

FISH HOEK VALLEY RATEPAYERS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION



Photo supplied by B Suter

Covid, Covid, Covid-19

The unprecedented lockdown which began on 27 March, will hopefully be a once-in-a-lifetime experience for most of us. According to the Daily Maverick, bats are the original coronavirus host, but the jump to humans (novel) came via intermediate hosts: camels for the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, civets for Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and pangolins, the most trafficked mammal, for the SARS-CoV-2 RNA virus that causes Covid-19. Like most things, US President Trump has his own theory including this virus being man made in or escaped from a Chinese lab. BCG vaccinations may have helped South Africans achieve possibly the lowest death percentage rate.

Our Exco has also had to adapt and held a virtual (Skype) meeting on 16 April wherein we decided to cancel our 28 May Quarterly General Meeting (QGM) as many older members will maintain their social distancing for some time longer. This action caused us to review our Constitution. We will send our recommended changes for your vote in due course when we think a QGM can be held.

NEWSLETTER SPONSORED BY:



Patrick Conderan
Tel: 021 7824441
Cell: 083 3100659
info@pcplumbing.co.za
www.pcplumbing.co.za

PRINTED BY FISH HOEK PRINTING TEL: 021 782 0177

PREPARED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF FHVRRA
CHAIR: BRIAN YOUNGBLOOD
TEL: 0843999933 EMAIL: FISHHOEKRRRA@GMAIL.COM
WWW.FISHHOEKRATEPAYERS.COM

FISH HOEK VALLEY RATEPAYERS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

We opened our Hearts

We decided to dig a bit in our reserves during these extraordinary times and have donated funds to the trilogy: the Net, Revamp the Valley and Councillor Aimee Kuhl to assist with food parcels delivered to lower income local families and elderly who do not receive government support. We had previously supported the Net, who normally are assisting our street people, and the False Bay Hospital Board towards purchases of blood warmers, ventilators, cots for the paediatric wards, trolleys for the emergency room patients, couches, X-ray machine, blankets, a Phaco Machine for cataract operations, other instruments for eye surgery and a defibrillator. We also supported the Far South Covid-19 Response Group who are assisting Masi and Ocean View. We also like assisting our guerilla gardeners, such as Philip Katz, who made the beach entrance look so attractive.

Encouraged

We were encouraged to hear that many were willing to work in their front yards again during lockdown. We received many reports of waving to neighbours that are not normally seen due to their hectic work schedules. To maintain social distancing, many shouted their greetings. Due to less vehicular traffic, we've also been told that more people have heard and sighted more song birds and even birds of prey.

Storm water Pollution

The City released its latest Coastal Water Report which confirmed our 'poor' water quality. It said that even though there were spikes, Clovelly had an excellent rating despite sewage spills in the wetlands. The City conducted a smell test of the upstream manhole covers, which didn't correlate to scientific studies conducted by the University of Stellenbosch and Western Cape University showing high mammalian bacteria counts. We are in the process of sending a petition to Mayor Dan Plato regarding the Silvermine Wetlands and an investigation request for the Lighthouse, Wetlands and associated sewage pumping stations was sent to the Green Scorpions.

City's 2020 / 21 Budget

The City issued a draft budget for comment. Due to a directive from Treasury, the City will have to review their proposed budget. Also, it did not consider the R40 million extra monthly expenditure on protective gear for City workers during the lockdown. Although this budget was closer to the prevailing inflation rate at that time, the economy has subsequently tanked due to the lockdown causing some members to have difficulty with paying their rates. We commented against the annual increase in budget size and staffing; for the need of public toilets for our street people and informal traders, requested that all pay at least something in order to change the attitude of always being owed; stop the abnormal increase in Law Enforcement due to their limited arrest capabilities and prescribed hours of operation; CCTV's need to be integrated to track a vehicle between cameras; show the return on investment for the Stadium Suites (R207m) and IT Projects (R56m, R294m and R192m over next three budgets); upgrade to tertiary wastewater treatment facilities to properly treat bacteria and chemicals; expedite the SSEGs ability to feed into our electricity-starved grid; sell the Good Hope Centre (rather than invest in the R200m upgrade); limit IT spend by councillors (R14m); remove Geosmin from our drinking water; rethink informal trading; redesign storm water systems and paint our storm water grates with a notice that it leads to the sea.

Water Valves and Hydrants

These were replaced throughout the valley with several one-day stoppages of water supply. Some sluice gates had detached from their spindles and thus were completely ineffective in shutting off water when a pipe burst. Valves are also used to manage water pressure and assist our mountain slope residential areas in need of sufficient pressure. The 3rd, 4th and 5th Avenue pipe replacements to solve their brown water problem due to the over 100 year-old pipes is to commence sometime after 1 July.

FISH HOEK VALLEY RATEPAYERS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Street People

We asked our Councillors whether the temporary move of Street People to Strandfontein could be made permanent because we believe that all food donations should be conducted from one location. We support The Net in this endeavour.

Informal Traders

We commented on the City's plan while it was still in the City internal discussion phase. We subscribe to all informal traders being located in a single area that doesn't block pedestrian traffic and will be properly serviced by the City with rubbish bins, fresh water, sewage and drain pipes and a secure lock-up area. The plan states that informal traders are not to compete with each other or the nearby formal retailers, but this has been poorly monitored as have health inspections of food vendors. We would also like assurance that the items being sold are neither illegal nor fake nor stolen goods and that the traders are paying relevant taxes, VAT and import duties. We asked what plans the City has for informal traders to become formal traders.

Rhodes Cottage

We supported the lease of Rhodes Cottage to the Muizenberg Historical Conservation Society as they have 20 years experience of keeping this museum's doors open to the public.

Absentee Landlords

We met with Fish Hoek's Business Improvement District (BID) leaders and requested that they send a letter from us to all Central Business District (CBD) landowners to do something about the deterioration of Main Road. Crime and grime, the main reason for making the CBD a Special Rates Area, has risen negatively affecting residents, tourists and other nearby businesses. The increase in the street people (including some criminals) and informal traders are two causative agents, but so is the attitude of sweating assets by renting to anyone resulting in cell phone repair and R5 shops. Surely building upgrades would attract a higher level of retail shops.

Special FHVRRA Meeting

We almost called a special meeting, but then the lockdown struck. The purpose would have been to invite Mayor Dan Plato, Alderman Twigg and Deon Louw, City's Informal Trading Manager, to discuss why the City had not signed the two-year old City Permissions (lease) Agreement for the Bayside Bazaar area, erf 7000, between 55 Main Road and the train station. This erf is not zoned for informal traders. The storm water grate in the middle of this parking lot had the highest mammalian bacteria count of those that we sampled. The shipping containers on site have still not been removed although Metrorail has agreed they could be moved onto their premises. After investing R12.5m in upgrading the Krinos Building at 55 Main Road and another tenant threatening to leave, the owner wanted to know our thoughts and level of satisfaction with the Democratic Alliance (DA).

Fencing

We asked at the Sub-Council 19 meeting of 16 March if the Fish Hoek Valley Museum and City Clinic could be fenced to prevent vandalism and street people occupying the grounds after hours. We were told that a fencing contractor had been appointed.

Cleaning of Grates

Around 13 March, the City started opening road border storm water grates. This alone is not an easy task as some have not been opened in years and being cast iron, have rusted together with their frames. As a result, when trying to lift the grates, sometimes the frame lifts out of the gutter as well. The purpose for lifting the grates has been to clear the debris underneath. If you have peered into these grates, you may have seen that many are full of plastic, which impedes storm water flow. So, City, a big thank you from us.

Recycling Contractor

We are grateful to our recycling contractor for continuing to collect even though their supplier could not provide plastic bags during the lockdown.

FISH HOEK VALLEY RATEPAYERS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Thank you City

Our special thanks to all of the City officials who provide normal services, such as law enforcement, refuse collection, repairing and/or replacing burst water and sewage pipes, repairing electricity lines, dispatching emergency services, providing health services including social workers and MyCiti bus drivers who are facilitating essential workers' travel from home to work, cemeteries, courts and other destination.

PRASA isn't paying its bill; the City continues to disconnect services

PRASA has repeatedly failed to pay municipal rates and services debts of approximately R114m to the City of which R98m is the amount in arrears. Eskom has also disconnected PRASA, but for much less at R6.5m.

Clovelly Sand Barrier Restoration

Clovelly beach now has wire cages each with a large polypropylene bag to contain several smaller polypropylene bags filled with sand to provide an obstructive barrier to wind-borne sand that keeps drift sand off Main Road and the wetlands.

The Hawks to deal with the Pigeons

Cape Town Stadium management has decided to use hawks to help deal with unruly pigeons. A large number of pigeons have decided that the stadium is their home and are causing challenges due to their particularly messy nesting habits on stadium chairs. Cleaning up afterwards is time consuming and costly requiring 20 workers over three days before any upcoming event. The pigeons have also developed a liking for the stadium's rye grass-seed by eating as much as 70% of the seed laid on the pitch. Instead of poisoning the pigeons, Morticia, the hawk, will scare the pigeons. Hank Chalmers is her keeper. This eco-friendly method is used overseas at stadia and airports.

FHVRRA Subscriptions

Annual subscription due on 1 January 2020 are R80 per household.

The current status of your subs is indicated in the e-mail or hardcopy addressed to you.

Details of our bank account for EFT payments:

Account Name: FHVRRA

Standard Bank Account Number: 374203091

Bank code for EFT payments: 051001

Reference: subs-your initials-your surname

Please send EFT payment advice to

fhvrra.treasury@gmail.com

Subs can also be paid in cash at General Meetings or at any time at AP Jones (1st floor) and Busy Bees (Valyland)

