

FISH HOEK VALLEY RATEPAYERS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION



Photo: Sheila Mary Belshaw

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER - FEBRUARY 2021

NOTICE OF VIRTUAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ON ZOOM

THURSDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2021 AT 19H30

AGENDA

1. WELCOME: INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

2. GUEST SPEAKER: Mireille Wenger, MPP

TOPIC: Matters Covid

Mireille Wenger is the member of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament (WCPP) who chairs the ad hoc committee on Covid-19. She will discuss the WCPP plans, including vaccination, to fight the pandemic.

3. GENERAL QUESTIONS

PREPARED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF FHVRRA

CHAIR: BRIAN YOUNGBLOOD

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Blitz on the Cyclops

We requested that vehicle inspections (road blocks) be set-up at night in well lit areas in order to control four-wheel vehicles which only have one working headlight, usually the bright one. We also requested that taxis be made to comply with road safety rules: not jumping traffic lights and driving recklessly such as seen in the mornings on Kommetjie Road past the Riverside traffic lights where the taxis dice each other. However, we were encouraged by the latest traffic statistics on speeding fines and ticketing of unlicensed motor vehicles and drivers, operating a vehicle whilst under suspension, passenger overloaded, not wearing seat belts and defective lights.

Fish Hoek Main Road

We requested a traffic assessment due to vehicle / pedestrian crashes and poor traffic flow. We suggested that the pedestrian crossing be repainted and placement of flashing lights be considered. A traffic circle was proposed at De Waal and Main Road incorporating the Dunster Avenue dogleg which ends too near Main Road. The entire Main Road needs to be resurfaced and infrastructure upgraded including the pedestrian pavements. As temporary one-way traffic (First Avenue and Beach Road) will be required to upgrade Main Road, we asked if Main and Beach Roads could be assessed for permanent one-way traffic with diagonal parking to increase the parking bays available.

Fish Hoek and the Law

On 28 November 2020, at a roadblock in Fish Hoek, officers arrested 16 motorists for driving under the influence of alcohol (DUI). On Sunday, 22 November 2020, a Traffic Service Ghost Squad officer pulled over a scooter while on patrol in the Fish Hoek area. A bag with 40 shucked abalone were found under the seat. The suspects were arrested and Sea Fisheries were requested to assist in the investigation. The suspects admitted to being runners who receive the abalone from divers who operate in the Soetwater and Simon's Town areas. There were 115 speeding fines issued on 4 November 2020 between 10:30 and 12:30 on Kommetjie Road in the Sun Valley and Silverglade area. More than half of the vehicles inspected in Fish Hoek received citations on 31 October.

Vehicle Registrations

Although the City is processing twice the monthly number of vehicle registrations than normal, the City is just an agent for the national authorities. Unfortunately, the National Traffic Information System (NaTIS), which manages vehicle licensing services, has been experiencing technical difficulties causing delays across the country.

4-Ways Traffic Impact Assessment

Due to there having been several severe accidents at the new Glencairn Expressway (GE) / Kommetjie Road (KR) / Ou Kaapse Weg (OKW) Intersection, we asked the Far South Peninsula Community Forum to request a traffic impact assessment as many of our residents have expressed concern about the safety of this intersection. A traffic operations officer made several observations and recommendations:

- 1] The bus lanes are causing a problem since the prescribed robots for the busses and taxis are not in place;
- 2] The two compulsory right turn lanes from the Fish Hoek side turning right into OKW towards Sun Valley are causing a danger. There are green arrows indicating that you can turn right. When the arrows stop flashing, the robots for Kommetjie on both sides are green. The motor vehicles turning right can still do so, but are then facing four lanes of traffic from Kommetjie Road's side. This is quite difficult because motor vehicles in the middle are obscuring the traffic in the left lanes including the bus lanes and taxis. The officer strongly suggests that right turns only on the green arrows be introduced.
- 3] There is a similar issue coming from OKW turning right into Kommetjie Road.
- 4] There is a slip way crossing the bus lanes. One needs to make sure the bus lanes are clear, then cross the next lane to enter the traffic flow. There should be a robot at the slipway, otherwise the busses and cars in the slipways are going at the same time causing danger.
- 5] The officer recommends that the red phases should be increased by three seconds before it changes to green for the opposite side to make sure all motor vehicles stop;
- 6] This is quite a big intersection and it is clear that many drivers are not used to these lanes.
- 7] The bus lanes need to be closed until correct signs and signals are in place.

Informal Trading in Fish Hoek

Despite 13 official objections which recommended centralisation, on 3 December the full Council approved 29 2m by 2m trading bays in nine locations for informal trading from 06:00 to 19:00 seven days a week. Goods may not be placed on the ground, but on a table not exceeding 1.5m in height. Storage containers must be kept out of sight. The shipping containers at Bayside Bazaar in the train precinct are to be removed. Informal traders are to dispose of their rubbish daily by close of business. No open flames are allowed. Cooking on site will require a food truck.

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Yet another sewage spill in the wetlands

This report came from the Riverine Rovers. “On 31 October and 1 November 2020, the remaining sewage pump at the Vallyland Pumping Station failed due to rags and sticks clogging the pump. This station normally has two pumps with the one plumbed, but on stand-by. However, one of the pumps was removed for maintenance and requires a part from overseas. A tanker truck was dispatched to empty the sump so that it would not overflow. However, the current contractor has ageing tanker trucks which are very noisy. As a result, surrounding residents complained and the on-site staff battled to pump out the sewerage and alleviate the residents' complaints. So pumping was curtailed on that Saturday afternoon due to the noise. A refurbished pump was finally installed by 20:00 on Sunday to replace the damaged one. While no pump was in operation, the sewage overflowed the sump into the stormwater system that ends in one of the two culverts in the wetlands. Although a coffer dam had been built, its capacity was quickly exceeded and sewage overflowed into the main section of the wetlands as far as the stepping stone pond. We had previously asked for a manual warning system (lights and a siren) to complement the existing one so that locals can report problems as the City's “telemetry system” (SMS / radio) often fails. Now we have to ask for a procedure for the coffer dam to be pumped out when it nears capacity. We also asked why the contractor's well known noisy pump problem had not already been addressed.

City's Inclusive Economic Growth Strategy

As the City had identified risks associated with densification (crime, congestion and contagious diseases), we requested that the City revisit its position on development densification. We also requested that the City actually do Urban Planning so that one can walk to work, food and entertainment from one's residence. We suggested that we need more tax relief Special Economic Zones, like Atlantis, but they also needed more flexible hiring and firing practices based on real supply and demand dynamics. As electricity is a limiting factor for most businesses, we requested that the City encourage private SSEGs (small-scale embedded generation) by providing free two-way meters that allow the producer to reduce their electricity bill to zero with any surplus being provided to the City, while also removing the detested fixed costs for electricity and water provision. We suggested a labour market database be kept of current EPWP workers with skills to fill the gaps identified by market opportunities. The City needs to review the local supply chain steps required to replace imported goods. As a parting shot, we observed that our beaches are a natural attraction until one discovers they are polluted by the City dumping raw sewage into our bays. The City needs to provide tertiary sewage treatment before release or reclamation of the water.

Amendment of Administrative Adjudication of Road Traffic Offences (AARTO) Regulations

As road cases will no longer be held in municipal courts, we requested that at least one Appeal Tribunal be located in Cape Town. We requested that foreign driving licences also receive demerit points.

New Nuclear Plant

National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA) asks if they should allow Eskom to procure new nuclear energy generation capacity, which requires ten years to build. We said, “No”. The hived off Eskom Transmission entity can purchase base load (for peak demand hours) from the cheapest, sustainable provider. We need electricity, but it must be cheaper to purchase or self-produce (wind and solar) for our lower income families to use this safer alternative to burning wood.

Audio and Audio-Visual (AV) Content Services Policy Framework

Our Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies wants all platforms, including smart phones, to be required to purchase a TV licence for each device. We requested that she just includes this fee for those who download a specific app for watching SABC. She also wants global video on-demand (eg. Netflix), video sharing websites (eg. YouTube) and social media platforms (eg. Facebook) to purchase local broadcasting licences to fund the SABC. The implication for video on-demand would translate into a higher subscription rate. She wants to classify all content. We recommended that ICASA work with international bodies to seek compliance by the video on-demand providers to their Code of Conduct. We asked her to include the aged to her list of those needing AV consideration (eg. subtitles).

5G Towers

The City of Cape Town charges a tariff of a non-refundable R6 000 / meter for micro-trenching along the road edges that it maintains in areas without sidewalks. This explains why fibre providers have not been providing cable options along certain roads in our valley, such as those above Kommetjie Road. Yet, our Minister of Communications wants to give away our property rights to communication network providers to trench and put their equipment on our property without compensation. Also, our Minister wants to make property owners responsible for the welfare of said equipment, possibly including noisy generators. There could be negative health implications associated with 5G towers. We want all spheres of government to understand our interpretation of consultation. That being that it is not a one-way communication to us, but that our protests actually result in a mutually agreed change in the outcome. We think independent parties “must” be appointed to arbitrate all objections.

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Electoral Laws Amendment Bill

We expressed our concerns about allowing registration of voters who do not have an address as this could lead to individuals voting in several local election wards. We suggested using a geocode of latitude and longitude coordinates as a residence identifier. The main purpose of the bill seemed to advocate the allowance of the IEC to use a “different voting method / procedure”. This could introduce an electronic voting system. We need to know the safeguards that will be put into place to avoid manipulation of the results. Traditional voting systems are more transparent because they generate a paper trail and can be observed at every stage.

National Road Traffic Amendment Bill

Although the intentions of “0% blood and breath alcohol limit for any persons operating a vehicle on the road” are commendable, implementation will be problematic. We suggested rather improving the budget for enforcement. All owners / managers of pubs, taverns, shebeens and even restaurants that allow their patrons to leave their premises in an inebriated state should also be included in the drunk driving fine.

Children's Amendment Bill

It is essential that Early Childhood Development (ECD) providers be registered for the protection of the children. However, compliance is impossible due to the multiple registration requirements. We proposed a one-step registration across departments. We requested the adoption process be streamlined to nine months from the current two-years with relatives being given priority. Also, the adoption fees should be regulated to avoid “trafficking” and some social workers demanding exorbitant fees.



Dr. Jack on the cover of Noseweek, June 2019

Reserve Bank Amendment Bill

The EFF proposed this bill hoping to change the bank's mandate from inflation targeting to economic growth, but this purpose is set by the Finance Minister's monetary policy. The bill states that it has no financial implications, but it recommends expropriating the shares held by 650 shareholders without compensation. Conflicts could arise as the bill proposed the Minister as well as the President appoints board members. Central banks need to be free to implement monetary policy without political interference, as has happened in Zimbabwe and Venezuela with disastrous results. The JSE has proposed rotating auditors to its listed companies. We think the Reserve Bank should also rotate its auditors.

Expropriation Bill [B23 – 2020]

Note: this bill repeals the Apartheid The Expropriation Act 63 of 1975. As nil compensation hinges on “public interest”, we asked for clarity on “the nation's commitment to land reform” and what will satisfy “equitable access to all South Africa's natural resources” and “purposes and provisions” when administering any laws. We strongly recommended that a third party arbitrator who is a qualified property assessor, determines all compensation, including nil compensation, rather than an expropriating authority or the Minister for Public Works and Infrastructure, due to the potential for corruption.

FHVRRA Subscriptions 2021

We are facing another challenging year so your Exco proposes that membership subscriptions for 2020 be carried over for 2021. As in 2020, we will donate to some of the organisations in our valley fighting the pandemic or its effects on our livelihoods, so any funds you may still wish to contribute to FHVRRA will go toward this effort. We urge you to remain in virtual contact with us by email chair@fhvrra.org.za, via the website fhvrra.org.co.za/contactus.html, on Facebook at [Fish Hoek Valley Ratepayers & Residents Association](https://www.facebook.com/Fish-Hoek-Valley-Ratepayers-Residents-Association) and to attend the [Zoom](#) AGM and QGM's. Please encourage any residents of our valley to join FHVRRA - its free for a year! Details of our bank account for EFT payments: Account Name: FHVRRA Standard Bank Account Number: 374203091 Bank code for EFT payments: 051001 Reference: sub-your initials-your surname Subs can also be paid in cash at General Meetings or at any time at AP Jones and Busy Bees (Valyland)