

LANGEBAAAN RATEPAYERS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION (LRRRA)

LANGEBAAAN BELASTINGBETALERS-EN INWONERSVERENIGING
(LBBIV)

VOORSITTERSVERSLAG VIR 2013

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2013

It is indeed a privilege and honour to deliver to you my report regarding the activities of LRRRA and its Executive Committee for the period under review from 1 **January 2013 to 31 December 2013**.

The LRRRA has just cause and has taken up the responsibility and duty as a responsible civic organization to represent civil society in general. The LRRRA and its Executive is directed by our Vision and Mission statements, based on sound principle, good reason and strong norms and values. It is then in the light of this that I deemed it necessary to present our members with those exact principles and values in my report.

The Langebaan Ratepayers and Residents Association is a non-political, non-profit, civic organization whose core business is to ensure fair best practice in local government and to ensure the sustainability of its immediate natural environment.

The LRRRA is a legal entity in itself with a proper constitution and true desire to offer representation to all, within Ward 6, Saldanha Bay Municipal area.

Vision Statement:

Representing the individual and collective interests of all residents within the geographical boundaries of Ward 6, Saldanha Bay Municipal area.

Mission Statement:

Ensuring best fair practise in the Saldanha Bay Municipal area in terms of all government spheres, business and civil activities, to pursue a safe and secure lifestyle for all within a healthy and sustainable natural environment.

Values and norms:

- *Good and sustainable environmental conservation and awareness.*
- *Sensible urban planning and development.*
- *Healthy and sustainable economic development.*
- *Healthy and sustainable socio-economic development.*
- *Custodianship of fair and best practice in local government.*
- *Custodianship of a safe and healthy environment and lifestyle for all residents and visitors.*
- *General public participation and awareness.*

It is my desire to function and operate well within the ambit of those norms and values and I am convinced my team of the past year and years before, did just that.

- The LRRRA developed into a force to be reckoned with, not based on power, but rather on the above norms and values, well researched information, robust debate, honesty and perseverance.

Executive 2013:

The elected Executive Committee members for the abovementioned period were as follows:

Chairperson:	Jaco Kotze	
Vice -Chairperson:	Clement Matthews	
Secretary:.....	Frans Palm	
Treasurer:	Hannes Vermeulen/Chris Bester	
Additional Members:	Johan Ackron	
	Prof Kobus Steyn	
	Nick van der Merwe	Co-opted
	Eddie Bremner	
	Mel Richter	
	John Selby	Co-opted

Soon after the **AGM last year**, which took place on the **24 th January 2013** the newly elected Executive Committee had their first meeting and structured itself to function optimally. The individual committee members were allocated in several different portfolios according to their specific field of expertise and or preference.

The portfolios are as follows:

Chairperson:	Jaco Kotze	Economic Development , Spatial,Planning, & Environment
Vice-Chair	Clement Matthews	Social Development &Welfare/Marketing
Secretary:	Frans Palm –	Local Government Issues
Treasurer:	Hannes Vermeulen	Community Safety

Additional Members:

Johan Ackron:		Economic Development & Spatial Planning
Prof Kobus Steyn		Tourism
Nick van der Merwe	Co-opted	Bulk Infrastructure and community safety
Eddie Bremner		Port and Marine related
Mel Richter		
John Selby	Co-opted	Specific tasks

REPRESENTATION:

The LRRRA through its Executive Committee had representation on various other institutions: The LRRRA were represented on various other committees and environmental bodies due to its interest in the management and well-being of Langebaan.

Such committees are:

- a. West Coast National Parks Forum
- b. Saldanha Bay Air Quality Forum
- c.Saldanha Bay Forum
- d.Ward 6 Ward Committee
- e.Langebaan Community Police Forum
- f.Transnet Environmental Stakeholders Forum
- g.Municipal Coastal Committee

The LRRRA registered as an interested/affected party (A & IP) with various development activities and proposed developments in and around Ward 6 and we regularly submitted comments in terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment processes .

Ruimtelike Ontwikkelings Raamwerk hersienning

Die Langebaan ROR was gedurende Februarie 2013 deur die Saldanhaabaai Munisipaliteit vir hersienning geadverteer en die LBBIV het van die geleentheid gebruik gemaak om op die goed deurdragte en professionele LBBIV ROR dokument van 2011 voort te bou. Dit is dan juis hierdie dokument wat die insluiting van Shark Bay binne die stedelike soom verwerp. Dit is juis hierdie dokument wat ruim voorsiening maak vir die allokasie van geskikte grond vir laekoste behuising en sportgronde. Dit is vanuit n stedelike beplannings oogpunt oor en oor bewys dat die LBBIV se voorgestelde Ruimtelike Ontwikkelings Raamwerk beplanningsdokument sinvol is, wel deurdrag en is en nie objektief verwerp kan word nie. n Duidelike aanduiding hiervan is dat ten spyte daarvan dat die Saldanhaabaai Munisipale Raad nie die nodige erkenning aan ons beleidsdokument gee nie hulle wel hierdie dokument as basis gebruik het vir die detail ontwikkeling van 3 precinct gebiede binne die stedelike soom van Langebaan. Die Raad het selfs so ver gegaan om ons stadsbeplanner vir hierdie projek aan te stel.

Langebaan Precinct plans

Die Langebaan Noord Precinct, Oostewal straat Precinct asook die Langebaan Sentraal Precinct vorm deel van hierdie detail ontwikkelingsplanne, gegrond op die LBBIV se ROR.

Die ontwikkeling van Oostewal straat, die herontwikkeling van Bree straat, Hoofstraat en die verbinding van die toerisme nodusse is almal direkte uitvloeisels van die LBBIV se ROR. Kleinere uitvloeisels van die LBBIV ROR is die aanbring van n strand palnepad tussen Dwars straat en Bree straat om die nodusse te verbind om parkering druk in Bree straat te verlig asook om die nood aan toerisme infrastruktuur soos wandel paaie te bevredig. Die ontwikkeling van Uitsigstraat asook Einderstein straat is ook n direkte uitvloeisels van die LBBIV ROR. Ons het so ver gegaan as om detail sketse van meeste van hierdie projekte te doen en wat dan ook so deur die SBM aanvaar is.

2012 /2013 Property valuation process

The LRRA acted pro- actively on the 2013 property valuation process. We took the initiative to engage with the property valuers and ensured that fair values be attached to our Langebaan communities properties. This initiative resulted in far less objections and only a hand full of appeals. Mr Frans Palm served on the SBM property valuation appeals board. We can now proud ourselves that the days seems to be over when Langebaan was to be seen as the only cash cow in the SBM. We believe in fair property taxes and fair property taxes can only be met with fair property valuations. I want to specifically mention M3 the property valuers who were so willing to work hand in hand with us to secure a fair process. Unfortunately it was yet again the SBM who failed to comply to the legal prescription of the Property Rates Act and we had to step in to rectify the issue.

G.O.P proses:

Alhoewel die G.O.P proses wel tydens die 2013 jaar beter verloop het as in die vorige jaar bestaan daar steeds n gebrek aan publieke deelname. Ons kan met trots se dat die SBM selfs die LBBIV insette net so geneem het en dit probeer inkorporeer. Daar is steeds kommer dat die raad steeds planloos met hierdie prosesse werk en dat dit steeds op n adhoc wyse bestuur word. Solank die ROR en die precinct planne nie tot finaliteite kom nie sal daar min of geen sin in hierdie prosesse wees nie aangesien dit nie binne n goed geordende struktuur kan ontwikkel nie. n Plan moet n plek he voordat dit werklik tot uitvoering kan kom. Die kwynende kapitaal begroting doen hierdie proses ook geen guns nie.

2013/2014 Saldanha Bay Municipal Budget process

The LRRRA was intimately involved in the SBM Budgetary process and commented extensively thereon. We were shocked to realise that council irrespective our pleads approved a whopping R219 million on staff (a R23 million increase in one year). Simultaneously the Capital budget was cut from R197 to R188 million.(decrease of R9 million).Capital budgets goes towards the development and maintenance of bulk infrastructure. It is now official since the 2013 /2014 SBM budget that our municipal staff costs exceeds our capital budget with more than R33 million per annum .We did compliment the council on some other aspects of the budget, such as the CRR balance .

Saldanha Toerisme Organisasie Diensleweringsooreenkoms:

Volgehoue druk vanaf die LBBIV op die SBM asook die professionele ontleding en die verslag wat daarop gevolg het, soos opgestel deur Professor Kobus Steyn en Johan Ackron het daar op gedui dat die bykans R7,5 miljoen belastingbetalers geld wat in terme van die diensleweringsooreenkoms deur die SBM aan die SBTO uitbetaal is ,weinig indien enige regverdiging van publieke fondse regverdig .Hierdie slotsom is gemaak in terme van die teenprestasies deur die SBTO gelewer in terme van die diensleweringsooreenkoms .Hierdie diensleweringsooreenkoms is vroeg in 2013 vervang deur n nuwe diensleweringsooreenkoms.Die SBM het ridderlik erken dat hul in hul oorsigrol gefaal het aangaande die bevonding.Dit is egter steeds die SBTO wat ontken dat die geval was en het deur die plaaslike media die LBBIV as verdelend bemoeisaam afgemaak.Sensasionele media berigte het weer eens daarin geslaag om ekonomies met die waarheid te wees ,wat n hewige reaksie uitgelok het.**Ons is nie bang vir kritiek nie solank dit op die waarheid geskoei is ,billik is en nie persoonlik gerig is nie** .Dit het egter die LBBIV geveg om hom tot die Wet op Toegang tot Publieke inligting te skaar om die nodige antwoorde uit die geleedere van die SBM te kry. Dit is voorwaar n hartseer dag dat deursigtigheid en verantwoordbaarheid deur wetgewing afgedwing moes word.

Shark Bay Development legal review.

After long and careful deliberation as well as after consultation with its members the LRRRA took it upon itself to take the MEC of Environmental Affairs and Planning ,the SBM and Dormell Properties 391(Pty) Ltd on review with regards to the MEC's decision to approve the so-called Shark Bay development .The SBM outright decided not to oppose our application and the MEC, recently decide to withdraw his notice of intention to Oppose the LRRRA application and concurred to abide to a decision of the Cape High Court. Dormell Properties 391(Pty) Ltd is the only respondent opposing this review application at present.

White Road appeal case

The LRRRA was forced to take Dormell Properties (391 (Pty)Ltd to Cape High Court after the illegal closure of the so-called White Road. The LRRRA received ruling in its favour with punitive cost on 8 May 2012 ,after the case being heard by Judge Saba on 24 November 2011.Dormell then applied for leave to appeal. Leave to appeal was initially declined by Judge Saba ,but later overturned by a court decision that the case be heard by a full bench. At the first appeal hearing during July 2013 ,Judge Willem Louw ruled that the appeal only be heard after the conclusion of the Shark Bay development review case.

This appeal case is still pending.

Public access to beaches

The LRRA again acted pro-actively and engaged with the West Coast districts Municipality to identify almost 37 public accesses to the coast as provided for in the Integrated Coastal Management Act of 2008. This initiative was lodged in desperation after failure by SBM to engage with public participation to identify such public access to the beaches in the SBM municipal area. The SBM initially only identified only 5 public access points within the entire Ward 6 area. The 37 public access points to the beaches are now properly documented and registered with the provincial authorities.

Bulk services

With the over 9000 approved plots of which 2349 was approved by the current council in 2012 ,within the urban edge of Langebaan we are now dangerously running short of bulk services.

Waste management and waste management sites

Our waste management site is since 2009 still only 37 % compliant to its license conditions .Non-compliance is a criminal offence with penalties up to R10 million or jail sentence. Although there are some rumours about changing the waste site into an transfer station ,little proof is available in the budget to support such rumours. The previous illegal waste site was closed subsequent pressure from the LRRA and some money has been budgeted for the rehabilitation thereof.

Storm water Management Plan

After years of the absence of a storm water management plan in Langebaan ,enduring the frequent flooding and discharge of pollutant substance into the Lagoon there seems to be a glitter of hope on the finality of such plan. The frequent flooding of March street and Suikerkan street resulted in the overload of sewage systems due to these flooding. This resulted in the overflow of raw sewage into the houses of residents at Benjamin close that then ended up again onto our roads and then finally being discharged into the Marine Protected Areas.

Regular discharge of heavily polluted storm water from a retention dam at Robben street at the beach at Noord street was also brought under the attention of provincial and national environmental law enforcement agencies. All laboratory results were way over acceptable health limits.

Potable water

The lack of pressure and volume on potable water also haunted some areas in Langebaan central over the festive season and by times water pressure could not even feed irrigation systems. It was also experienced that fire trucks in recent times had great difficulty maintaining adequate water feed from the system. The red lights are flickering. The question is, is council going to wait till it is to late. We are aware of the fact that council did replace some water feed pipelines during late 2013 ,but if it would be adequate is still to be seen.

Sewage works and related systems

The recent festive season and frequent sewage overflows that occurred is witness to our years old claim that our sewer systems are overloaded. I personally experienced the overflow of sewage at home during peak times over the past season. Restaurants were flooded and pipe systems and sewer pumps clearly could not cope with the burden. If we want to be the tourism town we claim to be ,then we should cater for those demands coming with it.

Irrespective regular warnings from the LRRA ,council decided to still continue spending huge amounts of money on infrastructure diverting treated sewage of the Country Estate into a vlei area at Strandloper and then finally into the Saldanha Bay area and Marine Protected areas.

After continuous warnings and no prevail from council we decided to lay formal charges. The National Department of Water Affairs and Provincial Department of Environmental Affairs recently served a directive on council to cease all activities with immediate effect and to rehabilitate the area.

One good outcome from this project was the sealing of the sewer overflow right next to the same outlet to prevent contamination of groundwater in the area. It was first denied by council that the pond needed sealing ,but after the LRRRA pointed out the matter yet again common sense prevailed and we now see the pond being sealed.

Road infrastructure

We are still very concerned about the status of our road infrastructure as all indications are that years of neglect and patching up has now finally caused the road base course to collapse. Although this is not the case all over ,it is still a huge concern to us that no provision is made in annual budgets for a proper maintenance plan.

Electricity distribution networks.

I must admit that huge in row had been made to upgrade the electricity distribution network of Langebaan. We still fall way short of having adequate capacity ,but huge progress had been made .We hope to see that council shall continue to keep this pace regarding the upgrade of the electrical distribution networks of our town.

IDZ

It was mentioned in last years chairpersons report that the LRRRA had a substantial impact on the direction the planning of the IDZ had gone .I need to mention the mammoth contribution JohanAckron had made to this project. Now that all fan fair had come to a close after the announcement of IDZ ,we have to seriously look at how we can make this animal work for our communities without compromising our natural environment. It is a matter of manage it or getting managed by it.

CPF

A lot of commotion and emotion erupted due to the position the LRRRA took on the constitutionality of the CPF. We have no gripe with the CPF , their Executive nor any individual serving on it. As a responsible member of the CPF we believe that it is our duty to point out where we believe matters are not dealt with in the correct manner. We have no desire what so ever to derail or to undermine the organization. We only have a true desire to see that it be properly constituted. We all hope that mutual understanding and respect could prevail and that this issue be resolved as a matter of urgency.

LPG Gas Discharge Facility

The L.R.R.A was very active in the commenting process of both proposed facilities in the Port of Saldanha .We are in support of both these projects, but again had to raise our concerns about the preferred location of this facility. **“STAY OUT OF BIG BAY”**. Various other LPG discharge options were negotiated. We have now reason to believe that both applications received their ROD,s and it is now in an appeal phase.

Solar farm at West Coast Engen area.

The LRRRA extensively commented on this application .Although we are hugely in support of this green energy alternative in the Saldanha Bay area, we unfortunately cannot support the specific location of this application at such a high order tourism route and entrance to

Langebaan. We suggested various other suitable locations closer to industry. The application recently received their environmental approval irrespective our plead to relocate it to a more suitable site. We can now only hope that our local council would come to our rescue in terms of the LUPO process to place it in such a manner that it does not impact negatively on our spatial integrity.

Vote of no confidence

I am sad to say that the LRRA for the first time in its existence was confronted with a vote of no confidence in its Executive. We as an executive believe that this matter was totally unnecessary. We have to start talking to each other and not about each other. We have to acknowledge that we might have different opinions and that we are ordinary human beings with different making ,believes and way of doing things .We have to acknowledge that we cannot always please everyone all the time. We have to realize that civil society is the last safety net we have. Government is not going to look after us ,we have to look after ourselves .We cannot stand divided, we have to learn again to have robust debate ,without fear and without reservations. I publicly commit myself to reach out to those who differ from me and to engage in constructive talk.

Publieke vergaderings:

Die LBBIV het onderneem om sy belofte gestand te doen en tydens 2014 gereelde publieke vergaderings met sy lede te hou waartydens kwellinge aangespreek kan word.

Hierdie vergaderings is as volg gehou:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| 25 Januarie 2013 | - | Algemene Jaarvergadering |
| 23 May 2013 | - | Spesiale Algemene Vergadering |
| 21 November 2013 | - | Algemene Publieke Inligtingsvergadering |

Die uitvoerende komitee het gereeld op 'n maandelikse basis vergader waar sake van belang en ander aangeleenthede rakende Wyk 6 bespreek is, met gepaardgaande besluite en die uitvoering daarvan.

All written comments and letters referred to in this report would be available on our Website www.langebaanratepayers.co.za.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all members and other interested residents for their support. The responsibility to ensure that the LRRA achieves its goals and objectives is not only vested with the Executive Committee, but indeed with every member.

My hartelike dank ook weer eens aan die lede van die Uitvoerende Bestuur vir die bevoegde manier waarop u sake hanteer en afgehandel het en ook vir die goeie gees waarin dit geskied het. Daar wag sekerlik nuwe uitdagings op die LBBIV in die komende jaar, maar as die nuwe uitvoerende bestuur wat aanstons gekies sal word, voortbou op die fundamente wat u gelê het gedurende u termyn, voorspel ek net groter suksesse vir die LBBIV in die komende jaar wat voorlê.

In conclusion I foresee that with the necessary support, commitment and determination by you as the ratepayers and residents, this Association will go from strength to strength and therefore my best wishes accompany the LRRA during 2014.

BE INFORMED BE PREPARED BE INVOLVED

Jaco Kotze

Voorsitter Langebaan Belastingbetalers- en Inwonersvereniging