

Lake Babine Member Recommendations on Governance: Feedback from the July 2023 Election Code Meetings

Lake Babine's Election Code Steering Committee held community meetings between July 11-15, 2023 in Fort Babine, Tachet, Woyenne, Prince George, Vancouver and online. At these meetings, members provided feedback to the Steering Committee about how LBN's government should look and how elections should work. Many of the suggestions would significantly change how Lake Babine governs itself and would go beyond the mandate of the Steering Committee to improve the LBN Election Code in time for the 2024 election.

However, member recommendations that go beyond short-term improvements to the Election Code can be considered by Lake Babine's Governance Advisory Team and discussed further within the Nation as part of the work to develop Lake Babine's Governance Model under section 9 of the Foundation Agreement. Thus, those member recommendations are documented here for consideration in Lake Babine's Governance work:

1. Councillors should have to live in the community they represent in order to be more accountable to that community.
2. A candidate should need to live in the community where they run for office (i.e. before being elected)
3. There should be training for people to be good leaders. Train in their traditional ways, train younger people to respect elders. It's all about setting a good example and being a good role model and showing through your actions your conduct.
4. People who run should at least understand Nadut'en, and should be able to speak it.
5. There should be staggered terms of office so that there is continuity in leadership (i.e. not all positions up for election in the same year).
6. There should be a councillor position for Halifax.
7. There should be a councillor position for Sunnyside.
8. Woyenne should have less representation: 2 of its seats should be re-allocated to Donald's Landing/Pinkut (1) and to urban members (1) or 2 urban members.
9. There needs to be representation for urban members on Council.
10. All the information about our governance system should be translated into Nadut'en for the elders.
11. Each Community should have a membership list and that would decide who gets to vote for which Community council members. [*This recommendation relates to both the Governance model and development of LBN's Citizenship rules*]

12. Each member should have to vote for the councillors running in the community where the member lives.
13. There should be a drug and alcohol policy that includes random drug testing of Chief and Council.
14. Candidates should have to prove their qualifications to be candidates. Portfolios should be assigned to Council members based on relevant expertise and if they don't, they should have to develop that expertise within first 6 months.
15. Candidates should not need any specific level of formal education to run for office as they can still be qualified without formal education and the education system has discriminated against us.
16. Power is too concentrated in some families: there should be limits to how many Council members can come from one family or how many people on LBN staff can come from one family.
17. Hereditary Chiefs should have the power to remove Councillors from office if they aren't doing their job.

The Election Code Steering Committee thanks the members who provided these recommendations and urges the Governance Advisory Team and the Lake Babine people to consider them.