

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
FERNKLOOF NATURE RESERVE (FNR) ADVISORY BOARD (FAB)
HELD AT ELECTRICAL BOARDROOM, ONRUSRIVIER
ON FRIDAY, 30 OCTOBER 2015 at 09:00**

1. Welcome, Attendance and Apologies

Present: Duncan Heard (DH) [in the Chair], David Beattie (DB), Anthony van Hoogstraten (AvH), Neville Green (NG) [Biodiversity Manager – Overstrand Environmental], Linda Griffiths (LG), Cllr Kari Brice (KB), Andrae Marais (AM) [Cape Nature], Heloise Fortune (HF) [PA-Onrus Office], Muthama Muasya (MM)

Apologies: Liezl Bezuidenhout(LB) [Senior Manager–Overstrand Environmental], Glynis Van Rooyen (GvR), Estelle Spaarwater (ES), Lee Burman (LBn).

Absent without Apology: Edward Fisher (EF) [Law Enforcement].

Welcome: The Chairperson welcomed the members of the board.

DH noted that all of the FAB member's term dates are ending 31 January 2016, except for DH and MM. He requested that members who do not wish to continue should inform HF. HF to get reappointment letters after 31 January 2016 and forward the letters to the members and bring hard copies to the next FAB meeting.

Action: HF to get reappointment letters for new term.

AvH noted that the Municipalities contact number in the Directory (8037) is incorrect. KB did make a note of this to be corrected.

Action: KB to have the Municipalities contact number corrected in the Directory.

The dates for next year's FAB meetings have been set;

19 February 2016
20 May 2016
19 August 2016
18 November 2016

KB will not be able to attend the meeting on 20 May 2016.

2. Confirmation of Minutes for the Meeting of the FAB held on 17 July 2015.

H. Fortune

2.1 Confirmation of Minutes and Public Availability

HF confirmed that the minutes were made available to the public. The minutes were accepted.

Proposed: David Beattie

Seconded: Andrae Marais

2.2 Comments from Council on FAB Minutes dated 20 May 2014

K. Brice

KB noted that there was nothing in particular from Council, except for the baboon problem that they have at the moment.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Amendment of Bylaws and the Re-declaration of the Fernkloof Nature Reserve:

DH reminded FAB the FNR Bylaws required updating and the reserve required re-declaration in order to ensure that all areas managed as FNR were legislatively protected. NG noted that there are two sets of Bylaws; for FAB and for the management of the reserve. EMS has to draft the Bylaws and submit to the legal department. NG is currently busy with the process.

KB commented that the eyes and ears of the public in the reserve is important and noted that it will be good to put a press release in the newspaper by latest 16 Dec to inform the public of the Bylaws. NG asked KB to remind him closer to the date to draft the press release.

LG commented that a year ago they organised for people to walk in Fernkloof to take responsibility for safety and security and it is not happening, she has been phoning people in BOTSOC for a week and not one of them have ever seen any Environmental or Law Enforcement people. There aren't any registers or reports kept. NG noted that they started to patrol a couple of weeks ago; LG commented that they haven't seen anyone or receive any feedback. LG noted that BOTSOC has put together a brochure for the staff to use with all the information they need on fynbos, etc. NG noted that he will follow up on the staff that is supposed to patrol. DH noted that a Fernkloof Security meeting has to take place before the end of the year and he would like NG and LG to attend he will facilitate a date soonest, so that these matters can be discussed further.

Action: NG to arrange a meeting with DH to discuss amendments to the Bylaws.

N. Green & D. Heard

Action: KB to remind NG to draft the press release with regards to the Bylaws.

K. Brice

Action: NG to follow up with regards to staff not patrolling and provide feedback to LG.

N. Green

3.2 Provincial By-Pass Road & Stanford Trunk Road Upgrade By-pass:

DH commented that the By-Pass road is still in the comment phase.

NG commented that there's nothing new with regards to the Stanford Trunk Road. AvH commented that nothing has been finalised on the Stanford Trunk Road. NG commented that the environmental authorisation has been given just before the end of last year.

Updates on these matters will be given at following meetings.

N. Green

4 Administration

4.1 FNR Integrated Management Plan (IMP) Progress

NG commented that they had final meeting with Aubrey Withers of Withers Consulting which was very positive. Charl the consultant who did most of the drafting of the FNR IMP has moved on and they are now dealing directly with Aubrey Withers. They highlighted the issues that have not been corrected. Aubrey will attend to it in November 2015.

DH requested a copy of the Draft FNR IMP for each member.

N. Green

4.1.1 Hermanus Astronomy Centre

AvH noted that he was of the opinion that push for an Astronomy Centre in the reserve is gaining momentum again while the plan is still in progress. His recommendation is that FAB decides unanimously whether they are "for" or "against" the Astronomy Centre. DH noted that FAB already made a recommendation and that it has been minuted and is available for the public and Council to see.

KB reminded all that she cannot be a part of any recommendations/documentation on behalf of FAB. DH noted that the recommendation was made before she joined the FAB. DH suggested that an objection on Pierre de Villiers's statements in the Hermanus Times should come from BOTSOC stating that a lot of processes must still be completed before any such statements can be made.

NG noted the fact that the Rotary Drive Lookout development node as it is indicated in the FNR Management Plan, is on existing infrastructure i.e. the parking area and lookout on the southern side of Rotary Drive. The proposal of the Astronomy Centre falls outside the indicated development node. The proposal is considered an “external application from an external party” which must be considered by Council firstly in terms of the FNR Management Plan which is governed by an Ordinance and the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act and then also relevant municipal administrative policies.

Action: HF to check which of the previous FAB minutes contained the recommendation made by FAB on the Hermanus Astronomy Centre and forward to all. **H. Fortune**

4.2 FNR 2014/15 Budget

The available operational budget is about R900 000.00. The alien clearing budget is R119 400.00 for the reserve, which will be spent completely in the next month. KB noted that a major concern with regards to Fires is that with the past big fires in Cape Town and the last two helicopter crashes, all the helicopters are down. With the hot season starting now there are going to be fires and there are no helicopters available. The Mayor had a meeting with Minister Anton Bredell two days ago to address the issue. She noted that this is a huge concern that could possibly affect Fernkloof.

Action: NG to circulate the budget to all. **N. Green**

4.3 FNR Management Reports

NG commented that they are already using the format of the Management Plan goals. The goals and actions are listed and the feedback is provided accordingly. They are acting on their APO which was drawn up earlier in the year. They are spending to get it done. They haven't forwarded the APO to the MEC as there is not an approved plan yet. CapeNature is receiving a copy of the APO through the FAB.

DH asked NG if he had addressed the issue with regards to the motorcycle scrambling on weekends in the reserve. NG commented that he addressed the email to law enforcement and he had not followed through on the improvement in the control room yet. He had not been to the site to see if there has been any damage to the reserve area. LG commented that LBN advised her that there is always damage after scrambling. They were scrambling from 14:30 till 17:30. She asked the person on duty in the control room to send law enforcement officers to go and get the number plates of the bakkie and the scrambler. The scrambler did not have number plates and when they saw the law enforcement officers they drove off. The person in the control room did not follow through to ask the traffic dept to go after them. The person in the control room advised her that the law enforcement officers did not ask them to leave as they were scrambling in the bush to which her reply was that the bush is the reserve. DH recommended that two signs should be put up on the FNR boundary to indicate the boundary and that it is not a legal entry point. DH noted that this issue should be brought up at the Safety Forum meeting again. NG asked for an in-principle support from FAB for boundary markers on small vibracrete support poles buried in the ground with height of about 1.2m. FAB approved the idea for the boundary markers.

Action: NG to circulate his report to all. **N. Green**

5. Standing Items

5.1 Enforcement

DH noted that he previously requested that a letter be sent to Dir. Neville Michaels to inform him that law enforcement officer is not attending the meetings. NG commented that Dawie Esau is the Law Enforcement officer that Environmental Services are dealing with. DH asked NG if it is possible that Dawie Esau can attend the meetings with him. NG will follow up with Dir. Neville Michaels with regards to permanent representation of Law Enforcement at future meetings, FAB to be copied in the request to the Director. LG commented that she supports DH's request as law enforcement are not aware of the Bylaws. NG noted that he did send a request to law

enforcement to put the Field Rangers contact numbers in the control room, as they are on standby over the weekends. The Field Rangers do clock in at the control room on Friday's to inform who is available on the weekend.

Action: NG to send formal request to Dir Michaels on Dawie Esau's attending FAB meetings. **N. Green**

DH noted that the graves have been repaired. NG noted that they received a report from the Cliff Path group with regards to a cross that had been erected on Hoy's Koppie but they haven't got around to removing it yet.

Recommendation to council

FAB recommended that the cross be removed from Hoy's Koppie as no permission from anybody has been given to erect the cross.

N. Green

5.3 Ecological Issues

5.3.1 Baboon Electric Fencing / Baboon Management Strategy

DH asked what the progress was being made with the Baboon Management Strategy. NG noted that the protocol was in progress, the document was drafted but with the demise of the baboon monitoring team and with the retirement of Leon Steyn it had not gone any further, and with their being no funding LB does not want to make any commitments on the future of the baboon project. With regards to the baboon fence, LB noted previously that the fence will stay. DH requested that LB should provide FAB with a progress report with regards to the baboon management strategy.

L. Bezuidenhout / N Green

5.3.2 Burning of Coastal Corridors

NG commented that he asked BOTSOC to give possible dates to go and have a look at the coastal zones. The area they will be looking at is the Kraalrock area. He noted that they should look at areas that haven't been burned in a long time. But they will inspect with BOTSOC the fire hazards.

N. Green

5.3.3 Event Applications

NG commented that the Berg en See run took place on the cliff path and the reserve. The event went well and no negative complaints were received. EMS received photographs from the race organizers which could be made available to all. The next event coming up in early Nov is the Atlantic Flying club's annual flying event.

5.4 Research

5.4.1 Research Applications

NG commented that there was one American student that walked with the baboon monitors in the reserve. He noted that it was just observing behaviour.

5.5 Land and Infrastructure

5.5.1 Fernkloof Village Drainage Report

NG informed all of a request from Jack Bold to build up a wall/berm to put in building rubble. This will be discussed on Monday at the BOTSOC meeting.

N. Green

5.6 Klein River Estuary Management

The previous KREF minutes were circulated, the current minutes had not yet been approved. Once that has been finalized it, will be distributed to FAB.

N. Green

5.7 Report from Hermanus Botanical Society

LG noted that BOTSOC had a very successful flower show - one of the best they ever had. They had 3000 people who walked through the gates. They had very good profit and she thanked AvH who worked with the money. She complimented Mary-Ann Verster as the convenor on a job well done. She also extended her thanks to the baboon monitors, Michael Henn, Law Enforcement Officers, the municipal officials, Neville and his team for all their help. She did circulate the report to all.

Dianne Marais and Geraldine Gardiner wrote a brochure on Fynbos - these will be used by the monitors and interns. It is currently being printed, once received she will provide the members with a copy. The visitors, B&B's and the Tourism Bureau in Hermanus will receive the brochures.

BOTSOC has approved funding to Whale Coast Conservation for environmental education. AvH commented that BOTSOC made a financial contribution to Charlyn Vosloo for alien vegetation control. LG thanked Michael Henn for the clearing of litter on Hoy's Koppie as well as the car guard who has his green jacket with identification now.

DH thanked BOTSOC on behalf of FAB on a successful flower show and for all the assistance that they give to the reserve.

L. Griffiths

5.8 Reports from Cliff Path Management Group

DB noted that they already spent their 2015/2016 budget on upgrading others sections on the path. The Hermanus champagne mile walk app is available to download (red and blue app with headphones). The new formal welcome sign has been approved. In February, it's the 15th anniversary of the Cliff path management group, the celebration will probably be at Fernkloof, all will be invited. DH thanked the Cliff path management group on behalf of FAB on all they have achieved. He noted that Fernkloof is very fortunate to have these groups.

NG noted that one of the issues on the cliff path had to deal with was the removal of plaques. Shaun Page approved Major Pienaar's plaque many years ago at Kwaiwater. Major Pienaar was the only person buried at sea in Walker bay and this was one of the reasons for the approval. Six plaques have been removed and one of the plaques's belonged to Major Pienaar, EMS was unaware of the approved plaque and thus removed it. EMS tried to accommodate Mrs Pienaar by mounting the plaque under a bench which now caused problems. The MM instructed that the plaque should be removed and moved to another location. EMS wants to honour the previous agreement but do not want to fix any more plaques to rocks. NG has identified an area east of where it was away from the rocks. He would like to inform FAB that this one plaque will be submitted to the MM for authorisation and moved to the new location and all other plaques will be removed.

D Beattie

6. General

6.1 Grotto Parking Embankment (BAR)

The meeting takes note that the embankment will be graded as the most acceptable environmental option as decided by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning. This item will be removed from the agenda.

6.2 2nd Jeep Track Entrance

NG noted that they erected two walls last year at the 1st jeep track entrance. There is a 2nd entrance and the intention is to erect the same two walls to display corporate identity. They had contractors on site and are awaiting quotations. They are prepared to stone clad the walls to make it visually acceptable. DH noted that it is important for the reserve boundaries to be well represented.

Action: NG to check if it is a public servitude.

N. Green

7. Date of Next Meeting: 19 February 2016 ***NB Now postponed to 26 February 2016**