the Township’s Official Plan and 66% felt the restrictions should be tightened. The results from 2008 showed the same tendency only significantly more so.

There was also very strong appeal by 70% to increase the minimum lot frontage to greater than the existing 100 meters.

Comments were made about Pointe au Baril being such a “special” place that needs to be preserved, but there were also longtime members with multiple generations who felt their islands should be “grandfathered”.

CZBL – Accessory Buildings

The majority of respondents think both the number (67%) and the size (71%) of accessory buildings should have tighter regulations. These results match the 2008 results.

CZBL – Land Shaping: Blasting and Clearing

Again, the 2018 results are in line with the 2008 results for clearing trees and blasting. The majority of respondents (66%) think there should be some restrictions on tree removal; 83% would support restrictions on blasting and 79% feel the disposal of blasting fill should be regulated.

PaBIA’s Role Representing Its Membership

There is strong support for PaBIA to play a role in all areas related to Township Council Zoning, Bylaws and the Official Plan with 74% or more rating these factors as “very important”. Members were asked how satisfied they were with PaBIA representing them with Township Council. About a quarter of the respondents did not feel they were familiar enough to answer the question indicating the need for PaBIA to communicate more about their interactions with Council.

Ways PaBIA Interacts with Council	Very Important
Communicate with our Councillors to educate and foster cooperative issues	78%
Attend hearings on zoning matters of concern	75%
Work with Council to close loopholes in the Bylaws	75%
Appeal decisions made by Council when necessary to enforce the provisions of the CZBL and Official Plan	74%
Monitor requests for minor variances	49%

Separately, the majority of PaBIA respondents want the PaBIA Board to continue to not selectively endorse any individual election candidates for Township Council.

Emergency Response

An important mandate by over three quarters of our respondents is for PaBIA to investigate and recommend a seasonal emergency response plan for our water-based community funded in whole or in part by Township property taxes.

The 2018 Yearbook contained a special section on Member Safety including a Cottage Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) and the back flap which was removable to fill-out with emergency information.

The Yearbook was helpful to get discussions started, but PaBIA needs to continue to remind Members to complete a Cottage Emergency Plan and create Neighborhood Emergency Plans.

Environment

Most respondents have a traditional or advanced septic treatment system with a weeping bed (70%) or a septic holding tank (17%). While over 60% of those have had their system inspected and cleaned in the past 5 years, that means that 40% have not.

PaBIA should continue to educate Members on the importance of having their septic systems inspected and cleaned every 5 years.

Communications

PaBIA’s eBlasts and PaBIA/Ojibway Yearbook are extremely well received. The eBlasts are read every time and thoroughly showing how pertinent, timely and interesting the content is.

Remarks about the Yearbook include: “terrific”, “fabulous”, “impressive”

The PaBIA website is visited, but not very often. Members would rather receive information in eBlasts. The website is used for reference and visited mainly during the summer.

PaBIA’s communication is a large part of what pulls the community together and being part of a community is a key factor why people join PaBIA.

Throughout the survey in various area, respondents repeatedly expressed their appreciation and continued need for education around such things as invasive species, water quality, water levels, forest management, speeding boats, safety, fishing, noise and light pollution, etc.

PaBIA needs to be more transparent and communicate more about what the Board and Board Committees are doing. In addition, PaBIA needs to communicate more about what is happening in the Township and Council, and PaBIA’s interaction with them.

Membership

Our Respondent’s wide-ranging reasons for belonging to PaBIA indicate the importance of the organizations multi-faceted community involvement across all of its social, recreational, safety, environmental, communications and rate payer initiatives.

The main reasons for joining PaBIA include:

Main Reasons	%
Provide Safety (markers, Emergency oversight)	52%
Cottage Off Season Patrol	40%
Being part of the community	40%
Provides Communication about ongoing initiatives	38%
Want to support the local programs and initiatives	38%

The channel markers and cottage off-season patrols are tangible benefits. Being part of the community is a major reason as well as being informed about ongoing initiatives.

Junior Membership was started in 2015 for people age 18 to 36 whose families have Full Membership. Responses for the Junior members were limited, but it is important to note the differences in priorities when recruiting and communicating with younger members.

Their priorities are somewhat different:

Main Reasons for Junior Members	%
Want to support the local programs and initiatives	65%
Being part of the community	60%
Events (Regattas, Sailing, Naturalist, Triathlon, Jr Member, etc.) *	60%
Provides Communication about ongoing initiatives	55%
Actively Works to preserve the natural habitat	45%
Is a family tradition	45%

Not surprisingly, events are a major reason for joining PaBIA. Being part of the community and keeping up through PaBIA’s communications are also key. The younger members can also be called upon to participate in conservation activities.