



BELASTINGSBETALERSVERENIGING

HERMANUS

RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

MINUTES
of the
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF THE HERMANUS RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

Held on Tuesday 9 March 2023 at 18h00

Online over Zoom

EXCO MEMBERS PRESENT	Chair	Brian Wridgway
	Treasurer	Michael Bourne
		Anne Stern
		John Bristow
		Arlene Ross-Smith
	Secretary	Catherine Bruce
	Apologies	Jenny Howard and James Thom

MEMBERS PRESENT 22 HRA Members including HRA EXCO Members were present at the start. More members joined as the meeting progressed

PROXIES The Chairman received 22 proxies with apologies for not attending

DOCUMENTS CIRCULATED TO MEMBERS IN ADVANCE:

Notice of HRA Annual General Meeting
Agenda for the HRA Annual General Meeting
Minutes of the previous HRA Annual General Meeting
The Chairman's Annual Report
HRA Annual Financial Statements
HRA Amended Constitution for Approval

1. Chairman, Brian Wridgway, opened the meeting. He apologised for the delay in starting which was to allow for Eskom electricity availability.
2. Quorum: It was confirmed that there was a quorum of members present and the AGM proceeded.
3. Agenda: The Agenda was confirmed as tabled.
4. Minutes of the previous HRA Annual General Meeting: Confirmation of the Minutes of the previous HRA Annual General Meeting were proposed by Errol van Staden and seconded by Arlene Ross Smith.
5. Matters arising:
 - 5.1. Bypass: The EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) for the proposed Bypass is extended to the end of 2023. Despite objections by the HRA, other agencies and private individuals, The Department of Transport and Public Works continues to retain plans to build a bypass at some future date. The situation needs to be monitored closely. Note: Environmental Impact Assessment includes, among other issues, the impact of traffic on residential and natural areas and the impact of physical degradation of the environment as well as the assessment of traffic flow along the existing R43.
 - 5.2. Grotto East: Rehabilitation of the slope below Grotto East parking and picnic area is still in process and waiting for the lagoon to subside. It's scheduled to be completed by the end of May 2023.
 - 5.3. The Social Compact Group in respect of housing in Zwelihle has been disbanded and a contractor will be appointed to engage directly with the community.
 - 5.4. CBD Regeneration Project: Planned improvements to the Hermanus CBD precinct have gone been tabled and the availability of funding will determine when it will go ahead. Plans for upgrading the Taxi Rank and parking areas opposite the Magistrates Offices are awaiting OMAF presentation to Ward Committees. Further progress is dependent on the budget.
 - 5.5. Membership: The website enables members to pay and to join HRA electronically and 12 people have joined via this medium so far. Interested people can also join the WhatsApp group to receive news items.
 - 5.6. The Municipal Complaints management System is still a work in progress.
 - 5.7. Association with other associations: Following contact having been made by the convenor of the Fisherhaven association and the Onrus Vermont association our willingness to engage was confirmed. It should be noted that the Municipality will only deal with Ward Committees and not with an association of ratepayers associations.
 - 5.8. Younger people invited on to HRA EXCO has not happened as no responses to invitations have been received.
 - 5.9. Walter Mapham did not make contact.

6. Questions:

- 6.1. In answer to a question on Membership, Brian Wridgway said that there are currently 130 paid up Members of the HRA. Invoices and reminders are to be sent. Comments were that 130 is not a significant representation out of 5,500 registered properties, and there is need for change. The conclusion was that there will be a Strategy Session planned during April 2023 as a forum for planning the role and functions of the HRA in future. Some of the points brought up are:
 - 6.1.1. Good representation: Membership numbers and interest
 - 6.1.2. The need for change
 - 6.1.3. The HRA offering something that has a wide outreach that will motivate people to join
 - 6.1.4. New strategies to modernise and draw everyone together
 - 6.1.5. More effective marketing


7. Chairman's Report: The Chairman's Report, was distributed to HRA members before the AGM and is tabled with these Minutes.


Some of the points discussed by Chairman and members of the floor are as follows:

- 7.1. Ward Committees: When Pat Redford and Brian Wridgway attended meetings of the Portfolio Committees they found that no issues raised by the HRA were tabled there. They plan to test and expose this.
- 7.2. The HRA Constitution: Amendments to the HRA Constitution were suggested by Mike Bourne and undertaken by Anne Stern with the aim of updating it for SARS requirements, safeguarding EXCO members and generally modernising it.
- 7.3. The HRA website and Facebook page were updated by Anna Weideman and Brian Wridgway and it's hoped that it will be easier to keep HRA Members informed about HRA activities.
- 7.4. Hermanus Country Market: The fight for the rights of the Country Market will continue. It was felt that bureaucratic means were being used to negate proposals and letters to the Mayor had received no response. Fernkloof and Bypass issues were linked to the Country Market survival issues.
- 7.5. Issues of governance in the Overstrand Municipality were discussed:
 - 7.5.1. It was felt that the Speaker did not fulfil the mandate of ensuring that meetings took place in line with legislated guidelines.
 - 7.5.2. The Bypass is back on the agenda based on correspondence received from the EIA practitioner. Valuation of properties may be affected by the proposed Bypass.
 - 7.5.3. It was felt that the HRA needs to develop leverage and support based on a larger and more active membership base. It was posited that HRA does in fact have leverage with the Overstrand Municipality.

8. Financial Statements

HRA Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2022, presented by Treasurer Michael Bourne, were distributed to HRA members prior to the AGM and tabled with these minutes, having been read and approved by HRA EXCO. The meeting accepted the Financial Statements and Michael Bourne was complimented for his work.

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9. Approval of Amendments to the HRA Constitution: The Amended HRA Constitution was distributed to HRA members prior to the AGM and are tabled with these minutes. The amendments were approved by the meeting as incorporated into the HRA Constitution. Acceptance of the new HRA Constitution was proposed by Michael Bourne, seconded simultaneously by Arlene Ross Smith and Pat Redford and accepted by the meeting. Michael Bourne and Anne Stern were thanked for their sterling work.
 10. Thanks: Work behind the scenes was acknowledged and commended.
 11. Resignation of Treasurer: It was announced that Michael Bourne has resigned as HRA Treasurer as he has been invited to contribute to the efforts of the Auditor General. He was thanked for his wonderful contribution.
 12. Tenure of EXCO Members: Members of EXCO whose tenure is current are Arlene Ross-Smith, Jenny Howard, James Thom and Brian Wridgway. The meeting approved of the nominations of Catherine Bruce and Anne Stern to the HRA EXCO. Brian Wridgway announced that he is happy to continue as Chairperson for another year, and asked for help in finding the next Chair of the HRA.
 13. Further discussion on matters of concern to HRA Members ensued:
 - 13.1. The proposed strategy meeting is long overdue and will determine the profile of the new chairman and to find new purpose
 - 13.2. The session could strategise about how to interact with Overstrand Municipality more effectively.
 - 13.3. What would ratepayers in Hermanus like to see?
 - 13.4. Sources of future members of HRA were discussed and a number of suggestions made.
 - 13.5. The Cliff Path Connection: Jobre Stassen felt that it makes no sense to divert part of the Cliff Path traffic to the main public road. HRA should make a clear statement of what they want and oppose keeping the path closed. However not all ratepayers are in agreement on joining the Cliff Path and HRA does not take sides on issues.
 - 13.6. Tourism is not helped by the lack of maintenance on the Cliff Path which is overgrown in parts near Kwaaiwater.
 - 13.7. It was queried if contravention of municipal by laws by Senior Town Planner could be taken up by HRA. Once evidence was submitted the issue would be pursued.
 - 13.8. HRA members were encouraged to visit the Overstrand Municipal website; for example to monitor property issues and Portfolio Committees. HRA Members were also encouraged to attend quarterly public Ward Committee meetings as well as the Mayor's First Thursday meetings to have a voice and to engage with Ward Councillors. It was suggested that way is found to transmit the meetings via Zoom for those who cannot attend. Notification of OM meetings can be received by SMS if cell phone numbers are provided.
 - 13.9. It was emphasised that HRA needs to adapt to get community members involved.



14. Conclusion: The Chairman thanked the members of HRA EXCO, Arlene Ross Smith, Jenny Howard and James Thom for their support, Catherine Bruce for secretarial work and Michael Bourne and Anne Stern for their work on the HRA Constitution and Financial Statements. Michael Bourne applauded Brian Wridgway for the work he does, mentioning that his institutional memory of the Overstrand Municipality is invaluable.

15. There being no further business, the meeting closed at 19h30

Signed by:

Chairman _____ Date: _____
Brian Wridgway

Secretary _____ Date: _____
Catherine Bruce