



## **BUSHMAN'S RIVER MOUTH / BOESMANSRIVIERMOND**

Ratepayers' Organisation / Belastingbetalersorganisasie  
(BRRAG)

P.O.Box / Posbus 90, Boesmansriviermond, 6190

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8 September 2009

The Municipal Manager  
Ndlambe  
P O Box 13  
PORT ALFRED  
6170

[rdumezweni@ndlambe.co.za](mailto:rdumezweni@ndlambe.co.za)

Dear Sir

### **BUSHMAN'S RIVER MOUTH RATEPAYERS' ORGANISATION (BRRAG)**

Writer sent you an e-mail shortly after your appointment as new Municipal Manager wherein I congratulated you with your appointment. I also requested the possibility of a meeting with you over the week-end of 8, 9 and 10 August 2009. However, I assume that you did not receive that e-mail. I once again congratulate you on your appointment as Municipal Manager and trust that you will have a fruitful time in that position.

I also need to deal with a number of issues in relation to Bushman's River Mouth that are still outstanding and which are matters of concern to the ratepayers of the Bushman's River Mouth. Most, if not all of the items I will refer to herein have been referred to the acting Municipal Manager and various other officials including Directors of different departments, for attention. Very little of our concerns have been addressed to date.

***“We make the difference / Ons maak die verskil”***

Committee: Lötter Wepener (Chairperson), Sheila Swanepoel (Vice Chairperson), Fanie Venter (Treasurer), Wendy Grove (Secretary), Christo Botha, Corris Krogscheepers, Duncan MacTaggart, Pieter Mouton, Andrew Murray, Ian Smith, Bill Northrop, Anton Vosloo,

## **Sewage (URGENT)**

- 1.1. Save for regular clearing of all the conservancy tanks which really is self evident, it has come to our attention that the sewage plant of the municipality on the outskirts of Bushman's River Mouth is non-functional. Inspections by us during the course of the year showed that the aerator and chlorinator units were broken. When sewage is added to the plant it overflows from the ponds and lands in the surrounding area from where it flows down the valley towards Nature's Landing and eventually into the Bushman's River. This problem needs to be addressed urgently and in any event, is a contravention of the provisions of Section 19(1) of the National Water Act, 36 of 1998 and Section 28 of the National Environmental Act, 107 of 1988. Both these contraventions are criminal offences punishable by imprisonment of five years.
- 1.2. We have advised the municipality on numerous occasions that other sewage conservancy tanks regularly overflow in our town. Sewage has detrimental effects on water resources and human health. Sewage seeps into the underground water and if these aquifers do not contain relatively impermeable culcrete layers in the upper horizons, raw sewage out of control would pollute potentially potable water in the aquifers, and would necessitate the removal of deleterious elements which could cause illnesses. Allowing raw sewage to flow into water has a detrimental effect on human, aquatic and bird life. As regards to humans it can lead to skin, ear, throat and nose infections and possible intestinal disorders. As regards bird life, especially the birds that are waders or feed on aquatic life, spillage of sewage can kill such birds.
- 1.3. Raw sewage in the water is highly dangerous and can cause illnesses such typhoid, cholera, dysentery, cryptosporidium, oocysts and giardia cysts. Unless the sewage in the water is treated it can lead to the formation of cyano bacteria in the water which is an extremely toxic algae which can kill off both aquatic and bird life. It can also be very dangerous and in fact life threatening to humans.
- 1.4. The Ndlambe Community Protection Services' report for May 2009, water tests show that the Ecoli count is in excess of 200 000 Ecoli per millilitre at Bushman's River. This is far in excess of the permissible DWAF prescribed limit of 1000 per 100 millilitres of water. This is a serious danger to all in the vicinity.

- 1.5. The sewage plant is still non-functional and overflows down the valley into the River. The problem is serious and should be addressed without delay to avoid holiday makers from becoming ill during the coming summer months.
- 1.6. The sewage plant is not maintained at all in that the bar screens are not raked regularly and dry rakings are not transported to landfill on a daily basis; the grid channels are not scraped clean on a regular basis; the Parshall Flume is not washed on a daily basis; the bio-filter is not washed to improve the hydraulic distribution of sewage over the filter; the anaerobic pond is not drained and the sludge is not removed to drying beds to ensure that the depth is maintained to promote the anaerobic process; the mechanical plant is not maintained; the parameter fence and gates are broken down allowing for unauthorised access.
- 1.7. We call on you to address this serious shortcoming without further ado and to ensure that steps are taken to render the sewage plant functional and to avoid pollution of the Bushman's River.

## **2. Sewage Seepage on towpath**

The seepage along the towpath has been an ongoing problem for years. During a meeting in April 2009, Director Mvulelwa advised that the health inspectors should approach the relevant home owners in order to deal with the complaint insofar as pollution is concerned and that BRRAG would then receive a progress report. We supplied particulars of the problem areas in writing to the Director but we have had no feedback regarding the health inspector's inspection nor any progress report in this regard. Our Mr Christo Botha (tel 082 374 6511) is available to meet with officials and assist to identify problem areas.

## **3. Flooding / Storm Water to be curtailed**

- 3.1. There are various flooding problems due to the fact that the drainage pipes are either too small or run uphill or are non-existent. We are prepared to place this on a map to indicate the problems but do not wish to become involved in the exercise unless we are assured that the matter will receive attention. There are bigger pipes required in various places to avoid damming up of heavy rainfall at times. We all know the troubled areas in the Village Centre (Kokkewiet and Ocean Drive and Park and River

Road) and we can point out a few near Alexander Road (in front of Johnny Charles' house and opposite Kiewiet running down into Main Street).

- 3.2. Several residents are concerned about the storm water control measures with the new developments taking place BRM Village. A proper storm water plan downstream of the proposed developments was supposed to be in place. This has not happened and it is possible that the safety of all the houses below the developments could be comprised. The area affected is from Salie / Umthati Streets down through Hertzog Street to the lower part of Main Street, Park Street and River Road.
- 3.3. Ndlambe Municipality was alerted to the possible problem and it was raised in the original proposal for the new development. It was understood that there would be a storm water control plan downstream of the vlei. It is now apparent that the storm water is led into the existing drainage without any provision for the upgrading of the downstream storm water control.
- 3.4. The essence of the concern is that a 750 mm storm water pipe leads into a system that has only a 600 mm storm water pipe. The Village area can barely cope with the storm water at present and new developments in Bushman's, Marselle and Klipfontein will all contribute to a far greater run-off which is an increasing and real threat to the Village.
- 3.5. We would appreciate an intervention to see that a storm water control plan is introduced prior to any of the development or proposed development being completed. The risk to the municipality would be unacceptable as it would open up a case of liability if the Village was flooded.
- 3.6. We are willing to point out the constraints of the system and possible problems. Flooding at some residences occur from time to time and curb stones are necessary at these homes. The problem areas can be pointed out.

#### 4. **Manhole Covers**

- 4.1. A large number of manhole covers and water junctions covers / storm water grids need replacement. Manhole covers and water junction covers have been a problem for years. A few years ago a complete new set of water covers was installed but they were, in our opinion, of such inferior quality that problems were being observed as the

covers were being laid. With the increased building in the new extensions, very heavy vehicles are driving over these covers and, because they were not designed for the weight, the covers collapse. Also, when we had the heavy rains, the foundations of these holes moved and the covers did not fit. The problem has just become worse and more people are now aware of it because of the number of collapsed covers on just about all the roads in the Village and Riversbend.

- 4.2. After a request from Director Masiza, we supplied a list of the problem areas on 18 May 2009. We are advised that a quotation for the replacement of the covers is being awaited and we urge you to expedite this matter.
- 4.3. We suggest that covers that are bolted down be investigated as thieves are removing every piece of metal and copper that they can lay their hands on.

## **5. Potholes and Road Signs**

- 5.1. The potholes in our town are becoming worse by the day. Potholes need proper repairs and resurfacing of all major roads has become necessary. Without proper maintenance the Village is deteriorating and the end result would be a very high cost of replacement when all has broken down. The practice of filling potholes with gravel and tar without adequately preparing the holes before filling them results in the new material just being washed away by rain and the holes re-appearing within a short space of time. We attach for your attention, a document setting out the manner in which potholes should be repaired.
- 5.2. Road signs generally and road markings are to be upgraded, painted and repaired. There are a number of missing street names especially in Riversbend.
- 5.3. The following street names have still not been replaced:-
  - 5.3.1. Pier Street at Main Street;
  - 5.3.2. Ocean Drive at the toilets;
  - 5.3.3. Louw Street.
- 5.4. The following road signs have not been attended to:-

- 5.4.1. warning signs at the various humps in town;
- 5.5. Mr Corris Krogscheepers (tel 083 654 6160) is prepared to indicate all the shortcomings in this regard.

## 6. **Speed humps / encroachment**

- 6.1. We have been requested by residents to convey the need for speed humps on certain roads in the town. Holiday makers and children are at risk because of persons not adhering to speed limits – the roads are also too narrow to even allow it to be a 60 km per hour zone. Traffic calming measures would alleviate the problem. We request that the following speed humps be installed:-
  - 6.1.1. Salie Street, which used to be dead end and now gives access to and from a new development. Salie Street is a narrow street and it was not built for heavy traffic. In addition, if a hump was to be erected somewhere close to the entrance of the old Village i.e. two humps in Salie Street, we believe that it would have a calming effect on the additional and heavier traffic;
  - 6.1.2. With the increased traffic along Krogscheepers Street coming down Wit Street, it has become necessary to install a hump at the corners of Krogscheepers and Dorp Streets. It will also possibly be wise to install a further hump in Krogscheepers Street between the one requested at the intersection of Dorp Street and Main Road.
- 6.2. A second more complicated matter needs to be dealt with as it also includes the removal of a hedge that is encroaching far outside the erf boundaries and causing an obstruction. On the corner of River Road and Piers Street, where the bend occurs the property on the western boundary has allowed a hedge to grow well over its boundaries and onto the public road. In River Road, the hedge takes up at least 1,5 metres of the road and in Piers Street the hedge similarly takes up a portion of the road. As this is a dangerous bend for both traffic and pedestrians alike, we urge you to cause the hedge to be removed from the road. In addition, if speed humps are installed either side of the bend, the calming effect would have the desired result in that the danger caused by the hedge would be removed and vehicles can safely manoeuvre

the corner at slower speeds. We attach a sketch of the latter proposal for your consideration, marked "H".

## **7. Upgrading and Maintenance of four public toilets (Urgent)**

- 7.1. With a future goal of a Blue Flag beach for Bushman's it would be essential to get the local community buy in and to maintain public buildings. When locals and holiday visitors are spending time at the beach, the provision of good clean toilets are of the utmost importance. Also, work creation and pride in the Village environment is of utmost importance. All toilets often overflow and run-off is into the River. Revamping of the ablution blocks must be undertaken with easy maintenance in mind such as the use of concrete slabs on a slope instead of wash basins.
- 7.2. During a meeting in April 2009, Director Mvulelwa acknowledged that there was some funding available and that he would see what could be done to repair the four existing toilets. Nothing has been done to date.

## **8. Existing Slipway and jetty deterioration**

The existing slipway is to be made functional by upgrading the road, pedestrian path, painting yellow lines and erecting traffic signs. The jetty needs to be restored and proper signs regarding use thereof erected to avoid all and sundry to moor at the jetty.

## **9. Rubbish Bins**

- 9.1. Additional swing rubbish bins are to be erected in our Village.
- 9.2. During a meeting in April 2009, Director Mvulelwa advised that 19 swing bins, as indicated to the Director, would be erected by Ndlambe. After supplying the Director with the placement of the bins a number of bins were delivered to Bushman's River Mouth. However, only a few have been installed and the others need installation. In this regard we once again request that contact is made with Mr Corris Krogscheepers who can assist with the placing of the swing bins for installation – although the list was provided to the municipality before but can be supplied again.

## **Beach Access Area (Urgent)**

- 9.3. The booms and the general appearance of the car park at the beach need to be restored. A large volume of sand has been deposited on this parking area and causes difficulties for vehicles to manoeuvre. The sand has now caused several vehicles to get stuck. There is no other parking space for beach access and this matter requires attention urgently.
- 9.4. During a meeting in April 2009, Director Mvulelwa undertook to have the stones in the area cleared and the car park separated from the beach and a boom replaced to prevent cars from illegally driving onto the beach. To date, nothing has been done, save for some of the stones that BRRAG removed.

## **10. Tennis Courts**

- 10.1. The tennis courts need upgrading and maintenance. The alternative is to lease the courts to the Association at a Nominal Fee so that we can upgrade and maintain the courts ourselves.
- 10.2. During a meeting in April 2009, Councilor Mike undertook to approach Director Mali in order that a decision could be made to lease the tennis courts to BRRAG on more favourable terms. We have had no communication from Director Mali about the tennis courts since that date.

## **11. Maintenance**

We would request that a team of labourers be supplied to this Association on a fortnightly basis for a day at a time to assist with cleaning the town and pathways.

## **12. Traffic Control**

- 12.1. We have had a number of complaints regard the absence of traffic control in our town. As examples, we mention that there are un-licensed all terrain vehicle or quad bikes that are used on our public roads. There are also a number of motorbikes that are unlicensed and so used. There now also appears to be an increase in the number of unlicensed golf cars that are operating in the town.

- 12.2. A cause for concern is that these vehicles are utilised by youngsters who are clearly not capable of properly handling the machines which they are using on public roads. Writer has mentioned this problem to Boysie in the past but there is no effective control over these transgressions.
- 12.3. Once some persons are aware that certain quads are allowed, they do not understand why all quads can not be freely used in Bushman's. The problem is exacerbated every year with more and more of these vehicles arriving on the basis that others are "*permitted*" to use the vehicles freely in town. The quad vehicles are particularly noisy and were not manufactured for use on public roads in general.
- 12.4. We request that steps be taken to enforce traffic legislation and to stop unlicensed vehicles and unlicensed persons from operating in Bushman's River Mouth.

#### 14 **Disaster Management**

We experienced storm damage in 2008 and again, recently in 2009. It became apparent that there is no disaster management plan in place and undertakings were given to us that this important aspect will receive attention. The season for fires is upon us and we have not had any feedback regarding disaster management in our town.

Your kind and urgent attention to the above issues will be appreciated. We look forward to discuss these issues with you and the relevant Directors at a mutually convenient time. Writer will be in Bushman's on Friday, 25 September 2009 and would appreciate the opportunity to have discussions with you regarding our concerns.

Yours faithfully

**LÖTTER WEPENER**  
(Chairman)

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