

2003 July

Pieter Naude

You may remember that Pieter Naude had a very serious mountain biking accident on 28 December 2012, and it is thought that the collapse of his lung at the time precipitated the emergence of a TB infection, which might have been lurking there for some time, but which was only diagnosed last week. The medical regime that he is required to follow over the next six months will mean that he has had to take a sabbatical from the Chairmanship of WRRRA until at least the end of August.

Pieter is trying to view his situation positively, hoping that through this he can *“in some way make people aware of the danger of TB and at the same time help to educate and remove the mystical stigma around it.”*

In the light of this we would ask all our members to please direct queries or comments to myself, Phillip Parsons (philpars@telkomsa.net), or to the relevant member of the Committee. We obviously wish Pieter a speedy and full recovery, and want to assure everyone that the WRRRA projects with which he was so intimately involved will continue to be supported during his enforced absence.

Please also note that John and Marie Callanan, jointly responsible for the Town Planning Portfolio, will be overseas until August. Any queries relating to this portfolio can also be addressed to me.

Condition of the water distribution infrastructure in Wilderness

After an unfortunate interruption in the water supply to Waterside Road, we were alerted to the potential problem of the ageing water distribution infrastructure by one of our members; apparently this is a national problem relating to the old asbestos-cement pipes which were installed in the middle of last century and are coming to the end of their useful life.

The response from Clr Leon van Wyk and the Head of Civil and Technical Services, Harold Basson, is quite sobering.

Their response can be summarized as follows:

- There is and will be no budget/finance available for preventative replacement of old pipelines in the next three years (2013/14/15/16), save in the case of an emergency.
- When budget becomes available in year four (2017/18), there is no guarantee that Wilderness will be on the list.
- The replacement program is prioritized based on the history of pipe bursts on a specific section of pipe.
- There is a dedicated team which deals with burst pipes, and their response time is very good.
- There is no health risk associated with the asbestos-cement pipes.

As Harold Basson says: “There is therefore light in the tunnel. We just have to determine how long the tunnel is”.

Meeting with Integrated Public Transport Network Consultants

Following our submission to the IPTN Consultants regarding the details of the proposed bus routes, we requested a meeting to clarify our objections to the terminus being sited opposite the hotel, as well as other concerns that have been raised. Preliminary discussions with SANParks indicate that they might consider favourably the suggestion of using the SANParks parking area adjacent to the N2 for this purpose. We are still waiting for a meeting, which we requested with the Consultants, to be scheduled.

Traffic Circle construction on the N2 at Wilderness East

Most residents will no doubt, by now, have experienced the serious delays caused by the start of construction of the traffic circle on the N2 at Wilderness East. The WRRRA has been in discussions with the contractors to try and reduce the waiting time, which varies from 10 to 60 minutes, depending on the traffic volumes.

It is estimated that construction will only be completed in April 2014, with normal traffic flow being permitted over the Christmas holiday season.

Orchids for the Municipality

At the recent breakfast with Municipal officials, the problem of all the old builder's rubble etc next to the Constantia Kloof Conservancy garden was raised, together with a request that the road verge be

cleared.

We are very pleased to report that within a week, Marie Callanan was contacted by Jaque Quinot who arranged an on-site meeting with Paul Greyvenstein to organise the removal of the rubble. Paul and his team started work the same day and they spent about 3 days there. The result is that all the loose rubble and overgrown vegetation around our garden was removed, some top soil was brought in and the area leveled.

The Constantia Kloof Conservancy intends putting in suitable plants to complement the aloes that Paul planted at the back of the wall and ensuring that the area is not used as a dumping ground in the future.

At our most recent Committee meeting it was again highlighted that we have a refuse removal service which operates in all weathers and with outstanding efficiency, and appreciation was expressed toward the officials and staff involved.

Parking in the Village

The on-off parking situation on the vacant site opposite Milkwood Village has finally been resolved. Thanks to the efforts of Pieter Naude and Graham Sell (GWBI), the owner, Tony Georgiou, has agreed to allow it to be used for public parking again. The uncertainty regarding the availability of this area for parking resulted in some of the parking bays outside Milkwood Village being designated for shop owners. These bays, marked with yellow lines, may now be used by the public for short-stay parking (limited to 15 minutes). These arrangements should go some way to alleviating the parking problem, while WRRRA investigates the removal of the Armco barrier opposite the post boxes, as well as additional parking at the SANParks parking area adjacent to the N2.

Proposed Beer Festival

Thank you to those of you who responded to our request for comment and opinion on the proposed Beer Festival to be held in Wilderness in October. The responses were mixed, with some feeling that this sort of activity would be good for business in Wilderness, while some residents were concerned that the nature of the event and the attendant noise would be likely to prove disruptive.

It should be noted that at no stage was WRRRA consulted regarding the suitability of Wilderness for this event, nor regarding any of the arrangements. We have conveyed our unhappiness about this process to the Executive Mayor, together with a summary of the responses received. We have requested a meeting with the Executive Mayor and intend discussing this issue, and other matters, when we meet.

Finance

I am sure some of you may be asking where WRRRA gets the money to undertake all these initiatives, particularly the Wilderness Improvement Program? Our Treasurer, Niel Viljoen, has provided a summary of our income and expenditure for the year to date. Obviously, a full financial report will be presented at our AGM in December.

The income from membership subscriptions compares favourably with that of last year. However, there has been a significant increase in the net income from the Wall Advertising Project and in donations received. So far this year the income from these two sources amounts to R 33 789 and R 29 600 respectively.

This income is being used in various ways to further improve the quality of life of the Wilderness residents. Examples of this are;

- R10 000 donation towards the salaries of the lifeguards on the Blue Flag Beach during the holiday season,
- R1 190 donation to Sea Rescue,
- R11 366 contribution towards the Town of the year project (a R 5000 donation was received towards this)
- R2 700 contribution towards the cost of the new rubbish collection bins,
- R5 022 contribution towards the cost of the Village Monitor Project (to which George Municipality contributed R 25 000). Several Wilderness business concerns have also contributed financially to this Project and they will be publicly thanked as soon as the trial period of the project runs out.

Meeting with SANParks

Neville Ewing reported on a very productive meeting with SANParks at which the following matters were raised:

- Lantana (a Category 1 weed, which means it is prohibited and must be eradicated by any landowner) is now in flower, so it is easy to identify and remove (clusters of pink, red, crimson, orange, yellow or white flowers, often with several colors on one head).
- The culprits of the robbery on the hiking trail near the waterfall were denied bail – their case is going to court this week.
- There was an Incident at the NSRI parking area where a SANParks official was accosted by 5 men all wearing police uniforms but with no name badges, driving a Vito with “POLICE WP” registration plates. They were later filmed on CCTV camera in the Spar in the village. No arrests have been made to date.
- Thieves are targeting cars at the Big Tree at Hoekwil – please take extra care.
- Owners walking dogs on prohibited areas in Wilderness will be fined. Visible law enforcement is to be stepped up. Areas being targeted are the beach and the “green SANParks area” alongside the Touw River where the braai facilities are. (People with their dogs taking short-cut through here to the beach after officials have gone home are asked to co-operate or the gate will be locked.)
- A college from Karatara is considering the possibility of collecting garden refuse for composting . Further investigations are taking place and we will notify members if a collection point is identified.
- The waste bins, which form part of the WIP and which were sponsored by SANParks, are proving a huge success.
- In our May newsletter we announced that SANParks had appointed Herman Jungauer to head an official dedicated alien clearing team for the Garden Route National Park. We are pleased to announce that this team has been very active and very cooperative in tackling the problem of invasive aliens on private property.

Paving of Alleyway behind Caltex Garage

We are very pleased that this aspect of the WIP is about to be started. We have had financial donations specifically towards this project as well as donations in kind. When completed, it will see the 220 square meters of alleyway, which is currently uneven, unpaved and very muddy in wet weather, transformed into a safe “walk-in information centre” with the history panels on the N2 wall easily accessible to all. We will give more information in our next newsletter, and thank all those who have contributed towards this important project.

Beggars

The Law Enforcement authorities ask that we do not give food or money to people who are begging, but rather support the community organizations that are seeking to provide food and shelter to those who are destitute.

Phillip Parsons
(Vice-Chairperson)