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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FERNKLOOF NATURE RESERVE (FNR) ADVISORY BOARD (FAB) HELD
AT ONRUS RIVER BOARDROOM, HERMANUS
ON FRIDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2013 at 09:00**

1. Welcome, Attendance and Apologies

Present: Duncan Heard (in the Chair) [DH]; David Beattie (DB), Antony van Hoogstraten (AvH), Frank Woodvine (FW), Linda Griffiths (LG), Muthama Muasya (MM), Lee Burman (L.Bn), Grant Forbes [GF] (Cape Nature), Estelle Spaarwater (ES), Glynis Van Rooyen (GvR), Pieter Scholtz (PA) (Councillor) and Bongani Sithole (CapeNature – secundus for Andrae Marais)

Apologies: Andrae Marais [AM] (Cape Nature), Neville Michaels (Director: Protection Services) [NM]

In attendance: Penelope Aplon (Environmental Officer, Hermanus) [PA], Neville Green (Environmental Officer, Kleinmond) [NG], Jill Hendriks (PA, Onrus Office) [JH], Liezl Bezuidenhout (Environmental Manager, Overstrand) [LB]

The Chairperson welcomed everyone present. A special welcome was given to the two new FAB members Ms Glynis Van Rooyen and Ms Estelle Spaarwater. The re-appointment letters were handed out to four current members, which will continue serving on the board for another three years. (Ms L Griffiths, Ms L Burman, Mr A Van Hoogstraten and Mr D Beattie). PS has gave special thanks to FW. who resigned as a FAB member, for his years of commitment and support as a Fernkloof Advisory Board member. FW was involved in Fernkloof Nature Reserve for the past 36 years.

The Chairperson also welcomed Mr Anton Odendal from Bird Life Overberg who did a presentation on bird signage in the Nature Reserve. LBn requested to be involved with the final selection of the signage. DH confirmed that the FAB supports the project and suggested that BOTSOC also be involved.

The Chairperson informed everyone that the Biodiversity Conservation Manager's position at the Fernkloof Nature Reserve has been filled by Mr Neville Green and congratulated Neville on his new appointment.

2. Confirmation of Minutes for the Meeting of the Fernkloof Advisory Board held on 23rd of November 2012.

2.1. Confirmation of Minutes and Public Availability

The previous minutes had been circulated by e-mail to all members and no comments were received thereby confirming these Minutes. Confirmation was given that the minutes were put on the official Overstrand Municipal website as well as the intranet for the public to have access. Minutes are also placed in a library file and is available for the public.

J. Hendriks

2.2. Comments from Council on FAB Minutes dated 17th August 2012

LB confirmed that the Minutes were signed off by Mr Stephen Muller and it has been distributed to Council for comments. LB to give feedback at next meeting regarding any comments from Council.

L. Bezuidenhout

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Hermanus Astronomy Centre (Item 3.1)

A botanical assessment and engineering report had been submitted to the Municipality by the applicant. The relevant documents had been circulated to the Committee Members for comment. Mr. Green mentioned that the matter was dealt with in the Fernkloof Management Plan (being compiled) in terms of the Regulations for the

Proper Administration of Nature Reserves, in which an environmental impact assessment and authorisation was required prior to the construction of the facility. Sections of the management plan provided guidelines with respect to the evaluation of new infrastructure on the Reserve and these guidelines would be used to determine the need and desirability of the facility.

N. Green

3.2 Amendment of By-laws relating to FNR and FAB (Item 3.2)

NG had unfortunately not had time to meet with DH concerning the finalization of the by-laws. A follow-up meeting would be scheduled prior to the next FAB meeting.

D. Heard / N. Green

3.3 Invitation to Mayor to attend a FAB meeting (Item 3.3)

DH confirmed that the invitation to the Mayor to attend the FAB meetings is on the Mayor's table and that the Mayor will attend when she has an opening.

J. Hendriks

3.4 Dumping at Hoy's Koppie (Item 3.4)

PA indicated that the cost for the removal of the graffiti in Hoy's Koppie, will be approximately R 18 750.00. PA stated that warning signs have been put up for the public to stay out of the cave. The alarm was tested and it is working. PA confirmed that the general condition of the cave is much cleaner. LG confirmed that there are no big dumping issues anymore and it is a big improvement.

P. Aplon / L. Griffiths

3.5 Galpin Hut (Item 3.5)

PA indicated that an environmental loo has been purchased and confirmed that a site meeting for maintenance work at the hut was held on the 20th of February. PA stated that Supply Chain Management is in the process of getting quotations for the replacement of the mattresses, covers, steel trunk, table and hurricane lamps. PA informed everyone that an order has been put in for the building structure and installing of the environmental loo. PA to inform LBn once the maintenance is done so that the bookings can continue.

L. Griffiths / P. Aplon

3.6 Provincial By-pass Road (Item 3.6)

DH confirmed that there was also much public concern and opposition to the mooted Provincial mountain by-pass road. He stated that there was also much mis-information regarding the the status of the road's planning and that the SRK article in the recent Hermanus Times was very accurate. A regional road study would first be completed. If that study indicated that the mountain by-pass road is required and feasible, then the planning processes including the EIA and public participation would be initiated. DB confirmed that the civil society grouping 'Resident Opposed to the By-pass' are monitoring developments closely. LG confirmed that BOTSOC is completely against the road.

L. Bezuidenhout / D. Beattie

4. Administration

4.1 New Advisory Board Members

DH welcomed the two new board members, Estelle Spaarwater and Glynis Van Rooyen. The re-appointment letters for another three year cycle were also handed to Ms Linda Griffiths, Ms Lee Burman, Mr David Beattie and Mr Antony Van Hoogstraten.

4.2 FNR Integrated Management Plan (IMP)Progress

NG informed the committee that considerable work had been done on the Fernkloof Management Plan with respect to the alignment of objectives with the METT-SA Auditing System, the FAB METT-SA Assessment and the Objective Setting exercise that was conducted in 2010/2011. The consultant's text had been edited with respect to grammar, style and form. Comments had been compiled and had been forwarded to the Consultant. Mr. Green had scheduled a meeting with the consultant on Friday 1 March in order to discuss the contents of the management plan and to schedule the completion of outstanding information. It was foreseen that the draft management plan would be completed and ready to be workshopped with FAB on Friday 15 March.

N. Green / D Heard

4.3 FNR 2012/13 Budget

LB presented the Fernkloof budget excel spread sheet for information. She explained that currently the Overstrand Environmental Management Section receives a budget allocation from which the Reserve is allocated

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funds. The Reserve does not have a dedicated budget. In new financial year, Fernkloof will however have a dedicated Manager, and a dedicated budget.

DH suggested that the salaries of the dedicated personal be added to the spread sheet as well as a budget line item for Fire Management as it is a vital Reserve management function . LB confirmed that a request has been put in for additional two field rangers for the new financial year. She will present the updated Fernkloof Nature Reserve's budget to the FAB members at the quarterly meetings.

L. Bezuidenhout

4.4 FNR Management Reports

LB did combine all the relevant reports into one document and it was circulated to all FAB members.

L. Bezuidenhout

4.5 Making FAB Recommendations Public

DH indicated that FAB recommendations were made on a consensus basis or by majority vote. This must then be viewed as a FAB recommendation and not the view of any particular FAB member. If a member disagreed with a recommendation made at the meeting, that it was that member's right that their opposition to the recommendation be minuted.

Generally it would be wise to release information on the recommendations once the Minutes have been confirmed and that any formal correspondence to public organisations etc. would be dealt with by the Environmental Management Section.

5. Standing Items

5.1 Enforcement

Law Enforcement officials were absent. No feedback was available.

Enforcement Section

5.2 Ecological Issues

5.2.1 Keurboom (*Virgillia*) Distribution and Status

The report was distributed to everyone.

5.2.2 Baboon Electric Fencing

AvH still feels strongly that the electric fence must be removed if it's not serving positive function. FAB would preferably like to see the fence moved to the Reserve boundary. The responsible official has reported that the present electric fence is effective for the particular area it covers. LB indicated that a decision on the electric fence would be premature at this stage as she is investigating a number of strategies and consulting widely to find a long-term, effective and sustainable management strategy which she will present to FAB. The board respected LB's decision on this matter.

LG recommended that the Overstrand Municipality prioritises the removal of rubbish bags and other waste from the residential area of Voelklip and Fernkloof Nature Reserve on Monday mornings before 9 am in order to assist with the management of the baboon problem in the area. FAB and the Environmental Section agreed with the recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL – 2013 (1)

That the Overstrand Municipality prioritises the removal of rubbish bags and other waste from the residential areas adjacent to the Fernkloof Nature Reserve boundary on Monday mornings before 9 am in order to assist with the management of the baboon problem in the area.

L. Bezuidenhout

5.2.3 Event Applications

5.2.3.1 The Ride application

The event organizers did not receive any bookings for March 2013. The next date will be in October 2013. A Leading UK agent came to review the trail and is very excited about the product and will be listing it and recommended it to a network of agents across Europe and the USA. They are aiming to have a group for a trail date in October 2013. DH once again requested that Fernkloof must get the maximum exposure from the broadcast.

5.2.3.2 New event application sent via e-mail to Chairperson after the meeting

WCC submitted an application for the walk for Water event along the cliff path. An application form will be sent to Chairperson after the meeting.

- PA mentioned that she was contacted by Conrad Wegelin (Biosphere Breakaway) , who is part of a tourism initiative who will be taking clients on a 5 day 5 night biosphere walk.

Activity: *The first day is a walk through Fernkloof Nature Reserve, onto the Galpin hut path where we wish to lead our guests down to Newton Johnson where they will have lunch and a wine tasting. From there they will be shuttled back to their B+B at Hermanus.*

Group size & frequency: *minimum 8 to a maximum of 10 accompanied by 2 guides. The aim is to have one group per week over the Spring months of September through to early December and then from end January through to May.*

Area: *As indicated on the Google Map, we are looking for permission to clear a path of which about 125m is on the Overstrand/Fernkloof property. We would probably start the new path about 10m or so away from the Galpin path so that the beginning of the new path would be hidden and not easily seen by the everyday walkers. The path will be of ultra low impact. Bevan Newton Johnson has given us the go ahead to make the path on their land.*

This application would also be circulated via the Chairperson.

P Aplon

5.3 Research

5.3.1 Research Applications

Georgio Lombardi: Pollination biology in *Ericaceae*. This application was distributed electronically to FAB members. Approval was given to this application.

P Aplon

5.4 Land and Infrastructure

5.4.1 Fernkloof Village Drainage report

NG informed the Committee that discussions had taken place with Dr. Verster concerning the drainage issue. A hydrological study had been made available to the Municipality, but there were no clear construction plans which could be evaluated. The possible use of an extended drainage system for the irrigation of the Fernkloof gardens had been briefly considered and discounted as it was evident that the degree of flow in the system would be insufficient to supply the demand in summer and the water would not be required for irrigation in winter. Alternative irrigation resources had been identified for the Fernkloof gardens and nursery. Dr. Verster had indicated that he would consider further legal avenues if an agreement could not be reached with respect to the upgrading of the system. NG had drafted correspondence with request for further information from Dr. Verster and with reference to the Regulations for the proper administration of Nature Reserves, which requires a Basic Assessment Report and an environmental authorisation for the proposed upgrading of the drainage system. The correspondence would be submitted to the Committee for comment prior to the submission thereof to Dr. Verster.

N. Green

5.4.2 Hermanus Bird Club: Bird Hide Proposal

A letter has been sent to Barbara Palmer regarding the FAB recommendation and the Environmental Management's decision to decline the erection of a new bird-hide till the Management Plan had been finalised. Once the Management Plan had been finalised and zonation determined, the application can be re-considered..

N.Green

5.4.3 Bosko Church – Lease Agreement

The lease agreement is currently with Anja Kotze from Property Administration. Special conditions include in the agreement are:

- Removal of adult pines within 3 years of date of agreement
- The lease area must be kept clear of all other aliens
- A firebreak must be kept around the lease area
- No cultivation of plants without permission of reserve manager

- Only plants identified on Fernkloof spp list may be cultivated if permission is granted

P. Aplon

5.4.4. Scout Camp Site

AvH indicated that the FAB has recommended that the Overstrand Municipality renew the agreement for another nine years and 11 months. When the application was handed in it for the second time it was turned down. The board was informed that it should go out on public tender. It was recommended that the Scout Camp must apply annually to have the lease agreement renewed. AvH confirmed that the Mayor did visit the camp, and that the Scout Camp has the Mayor's support, but they are still experiencing obstacles, AvH suggested that NG incorporate the Scout camp into the Fernkloof Management Plan. DH suggested that the Scout group and BOTSOC should be treated with a MoA. ES confirmed that the Scout Camp will be put on the agenda as a discussion point for the next Heritage meeting which will take place on the 2nd Thursday of March 2013, to determined if the Scout Camp should go on the Heritage list.

PS confirmed that the Council is waiting for the proposal letter regarding the renewal of the Scout Camp lease agreement. PS also stated that according to the MFMA a lease agreement must go on public tender after the 1st year lease period and cannot just be renewed to the same Service Provider.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL – 2013(2)

A Memorandum of Agreement to be established for Scout Camp.

A.van Hoogstraten

5.5 Klein River Estuary Management

LB stated that the Estuary Management Plan has not been signed or accepted by the Municipality, due to tasks that was given to the Municipality that are not mandated functions, and are unfunded. LB indicated that the plan will have to be revised. LB indicated that the Mouth Management Protocol document which has an implication on the management of the mouth, will be revised in April 2013 (A date must still be determined). LB indicated that there will be a bathymetrical survey done on the mouth. LB urged members to forward comments to get as much historical information in the document as possible regarding the breaching. LB informed everyone that the position for the Estuary Co-Coordinator's funding will end in May and the contract will be ending in June 2013.

L. Bezuidenhout

5.6 Report from the Hermanus Botanical Society

LG did circulate all the Botanical Society's reports. LB indicated that BOTSOC do not have a Chairperson yet, but things are going very well. LG confirmed that there are a lot of new projects in the pipeline and that the FAB members will be updated.

L Griffiths

5.6.1 MoA with Overstrand Municipality i.t.o. FNR

A recommendation has been put forward to council, regarding the MoA. LG confirmed that the Overstrand Municipality has discussed possible funding to the amount of R 50 000.00 toward the water for the gardens.

L. Bezuidenhout

5.6.2 On and off FNR localities of herbarium species.

LBn to forward DH a copy of the updated spread sheet. DH indicated that is will be vital for the Management Plan to give an overall description of how many species are in FNR. MM will try to locate a national data list. DH indicated that is important to have back up information regarding the species for the Management Plan.

L. Burman

5.6.3 Accuracy of signboard in FNR gardens.

MM confirmed that he will be spending time with one of the board members to identify information on the signboards that requires updating.

M. Muasya / L. Griffiths

5.6.4 Nursery

5.6.4.1 Indigenous plants for Municipal use for rehabilitation Purposes.

PA confirmed that some progress has been made with plants being sold to the Municipality.

P. Aplon

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5.6.4.2 Sale of non-local indigenous invasive species.

LG confirmed that no invasive species are being sold at the nursery. **P. Aplon**

5.7 Report from Cliff Path Management Group

DB did circulate an annual report regarding the Cliff Path to FAB.

D Beattie

5.7.1 Working for the Coast Work Programme

PA confirmed that the Cliff path was cut open in December 2012. PA indicated that the Working for the Coast has met their APO deliverables and in some cases exceeded their deliverables. Two employees have been taken out of the Working for the Coast team whom is assisting at Fernkloof currently.

P. Aplon

5.7.2 Upgrade of Grotto Picnic Area

Enviro Africa has been appointed to conduct an EIA

P. Aplon

6. General

7. Date of 2013 Meetings:

24 May 2013

23 August 2013

22 November 2013

The meeting closed at 13.15