

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
FERNKLOOF NATURE RESERVE (FNR) ADVISORY BOARD (FAB)
HELD AT ELECTRICAL BOARDROOM, ONRUSRIVIER
ON FRIDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2018 at 09:00**

1. Welcome, Attendance and Apologies

Present: Duncan Heard (DH) [in the Chair], David Beattie (DB), Tarron Dry (TD) [Biodiversity Conservation Manager: Overstrand Municipality], Heloise Fortune (HF) [Environmental Secretary: Overstrand Municipality], Lee Burman (LB), Andrae Marais (AM) [Cape Nature], Liezl de Villiers (LdV) [Environmental Manager: Overstrand Municipality], Anthony van Hoogstraten (AvH), Linda Griffiths (LG), Kari Brice (KB) [Councillor]

Apologies: Glynis van Rooyen (GvR)

No Apologies: Edward Fisher (EF) [Law Enforcement: Overstrand Municipality]

Welcome: DH opened the meeting and welcomed all present. He extended a welcome to Tarron Dry the newly appointed Biodiversity Conservation Manager of the Overstrand Municipality. TD gave the board a brief background on his new post.

2. Confirmation of Minutes for the Meeting of the FAB held on 19 Dec 2017.

H.F

2.1 Confirmation of Minutes and Public Availability

HF confirmed that the special meeting minutes has not been made available to the public yet as there were still issues that were to be resolved at today's meeting.

The minutes were accepted.

Proposed: David Beattie

Seconded: Lee Burman

2.2 Comments from Council on FAB Minutes dated 19 Dec 2017.

K.B

KB noted that there were no comments from Council.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Amendment of Bylaws relating to FNR and FAB/Re-declaration of FNR:

T.D

DH & Penelope Aplon did some work on the bylaws. TD will be taking this forward with DH. The present bylaws of the reserve are outdated.

3.2 Provincial By-Pass Road

T.D

LdV attended an internal authorities (OSM, DEA&DP, Cape Nature and Consultants) meeting on site on 22 February 2018. The EIA process is underway and needs to be finalized. DH noted that Whale Coast Conservation laid a complaint with DEA&DP with regards to how dismissive SRK's response was. DH also noted that he wants to see the public transport study, if it has been done.

4. Administration

4.1 FNR Integrated Management Plan (IMP) deliberation

LdV reported that she did the summary of all the comments that she received on the IMP. She is currently busy drafting responses to the most substantive comments. She has committed to taking a week in March to complete the process. Once the commenting document is complete she will look at the 2014 and 2017 versions to find the best midway to incorporate the substantive comments into the IMP. Before the completion of the draft IMP she will go into consultation with Cape Nature. Thereafter the draft IMP will go to FAB and Cape Nature for comments. She will try her best to have the completed draft plan by June 2018.

ACTION: DH to forward the World Bank Protected Area Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) to TD.

ACTION: TD will setup a meeting with DH to discuss the METT. DH will facilitate a METT exercise at the next FAB meeting and where the relevant Overstrand EMS staff should also be present.

ACTION: HF to add/remove the following under point 5 of the minutes dated 19 Dec 2017. "LdV and DH will deliberate on the specific changes that have been made in the document" and remove "FAB will be given 14 days to comment/ provide inputs" from the minutes.

4.1.1 Hermanus Astronomy Centre

T.D

LdV reported that they requested more information from the Hermanus Astronomy Centre with regards to the viability of the project. No information has been received yet. The item cannot be submitted to Council before the information has been received.

4.1.2 Cableway

DH noted that there is nothing to report. Botanical studies have been done. DH decided that he will not get involved in the EIA process however another environmental consultant can still be appointed.

4.1.3 Damage done to Riparian Zone at entrance

T.D

TD reported that they have to appoint an EAP for the rehabilitation plan. A site meeting has been held and two quotes were received. Once the rehabilitation plan is completed it will be circulated to the board.

4.2 FNR 2017/18 Budget

T.D

TD will give a report back at the end of the financial year on the 2017/2018 budget expenditure. He will also report on what is planned for the new financial year.

ACTION: TD to compile an expenditure report on the 2017/2018 budget for the next meeting.

4.3 FNR Management Reports

T.D

TD presented an alien clearing map for FNR and explained the areas that have been cleared and what still needs to be cleared. Going forward he will do the same with the firebreaks and trails in the reserve.

LBN noted that she is extremely concerned about the firebreaks that are made in FNR as the change in vegetation is horrifying. She feels that firebreaks need to be carefully considered as they are changing the face of large sections of the reserve. LdV commented that they will definitely take LBN comment into consideration with regards to the impact on the vegetation. They are currently trying to bring the firebreaks down to roads so that it's not as broad anymore; they need firebreaks between the reserve and the houses.

DH: How should coastal Fynbos be managed for biodiversity? MM will take this up and will provide feedback of his findings.

DH commented that they are looking forward to the reports that TD envisages going forward.

4.4 World Heritage Expansion

D.H

DH reported that he still has not managed to find a person who can put this report together. LG commented that she will table this point at the next BotSoc meeting and will report back.

5. Standing Items

5.1 Enforcement

T.D

DH informed TD about the Fernkloof Safety Forum Meetings and asked him to confirm with Director Michaels when the next meeting will be held. AvH requested that TD should please inform Giorgio Lombardi of any incidents on the reserve.

ACTION: TD to contact Director Michaels with regards to the Fernkloof Safety Forum Meeting dates.

ACTION: HF to follow up with regards to Law Enforcement not attending the FAB meetings.

5.1.1 Encroachments

DB wanted to know if EMS catalogues the transgressions and if the information is available. LdV commented that they are in the process of drafting letters, together with the legal department, to people up along mountain drive where transgressions have taken place.

DB wanted to know what they can do if they see transgressions. LdV informed him that a photograph should be taken and forwarded to her together with the address. EMS will find out if there is a lease agreement in place if not it will go to the legal department who will draft a letter to the transgressor. The transgressor will get a time frame by when the structure must be removed or the area restored. If the transgressor does not comply it will be referred to the Municipal Court.

DH noted that there are two types of transgressions;

1. On Municipal Property
2. Under NEM:PAA

AM noted that Cape Nature will assist with transgressions under NEM: PAA since these transgressors cannot serve in Municipal Court. The Environmental Section and CapeNature need to work together in this regard.

5.2 Hoy's Koppie

T.D

LdV reported that Dean and his team are doing a clean-up of Hoy's Koppie twice a week.

LG referred to BotSoc's bin free plan that they have in place now she however requested that the bins at Hoy's Koppie should not be removed. LdV confirmed that the bins will not be removed and that this will only be applicable to the Botanical Gardens within Fernkloof.

5.2.2 Extension of Hoy's Koppie

LdV referred to the post-n-rail fence that has been put up at the open space on the mountain side of the Koppie. Jean de Villiers approached her and asked what the possibility would be for an extension of Hoy's Koppie to that property. It will serve the purpose of an open green corridor that links to Hoy's Koppie to the main reserve. LdV noted that she requested a plan from him for the area. She noted that top soil has already been delivered but asked all not to be alarmed she will first confirm with him what his plans are before she allows him to continue. She does not think the suggestion for the extension is a bad idea her only concern is the way it will be done.

ACTION: LdV requested that TD set up a meeting with a small group, members from FAB and BotSoc to have an on-site meeting to look at the area and to come up with possible ideas.

6. Ecological Issues

K.B

6.1.1 Baboon Virtual Fence

LdV reported that the virtual fence does work but has been stopped due to the fact that there is no funding to continue. The relays, gateways and software are up and running so the baboons can be tracked. There is currently a permit application with CapeNature for the replacement of the collars. DH wanted to know that if or when the virtual fence is up and running again if the electric fence can be removed or moved?

ACTION: LdV and DH will meet to discuss the baboon electric fence.

6.1.2 Burning of Coastal Corridors

T.D

This point was discussed under 4.3. DH noted that MM will look into the burning of coastal corridors from a scientific point of view.

ACTION: DH to forward the Cowling Report to MM and TD.

6.1.3 Event Applications

T.D

TD reported that he received an application for the Berg & See annual run. They still have to complete the application forms.

6.2 Research

T.D

6.2.1 Research Applications

TD reported that there were no research applications.

6.3 Klein River Estuary Management

T.D

LdV reported that Penelope Aplon is currently investigating the matter of the House on Mosaic Farm that has been building behind the setback line.

TD reported on the avian flu virus that is currently in our area. The Field Rangers were requested to do weekly patrols. They have picked up on two occasions 24 and 69 birds of which are mainly Terns. The virus is extremely contagious but is not very strong and therefore only affecting birds at this moment. If you have a dog that runs on the beach or in the water it is advisable to disinfect the dog's paws as well as your hands to ensure that you do not infect your birds at home. The current protocol is to euthanize any bird that shows symptoms of the virus. Two cases have also been reported in juvenile penguins in Agulhas but nothing so far at Stony Point.

6.4 Reports from Hermanus Botanical Society (BOTSOC)

L.G

LG circulated the BotSoc report to all. She further added that the situation of the dogs on Hoy's Koppie is not controlled by Law Enforcement and HPP.

DH commented that he tabled a proposal at the Ward 13 committee meeting when Director Neville Michaels was present. Nicolette Botha-Guthrie was the chairperson of the meeting at that stage because they did not have a Councillor. The main concern of Vermont and Onrus is that they never see Law Enforcement staff patrolling the coastal paths and it is a problem because people are walking their dogs off leads and cyclists are using the paths, etc. He proposed that Protection Service's should on a quarterly basis provide the Ward with a report on all the patrols that have been done. His proposal was accepted by the Ward and they are expecting their first feedback from Law Enforcement next month. He further added that if the Ward 3 members support his proposal he thinks that proactive patrols on Hoy's Koppie should be listed to get an idea of how many patrols are done, if they warn people or fine people, etc. LdV noted that she supports this idea and she will ask TD in his capacity as the reserve manager to request a report from the FNR Security Forum to see what they are doing on the reserve and it will include the coastal areas and Hoy's Koppie.

ACTION: LdV will take the issue of the dogs on Hoy's Koppie up with Law Enforcement.

ACTION: TD to request a report from the FNR Security Forum of the patrols they do in the reserve, coastal areas and Hoy's Koppie.

6.5 Reports from Cliff Path Management Group (CPMG)

D.B

DB apologized for not sending out a report in advance he has been working on the annual report which will be circulated next week.

The Co-Management agreement between CPMG and the Overstrand Municipality has been approved it is with Director Stephen Muller for signature.

DB reported that earlier this week he had a meeting with Don Kearney and various contractors on the three remaining sections that have not been upgraded, 1 in Kwaaiwater and 2 in Voelklip. It was followed by a site meeting and it will go ahead in the next couple of weeks. During the meeting Don Kearney mentioned that the other thing to consider is widening sections of the cliff path to allow for cycling events. DB asked the board to support CPMG they do not want bicycles on the cliff path.

A number of bridges are being maintained and fixed. Within Piet se Bos the access from the suburbs was a path that has been eroded by storm water and the drain. They have received some quotes and are looking to redo it.

DB & Penelope Aplon had a site meeting at the path around the wendy house last week. Penelope has drawn up a more accurate map of where the path goes. It will go to DEA&DP and then out on Public Participation. They have drawn up the advert for the Public Participation and the signs for the people to see. They are following the process.

CPMG has joint project with HPP as a security measure to number (small plastic plaque) the back of the benches. In the event of an incident on the cliff path you can contact security and say at what bench you are by giving the number. They will include sea rescue as well.

CPMG is also working with Hermanus History Society to identify places of historic interest.

DB noted that the Whale info signage has been vandalized with graffiti and some are missing they are not in a good state. He has written to request the removal or replacement of the signs.

6.6 Annual Hermanus Camp (AHC) – Lease Application

A.v.H

AvH noted that the Annual Hermanus Camp Committee is very grateful to the Municipality for the 9 years and 11 months lease agreement. LG thanked AvH for his hard work and for pursuing it.

7. General

7.1 Dogs in FNR

T.D

It was decided that this activity will be monitored for another six months before a final decision will be made whether dogs should be allowed in the reserve.

7.2 Trail Maintenance

T.D

TD requested FAB's assistance with regards to trail maintenance in the reserve. He wants to know what the best structures are for soil erosion.

ACTION: TD will set up a meeting with LBn, Giorgio Lombardi and Di Marais to discuss.

8. Date of Next Meetings:

25 May

24 Aug

23 Nov