

**MEETING NOTES – 4 NOVEMBER 2014**  
**PLETTENBERG BAY COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT FORUM MEETING**  
**ANGLICAN CHURCH AT 09h30 – 11h30**

1. Welcome

Kenneth Mgaga and Bulelwa Sheyi from the Food for Waste programme as well as Mary Jane Waite, who is involved with the Bitou Valley Foundation, were welcomed.

2. Apologies

Maretha Alant, Mark Brown, Chris Behrens, Jenny Gardy, Jared Harding, Erwin Leibnitz, Lawrence Ramakuwela, Robbie Robinson, Chris Schliemann, Anton Wolfaardt

3. Present

An attendance register was circulated.

4. Acceptance of previous meeting notes

Angus Greig accepted the previous minutes and Basil van Rooyen seconded it.

5. Additions to the agenda

5.1 Housing development: Erf 8212, Piesang Valley Road (Crescent Guest House etc.) (refer to section 9.3)

5.2 Proposed Rezoning: Portion 80 of Farm 293, Knysna Division (refer to section 9.4)

5.3 Removal of a restrictive title condition : Erf 322, Plettenberg Bay (refer to section 9.5)

5.4 Keurbooms Estuary House Boats (refer to section 9.6)

5.5 Possible Wetland Infilling: Portions 34 and 35 of Matjesfontein 304 (refer to section 9.7).

6. Win-win Swop Shop Update – Kenneth Magaga

Kenneth, Bulelwa and their team were thanked by the Forum for the work that has been and is being done to clean up the Qolweni and Bossiesgif areas.

Kenneth explained that the win-win concept was recognised as a great opportunity to initially clean up the Qolweni Conservancy Area. The team soon realised that they could play a significant role in cleaning up the Qolweni/Bossiesgif areas to create a safe and healthy environment while helping the Bitou municipality to solve their

waste management issues. Residents also benefit by getting essential household food and items in return for the waste collected which helps to enforce the idea that there is value in waste.

Since it was started about 2 years ago, 5 groups of volunteers (7 in a group) have been developed and equipped with skills that make them more employable. A teenage group, the Dream chasers, is also supported by the Win-win swop shop and through education young people are being motivated to continue with the programme into the future. The Dream chasers did a very good presentation that looked at climate change and global warming and also participated in the recent Save the Rhino and Elephant march. They have access to a computer and internet where they are able to do research.

Kenneth and his team though realised that to sustain the project they need to form a company. The volunteers of the Swop Shop are the owners of the formed company named Buhle Bendalo. The aim of the company, along with their British partner, is to build fire-proof low cost housing using bricks made of recycled high-density Polyethylene plastic. The partner in the UK is busy developing the technology and machinery and is raising the required funds (7.2 million pounds). The company opens on the 29<sup>th</sup> of November. Through this company they hope to show the Municipality how money can be saved through recycling that can then be used for other projects and job creation. This company will also support other Swop Shops by using their recyclable plastics collected and they hope to collect materials all over the Western Cape.

Other Swop Shops are now also being set up e.g. in Kurland Village. Kenneth explained that he understood from the municipality that there would be an increase in future in budget if the project is successful.

Kenneth finished off by saying that the Bossiesgif and Qolweni communities thank the Forum for their assistance and support in this initiative and ask that the Forum stay involved as the business develops.

## 7. Member updates

**Redford Conservancy:** Anton followed up with the engineers involved with regards to the potential damage to the water furrow as a result of the truckstop upgrade. The engineer confirmed that the furrow will not be damaged but it will now also serve as a drain for storm water collected on the parking area. The Forum will follow up to ensure that oils and other pollutants going into the furrow from the parking area are not entering the system.

**River Club:** They recently had a great sighting of a Cape Clawless-Otter.

**Botanical Society:** The society has been quite inactive over the last couple of months but they will be more active in the future.

**Ratepayers Association:** A Mayoral council meeting was held after a couple of months of delays. The building amnesty (for existing buildings that have not submitted plans for approval) has been extended until next year July. If

unauthorised construction is not declared during this period, no occupancy certificates will be issued which are required if a property is sold.

Progress has been made by the Municipality with regards to solar geysers being installed as well as regulators on electric geysers to control the electricity via radio signal during peak demand. The regulators are assisting homeowners to avoid penalties if they exceed their maximum allowable usage. Homes that have time switches or solar geysers do not need to have regulators installed. The regulators are installed by a private company for free (funded by the Department of Energy).

Portions of the sewage pump station at Poortjies are being demolished after structural faults were found by the Municipality.

**Bitou Valley Foundation:** The Plett Birding Route website has been launched ([www.plettbirdingroute.co.za](http://www.plettbirdingroute.co.za)). The building of bird hides is still being planned. They are waiting for funding for guide training. 12 guides will be trained to work in different areas of the Bitou region e.g. Craggs, Kranshoek, Bitou Valley.

## 8. Matters arising

### 8.1. Car Park: Portion 91 of 304 Matjes Fontein, Keurboomstrand (opposite Milkwood Glen)

The PBCEF is still awaiting feedback from the municipality on their queries with regards to the proposed parking areas for Enrico's Restaurant. A team that includes the municipality's Strategic Services are looking at an alternative parking solution. At this stage Enrico has not withdrawn the proposal to use Portion 91. It is also understood that the owner of the property indicated that if by democratic decision it is decided that the majority of people don't want the parking lot, he would abide by that decision.

Concerns with regards to Enrico's continued expansion, that adds to the parking issues, as well as potential infringements of his liquor license were discussed.

Other potential sites were also discussed.

A meeting that will be attended by the Forum and the KPOA has been arranged with the Bitou Mayor to discuss the situation.

### 8.2. Estuary embankment activity: Portion 136 of 304 Matjesfontein and Erf 775, Keurbooms River

Detailed information requested from the developer and the Environmental Impact Practitioner (EIP) Hilland has not been received yet. The Forum has been informed that the EIA forms part of the S24G process. The EIP indicated that they are just waiting for final input from a specialist before the Draft S24G impact assessment documents will be made available for public participation.

### 8.3. Section 24G application: Farms 491 and portion 10 of Doukama 221, Wittedrift (Bitou River Pipeline installation)

The Forum has been informed (but did not receive official notification from the developer or Environmental consultant) that the application to construct a

pipeline to abstract water from the Bitou River (part of a S24G application) has been approved. The Bitou Valley Foundation has submitted their intention to appeal and the Forum will submit theirs' as well and then both organisations will appeal the decision.

8.4. Cemeteries, Prison and Housing Development: Portions 3 (Ebenezer Estate) and 33 of 437 Hillview

The Forum submitted comments stating that we are in principle not against the development and that we recognise the Bitou region's need for a cemetery, prison and further housing. However, the Forum indicated that they have concerns with regards to the process being followed in identifying properties for the proposed development as well as with the suitability of the currently selected properties. The Forum also suggested at this stage that undeveloped vacant areas closer to town (South and East of the site) should first be considered for development.

8.5. Whale watching operators and Jet Ski's

An article, as discussed during the previous meeting, will be placed in the CXPress informing the public on the regulations and how incidents should be reported and what information is required to act on a reported incident.

8.6. Piesang River pollution (opposite The River Club)

At the latest Ward 2 Council meeting this was discussed and it was recognised that the unofficial use of the taxi rank at the bottom of Oddlands Drive (before the white bridge) likely contributes to this dumping. The municipality recognise the need to establish an official satellite taxi rank e.g. in Longships as there is a need in that area. It was also discussed in the council meeting that more bins should be placed at this site. The Forum will follow up with a letter to the municipality to request that they consider solutions to keep the river clean.

9. New applications and issues

9.1. Boardwalk Proposal: Portion 11 of 304 Matjes Fontein

The Forum objected to the proposal as we believe the limited use from one residential unit does not warrant the construction of an extensive dedicated raised boardwalk. It was suggested that they make use of the existing paths and use similar structures on the slopes (short sections of boardwalk, which is built low down at ground level, log or sleeper steps or rope and pole steps) as is successfully used on Goukamma and Robberg that has to endure a lot more foot traffic.

9.2. Residential Dwelling: Portion 3 of 447 Ganse Vallei

The application is for a proposed new residential dwelling on Portion 3 of the farm Ganse Vallei 447. A basic Assessment Report needs to be completed as

NEMA listed activities pertaining to the proximity of the Bitou river were triggered. The Forum will arrange a site visit before deciding if comments need to be submitted.

#### 9.3 Housing development: Erf 8212, Piesang Valley Road (Crescent Guest House)

During 2013 an appeal was lodged by neighbours against the Council decision to approve the rezoning and consent uses on Erf 8212 for the development of a group housing scheme. DEA&DP upheld the appeal and advised the municipality to circulate a Site Development Plan (SDP) and reconsider the proposal. SDP is for 46, 1-bedroom Section Title Units. The SDP was circulated only to immediate neighbours.

The Forum will follow up with municipal Strategic Services to enquire as to the stage of the process and if an EIA is required to be undertaken.

#### 9.4 Proposed Rezoning: Portion 80 of Farm 293, Knysna Division

The property is zoned Agricultural Zone 1 and Institutional Zone (INGWE Education Centre and associated accommodation) and the application is to rezone to Special Zone: Rural Conservation to allow for the establishment of a conservation area, permaculture area and sectional title units.

The rezoning documentation will be circulated to the Forum committee for feedback and comments will be submitted. Issues discussed during the meeting are the number of units being requested and concerns with water and sewerage solutions.

#### 9.5 Removal of a restrictive title condition: Erf 322, Plettenberg Bay

The application is in order to permit; the existing additional dwelling units, increase in the permissible site coverage, the existing building line encroachments and the ownership of the property by any racial group.

The Forum is not going to comment as there are no environmental issues.

#### 9.6 Keurbooms Estuary Houseboats

Concerns have been expressed with regards to houseboats between Stanley Island and the Angling Club. These houseboats aren't being charged for anchorage, are blocking thoroughfare and there are concerns with regards to sewerage management.

The municipality is in the process of drafting bylaws for the Keurbooms Estuary with the intention of controlling the boats better. The bylaws will have to go through a public participation process, be approved by council and then be gazetted.

#### 9.7 Possible Wetland Infilling: Portions 34 and 35 of Matjesfontein 304

The Forum has been notified that there is possible infilling taking place on part of the Tchokwane Wetland. The Forum will investigate further.

## 10. Recent updates

### 10.1. Small Boat Harbour

After submitting an application for extension of two-years to submit a revised and compliant Scoping Report to DEA&DP (after their Final Scoping Report was rejected on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October) the Department rejected the application for extension on the 21<sup>st</sup> of October informing the developer that approval for the current environmental application has now finally lapsed. The developer may appeal but the chance of a successful appeal seems remote. If the developer, Western Cape Marina, wishes to pursue the project further, an entirely new environmental application must be filed with the department, and if granted, the whole process will have to start right from the beginning again.

Donations have been requested from supporters to cover the final legal costs. Excess donations will be split between the PBCEF and the RPA.

### 10.2. Food for Waste / Win-Win Swop Shops

The Forum submitted the required paperwork and is now waiting for an additional approved R100 000 for the programme from the municipality. The Forum realised that community members are bringing in bulk loads of cardboard and glass e.g. from shops or liquor stores so we had an informal meeting to explain that the purpose of the program is to keep the community clean in exchange for essential items so that both the community and the environment benefit. The Forum is in the process of acquiring a scale and container so that a Win-Win Swop Shop can be started in Kurland village.

It was suggested that the Forum invite Randall Bouwer to the next meeting so that issues such as enforced recycling for Plettenberg Bay can be discussed.

## 11. Meeting / Workshop Feedback

11.1. Keurbooms Estuary Forum – Bitou Catchment verification of water rights is being undertaken to ensure that correct usage is assigned to each property. A reserve determination for the Keurbooms River is being undertaken, as well as various additional studies and data updated (but it is not a full comprehensive study) so that there can be higher confidence in the determination. The higher confidence results will be able to give a better indication if there will be sufficient water flowing through the system during high flow periods so that water can be pumped to an off-stream storage dam. It was indicated that the proposed water pipeline between Knysna and Plett is not going to go ahead.

### 11.2. Ward 2 Committee

It was discussed that a contractor will be appointed by the end of October to construct the Waste Transfer Facility stations (taking into account objections from other tenderers). Rehabilitation of the waste dump is being budgeted for at R2mil a year for 3 years. Drop-off points for recyclable material within the Municipal area

will soon be established – recycling bins are being sourced from Post Wink in Cape Town.

## 12. General

### 12.1 Preserve our Plett Facebook Page

A Facebook page has been started to bring environmental issues to the attention of Plett residents. The page has received a lot of support. The page will hopefully be able to draw attention to issues that people should be informed about and enable all to voice their opinions. Interesting information on environmental matters will also be circulated through the page.

### 12.2 Fundraising

It was discussed that the Forum needs to look into various methods by which we can raise funds. It was agreed that a newsletter should be drafted focussing on the Forum's recent achievements including the Small Boat Harbour and the Win Win Swop Shops. To increase the efficiency of the newsletter, members must be approached in person to contribute. It was further suggested that each member of the Forum must personally approach 5 more people that they know. Many of the member organisations have not contributed recently so they should be reminded to contribute. It was suggested that a separate meeting will be held to further discuss the fundraising strategy.

## 13. Announcements

### 13.1 Boere-Brocante

A French type up-market sale of collectables with a local flavour will be held at Ouland Royale on 16 December. The purpose of the event is to raise funds for four local non-profit organisations including the PBCEF. 10% of the income from this event will be equally distributed between the four organisations. Forum members are requested to help with the arrangements and people should also consider antiques and collectibles that they would like to sell at this even.

### 13.2 Conservation at Work training day

This will be held at the Kurland Club, the Crags on 21 November 2014. The purpose of the event is to teach people how to integrate conservation practices into their land management.

## 14. Date of next meeting

2 December 2014