

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FERNKLOOF NATURE RESERVE (FNR) ADVISORY BOARD (FAB) HELD AT ONRUS RIVER BOARDROOM, HERMANUS ON FRIDAY, 23 NOVEMBER 2012

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), Johan du Toit (Inspector: Special Investigations: Law Enforcement) [JdT]).

Apologies: Neville Michaels (Director: Protection Services) [NM], Rudi Frazer (Chief: Traffic / Licenses) [RF]. Andrae Marais [AM] (Cape Nature), Councillor Pieter Scholtz, Liezl Bezuidenhout (Environmental Manager, Overstrand) [LB], Jill Hendriks (PA, Onrus Office) [JH],

In attendance: Penelope Aplon (Environmental Officer, Hermanus) [PA], Neville Green (Environmental Officer, Kleinmond) [NG].

The Chairperson welcomed everyone present. NG provided comments from LB regarding items for her attention.

2. Confirmation of Minutes the Meeting of the Fernkloof Advisory Board held on 17th of August

2.1. Library File for Minutes

The previous minutes had been circulated by e-mail to all members and no comments were received thereby confirming these Minutes.

JH confirmed that the minutes were put on the official Overstrand Municipal website as well as the intranet for the public to have access. Confirmation was given by JH that the library file has been opened and all the previous minutes for this year are available for the public.

J. Hendriks

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

LB confirmed that the Minutes were distributed to Council and Senior Management and no comments were received thereby confirming that there was general agreement with the contents of the Minutes.

L. Bezuidenhout

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Hermanus Astronomy Centre (Item 3.1)

A botanical survey was conducted on the proposed site by Shaun Privett. The report will be circulated to board members.

N. Green

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

DH indicated that there appeared to have been a misunderstanding regarding the request for amendments to the FNR and FAB by-laws. The intention of the original request was to amend the by-laws to update and align them with the current Provincial Nature and Environmental

Conservation Ordinance (which is still applicable) in terms of which FNR was declared. The Advisory Board was mandatory in terms of this Ordinance and its purpose was to provide advice on the management of local nature reserves to municipalities that did not have fully-fledged conservation departments.

It was noted that the National Protected Areas Act (also applicable to FNR) provided for the 'Advisory Committees' but this was not mandatory and these 'Advisory Committees' served a broader purpose – mainly that of a stakeholder liaison forum.

It was agreed that an 'Advisory Committee' in terms of the Protected Areas Act was superfluous as FAB was already representative of many sectors of the local community. However, it was agreed that there was room for improved stakeholder liaison regarding the management of FNR and that this could be largely accommodated through an annual public meeting at which a progress report on FNR management is given followed by a question and answer session.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL – 2012 (2)

1. Stakeholder feedback on the FNR management progress to be given at an annual public meeting.
2. The current By-Law must be updated and aligned with the Western Cape Nature and Environmental Ordinance.

DH and NG must meet to finalise proposed amendments to FNR By-laws.

D. Heard / N. Green

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

DH requested that the new dates for the 2013 FAB meetings be sent to the Mayor's Office.

J. Hendriks

3.4 Dumping at Hoy's Koppie (Item 3.4)

PA indicated that a contractor has been appointed to remove the graffiti in Hoy's Koppie, but a water point still has to be established to enable sandblasting. Progress report at next meeting.

P. Aplon / L. Griffiths

3.5 Galpin Hut (Item 3.5)

LBn indicated that the hut is in constant use, but mattresses were needed urgently. PA indicated that a site visit still has to be scheduled with Director Stephen Muller. LG undertook to convey the urgency of the upgrade to Dr Pat Miller. (BotSoc Chairperson).

L. Griffiths / P. Aplon

3.6 Provincial By-pass Road (Item 3.6)

LB has indicated that she will be attending the planning meetings regarding the proposed by-pass road. DB indicated that a public meeting was held on 3 December 2012 attended by approximately 200 people all opposed to the road going through the reserve.

The following information document dated 13 December 2012 was subsequently distributed by SRK Consulting:

**Information on Upcoming Stakeholder Engagement Process:
Overstrand Transport Master Plan**

The Western Cape Department of Transport and Public Works (WCDTPW) is in the process of compiling the Overstrand Transport Master Plan (OTMP), a strategic transport study for the entire Overstrand region (including the coastal strip from Pringle Bay to Pearly Beach).

The OTMP will include detailed traffic studies for a number of towns in the region. The proposed investigation of the Hermanus Bypass will also be addressed in the OTMP.

The OTMP will have various outcomes, including the assessment and modelling of current and future traffic demand in the region and the identification of various traffic interventions between and in each of the affected towns. The OTMP is a tool that will also allow local municipalities to plan their road system more efficiently.

The OTMP is still in development and it is not anticipated that the plan will be completed before July 2013. Pending the outcome and recommendations of the OTMP, the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Hermanus Bypass will only commence once the OTMP has been developed further.

A stakeholder engagement process will be conducted as part of the OTMP development. It is proposed that a series of Open Days at various locations in the Overstrand area will be hosted, where the public will be provided with the opportunity to give input into the OTMP.

Relevant information will be made available to stakeholders prior to the public Open days.

The dates, times and locations of the public Open Days have not yet been set and will depend on the progress with regards to the OTMP. More detail on the stakeholder engagement process will be provided once this is available.

Sue Reuther CEAPSA

Principal Environmental Consultant

LB and GF will keep FAB informed of any official developments in this regard while DB will report on any civil society initiatives in this regard.

L. Bezuidenhout / G. Forbes / D. Beattie

4. Administration

4.1 New Advisory Board Members

DH requested the current advisory board members whose terms were expiring whether they will be willing to stand for another term. All responded positively except FW who indicated that he had to decide about the matter. Subsequent to the meeting FW handed in his resignation to the Chairperson.

DH further indicated that Estelle Spaarwater and Glynis van Rooyen were approached to determine if they would be willing to serve on the advisory board, both responded positively.

These new members must be appointed by Council on the recommendation of the Environmental Management Section.

L. Bezuidenhout

4.2 FNR Integrated Management Plan (IMP) Progress

NG indicated that the Municipality has submitted their comments to Withers Environmental and that the consultant now has to compile a draft document that will first be workshopped by FAB and the Botanical Society. After broad consensus on the contents is reached the IMP will be put out for public comment.

N. Green / D Heard

4.3 FNR 2012/13 Budget

PA presented the budget allocation to FAB. Members requested that more detail be provided for each of the allocations which are given

L. Bezuidenhout / P. Aplon

4.4 FNR Management Reports

DH indicated that he has not received any management reports for the year. He indicated that it was important that these reports be made available to FAB so that members can be kept up to date on management activities.

L. Bezuidenhout

5. Standing Items

5.1 Enforcement

JdT indicated that the cave has been fitted with a new motion sensor. He further indicated that there is a Municipal Law Enforcement Officer (LEO) in the Joint Operational Command Centre of HPP and that the guards should have direct contact to them. He will follow up the communication issue after LG indicated the HPP guards do not have radios with them.

PA reported that a service provider had been appointed for the removal of graffiti, but that he was waiting on the Operational Dept to establish a water point at Hoy's Kopie. DH requested that all new graffiti be removed as soon as possible.

AvH requested that Scout Camp also be included in Law Enforcement's patrol route.

Enforcement Section

5.2 Ecological Issues

5.2.1 Keurboom (*Virgillia*) Distribution and Status

Grant Forbes's report had been completed and FAB supported the management recommendations to control the two species as indicated. Following the recent fire at least two large and one small infestation of *Virgilia divaricata* at Maanskynbaai have been burned out. Seedlings will be coming up in their thousands and the next few months will be the ideal time to remove them without having to incur major expense. This needs to be slotted into the work programme NOW, not wait for some nebulous future date when the management plan is in operation. It will then be much too late to deal with them. They pull out easily within the first 6 - 12 months, much more difficult later!

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL – 2012 (3)

The Keurboom (*Virgillia*) Report (2012) be accepted and that the management recommendations be implemented and the guidelines be included in the FNR Integrated Management Plan.

N. Green

5.2.2 Baboon Electric Fencing

LB comments: *The fence is effective as part of a toolbox of measures used to manage the baboon troops. EMS will not be taking the fence down and is still continuing our monitoring of the impact and effectiveness of the fence together with the other mechanisms. We've engaged with an interactive process with the City of Cape Town, SANParks and CapeNature (Scientific Services) to compare notes and management processes in order to align our efforts with the "greater" management of the baboon populations within urban areas. Although it does not seem as if we are doing anything, we are working behind the scenes to find an effective baboon management strategy. I would like the FAB to give us time to deal with this matter in due process before we submit any recommendation. I would like to have all the information at hand before I will make any recommendation.*

FAB prefer that the current fence be moved to the boundary line but will wait for the Baboon Management Strategy to be presented before making a recommendation.

LG and LBn commended the baboon monitors for the good work that they were doing

L. Bezuidenhout

5.2.3 Event Applications

5.2.3.1 The Ride application

The applicant has indicated that the proposed horse ride will take place in March 2013, exact date will be confirmed.

5.2.3.2 Vintage Bentley Car Rally

DH indicated that this event took place without any problems.

5.3 Research

5.3.1 Research Applications

LBn commented that Christopher Johnson was very pleased with the service and assistance which he received from the reserve and BotSoc member and would recommend Fernkloof to fellow students.

5.4 Land and Infrastructure

5.4.1 Fernkloof Village Drainage report

NG indicated that the complainant is of the opinion that the drainage channel which was installed is sub standard. There is however uncertainty of who will have to carry the costs for an EIA if any excavation is to be done on the reserve. NG suggests that a temporary solution would be to create a sump in the seepage area from which the Gardens will also be able to extract water.

Manipulation of the river weir will also be investigated.

A further report on the situation is awaited.

N. Green

5.4.2 Hermanus Bird Club: Bird Hide Proposal

DEA&DP has indicated that the proposal submitted by the Hermanus Bird Club for erecting a new bird hide along the Klein River estuary will not trigger an EIA. DH had also visited the site with James Hart.

Although by all accounts, the the impact of the new bird hide would be minimal, extensive discussion took place regarding this application as to whether an *ad hoc* development decision should be supported prior to the IMP being finalised against the background of other *ad hoc* development applications that had been shelved till the IMP was finalised. The matter had to be put to a vote. By a majority of votes, FAB recommended that the application be placed on hold until the IMP had been finalised. PA would give feedback to the Hermanus Bird Club.

P. Aplon

5.4.3 Bosko Church – Lease Agreement

FW indicated that the proposed lease area was extremely disturbed and it would be difficult to rehabilitate. It is however strongly recommended that the pine trees and the other alien invader plants on the reserve boundary here be removed out and where appropriate replaced with local indigenous plants. It is also strongly recommended that the reserve boundary be determined.

P. Aplon

5.5 Klein River Estuary Management

It was agreed that FAB would support the management guidelines in the current Estuary Management Policy.

It was agreed that FAB would not be represented on the KREF since Overstrand Environmental Management Section serves on KREF and FAB would rely on their feedback.

P. Aplon

5.6 Report from the Hermanus Botanical Society

The drainage problems experienced in Precinct 9 is still an agenda item, the precinct residents has now come up with a proposal that the precinct's garden manager be in charge of regulating the water through the weir.

The Flower Show made a profit, although visitor number has decreased this year. A public meeting will be held regarding the proposed bypass road. A meeting was held between Patrick Robinson, Jack Bold and Penelope Aplon regarding water supply to the nursery. A full costing

of all the different options will have to be done, bearing in mind that an NEMA listed activities might also be triggered. The BotSoc AGM will take place on 11 January 2013.

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

This item had been on the Agenda for quite some time and no progress had been made. FAB recommended that urgent attention be given to this matter so that each party in this partnership clearly understood their role and rights.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL-2012 (4)

That urgent attention be given to drawing up a MOA between the Hermanus Botanical Society and Overstrand Municipality regarding the partnership relationship in terms of assistance to and use of FNR.

L. Bezuidenhout

5.6.2 **On and off FNR localities of herbarium species.**

DH gives a diagrammatic representation of what his idea is regarding the manner in which species records can be kept the herbarium. LBn indicated that most of the data is already stored in a spreadsheet format and there is currently a new team assisting with specimen collection along the coastal section which will improve the Fernkloof list.

5.6.3 **Accuracy of signboard in FNR gardens.**

MM will visit the reserve to evaluate signboards and advise BotSoc accordingly.

M. Muasya / L. Griffiths

5.6.4 **Nursery**

5.6.4.1 **Indigenous plants for Municipal use for rehabilitation purpose.**

A meeting was held with the Contracts Manager to determine the way forward of registering the Nursery as sole supplier. This process ties in with the MoA with BotSoc and will be dealt with in a single process.

P. Aplon.

5.6.4.2 **Sale of non-local indigenous invasive species.**

Nothing reported under this item.

P. Aplon

5.7 **Report from Cliff Path Management Group**

5.7.1 **Working for the Coast Work Programme**

PA confirmed that the Working for the Coast Work programme is still proceeding with the clearing of the Cliff Path. James van Rensburg has given his assurance that all work will be completed before the holiday season.

P. Aplon

5.7.2 **Upgrade of Grotto Picnic Area (last report Minutes 8th March 2012 – Item 3.6)**

A tender will be advertised soon in order to appoint a consultant to conduct an EIA process.

P. Aplon

6. **General**

6.1 Scout Camp Site

AvH indicated that the lease agreement has not yet been renewed by the Municipality. The infrastructure is being vandalised and he requested that this area be included in the LEO patrol areas.

N. Green

7. Date of 2013 Meetings:

22 February 2013

24 May 2013

23 August 2013

22 November 2013

The meeting closed at 12.55