

MEETING AGENDA – 12 AUGUST 2014
PLETTENBERG BAY COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT FORUM MEETING
ANGLICAN CHURCH AT 09h30 – 11h30

1. Welcome

Welcome to Randall Bower from Bitou Municipality.

2. Apologies

Jenny Gardy, Inez Jamieson, Basil van Rooyen, Annabelle Conyngham, Julie Carlisle, Achim Eker, Joan Berning, Vernon Gibbs, Wayne Craig.

3. Present

An attendance register was signed by all present.

4. Acceptance of Previous Meeting Notes

Accepted by Rudi Martin and seconded by Robbie Robinson

A request for page numbers to be included.

5. Additions to the agenda

None

6. Waste management update

Update from Randall Bower, Bitou Municipality:

- Waste management is now his sole responsibility (he is no longer involved in other departments).
- The face of the town is determined by its cleanliness. Thank you to the Plett Clean -Up Campaign for all their help. They are volunteers who meet every Tuesday after work to clean up target areas within town. The aim/need is now to spread this to beyond town.
- Landfill site: Has received a closure permit. It is not an easy process to close it, however (have 3 years) as at present there is still builders rubble and green waste on the site and domestic waste temporarily (in transfer). Up to twelve containers of waste are transported to Mossel Bay each day, at great cost to the

municipality. The existing service provider's contract has expired and is now extended on a month to month basis.

- New transfer station: The previous tender was cancelled as the budget was for R8-9 mil but quotes of around R16 mil were received. Tenders for over R10 mil need to be advertised for a 30 day period, meaning that the tender had to be re-advertised for the correct duration. The new tender is now out. It will take about 3 months before the tender is awarded i.e. the aim is to appoint a contractor this year and for building to begin in January 2015 which will then take 8-9 months to complete. The present landfill site will therefore still operate until the end of 2015.
- Builders rubble: KK Sands quarry would like to rehabilitate a section of the quarry and are therefore interested in receiving builders rubble. The environmental impact assessment process etc. is still needed though.
- Green waste: The plan is still to create a composting facility at the transfer station but there are insufficient funds to start until the new year (R1.4mil is needed). The chipping machine has also had problems with belts etc. (R180 000 for new belts) and the hire of a private chipper has therefore been budgeted for. This is needed urgently as there is now no more space on the landfill site and green waste is largely responsible for the recent fires.
- Recycling: Gert Wilemse's contract was until the end of June. The tender was a lump sum for collectables from all Plett areas (Keurboomstrand, Natures Valley, Craggs etc). A clause was included that a minimum tonnage per month had to be collected and failing to do so resulted in a deduction on the tender paid.

Recycling is on track at the moment.

Environmental Affairs is going to be paying for 19 people from 'Jobs In Waste' to help in the BM area. Eight people will be responsible for recycling education awareness through door to door campaigns etc. The remainder will help with collection. A tender (which will be adjudicated in 2 weeks) is out for additional recycling bins (1000 litre capacity). These will be placed at strategic points throughout BM.

Consol, Sappi etc. collect the recyclables from the contractor. By-laws enforcing people to recycle will soon be in place.

- Hazardous waste: A container for electronic waste and one for oil are at the landfill site. The dumping of animal carcasses at the landfill site is illegal but there is no other option at present. George is currently testing an incinerator and carcasses will then have to be taken there.
- Natures Valley: Still in discussion whether there should be a drop-off point as baboons scavenging through refuse is a problem. Wheelie bins have been issued which could eliminate the need for a drop off point.

Comments by members:

- Information boards are needed. Information flow needs to come from BM (in the What's New etc.). Mr. Bower – info boards are planned.
- Inaction is often due to ignorance. The public needs to be informed about why we need to recycle and also where the recycling is going.
- Rate payers – road works on the N2 at present is resulting in lots of rubbish at the Stop/Go points.
- A waste licence costs about R45 000 but the need for one can be avoided if the load is spread between a number of points and therefore kept below the limit.

7. Member Updates

SANParks : Twelve teams are busy with alien clearing at present (2 areas within Bitou). Discussions are underway as to how ecological infrastructure within buffer zones can be restored. It is a large initiative, combined with fire management. Maretha will give a presentation on the Knysna buffer zones to the Forum and a wider audience, once more information on local examples has been collected.

Redford Conservancy: Alien clearing taking place. Fire management is of great interest as it is desperately needed in some areas. Guidance would be of great help e.g. how to burn small patches of fynbos in agricultural land. SANParks will develop management plans for all areas and Redford is on the list.

Indalo Conservancy: There is a lot of development anticipated and we need to be up to speed with this. We need to be linked to the town planners. All EIA's need to come to us.

Rate Payers Association: Dupré Lombaard is leaving at the end of August. His budget has been cut and applications for an Environmental Officer position and By-Laws for the Bitou Estuary have therefore been postponed. The budget will be reviewed in 6

months. BM has requested extra funds from Province for vital maintenance of infrastructure in the town.

Natures Valley Trust: Two new programs are to be launched in September. One is an extension of the Oyster Catcher project, now extending from NV to George (as an MSc project). The second project will be looking at pollution of our beaches – what it is, where it is from and the impact pollution is having on wildlife.

Keurbooms/Bitou Estuary Forum: – John Roberts responded to the Estuary Forum’s letter of enquiries/issues from February. The response will be circulated electronically. Once again, no representative from BM was present at the last Estuary Forum meeting.

Keurbooms: The illegal dumping of sand bags in the river bank has still not been tackled. The same owner has erected a large shed in the wetland area.

8. Matters Arising

8.1. Water/Estuarine issues

Refer to point 7: Keurbooms/Bitou Estuary Forum

8.2. Win Win Swop Shop

There has been a major clear-up of Qolweni, using funds previously allocated to the Forum by BM. The community is now running the swop shop largely themselves. The Forum has been offered a further R100 000 from BM to support the Win Win Swop Shops. Forum members agreed that the project should continue and the contract to receive the R100 000 should be signed.

8.3. Jet skis

Are there by-laws regarding jet-skis in the bay? What action is taking place to prevent jet skis in the bay during the whale season?

No craft (including paddle skis) are allowed within 300m of whales. More information on the regulations needs to be obtained. The public then needs to be made aware of the regulations and who to report illegal activities to.

8.4. Wadrift dam – Final EIR

The Forum submitted comments, pointing out once again that a more detailed reserve determination is needed before any decisions can be made – as was agreed upon beforehand. Funding is now available for the relevant studies and it is therefore logical to wait for results before any further decisions.

Comment was made that John Roberts clarified the fact that there will not be a comprehensive determination done – but rather a long term continuous upgrade of the reserve determination.

There is concern that the reserve determination process is dragging on and soon we will have huge water problems. However, nothing is hindering fault line tests etc., which can be carried out in the mean time before the EIA is finalised.

The opinion from rate payers is that it is purely a storage dam and no water from the dam will be flowing into the Bitou Estuary. The top dam overflow will bypass the storage dam. Theoretically there should be no impact on the Bitou estuary.

8.5. Poortjies Embankment Protection, Final Basic Assessment

The Forum does not support the dumping of rocks for bank stabilization as they are then in place permanently. Sheet piling is the better option as they can be used elsewhere and do not have a permanent impact. Reno Mattresses tend to move. SANparks also doesn't support any hard structures, but rather the protecting of houses from behind the sand dunes so that natural erosion processes can still take place up until that point.

8.6. S24G application – pipeline installation in Bitou River bed.

The farm owner who installed the pipeline illegally has been fined R50, 000, yet he still needs to be ordered to repair the damage he has done. If not, it is another example of how the S24G application process can be abused.

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

The Forum has submitted comments, requesting hazardous drop off points to be included in Kranshoek, Kurland and Wittedrift, as well as Win Win Swop Shops at these points to encourage recycling. Drop off points are also needed at Kwanokuthula and Keurboomstrand and the proposed Wittedrift site is not suitable as it is on top of the community food garden.

8.8. Proposed rezoning and consent use – Erf 8180 (Piesang Valley)

The Forum had no objections as the proposed development is according to the Bitou SDF.

9. **New applications and issues**

9.1. Rezoning and consent use for Bosky Dell (farms nr. 312 and nr. 539).

Proposal for:

- 1) Rezoning the properties from Agriculture I to Agriculture II so that a small scale winery can be established in the vicinity of the existing farmstead;
- 2) consent use for tourist facilities (wine tasting, farm stall etc.) and
- 3) 5 additional dwellings on each property (tourist accommodation and staff cottages).

Committee members visited the properties and concluded that there were no grounds for objections.

9.2. Wetland destruction adjacent to Jukani

Owners of the property adjacent to Jukani Wildlife Sanctuary complained that an area of their property, classified as seasonal wetland, was being destroyed by a tractor from Jukani driving over the wetland and dumping grass/tree cuttings on their land. A site visit was conducted to confirm the situation and a letter of support was written, acknowledging the damage. The owners will take the matter further with their own legal representatives.

9.3. Proposed access control: Solar beach neighbourhood

Due to crime in the area, boomed access to Solar Beach residential area is proposed. Booms will be unmanned and will be open from 6am-6pm, after which residents will use remotes to gain access.

The Forum decided this was not an environmental issue and will therefore not be commenting.

9.4. Proposed rezoning and departure: Portion 5, Matjesfontein Farm 304.

The proposal is for:

- 1) rezoning from “Resort Zone II” to “Subdivisional Area”;
- 2) subdivision into 7 portions (6 x Residential Zone II erven; 1 x Open Space Zone II) and
- 3) departure from the Section 8 Zoning Scheme Regulations to allow a group housing site larger than 2ha in extent,

Initial comment is that no building should be allowed in the coastal forest area and on the primary dune as this is within the corridor zone. Forum members and SANParks will conduct a site visit.

9.5. Proposed rezoning and consent use: Portion 1 of Farm 247, The Craggs.

Proposal for:

- 1) “Agriculture Zone I” to “Agricultural Zone II” to allow the operation of an “Agricultural Industry” (winery)
- 2) Consent use to allow a “tourist facility” and “farm store” – wine tasting and vending.

More information on water requirements, water availability and affluent disposal is needed. Drainage lines run through the property i.e. it is in a catchment area. No corridors for connectivity are planned. Forum members and SANParks will conduct a site visit.

10. Meeting / Workshop Feedback

10.1 Keurbooms/Bitou Esturay Forum meeting – 29 July 2014

Refer to point 7: Keurbooms/Bitou Estuary Forum

10.2 Ward 2 committee meeting – 5 August 2014

Issues discussed have all been covered above.

11. General

- 11.1. The Forum needs to write a letter to whale watching operators pointing out that only one skipper currently has a licence to operate craft near whales, which is against their permit regulations. We need to give them an ultimatum to get their skippers trained.

12. Announcements

12.1. Halszka Covarr will be resigning as the co-ordinator of the Forum as of the 31st August 2014. Daniël Cloete will be taking over the position.

12.2. Paul Falla will be resigning as a Chairperson of the Forum as of the 31st August 2014.

12.3. Obie Oberholzer will be giving a slide show of his photography from Australia, in the Natures Valley church hall, 13 August.

12.4. There will be a Waste Minimisation Road Show on the 1st September in the Piesang River Hall.

12.5. Congratulations to Erwin Leibnitz on the successful launch of his book ‘Living on the Wild Side’.

13. Date of Next Meeting

2 September