

GRAHAMSTOWN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Minutes of a meeting of the Management Committee held in the Graphic Art Section, St Peter's Campus, Somerset Street, on Tuesday 4th December 2007, at 5 pm.

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

2. Confirmation of Minutes of the meeting held on 6th November. These were approved.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes:

3.1 *Distribution and collection of agendas.* The system of collection at Makana Tourism was working well. DT undertook to place a 3-tired drawer in the tourism office to hold same.

3.2 *Newspaper notices.* DHe would collect these at meetings and keep in a box file for 2 years

3.3 *Municipal manager.* The outcome of the selection was still awaited.

4. Correspondence:

4.1 DT had had no response from Clr Wells to his letter on the name change issue.

4.2 A response was still being awaited to the letter to Finance Division expressing concern at the staff shortages.

5. Committee reports:

5.1 *Aesthetics.* (DT) The meeting of Tues 12 November had not happened. DT had written to Clive Christian re the lack of activity. A request by Inggs Funeral Home to install sash windows had been turned down. The paving outside Wessons (old Kingsley Tyres) had been approved, but not the proposed signage, in spite of it being similar to that which had been approved for HiQ. A-frame advertising on the pavements had been disallowed by the Traffic Dept which had the responsibility to control hawkers.

5.2 *EDT.* (WM) The proposed development at Grahamstown rail station had been put on hold. The goat project was on track, and a trust had been formed which in future would have the final say, the EU and Trustees then being responsible for all decisions. The kaolin project was still static, and Clr Reynolds had pointed out that, due to impurities, local kaolin was suitable only to be used in paint. The carwash project was not working at all as the owners had resigned because they were not getting customers (but see Grocotts Mail of Friday 14 November re accomplishments of Mayor Kate, with photographs!)

5.3 *Social Services.* (RE) Township libraries would close from 18th December until 14th January, while the Main library would close from 24th December until 2nd January. Province had been due to take over Health Services on 1st July 2007, but this had been postponed to 1st January 2008 and then again to 1st April 2008. The mobile clinic was ill-equipped, and many vehicles of this arm of Makana Municipality were out of commission, meaning that many workers were also standing idle.

5.4 *LHID.* (CW) The meeting started chaotically, first being postponed for one hour, and then for two days, ostensibly because all councillors had been summoned to Humansdorp for a meeting. Water & Sewerage Section had 12 vacancies, Roads Maintenance 14 vacancies, Electricity Dept had vacant posts for 10 electricians with the result that staff were fatigued and repairs took a long time. The items about housing on the IDP Implementation report were virtually unchanged from the previous meeting, suggesting a reluctance on the part of Makana Municipality to exert pressure on Bisho. Minutes of portfolio meetings were going through to the Mayoral Committee neither perused nor corrected, often with mistakes, misrepresentations or abysmal grammar. The application from the Daily Dispatch to attach advertising boards to lamp posts had not been approved.

5.5 *EDMH.* (JD) The matter of 420 houses, roads and electrical components damaged by the 2006 floods was still on the agenda, an amount of R2.6 million having been requested from Bisho. An amount of R13.5 million was available for disaster relief, but, of the business plans requested by Bisho, only 3 had been submitted. A conference on risk reduction and safety had been held in Jefferys Bay. The Makana Greening Project was to be monitored, as trees were being uprooted as soon as they were planted. The impounding of stock was presenting a problem, as owners resisted paying the charges. Although the SPCA and

Makana Municipality had an agreement and the latter had given land to the SPCA for a pound, the Makana Municipality's Parks & Gardens assistant was proving difficult to deal with. The Kowie Catchment Campaign has expressed concern at the state of the streams in the district which were being used as toilets and for the disposal of rubbish, presenting a health hazard. Invasive plants were also a problem. Street name signs in Xolani were being removed by residents.

5.6 *Finance.* (CW) The Chief Financial Officer, Mr Jackson Ncelwane, who had presented an unaudited financial statement, had created a very favourable impression and was congratulated by Clr Reynolds on his professionalism. Mr Ncelwane had suggested the installation of a computerised system whereby people with large electricity arrears had their meters replaced with prepaid meters which deducted 60c towards the arrears for every R1 they paid. This suggestion had met with no response (paralysis, lack of initiative or a preference for talk over action by Makana Municipality?). The suggestion was made that the GRA place a "performance barometer" in the local press.

5.7 *Full Council.* (DT) Makana Municipality had been re-elected for a VUNA award. A study group from the Executive had visited Johannesburg and had suggested twinning(?!). The eradication of the bucket system had been held up by the discovery of human remains which now required an official reburial. Apparently, the only other remaining buckets were in informal squatter camps. R3.6 million of the promised R6 million for the Health Department had been received. Clr Reynolds had queried why an amount of only R24 000 had been spent on capitalisation. The IDP (actually a "wish list" for which no funding was available!) was presented, but responsibility was shifted from person to person, and from committee to committee. The Liquor Laws issue was still unresolved as the Grahamstown East traders had not been consulted, and was carried forward.

5.8 *Police Forum* (DB) 100 additional reservists would be in place for December. Rape and car theft figures were up, and were blamed on the students (?). Regarding cash-in-transit heists, it was the responsibility of businesses to inform the police when they were transporting money.

6. Finance: (D Hodgson) A small number of additional subs had been received.

7. Next meeting: 19th February 2008.

The meeting closed at 6.40 pm.

Don Hendry, Hon Secretary, tel. 046-6224243

17th December 2007

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Chairman

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Date