

MEETING AGENDA – 1 JULY 2014
PLETTENBERG BAY COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT FORUM MEETING
ANGLICAN CHURCH AT 09h30 – 11h30

1. Welcome

2. Apologies

Mark Brown, Julie Carlisle, Keith Berning, Chris Behrens, Jenny Gardy, Robbie Robinson, Erwin Leibnitz, Dupré Lombaard, Cedric Stansfield.

3. Present

An attendance register was signed by all present.

4. Acceptance of Previous Meeting Notes

To be included in previous minutes:

- Apologies from Kerry Schurmann
- Water testing in Matjies River –Residents will start testing the water again. There is a history of high E. coli in the river from the tributary “Buffels” that passes Kurland village.

Minutes accepted by Angus Greig and Basil van Rooyen.

5. Additions to the agenda

- Eskom powerline and substation – refer to 10.2.
- Announcements – refer to point 13.
 - i) Facebook page
 - ii) Fynbos Forum
 - iii) Global March for Elephants and Rhinos
- Erf 2098, Piesang valley – refer to 8.5.
- Wadrift dam – refer to 8.6.

6. Member Updates

Redford Conservancy – Alien clearing is continuing. A bird survey run by Gareth Robinson was carried out on the Noble’s property, using My Bird Patch (<http://mybirdpatch.adu.org.za>). The aim is to conduct further surveys in other areas with other habitats.

Indalo Conservancy – Apart from a graveyard, a prison is now also planned for in the area. This may be in the area previously zoned for the N2 bypass.

Bitou Municipality (BM)- Peter Lobese in attendance to represent Dupré Lombaard.

Crags Rural Association – Has been focussing on the issue of a drop off site for waste in Kurland – refer to 8.4 for more details.

Save Plett Alliance – Nearly all the money required to cover the legal fees owed to ENS has been raised.

Recycling – The Win Win Swop Shop is operating fairly well. The valley behind the shop is being cleaned up by paid volunteers. Awareness is increasing within the community, as the value of recycling is being realised - the collected material does have a value. Kurland village cannot get their recycling collected often enough due to the distance from town. Jofre Lottering from the BM is now responsible for township recycling efforts. Recycling in greater Bitou has generally improved and a tender is out for recycling bins around town.

It is still not clear what is happening with e-waste and hazardous waste? BM needs to inform us on all details at the next Forum meeting. A lack of information is a key problem- people need to be informed and forced to do it. An article in the CXPress is needed and instructions should be included in monthly bills. Mechanisms need to be place to make it an easy, practical process. It was agreed to invite Randall Bower who now has waste management as his sole responsibility to the next meeting

Rate Payers Association – Pikkie Lombard (Manager: Water Quality Control at BM) has achieved blue drop status for Plett's water quality. He won the Wilson award for the most effective sewerage works in SA.

An environmental officer is in the process of being appointed for the BM.

7. **Funding**

The proposal for a car boot sale in December will be pursued. This would be a joint effort by a number of charities and will possibly take place at Ouland Royale.

8. **Matters Arising**

8.1. Look Out 'Nature Reserve' – bush clearing by Bitou Municipality.

No path widening or clearing of alien vegetation has started yet.

8.2. Milkwood Manor Parking

A list of legislations and regulations which would prohibit the extension of the parking area into the salt marsh and Milkwood forest area has been sent to BM.

There has not been an official proposal for the parking extension and it is hoped that by passing on this information it will not get to that phase.

It is noted that the Rate Payers have identified the need for extra parking as a big issue. Alternative methods such as the use of tuk tuks from town to Look Out need to be further investigated and the BM needs to be reminded of this.

8.3. Ladywood – proposed rezoning and subdivision portion 18 of farm nr. 438.

Confirmation from BM on the location of the site relative to the stream and wetland is needed before comments can be submitted.

8.4. Proposed Establishment of Public Waste Drop Off and Management Facilities

There was an open day on the 25th June but this was very poorly attended.

No drop off point is planned for Kwanokathula, which is a problem.

Kurland – The one proposed site is too far away for people to carry their rubbish to. The site next to the rugby field is best as it is accessible.

Information/awareness on how hazardous waste etc. will be dealt with is still needed.

8.5. Erf 2098, Piesang valley.

The Forum has objected to development on this site previously. The area is below the 5m flood level and between two wetlands. There is no buffer zone between the wetland and the proposed development and access is an issue. A ROD for 23 units has, however, been received. Zoning has been changed from Agriculture to Residential.

8.6. Wadrift dam

Now in the EIA phase

9. New applications and issues

9.1. Erf 8180: Proposed subdivision and rezoning.

Proposal to subdivide and rezone the Piesang Valley property into a 400m² Residential Zone I and 2129m² Business Zone II, to be used for offices and flats. Part of the property has a steep slope and access from Piesang Valley road will need to be addressed.

10. Recent Updates

10.1. Small boat harbour

Refer to point 6: Save Plett Alliance

10.2. Eskom powerline and substation

Environmental Authorisation has been issued. The Forum did not appeal this decision as most of our concerns had been dealt with in the 'specific conditions' section.

11.Meeting / Workshop Feedback

11.1.Eden Forum for Wildlife-Welfare Science and Ethics – 25 June 2014

The PBCEF is a member of this new independent forum which has been formed 'to provide scientifically based and ethical guidance and advice on human-wildlife interactions to Eden District Council'.

The Terms of Reference were discussed/finalized at the meeting.

Members include independent bodies such as WESSA, SPCA, SANParks, Knysna Environmental Forum etc. (representatives from commercial practices are not included).

The aim is to 'provide ethical, independent, authoritative, scientifically defensible and impartial advice to the council on human-wildlife interactions'. Establishing by-laws to deal with various wildlife-human issues will, for example, be one of the goals.

An immediate issue which the EFWWSE will deal with is the circus which hopes to return to Knysna in December. The EFWWSE will oppose this (due to the use of wild animals) and asks all member groups to write a letter of objection to the Forum. Letters will then be sent to the Knysna Municipality. Agreement was reached that the PBCEF will write such a letter, objecting to the circus visiting the Eden district as we are opposed to the use of wild animals for entertainment.

11.2.Garden Route Initiative – 27 June 2014

The Eden Climate Change Plan was launched.

Tanya De Waal (DEADP) gave an update on the Provincial SDF. She pointed out that Province cannot dictate to municipalities what to do regarding their SDF, but significant substantiation would be needed for a municipality to not comply with the Provincial SDF. Lawrence Ramakuwela presented the Bitou SDF.

Myles Mander from Future Works gave a very informative presentation on 'Ecosystem Services Assessment for Knysna Estuary and Catchment'. A study looking at Knysna's assets and the ecosystem services that these assets supply revealed how important Knysna's water supply is and how detrimental not managing such an asset is. A lack of action/management results in increased degradation. No number of dams will provide a long term solution – only dealing with alien tree invasion.

The Forum noted that it would be worthwhile inviting Mr Myles to give a presentation to the BM, as Plett is likely to be in a similar situation. The findings explicitly justify the need to focus on alien clearing rather than just building dams.

Julie Carlisle gave a presentation on the exiting new Plett Birding Route which is soon to be launched and will include a number of LandArt bird hides.

11.3. Eden District Municipal Coastal Committee – 27 June 2014

DEADP Western Cape gave feedback on the development of setback lines. The West Coast is complete and now the Garden Route area will be tackled. Ad-hoc setback lines are used around existing development, but in areas without development the 100 year set back line is used (i.e. low risk).

12. **General**

12.1. Circus return

Refer to 11.1.

12.2. Cattle on Indalo Conservancy

The Forum has sent a letter to the BM asking for action to prevent/stop cattle from invading the conservancy.

12.3. Alien vegetation on municipal land

A letter has been sent to BM pointing out that clearing of alien vegetation is the landowners' responsibility and how the BM has neglected this responsibility on their land.

12.4. Sewerage leaks

A letter has been sent to BM on the issue, noting that leaks at pump stations could be prevented with better maintenance of the infrastructure. The pump station below Whale Rock Heights is identified as an additional problem area in addition to the pump station in Piesang Valley and behind the Angling Club).

It was pointed out that the public needs to inform Pikkie Lambard of problems so he can act upon it. His department is understaffed (50 personal instead of the needed 90) and the R700 000 budget awarded is not enough – therefore difficult to keep on top of all issues. Donald Grant will advise on what route to take to apply for additional funding for infrastructure.

12.5. Waste Management

It was questioned why it is not possible to create a landfill site closer to Plett than Mossel Bay? The requirements/regulations are so strict that it's difficult to find a suitable place (the large number of rivers, for example, makes it difficult because of pollution from run-off).

The old landfill site has received a closure permit and BM has three years to get it into order.

Fifteen years of monitoring is required before run-off from the old dumpsite is allowed to run into Piesang River.

Animal carcasses may not be dumped in the old dumpsite as it is a class B dump. This has, however, been taking place and is highlighted in a recent report.

13. Announcements

13.1. Facebook page – A PBCEF Facebook page has been set up. The focus will be on current topics and announcements. Please join the page and invite friends to join.

13.2. Fynbos Forum - 4-7 August in Knysna.

13.3. Global March for Elephants and Rhinos- 4th October. A march will be held in Plett. The Forum will be involved in organising and running this 'event'. Visit <http://www.march4elephantsandrhinosaurs.org> for more information.

14. Date of Next Meeting

12 August