



BELASTINGSBETALERSVERENIGING
HERMANUS
RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

Hermanus Ratepayers Association Quarterly Report: September 2023

One of the basic tenets underlying municipal systems and structures is the principle of public participation.

A reflection

During my time as a member of the HRA I have come to understand more clearly the complexities involved in running a municipality. One would imagine that municipal legislation is designed to enable service delivery and to promote the interests and the rights of communities. To a certain extent this is true but there are many instances where rules and regulations make it difficult to get the job done.



Brian Wridgway

One of the basic tenets underlying municipal systems and structures is the principle of public participation. The HRA needs committed individuals to get involved in helping to make things happen. We need individuals who feel strongly enough to join and pour their energy into holding the authorities to account. Since its establishment in the 1960's the HRA has been doing just that, and we need to carry on this proud tradition.

The EXCO has been applying its collective mind to the future of the association and putting in place building blocks which will ensure its sustainability in line with the strategy which we shared in May, the undertaking we made at our AGM and the principle of public participation. There is currently a new air of optimism and energy among us which has been absent for some time. This bodes well for the future. There are still some important portfolios which need to be filled and the search for suitable individuals continues. One of the issues which comes to mind is social cohesion and our involvement with the wider Overstrand community.

Down to business

In our [May Quarterly Report](#) we set out the sequence of actions we were to take in implementing our strategy for the HRA during the balance of the year. Despite having had a period of recess during June we are making progress.

This is some of what is going on:

- We have recruited [new members for the EXCO](#). Aloma Jonker has been asked with Environment, Christine Hibberd is our new Treasurer and Anne Stern as now Vice Chairperson.
- We have briefed the market researcher regarding the member survey which will commence before the end of the year.
- Our newly formed Marketing sub-committee has drafted a strategy aimed at recruiting new members and reviving the membership of those who have allowed it to lapse.
- We are in the process of updating our member database to ensure that our records are accurate and comprehensive. You may soon be asked to verify the information you've given us in the past.
- We have recognised that email is no longer the most effective means of communication and will be making increased use of other channels. We will engage you more frequently than in the past on WhatsApp, in the local press and on Facebook.
- We commented in some detail on the Draft Dog and Cat By-law which seeks to consolidate by-laws from the pre Overstrand era and to modernise the

approach to pet ownership taking both societal and environmental factors into consideration.

- We continue to scrutinise planning applications to monitor what is planned for the built environment and make comments where appropriate.
- We are undertaking a serious review of the Ward Committee rules following consultation with the Mayor.
- We continue to participate on the Ward Committee where issues affecting our community are discussed and decisions made. Discussions are currently underway to review the list of priorities which will be fed into the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and into the OM Budget for 2024/2025.
- Our mediation efforts regarding the Hermanus Country Market have come to an end but we are hopeful that the progress made will not be lost as the parties continue their negotiations to secure the continued operation of this important part of what makes Hermanus so special.
- We await feedback from the Premier on [our submission regarding the Hermanus CBD Bypass Road](#).
- We are in discussion with the Environmental Department regarding the completion of the Grotto East berm.

In the wider context

- We have been invited by the Sandbaai Forum to participate in a gathering of interested parties to examine the processes pertaining to the last Property Valuation process.
- There is also a move to arrange a gathering of representatives from Ward Committees across the Overstrand in order to discuss issues of common interest and concern. This appears to be a worthwhile exercise and we are keen to participate.
- There is concern that in its attempts to balance the budget and to deal with service delivery the OM is not fulfilling its obligation to take adequate care of the environment, specifically Fernkloof Nature Reserve. This is not from a lack of concern but because it lacks the resources and the capacity. Civil society is going to have to step up to the plate.

- Feedback from the OM Water Committee is that extraction from the Aquifers is lower than normal owing to load shedding and that as a consequence greater reliance is being placed on the De Bos dam. Residents are encouraged to make sparing use of water until the situation is normalised. Happily the quality remains unaffected and of a consistently high standard.

In conclusion

With the Rugby World Cup underway I am reminded of the Shosholoza song we sang in '95 encouraging one another to move forward together.



Brian Wridgway and the EXCO

 <https://hermanusratepayers.co.za>

If you are not yet a member, please join our ranks. Membership for the remainder of 2023 is free.

[Click to join](#)