

SIMON'S TOWN CIVIC ASSOCIATION MINUTES – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

14 NOVEMBER 2022 @ SIMON'S TOWN COMMUNITY HALL

PRESENT: Register taken at the door

APOLOGIES: Recorded

QUORUM was established.

PREVIOUS MINUTES - Accepted

TREASURER'S REPORT at 11 November 2022 - Tim Skea

Treasurer, Tim Skea, stated STCA remains in a sound financial position. he highlighted that the bank balance totalled R141, 158. Balance for general purposes is R115, 148 (balance ring-fenced for subs paid in advance R2, 030). The total number of paid-up members for 2022 is 219 (10 more than 2021; all subs paid after 1 October 2022 will be recorded as 2023 subscriptions). Costs on Community supported initiatives totalled R3, 693. Project funds totalling R23, 980 were spent on gardens and NCC baboon ranger support (Masi fire). Project income, mainly for gardens, stands at R20,495.

Lastly, present Honorary Accounting Officer, Alan Roberts, is unavailable in future so STCA calls on members to recommend or to volunteer to take on this essential and constitutional required position to independently review the annual work of the Treasurer.

1. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT (Simon Metcalfe)

The STCA MISSION is “to promote the welfare of the community and support the economically sustainable & environmentally sound development of greater Simon's Town”, an area covering Glencairn Heights to Smitswinkel Bay, including Redhill).

1.1 THE STCA EXCO'S MAIN FUNCTIONS are (1) To represent the residents to the Metro and other agencies and advocate for good service provision and (2) To coordinate with residents and local associations around agreed environment, social development and heritage goals.

1.2 STCA EXCO TEAM

1. **Simon Metcalfe** as Chairman coordinates collaboration with the council and with the community guided by the broad themes of environment, social development, and heritage. He Represents STCA on the Ward Committee, and the Happy Valley and STADCO boards.
2. **Nadima Smith**, deputises on EXCO and leads on waste management (recycling) and relations with civic agencies including businesses. She is part of the baboon strategy facilitation purpose, and has general oversight of social development and heritage issues. Sits on STADCO Board.
3. **Tim Skea** is our stalwart treasurer, managing general and ring fenced special project funds (e.g. gardens) and general funds, largely held as security against 'rainy day' events e.g. legal costs
4. **Di Ruthenberg** is Communications Officer (e.g. STCA FaceBook, website, newsletter layout), and provides key environmental inputs, including on baboon and waste management issues.
5. **Merle Evertse** manages the STCA membership and serves on the Simon's Town Trust Board. She has covered several portfolios in her long service to the EXCO.
6. **Cilla Bromley** is a long-standing EXCO member and founder of the NGO GEESE that has cared for the Glencairn Else river valley, wetland and beach for many years.

7. **Debbie McComb** supports the Glencairn area, GEESE, runs the property portfolio, and serves on the Sub-Council 19 committee and the Far South Peninsula Community Forum (FSPCF).
8. **Eugene Loftus** represents the STCA on the Community Police Forum, with a special interest in vulnerable groups including the homeless and our 'seniors' citizens community.
9. **Alex Jongens** is a landscape architect interested in 'activating urban spaces (Historic Lanes and other areas; urban furniture, decoration, and special events like the forthcoming literary festival).

Councillor Simon Liell-Cock attends the STCA EXCO meetings; EXCO has support Desiree Mentor, Manager of Sub-council 19 in Fish Hoek, and Alderman Felicity Purchase.

1.3 THE STCA STRATEGY

1.3.1 PROJECTS

Membership fees are not spent on projects for which we fundraise and 'ring fence' for specific activities. The two year old **civic gardens** activity has raised R 78,000 so far, thanks to generous resident donations. The project maintains the gardens from Pisces Dive Centre to the end of the Old Burial Ground fringe, including the new Arsenal Road rockery. We recently helped clear rampant Port Jackson from the ill-named 'Jurassic Park', near Happy Valley shelter. This could be a lovely riverine park with a better name.

I have supervised over 200 planned gardener days, paid wages and trekked waste to various dumps. No costs have been charged to your donations. It is a popular civic activity and the wages are appreciated, including some by Happy Valley residents. If you keep donating, we'll keep managing. A 'green fingered' volunteer is welcome to support the gardens project.

Mt. Pleasant and Admirals Kloof raised R20, 000 for NCC **Waterfall baboon rangers** last Xmas and recently the wider community raised R 17,200 in three days for 8 rangers who lost homes and property in the recent Masi fire.

When you see a problem, like a sewage leak into the sea at Seaforth, you must **make a service request** report before notifying the councillor who can then motivate its urgency to the right department. Unless you report a fault, it doesn't exist. A service deliver control centre seems a good idea but for that we just a dedicated volunteer.

1.3.1 PROGRAMME THEMES - To avoid merely reacting to routine events and crises the STCA is developing a programmatic approach around three core service area themes.

ENVIRONMENT

Engaging '**brown**' and '**green**' **environmental dimensions** means raising local awareness and activating involvement and also knowing 'who is who' in all the relevant departments, relevant civic agencies, and somehow engaging the navy.

Brown issues include solid waste, litter, pollution, sewage spillages, aggressive alien plants, and fire risks. Dealing with solid waste alone involves interacting with 4 city agencies (bin collection, public cleansing, recycling, and law enforcement) as well as coastal management. The STCA has helped improve public bin positioning including several new big double bins. High street wet waste is collected and recycled to pig farms. Cleansing and Coastal Management routinely clean up our public beaches, especially on weekends and holidays, and Miller's Point after ski boat smoke run jamborees. Although the City clears our fire breaks annually the STCA has not yet engaged an alien plant or fire risk activity.

Green issues include the STCA has led a baboon management strategy (see later report) and related waste management strategy. We aim to ensure well managed beaches and coastline and the conservation of our indigenous fauna and flora. The Glencairn GEESE initiative is presently growing its membership, restructuring its EXCO, and designing a detailed strategic plan. The STCA encourages the Glencairn community to engage this project as a focal point.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Security, safety and disaster management is led by the CPF, the apex of our decentralised NHW cluster system. Despite fractious flare ups over baboons, the NHW based WhatsApp chat groups are fundamental to local community safety and civic organisation. While tracking security and safety issues closely, the STCA supports social development aspects, like homelessness and vulnerable groups. The Led by the Department of Social Development leads our area is proud of the work done by our own NGOs - My Father's House, and Happy Valley Shelter. Please support them.

Despite the rehabilitation pathway offered, some homeless prefer an independent street life. However, no resident is entitled to anti-social behaviour and the STCA encourages residents to focus their charity on the agencies with structured rehabilitation programmes rather than 'hand outs' that foster dependency. The STCA's CPF representative, 'Lofty' Loftus, has started a social engagement activity for seniors who may appreciate more social engagement.

HERITAGE

Who are we and how do we show it is expressed in our physical and cultural landscape? The STCA is supporting a literary festival next year featuring, among some others, many peninsula based writers. While every year Heritage Day feels like a rather sad occasion, Simon's Town could imagine a way to reconcile the 'rough' and 'smooth' in our past and reconcile and share a bit of love, food, music, and dance?

Debbie McComb runs our property portfolio and keeps an eye on our physical landscape and oversight of our heritage zone. Many navy properties need care but we lack influence there. Alexandra Jongens, new EXCO member, is a landscape architect interested in "activating public spaces" like our pier, Jubilee Square, burial grounds, and historic lanes, murals, street art, and furniture. Watch this space!

2. SIMON'S TOWN LITERARY FESTIVAL

Professor David Attwell gave an update on plans for Books on the Bay, the Simon's Town Literary Festival, to be held on Friday and Saturday, **10th and 11th March, 2023**. A launch event will be held on Friday 10th February in the St Francis Anglican Church, at 18h00, at which **Nobel Laureate J.M. Coetzee will give a reading**, with **Antjie Krog** and the Angolan novelist **Jose Agualusa**.

For the main festival programme is **March 10-11**, the line-up of writers who have confirmed their participation includes:

- Damon Galgut (**Booker Prize winner for 2021**),
- Justin Fox, Barbara Mutch (writers of international bestsellers set in Simon's Town),
- Mignon Breier (winner of the 2022 **Sunday Times Nonfiction Award**),
- Sindiwe Magona, Finuala Dowling, Joanne Richards, Futhi Ntshingila,
- Gabeba Baderoon, Herman Lategan, Henrietta Rose-Innes, Mark Gevisser,
- Chas Rhys, Kirby van der Merwe, Andre Odendaal, Max du Preez, Wahbie Long,
- Ingrid de Kok.

Venues for the festival will be the St Francis Anglican Church, the Simon's Town Museum, the Methodist Church, the Dockyard Chapel, and the Mosque. Key events will include the celebration at the Mosque of the translation of the Q'uran into Afrikaans by Imam Baker, and a spoken word/slam poetry open mic

session at Willets Hotel. David Attwell's co-organisers are David David (of the Education Faculty at UWC and an expert on literary festivals and literary tourism) and writer and publisher Karin Cronje.

3. COASTAL MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR FALSE BAY PENINULA

Cathy Shutte presented Coastal Management's plans for the Muizenberg revetment and upgrade; the Muizenberg to Kalk Bay walkway railings; the Kalk bay and St. James beach litter management; the Clovelly access upgrade; Jagger's walk concrete repairs; the extensive Glencairn beach upgrade; Simon's Town Long Beach; Windmill Beach upgrade; Fisherman's beach access upgrade.

Present implementation activities include: St. James tidal pool precinct upgrade; Millers point tidal pool embankment. The work of Coastal management met with general approval.

4. STCA FACILITATED BABOON MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Simon Metcalfe introduced the STCA Baboon Management Strategy volunteer facilitation team: Peter Willis (a professional facilitator); Ben Cousins (UWC PLAAS Emeritus Professor); Nadima Smith (STCA EXCO). Peter Willis presented an outline of the problem Simon's Town faced, the dialogue process he and the team have been developing and running since April, and what lies ahead for all baboon-connected suburbs in the Far South. His slide deck is attached to these Minutes.

Main conclusions at this point are:

1. The City has announced it will no longer issue contracts for baboon management as it has done for the last 10+ years, so the current regime ends on 30 June 2023.
2. The City is nearing the end of negotiations with SAN Parks & Cape Nature to establish how they will collaborate to manage the baboon issue going forward. They are due to publish a draft Strategic Management Plan (SMP) in the next few weeks, which should guide us all as to how we will collectively navigate the post-June period.
3. It will be essential for civic associations of the Far South to respond intelligently, promptly and, ideally, collectively during the period of stakeholder engagement that will follow publication of the SMP.
4. Strategic electric fencing has emerged as the consensus central plank of any future strategy. There are still many details to be worked out.

Councillor Simon Liell-Cock and Alderman Felicity Purchase contributed to the discussion. They concurred that the STCA initiative had been very positive in terms of engaging residents peacefully and politely and being taken seriously and supported by the relevant scientists, NGOs, and officials. Ald. Purchase thought it unlikely that the City could actually just drop the baboon monitor programme next year and leave nothing in its place. The next few years transitional period would be interesting and possibly challenging. We all wait for the City's draft new baboon strategy plan with interest.

CLOSE OF MEETING AND REFRESHMENTS