

GRAHAMSTOWN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Minutes of a meeting of the Management Committee held in the School of Art, Somerset Street, on Tuesday 2nd October 2007, at 5 pm.

1. Present: Miss J Dalton, Prof D Hendry, Mrs R Hobson, Mr C Pitman, Prof D Thorburn (Chair), Mr C Whitford.

Apologies: Mr D Bierman, Mr R Embling, Mr D Hodgson.

2. Confirmation of Minutes of the meeting held on 4th September. These were approved.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes:

3.1 *Goat farm.* No progress was reported. GRA to keep a watching brief.

3.2 *Grahamstown East liaison.* GRA did not have the capacity to drive this initiative. Mrs R van Wyk Smith undertook to inform the GRA of possible suitable persons.

3.3 *Name change.* This would be discussed at a public meeting, and would remain on the agenda.

4. Correspondence:

4.1 *Letter from National Treasury.* The National Treasury acknowledged receipt of the letter from the Secretary, encouraged the GRA to liaise with Makana Municipality and the Municipal Manager on this issue, and had forwarded the GRA letter to the Provincial Government for action and report back. In the interim, representatives from the Natl. Treas. had visited Grahamstown and had "turned the heat up" on Makana Municipality.

4.2 *Development of St Andrews fields.* An email from Helen James had been received in this regard, canvassing support from affected residents in Bennet Street to oppose the proposed removal of building restrictions.

4.3 *Botanical Gardens.* The draft of the proposed development was available for perusal at local public libraries, and comment was invited by 12th October 2007.

5. Committee reports:

5.1 *Full Council.* CW reported that this had been an appalling meeting dealing almost exclusively with the name change issue. The Mayor had, in very emotional and inflammatory language, stated that Grahamstown had to become Rhini. However, it was pointed out that the Name Change Committee, in spite of having identified 28 EC names for changing, needed to deliberate on any proposals which would be a long drawn-out process. The Council had taken no decision (the item not having been on the agenda!) and had taken a "principled" decision to change Grahamstown to Rhini.

5.2 *Aesthetics.* DT reported that no meeting had taken place. DT had asked for an appointment with the Chair of the Aesth. Comm. but (in spite of having received instructions from the Munic. Manag. to do so) no response from the Chair had been forthcoming. DT proposed to report to the press that that this committee had not sat for 6 months, in spite of all the developments currently under way in Grahamstown.

5.3 *EDT.* The meeting had not been covered. Also, no minutes had been circulated.

5.4 *Social Services.* RE reported that the tenders submitted for the construction of Fingo Village library had all been above the amount available. Tenders had been re-advertised. The lack of reported water tests results was due to their being done in PE, who had not yet submitted the results.

5.5 *LHID.* CW reported that an application to build a pub at Grey Dam had been turned down.

5.6 *EDMH.* JD reported that, according to Mr Kapp, taxi drivers were hijacking train passengers at Alicedale. The parking area at Fairbairn Spring was under discussion, concern having been expressed about the damage to the path resulting from human traffic, and the danger caused by parking congestion. However, demarcation of a new parking area was a Provincial issue. The first phase of the caravan project was due for completion on 31 January 2008, and a further R4 million was needed for water, electricity, etc. An area on Highlands farm had been sold to Hutch Properties for development, and concern had been expressed that the area overlooked Jameson Dam.

5.7 *Finance*. CW reported that the outstanding rates, monies owed by Bisho, etc, had been noted but no action had been taken.

6. Finance: No report in light of DH's apology.

7. Any other business:

7.1 *Agendas and portfolios*. CW undertook to ensure that the Municipality delivered agendas to Tourism (hopefully by the Friday before each meeting), as currently agendas were not being made available. Mr Makkink would be asked to provide a collection area for the agendas, and each member would be responsible for the collection of their respective agendas.

7.2 *Staff shortages*. CW raised the issue of staff shortages, and pointed out that Makana Municipality could not hope to meet its responsibilities with an overall 29% vacancy figure. CW undertook to draft a letter to Makana Municipality expressing GRA's concern at this situation and stressing the negative effect this was having on functionality. The proposal was made that GRA might care to champion this issue.

7.3 *Public meeting*. This was scheduled for 5th November 2007.

7.4 *Rates*. DT had fielded numerous calls on this matter, as had Clr Whisson whom DT had consulted for input. Clr Whisson had stated that houses in "good" areas that had been owned from prior to 1987 were the hardest hit by the increases, as current commercial valuations were being used as the basis. Persons who felt hard done by should follow this up individually, as there was nothing more the GRA could do.

7.5 *"Policy Talk" brochure*. It was decided not to pursue this issue, in the light of the non-functionality of the contact details given in the brochure.

8. Next meeting: 6th November 2007.

The meeting closed at 6.23 pm.

Don Hendry, Hon Secretary, tel. 046-6224243

3rd October 2007

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Chairman

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Date