



The Membership of Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek approve its proposed **Membership Code** through a successful ratification vote.

On November 19th 2016, the Members of Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek cast their ballots in a Ratification Vote on the proposed **Membership Code**. With an overwhelming majority of 65 to 13 in favour, the Community will now enforce its own **Membership Code**, and opt out of the legislative requirements under the *Indian Act*, administered by Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada ("INAC").

The **Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek Membership Code** was developed through a Committee driven process which involved three (3) Community Members, and was brought to the Community for consultation. BNA is one of several Communities in Ontario to enact its own **Membership Code**, and is one step closer to total self-governance as a result.

INAC determines Band membership until a Band assumes control of its membership under section 10 of the *Indian Act*. The rules must be approved by a majority of the electorate of the First Nation.

"This vote shows the support that the Membership of BNA has for the **Membership Code**", said Chief Laura Airns following the vote count. "We are thrilled with the overwhelming participation of the membership.

About Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek: BNA, also known as Sand Point First Nation, is a community of nearly 250 members. The First Nation is located on the southeast shores of Lake Nipigon. BNA just recently had its land returned to them in April 2010 following years of displacement at the hands of the Provincial and Federal governments. The Community adopted its own Land Code under the First Nations Land Management Act on March 30th 2013. The Community and its leadership are now forging ahead with major economic development initiatives, and re-establishing the Community for the eventual return of the membership to their homeland.

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