

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
FERNKLOOF NATURE RESERVE (FNR) ADVISORY BOARD (FAB)
HELD AT ELECTRICAL BOARDROOM, ONRUSRIVIER
ON FRIDAY, 17 JULY 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], Lee Burman (L.Bn), Linda Griffiths (LG), Cllr Kari Brice (KB), Estelle Spaarwater (ES), Andrae Marais (AM) [Cape Nature], Glynis Van Rooyen (GvR), Tania Fisher (TF) [Temp PA-Onrus Office], Di Marais (DM), Sue Reuther (SRK Engineers), Kirsty McQuaid (SRK Consulting Engineers), Eric Foster (EFG Consulting Engineers).

Apologies: Muthama Muasya (MM), Liezl Bezuidenhout(LB) [Senior Manager–Overstrand Environmental]

Absent without Apology: Johan du Toit (JdT) [Law Enforcement]

Welcome: The Chairperson welcomed the members of the board and the representatives from SRK Consulting Engineers and EFG Consulting Engineers. DH informed everyone that there would be an information session/discussion with the consultants regarding the proposed bypass road before the official start of the advisory board meeting.

Proposed By-pass Road:

The discussion commenced with an information session lead by Sue Reuther from SRK Engineers. DH then read out a draft submission on behalf of FAB and stated that the members of the board could give their input afterwards. The board commended DH for preparing an excellent document. They unanimously supported his comments. AvH suggested that the document be sent to the Premier of the Western Cape and several members suggested that it be sent to the press as well. LG requested that a copy of the Chairpersons draft document be sent to all the members of the advisory board. A discussion of the draft document and questions/answers session then followed with the consultants. The session concluded at 10:40.

Notes taken by Kirsty Mcquaid (SRK Consulting Engineers) and the Chairperson’s draft document will be circulated with the minutes of the meeting.

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

H. Fortune

2.1 Confirmation of Minutes and Public Availability

One amendment to the Minutes under point 4.2; G-track should be jeep track.
The Minutes were confirmed.

2.2 Comments from Council on FAB Minutes dated 20 May 2014

None received.

N. Green

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Amendment of By-laws relating to FNR and FAB

NG noted that he plans to take this item forward in August/September.

N. Green

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

An information session was held with SRK Consulting Engineers and EFG Consulting Engineers regarding the

proposed by-pass road. No further information was available on progress with the Stanford Trunk Road Upgrade.

N. Green

4 Administration

4.1 FNR Integrated Management Plan (IMP) Progress

DH commented that the IMP was returned from the consultants, with amendments, as requested by the Fernkloof Advisory Board. DH doing a final check and will then return it to Liezl Bezuidenhout.

Action: DH to do a final review of the IMP and return it to Liezl Bezuidenhout.

N. Green

4.1.1 Hermanus Astronomy Centre

NG has no progress feedback. He stated that he has not received any requests from the Property Administration department. LG enquired how the proposals for the road will affect the Astronomy Centre. DH stated that it will not have an effect because they would probably be sheltered from the extra light of the traffic. DH commented that this item should remain on the agenda to monitor further developments.

N. Green

4.2 FNR 2014/15 Budget

NG gave a summary of the spending:

- An amount of R739 038 was spent. The bulk of which was spent on maintenance contractors for the cutting of trails, firebreaks, the building of two entrance walls and the tarring of the parking area as well as the maintenance of buildings.
- R87 000 were spent on maintenance materials like herbicide, toolkits, etc.
- R120 000 was spent on alien clearing, the bulk of which was done on the Fernkloof Nature Reserve. The alien vegetation density has decreased to an estimated 2.7% from 4.7% at the start of the financial year. Some of the highlights include the clearing of the high trees in Kloof, the Klein River clearing and a portion of the Mossel River which were densely infested.
- R11 000 went to the design of the Mossel River bridge. NG has the final design and is looking at the possibility to start construction in the new financial year.

NG mentioned that he expects to spend the same amount this year because the budget for 2015/2016 has not been increased, the allocated amount remain the same. DH commented that the allocated operational budget is minimal for a reserve such as Fernkloof. NG stated that the challenge they face is actually not the allocated amount of money but the fact that they are severely understaffed. LB commented that the Botanical Society should be thanked for maintaining the gardens.

LG enquired about the renovation of the storeroom at Fernkloof. NG said that all the documents are ready to submit and that the renovation should then start around October/November of this year.

N. Green

4.3 FNR Management Reports

Maintaining Infrastructure:

NG stated that the main focus was on maintaining the infrastructure on the reserve. The jeep track has been finished and they also dealt with a few problematic gates. Two of the three gates have been installed. They have started on the hiking trails but there are still some erosion problems on some of the trails which will be attended to during the course of the new financial year.

NG commented that it is important to maintain the firebreaks which were cut. One of the firebreaks is starting to show some erosion. NG mentioned that he intends to cut the trail which goes down to the reservoir site and burn

that portion across the mountain up to the towers and down.

Ownership Survey:

NG reported that they have been doing an ownership survey on all properties within the coastal zone and around the buffer as part of the review of the zoning scheme and for the purpose of maintaining their records. They encountered quite a few problems with zoning properties which will have to be taken up with the Town planning Dept.

Staffing:

NG reiterated that they are very understaffed. If someone goes on leave or attends a course they are down to one staff member. NG thanked the Botanical Society and Cliff Path Management for their assistance.

Fire Management Program:

NG stated that they are developing a GIS data base. The GMC team did a great infrastructure survey on the coast towards the end of the financial year. In time they should have a good data base on which to base their budgets. DH requested NG to circulate his report to the members of the board.

Action: NG to circulate his report to the members of the board.

N. Green

5. Standing Items

5.1 Enforcement

DH requested that a letter be sent to Dir. Neville Michaels to inform him that the law enforcement officer did not attend the meeting again. DH told LG that there is another security forum meeting scheduled for the reserve. LG said that she will unfortunately not be able to attend. DH and NG will be attending. DH requested that any concerns be emailed to him so that he can bring it up at the meeting. DH asked if the municipal court is operational. LG commented that it is not operational and that she has had a lot of people asking her about the court because they have problems that need to be addressed. DH stated that he would raise the points about Hoy's Koppie and the municipal court at the security forum meeting.

J. du Toit

5.2 Hoy's Koppie

DB inquired whether the graves on Hoy's Koppie have been repaired. LG said that it appeared to be repaired when she visited the site about three months before. DH suggested that NG meet with Robin Lee from the Historical Society to pay a visit to Hoy's Koppie with a view to bringing about any planning that may be needed to upgrade the site. LG commented that delivery vehicles park at Hoy's Koppie and the drivers dump their rubbish there. She has reported this to Law Enforcement several times but they don't go out there to address the problem and they never report back to her. LG has written a letter to Dir. Neville Michaels, who will hopefully take action. There is also no improvement in the illegal car guard situation. She has learnt from these car guards and the HPP officials that Law Enforcement has been handing out the bibs to them without any ID's or zoning. DH requested LG to copy himself and NG in on the email to Dir. Michaels. LG mentioned that she also noticed that builders are dumping building materials at Hoy's Koppie. AM wanted to know if these builders shouldn't be reported to the building society. LG commented that there are only two building inspectors in the area and that it is very difficult to get into contact with them. DH stated that the responsibility of Hoy's Koppie is split between the LED and Law Enforcement. He is going to request a site inspection of Hoy's Koppie with the Directors.

Action: NG to arrange a site visit with Robin Lee from the Historical Society.

Action: DH to request a site inspection with the Directors.

N. Green / D. Heard

5.3 Ecological Issues

5.3.1 Baboon Electric Fencing

LB to give update on baboon monitoring strategy and electric fencing at the next meeting.

L. Bezuidenhout / N Green

5.3.2 Burning of Coastal Corridors

NG noted that the EMS section of the municipality was investigating the burning of the coastal strip between Kraal Rock and Die Gang. A complaint was received from a resident in that area requesting the municipality to reduce the fire hazard in front of their property. In the document it stated that the type of vegetation was of the coastal forest and mountain fynbos varieties. NG commented that the fire hazard for these types of vegetation was very low. NG noted that EMS requested BOTSOC's input on which sections of the coastal strip to burn.

L. Bezuidenhout

5.3.3 Event Applications

NG stated that an application was received for the Land en See Annual Run to be held in October.

DB reported on the Walkerbay Xtreme event which was held in May. DB commented that he had to contact the organisers because they left red-and-white tape as well as direction signs on dustbins and signage. They only apologised after DB contacted them. Their sweeper did a poor job. DH said that it was part of the conditions that they should clean up properly after the event. DH stated that those points must be noted when the board receives an application from them again. GvR suggested charging organisers a cleanup deposit for future events. Her suggestion was met with enthusiasm from all. DH stated that the EMS should look at applying for a cleanup deposit which could be lost if the municipality has to clean up after an event.

Action: NG to apply for cleanup deposit at the start of the new financial cycle in August.

N Green

5.5 Land and Infrastructure

5.5.1 Fernkloof Village Drainage Report

NG has no further progress to report. DH requested that the item remain on the agenda.

N. Green

5.6 Klein River Estuary Management

NG read out a report compiled by Penelope Aplon on the upgrade of nine sewer pump stations. The report will be circulated with the minutes of the meeting. AvH will enquire about the environmental authorisation and discuss the matter with Dir. Stephen Muller.

Action: AvH to meet with Dir. Stephen Muller regarding the upgrade of the sewer pump stations.

L. Bezuidenhout

5.7 Report from Hermanus Botanical Society

LG noted that the Flower Show, which will be held from 24 – 28 September is being organised very efficiently. This year's theme is Fynbos Creatures. All are invited to join in the festivities.

L. Griffiths

5.8 Reports from Cliff Path Management Group

DB noted that since the last meeting 130m of the path has been resurfaced. DB has written to the area manager, Don Kearney about the 97m that they didn't manage to do and he wanted to know what happened to the balance of the money that was allocated to this project, seeing that it hasn't been finished properly before the financial year end. He is waiting for an answer from area management. DB commented that all the defaced signs have been replaced along the cliff path. He also commented that the Biodiversity Walk was launched on 20th May 2015.

DB stated that the voicemap app has been introduced and is up and running. It provides historical and geographical information as you move along the path. DB mentioned that the planting of the plants need to be completed. Over 5000 plants have already been planted with the help of Di Marais and members of BOTSOC, the gardening club and the EPWP team has also done a great job.

D Beattie

6. General

6.1 Grotto Parking Embankment (BAR)

NG has no further progress to report.

N. Green

6.2 Hunting with Dogs & Illegal Plant Harvesting

LG commented that she hasn't received any further reports of sightings. DH commented that any sightings must be reported as a matter of priority to NG or Law Enforcement. AM mentioned that he could also be contacted on 079 528 3560. DH noted that the item may be removed from the agenda.

Other points of discussion:

Cape Floral Region Protected Areas World Heritage Site Expansion

AvH requested the Chairperson to give a summary of the meeting regarding the World Heritage Site. DH stated that he wrote a letter to Guy Palmer at Cape Nature who was responsible for the motivation for the expansion of the Cape Floral Heritage Site, which has been successful. Up to now they have only considered provincial or national park properties for that, however they will attempt to look at private and municipal nature reserves in the future. DH stated that they suggested looking at a corridor of reserves which include Fernkloof, Vogelgat, Maanschynkop and Walker Bay right through to Grootbos. The representatives of these reserves were present at the meeting. DH noted that Guy Palmer would be retiring at the end of July but Mr. Palmer hoped to report back to them before then with an in principle nod from the CEO of Cape Nature that a steering committee be formed with the role players here. They will then assist Cape Nature with info to start putting together a World Heritage Site. AvH requested to be incorporated in any future meetings. DH stated that a steering committee will be formed and the advisory board members may attend all future meetings.

D. Heard

Para glider Site

AM mentioned that he noticed erosion coming from the paraglide site. DH noted that NG and AM should contact the paraglide club to arrange a site visit.

Action: NG and AM to visit the paragliding site.

A. Marais

7. Date of Next Meeting: 30 October 2015