

FISH HOEK VALLEY RATEPAYERS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION



With kind permission: Brian Suter

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS 2023

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NOTICE OF 2023 GENERAL MEETING HYBRID – LIVE & VIRTUAL (HOST: PETER SCOTT) THURSDAY 29 JUNE 2023 AT 19H30

AGENDA

1.WELCOME: INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

2. GUEST SPEAKER TOPIC:

Managing urban wetlands for conservation: challenges and approaches

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE AGM OF 2 MARCH 2023

4. GENERAL QUESTIONS

About the Speaker

Following two decades in formal conservation in South Africa, Balfour embarked on a freelance career in conservation ecology. His formal experience focussed on the interface between science and management – using science to guide conservation management decision making. He spent ten years as a park ecologist in northern KZN and eighteen months in Kruger National Park before taking on roles in senior and executive management in the Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency. With a master's degree in forest ecology and a PhD in savanna ecology Balfour has extensive field experience in both ecosystems. Over 60% of his time as a consultant draws on his specialist expertise in large mammal management and his perspectives on strategic approaches to tackling the challenges of today. He has a particular interest in grappling with how conservation management decision making can be improved through incorporating an understanding of ecological and behavioural processes. Balfour is a longstanding member of the IUCN African Rhino Specialist Group and the African Elephant Specialist Group as well as the SADC Rhino Management Group which he currently chairs. He has delivered work for UNEP, INTERPOL, African Governments, conservation NGOs and private individuals.

David Balfour



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Our elected Executive Committee

Name	Office / Portfolio	Skills / Expertise / Experience
Brian Youngblood	Chair	26 years with City of Cape Town, contracts management, MBA (U.Stel), BBA Hons, MSc, BSc
Peter Scott	Vice-Chair / Membership	PhD Chemical Engineering in the field of mineral processing. Extensive experience in industrial & municipal solid waste & effluent treatment, recycling and management; and mineral processing & metallurgy
Judy Bean	Treasurer	Bookkeeper with 15 years experience in Internal Auditing; amateur environmentalist and activist; enjoys gardening specifically in community parks.
Helen O'Regan	Wetlands / Dunes / Water quality	Secretarial, Book-keeping, Real Estate, Ex-Town Cllr (Uvongo, Natal)
James Ricketts	Fish Hoek Vision	Qualified engineer and project manager with a deep affection for the valley
Peter Feasey	Minute Taker	33 years with City of Cape Town, Engineering, Roads and Stormwater, project management, infrastructure management. Previously, Consulting Engineer. Served the Fish Hoek Scouts for 17 years as an adult leader. Has a great love of the outdoors and strongly supports the preservation of the natural environment.



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City's Shared Network Charge Policy

The City's Electricity Department asked what should be charged to generators of electricity, if anything, and what to charge new consumers when upgrading of the network / grid is required. We commented that business and residential electricity generators using their Small Scale Embedded Generation (SSEGs) should not be charged network fees and their bi-directional meters should be installed for free. Generators receive cash for selling their excess electricity to the City and the City benefits from on-selling this electricity as the price difference for the cash paid to generators is less than the Eskom price paid. However, new consumers must pay according to the deep charge model (larger installation fee vs ongoing network charges) to discourage too many residential developments. We felt that it wouldn't be fair for general customers who aren't directly benefiting from the expansion or upgrade, to pay for this. Business developments can be charged a lower installation fee.

Comments on City's 2023 Budget

We asked that in the next budget there would be an allocation for an environmental assessment for the dualing of Ou Kaapse Weg (OKW), at least in sections. Alternative routes clog quickly when there is a crash on OKW. We suggested a cost / benefit analysis be done on replacing all Mercury Vapour street lamps with LEDs. We had wished to see something about expropriation of land for a generator at our Vallyland Sewage Pump Station.

Categories of Municipal Planning By-Law Contraventions Not Requiring Admin Penalties

One such penalty the City wants to waive on new owners is when the previous owner was at fault due to not submitting plans for proposed changes. We felt that condoning such behaviour circumnavigated our right of public participation. Also, it points out a faulty transfer process whereby the previous owner is not held accountable to submit properly approved plans and the new owner would benefit from the enhancements without associated fees being paid. Our related frustration is that the building inspector often fails to pitch in time when unauthorised building has been properly reported. Our community concerns are for the protection of our residents in terms of their privacy (neighbour buildings built too close or high allowing them to see into their neighbour's yard) and security (built too close to the street boundary obscuring neighbours' view down the street to potential street muggings).

Water Use Application for Groundwater Extraction on Erf 10699, Fish Hoek Dunes

We are concerned with the draw down from this proposed borehole causing ingress of seawater into the aquifer below the dunes or possible foundation shifting. Terry Page, one of our members and an internationally renowned consultant geologist specialising in hydrology, has offered to review the proposal free of charge as a community service to Fish Hoek. We urged Infinity Environmental Services, consultants to the City, to accept his generous offer and consider his opinion.

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Shoprite's application for very large, illuminated signs

Our Facebook community said that these signs cause visual pollution and that there is zero need for them. They cause light pollution and an unnecessary consumer of electricity. Shoprite has agreed (unsigned document) to switch off the big red SHOPRITE sign facing Clovelly at 18:00 every evening so as not to 'inconvenience' neighbours”.

Speed Trapping on Elsie's Peak Roads

Due to complaints received, we requested camera speeding ticket enforcement signs. The City agreed to test that residents were actually speeding, but not one vehicle was trapped that exceeded the AARTO 52 kph in a 40 kph zone to warrant ticketing. Crowd funded speed humps were recommended.

Parliament's Independent Municipal Demarcation Authority Bill

We understand politicians complaining when ward boundaries are changed to seemingly favour a particular political party. However, this bill purports to be independent, yet the **bold** sections below could allow for political interference in the make-up and decisions of this authority:

- a person with specific knowledge of demarcation designated by the Minister **after consultation with the MECs for local government;**
- a person with expert knowledge of demarcation **designated by organised local government;**
- **the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee in the National Assembly responsible for local government, or a member of the Portfolio Committee designated by such Chairperson;**
- **the Chairperson of the Select Committee in the National Council of Provinces responsible for local government matters, or a member of the Select Committee designated by such Chairperson; and**
- **the Chairperson of the National House, or a member of the National House designated by such Chairperson.**

We think municipal boundaries, to be democratic, equitable, sustainable, support social and economic development and a safe and healthy environment should fall within a municipality's urban edge. Then, Section 35 can include Section 23's objectives where each ward cuts along economic strata grouping together those with shared values and priorities. Total property value can be a good approximation, if towns do valuations fairly and regularly.

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Prevention and Combating of Hate Crimes and Hate Speech Bill

We commented on this bill as we are concerned when hate speech crosses the line into freedom of speech. The Bill's broad definition of 'harm' fails to define 'hate' or 'hatred'. Government should bring the hate speech provisions in this “Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act” into line with our Constitution and Equality Act.

Marine Sector Plans of the Marine Spatial Planning Act

We were concerned that some of the plans acknowledged that coastal municipalities dump insufficiently treated waste water into our marine protected zones. One plan said that Transnet would develop ports and harbours whereas it cannot maintain the existing ones possibly meaning that the Table Bay Anchorage Zones should be expanded due to the backlog. We thought our SA Navy should protect our fishing zones. Marine research and development of aquatic farming, ranching, aquaculture and more fisheries might be useful.

GMO Act 15 of 1997 and 23 of 2006 for importing HB4 GM Wheat into South Africa as Food, Feed and Processing

We agreed with the African Centre for Biodiversity that the Genetically Modified (GM) Organisms Executive Council failed to adopt a risk-averse and cautious approach when it approved the entry of GM wheat, which is an important staple food in South Africa, consumed by millions of people daily. They failed to evaluate and engage critically with the paucity of information and food safety data, assessments and evidence, despite HB4 being grown in Argentina for the past 20 years. They just decided there was no need even though 1,400 scientists warned that the introduction of GM wheat would perpetuate an agribusiness model that is harmful to the environment and biodiversity while failing to solve the problems of the food system. In addition, our wheat trading partners may reject our GM wheat.

2023 Eskom Relief Bill (B5-2023)

For Eskom to tap the National Revenue Fund, a bill must be passed to allow a direct charge via appropriation. Eskom would issue shares for this “loan”, but SA already owns 100% of Eskom and trading in Eskom bonds often results in no buyers. The government will not allow Eskom to collect from delinquent municipalities. Providing a loan to the single entity, Eskom, implies that this SOE has not been split properly yet.

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