

BOT RIVER ESTUARY FORUM (BREF)

MINUTES OF BREF MEETING HELD ON 07 AUGUST 2014

AT 14H00 – LAKE MARINA YACHT & BOAT CLUB, FISHERHAVEN

1. Welcome

Pierre de Villiers welcomed all present. Vice Chairperson Robin Perrins asked Pierre de Villiers to Chair today's meeting.

2. Apologies and Attendance Register

Apologies recorded from: Mark Johns, Tracy Sampson & Peter Muller.

The Attendance register was circulated.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

a) Amendments

Megan Campbell will forward corrections via email to Heloise Fortune.

b) Acceptance of the Minutes

The minutes were accepted by all.

4. Additions and Amendments to Agenda

New items to be added to the Agenda;

- i) Septic/Conservancy Tanks – Sewerage disposal methods
- ii) Bot River Waste Water Works

5. Matters Arising

5.1 Pump Station at Middlevlei:

Frans Theunissen queried whether the pump station at Middlevlei has been addressed and whether it was raised with the local authority.

Liezl Bezuidenhout replied that they did investigate the matter. It was explained to them that it would cost millions to move the pump station and that's what needs to happen. They suggested a plan from disaster management.

Penelope went to Operational Management and formulated a standard operating procedure for such a disaster. Overstrand Municipality can't afford to change the pipelines now or move the pump station. They need to ensure that the correct protocol is in place – back up for pump stations, generators, monitoring and cleaning up in case of spillage. This is the only process they can implement given the lack of funding.

Pierre de Villiers asked whether the protocol (SOP) can be tabled at the Mouth Management Meeting. Liezl Bezuidenhout confirmed that the SOP can be tabled.

Frans Theunissen commented that the pump can be contained by raising a berm around it to keep out any storm water. Pierre de Villiers asked the Municipality to look at it as an option.

ACTION: MARLU RUST TO COMMENT ON THIS MATTER.

5.2 Meerenbosch dune rehabilitation:

Penelope Aplon provided feedback that a site inspection was conducted with Megan Campbell on 2 December 2013, the observation that was made is that Homeowners make their own individual paths and that they are not using the communal paths.

Penelope stated that a letter was sent to the Meerenbosch Homeowners association (MBHOA) in December 2013, to which no reply has been received as yet. The property is registered to the Meerenbosch Home Owners Association. The letter sent to the MBHOA on 20 December 2013 directed that these illegal paths must be addressed by the board. They must be removed.

Penelope advised regarding dune stabilisation measures, if anything is done, it must be done in accordance with the Maintenance Management Plan. MBHOA was instructed to obtain this and to engage the services of a suitably qualified specialist which must then be submitted to DEA&DP for approval.

6. Natural Breach – 28 June 2014

Danie Coetzee gave a presentation to the Forum on the Bot River Estuary breach. It was noted that the water level reading of 2.11m above MSL that Frans Theunissen took at the Meerensee footbridge on 27 June, while estuary water was flowing over the berm to the sea, is more accurate for record purposes.

Estuary water had also been flowing across the berm the previous morning (26 June 2014) when Tarne' Johannes had visited the mouth, two mornings before the full natural breach on 28 June. The mouth had been closed for about 18 days (closed around 10 June 2014) when it finally breached.

On 24 June 2014 Tarne' had taken a water level reading of 1.92m above MSL at the Ysterklip jetty, two days before she discovered the overflow at the mouth. She had also taken salinity readings at seven localities on the estuary. They varied between 19.7 and 23.8 ppt (parts per thousand).

Pierre de Villiers suggested that if anyone notices anything unusual or out of the ordinary that they should take photos and send it to him because the committee is trying to set up a database of photographs.

7. Monitoring and Results

Tarne Johannes gave a presentation to the Forum on salinity readings.

She noted that the monitoring is going very well at the moment.

Frans Theunissen wanted to know when the Kleinmond estuary breached; Tarne informed him that it was on 15 June.

Tarne noted that there were problems with interpreting the readings of the probe. This must be taken up with Gerhard – he must be asked to send something in writing on how the readings should be interpreted. Frans Theunissen asked to be included in the monitoring process. Tarne confirmed that Frans Theunissen can be included in the process. Currently only readings at shallow levels can be taken due to a problem with the boat's engine. Pierre de Villiers asked if anyone has a boat to offer for this purpose: it would be appreciated.

Bacteriological monitoring – only one bacteriological sample is taken on the Bot River Estuary every two weeks. Danie Coetzee said that sometimes there are high readings at the slipway at Fisherhaven but it is erratic. This is possibly due to septic tanks. Patrick van Coller said that the infrastructure is ageing. It needs checking and refurbishment.

Pierre de Villiers: Overstrand Municipality needs to investigate and identify hot spots. He asked everyone to let them know if they know of anything. Septic tanks are going to be replaced with conservancy tanks. Home Owners Associations should be informed of this.

8. Reed Management Programme – Danie Coetzee

Lower Foot Bridge at Kleinmond:

Danie Coetzee gave a presentation to the Forum on the lower footbridge over the Kleinmond Estuary that the Municipality would like to upgrade and extend. The extension would ensure better scouring of the mouth area.

Phragmites reeds were cut between 15 and 23 July 2014 as part of an Interim Reed Management Plan. There are two fixed photographic points on either side of the cut area in order to monitor how quickly the reeds will recover so as to fine tune the management and recutting of the reeds. Danie noted that this was not going to solve the reed problem, but that it is an interim measure. They are waiting for water borne system to be put into the older part of Kleinmond, which should reduce the pollution. A fixed date for this has not yet been set. Contributory factors to pollution include the run-off from the golf course, polluted run-off from the catchment (such as the faeces from animals on farms), storm water and septic tanks.

Fisherhaven:

Danie Coetzee mentioned the section of the reeds that Sue Matthews had removed previously and that Robin Perrins would like an additional section (adjacent) to be cut for recreational purposes. There is no scientific reason why it should be cut and also no reason why it shouldn't – but if residents want it done, it can be done. Frans Theunissen said the majority of people want it cut. Danie Coetzee said that it can be done, but that it must be done in consultation with Peter Burger.

Liezl Bezuidenhout requested that there must be a plan for each area where reeds are to be removed/cut and that it should be managed for that specific reason.

Danie Coetzee reported that they are taking regular photos of the reeds that have been cut and there are interesting early results. These will be followed through continuous monitoring.

9. Alien Clearing Programme

Liezl Bezuidenhout reported that the Working for Water contract has not been signed yet and that it is still with the National Working for Water office. They are currently only working in the Klein River catchment and will be starting in the Lamloch area soon. They wanted to move to the Bot River catchment but the budget was not approved by the Regional Working for Water programme. They will thus be finishing off Lamloch and hopefully CapeNature will maintain that afterwards. They will only be able to start with the initial work in the new financial year which starts in April 2015 and the method of approach will probably be from the mouth up toward the catchment. They will know by October 2014 what the new plan will be for 2015. Discussion is taking place between the CEO of CapeNature and the WFW programme leader of the Western Cape to take over the management of the Lamloch swamps.

10. RAMSAR

Tarne Johannes reported that all applications have been developed and sent through but no feedback has been received yet. Pierre de Villiers said that this has to be done by the end of 2014. CapeNature is dealing with it. There will be extensive stakeholder negotiations.

11. Coastal Set-back lines

Liezl Bezuidenhout reported that the tender has been advertised for consultants to manage the process. It is the same process as previous Overberg Setback-line process which was stopped because of all the negative comments – it was not going ahead in the proper way and there was not enough consultation with the public. The new process will include comprehensive. Pierre de Villiers will inform all of the dates ASAP.

12. Management of Wild Horses

Liezl Bezuidenhout reported that the Municipality and CapeNature will work together to sort out the issue. They had a meeting with the CEO of CapeNature – decision was that Overstrand Municipality and CapeNature would have a working group to manage the horses.

But with Robin not being able to attend, they need to get other dates for a meeting. Present will be Law Enforcement, Overstrand Municipality's Environmental Management section, CapeNature, Sarah Milton from the Equestrian Centre and Animal Welfare.

There is also a document from Dr Frans van der Merwe and an opinion from Bot Friends for the development of a management plan. Tracey Whitelaw from Bot Friends tabled a document which will be tabled at the working group meeting.

13. Estuary Management – Way Forward

Pierre de Villiers reported that a Terms of Reference has been set up for the EMP. The coastal unit is made up of 3 people. They are using professional service providers until they can get the work done themselves. This is the only strategy available now. Pierre de Villiers has prioritised this. He will send this out with the minutes.

Frans Theunissen wanted to know what the role of the Estuary Forums is. Pierre de Villiers explained the history of the legal proceedings regarding the EMP. In the National Act it was stipulated that there must be an EMP. The Cape Estuaries programme then developed forums for all the estuaries. In the process of the bill becoming an act, forums were removed. National and provincial departments all agreed forums are a very healthy process and that all estuaries should have forums. However, the national estuary management programme doesn't recognise forums as a legal entity. It is not a requirement. We have a right to form an association to advise government.

At provincial and national government level, they pushed for the municipal coastal committees to be recognised. These committees report to the district municipality. Good points and bad points must be made by forum Chair and reported to the municipal coastal committee (district). It then goes to Province and then to National. Then the reverse takes place, i.e. the Coastal Committee must give feedback to the Chair and the Chair reports back to the forum. The chair is the key person. It is his/her responsibility.

There is a grey area as to whose responsibility it is at provincial and district level. He needs clarity on this and it will be tabled at national government. According to the Act, district plays a vital role.

Megan Campbell mentioned that we should elect a Chair, since Nico Nasson resigned in November 2013. An AGM will be held at the next BREF meeting to elect a new Chairperson. Liezl Bezuidenhout will follow up with Robin Perrins.

ACTION: DANIE COETZEETO FINALIZE AGM DATE WITH ROBIN PERRINS

14. Mouth Management Workshop and Indaba

Pierre de Villiers reported that the workshop is included in the Terms of Reference and is dependent on the Tender. He will receive feedback on the Tender at the next PCC meeting.

15. EWR Determination

Pierre de Villiers reported that the Ecological Reserve was carried out but Water affairs have not approved it yet. It is important that they formally accept and verify it, so that everyone acts accordingly.

Shaddai Daniel reported that they had to resubmit as the format was problematic, but wanted it to be noted that there is communication between their office and the Head Office.

Frans Theunnisen wanted to know what the EWR “Ecological Water Reserve Determination” is, and what its connection to the Bot Estuary is? Pierre de Villiers explained that in the new Water Act it specifies what is allowed, eg. basic human needs and the eco system – How to determine this. This was done by specialist service providers. There is a specific criterion they look at the hydrology, rainfall, species, habitats, etc and they have a scoring system. The CSIR led a specialist group about 5 years ago and the document was circulated then. Water Affairs now need to sign it off.

Liezl Bezuidenhout added that it is linked directly to the alien clearing. She will follow up; she thinks the person that needs to be contacted at Dept. Water Affairs is Frans Mouski regarding the water inflow meter. She will ask Tracy Sampson to follow up from the Working for Water side.

Pierre de Villiers: there is new technology available now that will be used. Patrick van Coller commented that it is an Eco-finder.

ACTION: TRACY SAMPSON TO FOLLOW UP WITH FRANS MOUSKI REGARDING WATER INFLOW METER.

16. Other matters

16.1 Paddavlei issue in Hawston:

Patrick van Coller wanted to know if the Paddavlei issue in Hawston was sorted out. Liezl Bezuidenhout commented that this issue was raised four years ago. It concerns the ‘lang erwe’. People were infilling in the wetland to build. Pottie Potgieter was the one who raised this and complained to BOCMA years ago. Liezl Bezuidenhout commented that if it was permitted pre-1997 when NEMA came into effect, people are allowed to build without an EIA. It was finalised and a S24G’s were issued. No one has monitored the situation, however. DEA&DP must ensure compliance monitoring on any directive issued.

Penelope Aplon will give the case officer’s details to Pierre de Villiers. He will follow up. It also needs to comply with the Water Act, and not only with DEA&DP. Pierre de Villiers will ensure that the case officer contacts Patrick van Coller and presents to the next meeting.

ACTION: PIERRE DE VILLIERS WILL ENSURE THAT CASE OFFICER CONTACTS PATRICK VAN COLLER AND CASE OFFICER SHOULD PRESENT AT NEXT MEETING.

16.2 Meerenbosch dune stabilisation:

Megan Campbell queried whether this application of legislation pre-existing NEMA in 1997 did not similarly apply to Meerenbosch’s dune stabilisation issue as well then? Liezl Bezuidenhout will investigate and it will be addressed at the next meeting.

ACTION: PENELOPE APLON TO INVESTIGATE AND REPORT AT NEXT MEETING.

16.3 Pigs in Hawston on main road:

Megan Campbell asked why pigs are allowed to be kept in Hawston, a residential area. These pigs regularly run around on the road. Liezl Bezuidenhout commented that they are not aware as the Municipality's Law Enforcements section works with feral animals. Nida Potgieter said that a ward meeting will be held soon and it will be tabled.

16.4 Rubbish dumping on Hawston road:

Nida confirmed this is also on the ward committee agenda. She will follow up at Monday's ward meeting and provide feedback on dumping and pigs at next BREF meeting. Pierre de Villiers said that this needs to be escalated to provincial and national level. Liezl Bezuidenhout commented that it is important to get the ward councillor on board the BREF. Councillor Smith should be invited to the next meeting. Pierre de Villiers will arrange a site visit before the next meeting.

ACTION: NIDA POTGIETER WILL REPORT BACK ON PIGS AND DUMPING IN HAWSTON AT THE NEXT MEETING

ACTION: PIERRE DE VILLIERS WILL ARRANGED A SITE VISIT

16.5 Websites providing information on the Bot River Estuary:

Tracey Whitelaw commented that the BotFriends site can be used to store data. Overstrand Municipality is busy sorting out data retrieval from Sue Matthew's website (Overstrand Estuaries) – currently no access to the website. Danie Coetzee will forward Fisherhaven slipway readings to Tracey Whitelaw to store on their website.

ACTION: DANIE COETZEE TO FORWARD FISHERHAVEN SLIPWAY READINGS TO TRACY WHITELOW

17. Date of Next Meeting and Closure

09 October 2014

ACTIONS TO BE NOTED BY ALL:

- ***POINT 5 Matters Arising (Pump station at Middelvlei)***
ACTION: MARLU RUST NEEDS TO COMMENT ON FRANS THEUNISSEN'S SUGGESTION FORWARD AS AN OPTION.
- ***POINT 13 Estuary Management – Way forward***
ACTION: DANIE COETZEE TO FINALIZE AGM DATE WITH ROBIN PERRINS
- ***POINT 15 EWR***
ACTION: TRACY SAMPSON TO FOLLOW UP WITH FRANS MOUSKI REGARDING WATER INFLOW METER.
- ***POINT 16.1 Other Matters – Paddavlei issue in Hawston***
ACTION: PIERRE DE VILLIERS WILL ENSURE THAT CASE OFFICER CONTACTS
PATRICK VAN COLLER AND CASE OFFICER SHOULD PRESENT AT NEXT MEETING.
- ***POINT 16.2 Other Matters – Meerenbosch dune stabilisation***

ACTION: PENELOPE APLON TO INVESTIGATE AND REPORT AT NEXT MEETING.

- **POINT 16.3 Other Matters – Pigs & Dumping in Hawston**
ACTION: NIDA POTGIETER WILL REPORT BACK ON PIGS AND DUMPING IN HAWSTON AT THE NEXT MEETING
ACTION: PIERRE DE VILLIERS WILL ARRANGED A SITE VISIT
- **POINT 16.5 Other Matters – Website**
ACTION: DANIE COETZEE TO FORWARD FISHERHAVEN SLIPWAY READINGS TO TRACY WHITELAW
- **ACTION: HELOISE TO INVITE COUNCILLOR SMITH AND GOTLIEB V/D MERWE TO THE NEXT MEETING.**