

**KINGSTON YACHT CLUB
MEMBERSHIP SURVEY 2011
SUMMARY REPORT**

INTRODUCTION

The Board extends its thanks to everyone who responded the Membership Survey. The response was overwhelming: 173 members took the time to provide thoughtful and constructive advice and to report on their experience with various aspects of Club programs and services. It is unusual to get a response of this size and speaks to how much members care about their Club.

The Membership Survey was carried out as part of the Board's efforts to engage everyone in contributing to the long range strategic plan and to begin an annual process for getting input on operations and policies.

This report provides highlights of the survey including a brief summary of the narrative comments as well as charts and graphs on various aspects of the responses. Overall, the responses are consistent with the feedback provided at the Town Hall meeting on April 23. A summary of that meeting is also available.

GENERAL RESULTS

To date, we are hearing that the majority of members support substantive improvement and/or development of the existing facilities as a means to attain sustainability over the long term. There is a smaller number of members who prefer minimal to no change and an even smaller number who express an interest in pursuing radical change. For the most part we are hearing that we should focus on:

- Increasing and broadening the current membership;
- Improving and increasing the capacity of the Clubhouse facilities;
- Improving and expanding the capacity of the harbour.

Members also emphasize the need to undertake a thorough cost/benefit analysis and develop detailed plans before embarking on any major renovations or changes.

NARRATIVE COMMENTS

The narrative comments provided in the survey were helpful in providing the Board with constructive input. Some of this we can act on immediately and other things will be addressed within the context of the long range strategic plan.

Here's a sample of what you told us:

General

- You have a commitment to your Club and want to see it prosper over the long term at its current location;
- You joined because of family history with the Club, your love of sailing or desire for a comfortable place to make social connections;
- Racing and the Club's reputation for producing excellent sailors are important to you;
- Many of you volunteer your time at the Club. Some of you would like to volunteer but need more information or support to get involved;
- We need to be more family friendly and that includes our facilities, programs/services and food services;
- We need to be more youth friendly with appropriate space and activities;
- You aren't all getting the information you need about Club activities;
- Hiring a General Manager was a good thing but you want to know if it was a sound financial investment;
- The Board needs to do a better job of letting you know what it is doing on your behalf.

Food and Beverages/Entertainment

Almost everyone would like to see changes in the availability and type of food and beverage services, e.g.:

- Expanded menu including more low cost items, healthy choices, specials and a children's menu;
- Expanded use of the dining room throughout the year.
- A number of you are prepared to pay a minimum chit to support expanded food and beverage services.

There were many suggestions about the entertainment schedule. You would like to see:

- More events with music and dancing;
- Off season activities e.g. card night;
- More functions for families with young children e.g. movies;
- Either more vacation slides in the Speakers Series or no vacation slides at all;
- More activities for youth;
- Some of the standards kept, e.g. the carol sing.

Membership

Many of you acknowledged that we need a healthy membership base to sustain the Club and you made recommendations about how to do that:

- All members need to be more welcoming of new members and we need to create specific processes/activities to help new members integrate into the Club, e.g. orientation nights, mentors or ambassadors, etc.;
- We need to increase our appeal to a broad range of individuals including a younger demographic, people interested in social memberships, and sailors interested in racing IOMs, for example;

- We need to be more proactive in helping Adult Learn to Sail participants make the transition to ongoing membership;
- Our facilities need to be updated if we are to attract new members;

Facilities

Our Clubhouse is showing its age and we should:

- Look at opportunities to substantially upgrade the existing Clubhouse or explore options for converting Saints' Rest to this purpose;
- Significantly upgrade the showers and washrooms at Saints' Rest;
- Update the Clubhouse, its furnishings and facilities including improving accessibility;
- Create better space for children and for youth;
- Present a welcoming face on Maitland Street;
- Finally, a few of you would like to see spa and sports facilities at the Club.

You recognize that our harbour is showing its age and is congested. We need to:

- Look at opportunities to make better use of the existing space;
- Address congestion problems on the breakwall and the T-dock;
- Explore options for expanding the harbour and increasing our capacity to accommodate bigger boats;
- Provide more finger docks and improve access in the Shark basin;
- Improve electrical service;
- Create people friendly space at the flagpole;
- Address storage issues.

Activities

There were a number of helpful suggestions on how to attract more racing boats and crew as well as members interested in model boat racing. In addition, many of you are interested in dinghy racing if we could just get organized to make it happen. Some of you also mentioned providing members with access to dinghies, canoes, kayaks, windsurfers, etc. There were many terrific suggestions that will be provided to appropriate committees for follow up.

Vision for the Club

Visions vary somewhat but there are common themes. For example, members want their club to be recognized for the following:

- Friendly and vibrant culture;
- Excellence in sailing - racing, training, etc.;
- Superior and expanded food and beverage services
- Part of the Kingston community;
- Year round activities;
- Updated facilities – clubhouse, harbour, patio.

A few members note that they are simply interested in a mooring or in racing but most are looking for something more: a welcoming, comfortable environment where they can spend time with friends and family.

Following are a few specific comments:

- “I would like the Yacht Club to regain a position of prominence and importance throughout the Kingston community, and to again be a destination for those looking for summer leisure, world class sailing and social networking.”
- “KYC has an excellent location, and with team work and collaboration with all members, it can be the best club on the lake.”
- “An active well managed and maintained club that is strongly supported by members of all ages whether or not they are sailors.”
- “A centre of active participation and education for all aspects of sailing and water sports. A classy gathering place for members and guests that is cosy yet modern, attractive and inviting for all age groups.”
- “We should ambitiously look forward to how we do business, develop the strategic plan, then spend the money to implement the plan and rebuild what needs to be replaced.”
- “Having the club filled with old and young families.”

People clearly care about their Club and how it is seen in the community.

Following are some charts and graphs based on responses to the survey.