

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
FERNKLOOF NATURE RESERVE (FNR) ADVISORY BOARD (FAB)
HELD AT ELECTRICAL BOARDROOM, ONRUSRIVIER
ON FRIDAY, 12 MAY 2017 at 09:00**

1. Welcome, Attendance and Apologies

Present: Duncan Heard (DH) [in the Chair], David Beattie (DB), Penelope Aplon (PA) Environmental Officer – Overstrand Municipality], Councillor Kari Brice (KB), Heloise Fortune (HF) [Environmental Secretary – Overstrand Municipality], Lee Burman (LBn), Andrae Marais (AM) [Cape Nature], Glynis Van Rooyen (GvR), Liezl de Villiers (LdV) [Environmental Manager: Overstrand Municipality], Anthony van Hoogstraten (AvH)

Apologies: Muthama Muasya (MM), Linda Griffiths (LG)

No apology from Edward Fisher (EF) [Law Enforcement – Overstrand Municipality]

Welcome: DH opened the meeting and welcomed all present. He informed everyone that he had a meeting with LdV and PA. The environmental section is still looking for a replacement for Neville Green. LdV is in the process of restructuring her department but that will still take a while before completed. LdV informed all that PA will be acting in the position of the Biodiversity Conservation Manager and she will take on Neville's responsibilities. She requested that all Fernkloof related matters should be communicated to PA and copied to her.

2. Confirmation of Minutes for the Meeting of the FAB held on 10 February 2017.

HF

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: Anthony van Hoogstraten

2.2 Comments from Council on FAB Minutes dated 10 February 2017.

K.B

No comments were received.

3. Matters Arising

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

P.A

PA will contact DH to arrange a meeting date to discuss this point; LdV should be included in the discussion.

3.2 Provincial By-Pass Road

P.A

PA commented that she has nothing new to report. No comments have been received from SRK yet.

AvH commented that September 2016 was the deadline given by the Minister but they haven't heard anything as of yet. DH commented that the EIA might be holding up the process as a lot of comments were received.

4. Administration

4.1 FNR Integrated Management Plan (IMP) Progress

P.A

LdV have a meeting on Tuesday 16 May 2017 with Director Stephen Muller and Mr Riaan Kuchar to relook the map and the zoning of the FNR IMP. It is noted by Director Stephen Muller that if something drastic changes in the document that was publicised it will have to be publicised again.

Updated comments from 16 May 2017 meeting; Director Stephen Muller decided that FAB will receive the document directly from EMS but that the document will be advertised at the same time.

4.1.1 Hermanus Astronomy Centre

P.A

PA reported that the Town Planning application has not been finalised.

4.1.2 Cableway

D.H

DH commented that he has not been appointed yet. What he can mention is that an early botanical assessment is underway. Craig Saunders and Andre Wiehahn are about to appoint a botanist to scan and scope the area for a bottom station to work from as well as the possible cable way path and upper station. That should then be applied to the design and then a proposal should be put forward of the exact placement of the structures should they go ahead with the project. Afterwards the botanist will have a more detailed look at the possible areas of direct impact. The big problem is they can't operate anything unless they secure an area of public land outside the FNR for the bottom station. That will be something they will pursue over the next few months. After the botanical assessment report he might or may not receive his first appointment. He will then make a submission to the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) to put out what parts of the EIA regulations will be triggered. After DEA's comments have been received they can move forward knowing exactly what the legal requirements are. DH commented that if he gets appointed he wants to run a transparent process therefore he will have to recuse himself whenever there are FAB deliberations regarding the cableway.

4.1.3 Damage done to Riparian Zone at entrance

L.d.V

LdV commented that the Overstrand Municipality received a pre-compliance notice yesterday from the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (DEA&DP). She will forward the document to all together with her response and the way forward. The Overstrand Municipality have to reply within 7 days on what they are planning to put in place to restore the area and then DEA&DP will either except it or not.

4.2 FNR 2016/17 Budget

P.A

PA reported that the store tender was submitted yesterday. The store, carport and palisade fencing will be completed before the end of June 2017. DH commented that the path behind the (loo) building is extremely rough and broken up. He suggested for the sake of the elderly that the path should be looked at urgently.

4.3FNR Management Reports

P.A

PA commented that she has nothing to report.

4.4 World Heritage Expansion

D.H

DH commented that they did receive the support from CapeNature and the idea was to get a quote from Guy Palmer but after his retirement he got involved in various projects and therefore will not be able to put together the report. Giorgio Lombardi is currently looking at whether he would be prepared to put the motivating report together for remuneration. DH will assist him when he can, he will however not be able to assist him full time.

5. Standing Items

5.1 Enforcement

P.A

LdV will take up the issue of the official not attending with Director Neville Michaels.

5.1.1Encroachments

DB commented that the encroachment problem along the coastal section is getting worse. People are just blatantly cutting back the vegetation to extend their gardens. He noted that examples should be made and publicised. DH commented that it is important for officials to give feedback once they have inspected a complaint to close the matter properly. LdV noted that her personnel are responsible for closing the matter if it started with them; it is not the responsibility of law enforcement. She further noted that with the new field ranger that will be appointed in a month or so constant patrols will happen which will improve the situation since the field rangers have peace officer certificates.

5.2 Hoy's Koppie

P.A

DH referred to the Botsoc Report where LG mentioned that the alarm in the cave is not working and the illegal car guards at the parking. LdV will follow up with Director Neville Michaels. DB commented that he is on the sector 3 police forum and he feels this should be tabled there as well.

6. Ecological Issues

K.B

6.1.1 Baboon Virtual Fence

KB thanked the environmental section for their assistance with the virtual fence project. The equipment has been purchased and the noise boxes are working. There are currently three volunteers who are willing to assist and get the necessary training that's needed. Human Wildlife Solutions (HWS) captured, collared and released the alpha male and female of the Fernkloof troop. They are now waiting on HWS to show them exactly what to do. She also managed to get extra funding for another equipment box and preferably another collar. Funding will have to continue to replace bear bangers, etc that has to be replaced. The public has been very forthcoming in supporting the project. DH commented that they are looking forward to the results and how sustainable it will be. DH commented that if the virtual fence is successful than the electric fencing can be removed as it is in the management plan to be taken away. It is currently causing a huge scar.

6.1.2 Burning of Coastal Corridors

P.A

PA reported that NG's priority areas were Pringle bay and Betty's Bay so that will be burned first thereafter Sandbaai and Gansbaai. LdV commented that in the last two years there were a lot of priority given to the Pringle Bay, Kleinmond and Sandbaai areas and Gansbaai has not been looked at. She further commented that they are planning to sit with Marlu Rust to do a reassessment of where the biggest threats are by doing a risks analysis for both fire risks and ecological burning. DB commented that before Neville Green resigned they were supposed to meet with a few residents in the Kraalrock area, but they never got around to it. He noted that the vegetation is really high. They would really like to burn there because it burned about 50 years ago. LdV commented that a vegetation management plan is needed to decide whether it is necessary to burn. People have to realise that you can't burn everything in an urban area. When there is vegetation that has gone over to thicket then a decision has to be made whether to keep it as it was 50 years ago and burn or just to do thinning of the vegetation or leave it as it and manage is as coastal thicket/Milkwood. So decisions on how to manage these areas have to be based on the staff and funds that are available. LdV further commented that she and DB should meet and discuss this and decide where it fits into the bigger plan whether the area has to be burnt or not. DH suggested that MM should be included in the meeting just to get the science part across as well. LBN referred to the Cowling report that can also be looked at, she did forward a copy to FAB. DH commented that it would be great to get Richard Cowlings opinion on the abovementioned. LdV commented that people like Richard Cowling and Coert Geldenhuys's input would be invaluable in the process of setting up a milk wood system management plan.

6.1.3 Event Applications

P.A

PA commented that she has nothing to report.

6.2 Research

P.A

6.2.1 Research Applications

PA commented that she has nothing to report.

6.3 Klein River Estuary Management

P.A

LdV commented that the draft estuary management plan will be made available soon for comment.

6.4 Reports from Hermanus Botanical Society (BOTSOC)

L.G

LG circulated the report to the board. DH commented that LG touches on a point that bares discussion which is that there is still no control over the dogs in the reserve. LdV commented that the ecological monitor and a field ranger will monitor the dog issue over the weekend. The field ranger will be able to enforce the law with his peace officer certificate and the ecological monitor will be the support.

6.5 Reports from Cliff Path Management Group (CPMG)

D.B

DB reported that they had to resurface a section of the path that they did last year because it started to crumble. There are 3 sections of the existing path, 1 in Kwaaiwater and the other 2 in Voelklip that are degrading that will have to be resurfaced. They are looking at upgrading an existing path at the far end of Piet se bos and De Mond, it has been damaged because of the high levels of the lagoon. The CPMG are still removing aliens but they do not have a permit to do so reason being that their Co-Management Agreement is still with the Municipality and needs to be signed. LdV commented that it has been handed over to her but she wants to go through it first and if she is satisfied she will inform him when the document is ready to be signed.

6.6 Annual Hermanus Camp (AHC) – Lease Application

AvH commented that he is expecting to hear back from Anja Kotze Le Roux at the end of May 2017 on his 9 year and 11 month lease application.

7. General

7.1 Sale of Municipal Land adjacent to Scout Camp

A.v.H

AvH commented that FAB was not informed about the sale of the municipal land. He finds it disturbing that Anja Kotze Le Roux informed him that it is the function of the board to read the newspapers and see the advertisements. He takes exception to the fact that the board was not informed independently. FAB should not have to scour the newspapers. He wants the EMS section to make sure that the building that is being built is not on or over the boundary of FNR. LdV commented that her section was also not informed about the sale. They also heard about the sale from AvH. **DH commented that the FAB fully rejects the statement by Anja Kotze Le Roux that it is the Board members function to scour newspapers.** Any matter that may affect the FNR's management, including what may happen on areas adjacent to the reserve (its buffer area), should as a matter of course, be brought to the attention of the EMS by the municipality timeously and then if significant to the Advisory Board. FAB hopes that the matter will be rectified in the future.

7.2 Dogs in FNR

This point was discussed under 6.4.

P.A

8. Date of Next Meetings: 11 August 2017
10 November 2017