

# **BETTY'S BAY RATEPAYERS' ASSOCIATION**

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2021**

In order to report on the activities for the past year, we need to measure our performance against the aims and objectives of BBRA, as stated in our constitution, these are as follows:

1. To facilitate, monitor and promote excellent management of the town of Betty's Bay and its environs and the needs of the community.
2. To monitor, evaluate and where appropriate, influence the Local, Provincial and Government's decision making in matters relating to Betty's Bay.
3. To identify issues affecting Betty's Bay and to recommend possible solutions to the Municipality and advance the interest of the Community in such issues.
4. To keep members informed, and to cultivate and encourage an interest in local affairs amongst ratepayers and residents in order to ensure improving standards of management for Betty's Bay.
5. To gain universal recognition as the official representative body of the community of Betty's Bay.
6. To promote the conservation of the unique flora and fauna character of Betty's Bay and it's environs.
7. The association is intended to be a public benefit organisation with all its activities being carried out in a non-profit manner and with an altruistic or philanthropic intent.

In summarising the above objectives it is clear to me that the common thread is to positively influence all authorities such that the value of properties are enhanced by ensuring that standards are maintained and hopefully improved.

The activities of the BBRA committee are divided into the following portfolios:

- Sand dune management
- Roads and storm water
- Conservation
- Property planning and development
- Water, waste and sanitation
- Fire and emergency services
- Security and CPF
- Community and cultural matters

As can be seen most of these portfolios depend on having a good working relationship with the Overstrand Municipality. In the past the relationship between OM and the BBRA could best be described as confrontational and clearly this was not in the best interest of the community. After a strategic planning session a decision was taken to adopt a spirit of co-operation with OM without compromising our objectivity and independence. This approach has in my opinion worked well as there has been improvement in many areas, namely:

- Water reticulation project
- Proposed establishment of a fire station in Betty's Bay
- Storm water management
- Upgrading of roads
- Management of the baboons

There are however areas where there has been little or no progress, these include:

- The reduction of the fire risk in many areas of Betty's Bay, especially Dawidskraal, Bass Lake, Jocks Bay and Silver Sands.
- Functioning of the Building Inspectorate/Municipal Court
- Road safety in Clarence Drive especially at the two business areas.
- Upgrading of the CBD in Betty's Bay

In an attempt to correct the various issues affecting Betty's Bay a meeting was held with the Municipal Manager on the 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021. At this meeting the poor performance, in certain areas, of OM was openly discussed and since then some improvement has been registered.

The Ward Committee system was well supported by BBRA and we directly influenced the budget allocation for major projects as well as minor ward specific projects. A specific criticism of the OM was them using the restrictions imposed by the procurement system as an excuse for slow service delivery. It became apparent that OM was working primarily to get a clean audit rather than a clean audit being a consequence of how business was conducted.

The comments mentioned are history and we need to look ahead.

When I first moved to Betty's Bay in 2009 many residents I spoke to told me that they particularly enjoy the ambience of our town and would not like it to change. When I review what has happened in Betty's Bay over the last few years, especially since the Corona virus, I believe that Betty's Bay has changed and is no longer the sleepy hollow that it once was.

I say that based on these figures:

- 130 building plans passed in 2021 with a total value of R177m.
- In excess of 40 new plans that are still in the system.
- Betty's Bay has a total of 5300 properties and once these are all built up Betty's Bay will be bigger than Kleinmond!
- An Internet Service Provider has confirmed a 30% increase in demand for services in Betty's Bay

The Corona virus has forced many people to work from home and this has resulted in people moving out of the big cities into smaller towns and still continuing their career. These are mainly younger people and the services that they require will further change the dynamics of the town. I am sure that some form of an upgraded internet system will be required with increased electronic speed. There are indications that more people are fencing their properties, which is contrary to the norm created. With time I believe that the CBD in Betty's Bay will have to expand to cater for the needs of the growing population. The schooling available in the area will require attention. Medical services will also need to be reviewed. A particular challenge to the future committees of BBRA will be to ensure that with the growing of Betty's Bay we receive the commensurate percentage of the allocated municipal budget.

The challenge going forward will be to ensure that the economic expansion does not negatively impact on the unique environmental situation of Betty's Bay. There are early indications that people purchasing properties in Betty's Bay are not made aware of the laws (either national, provincial, or municipal) pertaining to the specific environmental issues at Betty's Bay.

Please allow me to thank the committee for their time and dedication throughout the year under difficult and sometimes frustrating conditions. I need to specifically thank Werner, Adrian and Karon for their support during the year.

It has been an honour to serve as Chairperson for the past year and I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

I thank you.

Bill Steyn

