

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 19th February 2008, at 5 pm.

1. Present: 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. Apologies: Mr D Biermann

2. Confirmation of Minutes of the meeting held on 4th December 2007. These were approved.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes:

3.1 *Grahamstown name change.* Mr Paul Mills had been commissioned by Makana Municipality (MM) to make a DVD on the name change issue to be shown at ward meetings. The GRA has been contacted for its input by Clr Julie Wells to present GRA's position. **DT** had been on the original name change committee, but on the 2nd round MM had chosen an "in-house" committee. **WM** pointed out that the website "iRhini" had been 'parked on' by Tourism, so we should ensure that iRhini not eRhini was eventually chosen.

3.2 *Municipal manager.* The selection committee had sat, but the outcome was still unknown.

3.3 *Car wash.* This was to be opened in March. It had received R1m, but required a further R400 000 for security fencing.

4. Correspondence:

Emails had been received from Helen James re the rezoning of Gowie and Cawse Fields which had been bequeathed to St Andrew's College, who now wished to sell them for development. In spite of objections, LHID had given its approval and MM would recommend to the Premier that the restriction on these fields be lifted. The legal right of the Premier in this regard was queried. **RE** to follow up on status quo and draft a letter of support for not rezoning from the GRA.

5. Committee reports:

5.1 *Special Council Meeting.* (**WM**) A salary increase of 7.5% for all councillors, backdated to July 2007, was ratified, in spite of objections by the DA councillors.

5.2 *Aesthetics.* (**DT**) The application by KFC and Pep Stores for signage on Market Square was discussed, their building not having been on the original plans submitted. Daphne Timm had applied for signage on African St. **DT** pointed out that he had submitted 10 items for discussion, including the absence of plans coming to the committee for the alterations to the Frontier Arms Hotel or for the old CPA building parking garage, cnr Hill and African St, the alteration to the Maritime Motors façade, the alterations to the Highlander (Andrean Club), Fat Cat Café in African St, and the Pirate's Pizza sign on Somerset St. None of these had come before the Aesthetics Committee. Clr Peter was absent and Clr Whisson chaired the meeting. It was noted that both Mr van der Merwe and Mr Ngila of this committee were very hard to get hold of.

5.3 *EDT.* (**WM**) Councillors were starting to query the goat project, with phrases like "smells a rat" and "stinks to high heaven" being employed. No decisions were taken, except to have another meeting on this topic! Terry Myburgh had again presented an inconclusive report. The bank account had been transferred to Port Alfred for reasons that were unclear, R104 000 had been paid for infrastructure, and R500 000 had been paid to an architect for surveying, EIA report, site inspection, etc. Rockhurst Ostrich Farm had been donated R35 000 by MM. Plans were afoot for MM to twin with a Municipality in India. The kaolin report had been tabled and noted, the kaolin apparently being suitable for sanitaryware only due to impurities.

5.4 *Social Services.* (**RE**) R295 000 had been received from Cacadu for Fingo Village library. Burials during 2007 were down to 730 as opposed to the 860 of the previous year. The number of people diagnosed with TB was up, due to increased efficiency of diagnosis. Mobile clinic routes had been suspended due to the resignation of two nurses. Cacadu had received only R17m of the R31m originally promised for health services.

5.5 *LHID.* (**CW**) There had been no quorum, with 4 Clrs being absent. What discussion there was had been circular and inconclusive.

5.6 *Police Forum.* (DB) The meeting was well attended, mainly by residents of the Lansdowne Road / Frances Street area concerned about the increase in crime in their area. Invited members of the council and ward committees had not bothered to attend. A spruit and bridge in the area were serving as escape routes for criminals, but requests to municipality for these to be fenced had met with no response. An incomplete townhouse project was drawing vagrants, who were using the spruit as a toilet. A number of incidents of petty crime (including an elderly couple being pepper-sprayed and burgled, theft from a car on campus, and harassment from street children) was raised. Inefficiency at the charge office when reporting crime, the obscuring of street lights by trees, and the possibility of reservists doing patrols were also discussed. A police official recommended the purchase of an upmarket pepper spray from a local security company, while a suggestion was made that Hi-Tec be asked to provide improved foot and car patrol services. As the police number 10111 was proving to be inefficient, a preferred number was provided, being **046-6039147 / 8**.

6. Planning for the AGM.

This was scheduled for Thursday 27 March 2008 at 5.30 pm in the Library Hall. **DHe** undertook to reserve the hall with the library, to locate the minutes of the last meeting, and to contact Eddie Baart about speaking on the current electricity problems (“Surviving the Power Crisis”). Other details (notices, agendas, distribution, advertisement in Grocotts, nominations, etc) would be settled at the March meeting. Roux van der Merwe was proposed as a Hon Life Member of the GRA.

7. Any other business.

7.1 *Agendas* were not being sent to Makana Tourism by MM. **WM** would follow this up.

7.2 *Lack of capacity in Finance Division.* No response to the letter from GRA had been received. It was decided that no further action would be taken until matters deteriorated still further.

8. Finance: (D Hodgson) GRA account stood at R4347.20, an increase of R922.81 over last year.

9. Next meeting: 11th March 2008.

The meeting closed at 6.50 pm.

Don Hendry, Hon Secretary, tel. 046-6224243

17th December 2007

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Chairman

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Date