

FISH HOEK VALLEY RATEPAYERS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION
QUARTERLY GENERAL MEETING
19h30 ON THURSDAY, 24 MAY 2018
AT THE CIVIC CENTRE MAIN HALL, FISH HOEK

1. Present

As per attendance register

2. Welcome

FHVRRRA chairman, Brian Youngblood (BY), welcomed the participants and introduced the topics to be addressed, namely, Security; Personal Safety; Councillor's Report and Chairman's Report.

3. Topics

a. **Security** - The presentation was led by Manu Choudree (MC) of the Far South Safety Forum (FSSF):-

- He warned that the fight against escalating crime which was becoming a "way of life" in the Fish Hoek valley area required better cooperation from all the various entities both private and public that were endeavouring to combat crime.
- Manu then called on a number of key role players in the fight against crime from SAPS and CoCT Law Enforcement to inform the meeting.

Colonel Jackie Johnson (Station Commander in Fish Hoek)

The Colonel compared reported crime statistics from May 2018 for the Fish Hoek area with those from 2017, which had been a bad year

In summary:-

- Contact crimes: Assault, rape, murder and aggravated robbery had decreased slightly.
- Property crimes: Housebreaking, theft of and from motor vehicles, robbery from businesses also reduced
- Commercial crime: Fraud and shoplifting reduced a little but some internet transactions e.g. Gumtree are becoming increasing sources of fraud. The Colonel urged the public to exercise extreme caution before revealing account information or making payments over the internet
- Police Action: Drugs, drunken driving, sexual offences, possession of firearms are increasing
- Home invasion: A significant decrease has been achieved
- Crime solving success rate had improved significantly

Captain Madubuka

SAPS are cooperating with local security companies, neighbourhood watches and Law Enforcement by conducting joint operations

Captain Basson (Branch Commander in Fish Hoek) new in Fish Hoek, previously from Wynberg

The significant success had been the detention of the alleged Silvermine cycle thief and murderer of the Kalk Bay hiker

Superintendent Spreeth (CoCT Law Enforcement)

The Superintendent stated that both SAPS and Law Enforcement had limited staff and that no increase in personnel could be expected. This meant that the public as police reservists, auxiliary officers (J P Smith CoCT) and as members of community organisations such as the neighbourhood watches, community police forums etc. would be encouraged/obliged to play a greater role in providing security

Tasmien Philander

Tasmien an ex drug addict turned social worker in the Simons Town project of Councillor Liell-Cock made an impassioned plea to the public to stop giving food, clothes or money to the homeless. She claimed the vast majority of the homeless were addicts and her experience was that all such donations were used to sustain their addiction. Donations from the public should be made to accredited homeless support groups such as CoCT "give responsibly".

Manu Choudree

Manu introduced Andre Blom of the Community Police Forum (CPF) who encouraged all residents to join the CPF and become involved in “policing”

b. **Personal Safety** - Presented by Kelee Arrowsmith

Criminals have unlimited imagination and time

Decisions: Decisions that had to be taken by each person before an emergency were:-

- ★ Will I fight or comply
- ★ When will I fight or run
- ★ How will I fight or comply

Planning

- Decide what you are willing to give up - money, motor car, bicycle etc.
- Recognition of and testing for intent, threat, personal space and potential threat avoidance tactics were described
- A hands up, head down, use your submissive voice technique was demonstrated.
- Safety measures such as distributing and hiding possessions both on one’s person and in the home were discussed
- Several layers of home security were proposed e.g. beams, safe room for the home

Practice

Emphasis was placed on the need to practice and review all the decisions and plans made regarding personal and residential safety as during an attack, adrenaline shifts blood from the thinking to the acting part of the brain.

c. **Bin Picking** - Presented by Councillor Aimee Kuhl (AK)

Councillor Kuhl spoke briefly about a change in approach to bin pickers. Bin picking is illegal. Only a registered CoCT service provider may open one’s bin on the street. Rather than place unwanted items of value out with the refuse bin as she herself had done in the past, these items should be deposited at approved sites such as those described in a pamphlet which she distributed. In so doing, bin pickers would be discouraged due to lack of pickings and the concomitant threats of crime and litter would be reduced.

4. AGM Minutes

The Chairman requested that the minutes of the AGM of 22 February, 2018 be adopted. Duly proposed by Rob Downey and seconded by Peter Scott and adopted without objection.

Print costs for the FHVRRA newsletter are reasonably high. BY encouraged members to provide FHVRRA with email addresses so that the activities of FHVRRA could be communicated via that channel rather than in print. The electronic version is in full colour.

5. **Chairman’s Report** – Mr. Youngblood presented his report visually. Fish Hoek Valley Ratepayers and Residents Association has been busy.

Let’s have the discussion: <https://www.facebook.com/FHVRRA/> or FishHoekRRA@gmail.com

Dolphin Park – sell it or manage it; manage what? Childcare / research centre, restaurant, cultural events
Homeless are sleeping on Fish Hoek Civic grounds: do nothing, fence it, move them where?

About our homeless problem; come up with something creative – someone could volunteer a bakkie, who is prepared to go to Shoprite, speak to the Manager to fetch food that is expiring. Someone else volunteers a place in which to store such food. Another person volunteers a fridge. Yet another offers to print a whole lot of vouchers so that residents don’t have to give food or cash to beggars – they could give vouchers. Another solution to the homeless people’s problem would be if someone with spare time offered to help build a shelter for them at the bottom of Dolphin Park so that the residents around there wouldn’t hear strange noises in the night. Why don’t we have that sort of discussion?

City Updates (since our last Quarterly General Meeting)

City's Draft Budget's water and sanitation levies dropped from 27% to 20%. Fixed monthly electricity and water fees remain. Property rates were lowered from 7.2% to 6.5%.

Alien vegetation cleared in lower Silvermine Wetlands, but dredger didn't get all of the roots.

Dolphin Park Subway got a larger drain not requiring a pump, which seems to be helping.

Re-cycling: Waste Plan is sub-contracting to Just Breeze. Therefore, you may notice a different vehicle.

Beach Promenade Paving: progressing, but insufficient funds to complete all (i.e Law Enforcement to Galley)

Roads: Four-ways intersection at 11 lanes will be the largest intersection in Cape Town upon completion.

Houmoed Ave comments closed on Monday, 21 May 2018.

Dust: Amdec was fined R4,000 on 5 March. Next will be prosecution for failure to comply with the City's Dust Management By-Law in a magistrate's court.

Water: Why was Day Zero moved to 2019? Mainly due to daily water consumption dropping 60%.

Augmentation: Strandfontein desalination plant online from 21 May to eventually reach 7 ML / day.

Beach: Benches looking shabby from lack of paint and repair – moving to stone benches

Thanks to those who cleaned up the piles of litter on the Fish Hoek beach last Tuesday. Pity about all the plastic straws and empty packets

Proposed banning code of single use plastics (straws) in all coastal eating and coffee establishments

Letters Sent (since Newsletter was published)

NERSA (National Energy Regulator of SA) wants all SSEGs (small scaled embedded generators) to be registered vs Minister of Energy's exemption for rooftop panels & stand-by generators – closes 31 May
FHVRRRA's objection letter can be found at our website: <https://fishhoekrra.wixsite.com/fhvrrra>

Expropriation of land without compensation – closes 31 May

We commented to the Constitutional Review Committee that our Constitution's Section 25 does not need to be changed as expropriation for public purpose or public interest already exists, but must be defined in court judgements. We think expropriating derelict, dangerous or abandoned buildings owned by absentee landlords (often not paying rates) could be appropriate.

6. Questions (Q), Statements (S) and Answers (A)

The chairman called for questions, but appealed to questioners to propose positive solutions e.g. ways of feeding and housing the homeless

a. Andy Dawes (9 years' residence in Clovelly, member NHW)

Q - Prof Dawes asked what was being done about the people living under the Silvermine bridge. Clovelly area had experienced several break -ins in recent weeks. His community suspect that there are criminals amongst the under bridge inhabitants. In terms of the RSA constitution the citizens of RSA are entitled to security provided by inter alia the SAPS. He called on the relevant authorities to address the issue, according to the Constitution.

A - MC replied that after a meeting two weeks before, with Director Roberts (Head of Visible Policing in the Western Cape) instructions had been given to the Police and the L.a.w. Law Enforcement Head, who are both not present this evening, to commence profiling of the under-bridge inhabitants and other homeless folk as a joint project between CoCT, social services and SAPS, which has already been started by Cllr Liell-Cock. There will be two strategies. The criminal element will be dealt with by the Police and the Crime Intelligence. For those that need help we have the Social Services. Already sixteen "street" people in Simon's Town have returned to their homes. Once this was completed, a strategy would be developed to address the issue.

b. Lyn Nisbet

Q - Ms Nisbet enquired whether a SAPS and/or Security presence in Main Road at all times would not make it a lot safer.

A1 - MC replied that SAPS and Security personnel did patrol Main Road from time to time but could not be there at all times. His undercover personnel had been in Main Road for the last few weeks working with Social Services. This had resulted in improved conditions around the Post office

A2 -AK stated that her “Take Back Your Town” patrols with SAPS, Law Enforcement, neighbourhood watches and residents had brought positive results. She proposed that residents enlist the support of their neighbourhood watches and related organisations and organise their own “bib patrols”

c. Donald Moore

S1 - Mr Moore (Fish Hoek resident) stated that he was unable to distinguish between legitimate and bogus car guards

S2 - Mr Moore appealed to the meeting to oppose the Pick & Pay liquor license application and boycott the store and shop elsewhere.

A1 - MC replied that there are seven legitimate car guards but that the scheme had been manipulated and needed to be revisited.

AK believes that once the screening of the homeless is completed the car guard scheme can be reformed

A2 -AK supported the opposition to the Pick & Pay Liquor license application

d. Adrienne Pace

Q - Adrienne asked how Dolphin Park could be remain a viable park. She was willing to help maintain the area together with others residents in the area. She had made many useful contacts with individuals and organisations such as PRASA.

A - AK stated that the City did not intend to sell the park to a developer. Green public spaces are very important to the CoCT. However, the drought had made all parks difficult to maintain. The solution was to link the security issues to the park. The residents had to take ownership of the park and displace the undesirable elements occupying the park. This approach had worked in Muizenberg. In reply to the question of how the sale of the park “rumour” had arisen, “Revamp” has already been beautifying Public Open Spaces. She suggested contacting the Friends of Muizenberg Park for some ideas. Continually phoning the Police to move homeless people sleeping in the park is not a solution. Plant a veggie garden, erect play equipment – visit the Park. If the Green space is important to property owners nearby, take possession of the park. Use it.

e. Female (unidentified #1)

Q - Another resident explained that the park was occupied by drug addicts behaving anti-socially and proposed that the park be fenced and locked at night so that the group of residents living near the park could take care of its upkeep.

A1 -AK supported this approach and requested FHVRRA to set up a interested residents meeting to that effect with her.

A2 -BY stated that it was an option considered by the City officials to balance their budget, but that once sold, public land was gone forever.

f. Female (unidentified #2)

Q - Another resident mentioned that the Park had previously been used by the community sometimes as an overflow from the beach for picnics. There had been Carol Singing there and events. It had been used by the Community. Presently there have been unpleasant incidents in the Park and it seemed unlikely that peaceful events could easily take place there. The Park is absolutely filthy. She suggested fencing the park with a gate which is kept locked at night and opened in the mornings. There is a point to having a vegetable garden there within a fenced area because one knew that it was protected. We could supplement the exercise machines, and install more equipment suitable for children. So it would be really constructive for everyone interested in the Park to congregate and talk about solutions. She absolutely accepted that this wasn’t a matter for the Police or the Councillors. The local population needed to come together and supply the solutions. [There was much applause.]

A1 -AK said she would make her office available in which to hold such a meeting. She could arrange for Officials in charge of Parks to be present so that residents could describe what they were going to do and what they expected of the Parks Officials. She thought fencing the area a good idea. Residents living around the Park didn’t have to actually go there they could keep an eye on it from their own properties. When interested residents had been gathered, she would set up the meeting. BY suggested they e-mail him and he would supply the details.

g. Mark Robinson (MR)(NHW – Highway section and an Exco member of the Sector Crime Forum)

Q - Mr. Robinson asked why both FHVRRA and Councillors did not attend Sector Community Police Forum (SCPF) meetings. He stated that the sector police forums would no longer send minutes to FHVRRA and councillors. He also stated that residents should let Pick & Pay know of their intention to boycott the store as he had done. He often wore his neighbourhood watch bib while in Fish Hoek and surrounds. Furthermore, he confirmed the presence of MC's undercover personnel in Main Road, but stated that it had become a major problem with regular knife fights. The ATM's should also be avoided they were susceptible to fraud.

A1 - BY replied that FHVRRA would attend the meetings once a suitable solution to the issue of non-disclosure had been found.

A2 - MC believes there is a way of overcoming this concern. MC said that the real purpose of this meeting was to bring the Community together in combatting crime. The Community need to know what is going on. We can't fight the crime if one is not informed, so it's critical that we receive the information.

BY asked John Shaw (JS) whether he would be prepared to represent FHVRRA.

A2 - Cllr Kuhl replied that the meeting times had clashed with statutory meetings of the Council of CoCT that she was obliged to attend; she didn't need to be present at the meeting for their decisions to be heard. MR believes dialogue is necessary at meetings and that AK could send a representative on her behalf. Minutes are just a reminder for those who attend. AK said she would try to attend when she could.

h. Lyn Nisbet (LN)

Q - Lyn thanked AK for her efforts on behalf of Fish Hoek, but asked whether there was a way of communicating those efforts on a regular basis

A - AK felt she could be followed on Facebook and had little time to report in any other way. However, she admitted that there could be a need to communicate the diverse and extensive activities in which she was engaged to her constituents. She undertook to investigate options

i. Andre Blom (AB)

Andre is chairman of the Community Police Forum (CPF). AB and BY are negotiating a way of FHVRRA participating in the Police Forums. AB stressed that both the councillors and FHVRRA were willing to participate in efforts to improve the safety and security of the FH valley. Every means should be employed to make cooperation work. No legitimate body should be excluded.

j. John Earle (JE)

Many years ago JE compiled and submitted an eighteen page document listing the things on the FH beach that needed to be put right. He congratulated the councillors, officials and others involved for making so much progress.

k. Matthew Gray (MG)

Matthew pointed out how the current planning regulations concerning property frontage had been amended to better enable and empower individuals to do their bit in creating more secure buildings and safer streets. By enabling property owners to now build their buildings straddling the width of their site in the front portion of the site, still set back by the front street building line, but now no longer set back by the side building lines up to 12 meters from the street. This enables buildings being used to create a continuous street frontage, as a device to separate public frontage from private backs, keeping private backs safe and secure by preventing criminals from being able to get access to the vulnerable private backs of properties and break in without being seen and keeping public fronts and streets safe with "eyes on the street surveillance" by people, now no longer needing to build high street boundary walls in an attempt to secure their properties and are able to keep an eye on what is going on in the streets and report criminal activity from the safety of their own homes. True neighbourhood watch only works if the neighbourhood and as at an individual level, can watch and keep guard of the public realm from the safety of their homes.

l. Bianca

Bianca introduced Fish Hoek Emergency Call Centre (ECC), a voluntary service that had served Fish Hoek for many years and would continue to do so for many more. It operates 24/7 365 days a year in the fight for crime over this whole area. Telephone: 021 782 0333

7. Closure

BY thanked the people who had contributed to the success of the meeting, particularly the Police for their attendance, NHW people, Terry Rothwell and Arthur Smith the Girl Guides for tea and biscuits, and all those attending. The next meeting would be the Quarterly General meeting on 23 August 2018.