NEWSLETTER March 2024

NEW EMAIL ADDRESS – boesmansratepayers@gmail.com

Please amend you bank beneficiary details.

THANK YOU!!!

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all contrubutors to our various projects. We can now get on with some of our projects. We commneced upgrading the rear section of the town hall. The repairs to the roof alone will cost approximately R 30 000. This is going to be a huge effort to incorporate it as a usuable area of the hall.

Hall bookings are done via Whatsapp +27 83 876 7000. All enquiries will be answered as soon as is reasonably possible by our committee member, Sue Muirhead, who keeps a register of bookings.

The board room is avilable for meetings. It also has a one hour free WiFi available.

Below:

Repairs and upgrades at the hall – committee members, friends and our staff making the differece!!

Jaques, Duard, Daryl and Robert.

And afterwards….

EASTER CRAFT MARKET – SATURDAY 30 April

Please join our Easter craft market and art on the veranda on Saturday, 30 March at the town hall.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES

Due to our exceptionally high cost for maintenance and repairs, we have increased our annual membership fees to R 500. This is the first increase in many years, but members can be assured that every cent is spent wisely and for the benefit of our community. Please renew your membership by paying into our account with reference your name and street address

and subs. We attend to much of the maintenance in our town, have expenses for our tennis courts and town hall and require additional assistance.

WHATSAPP GROUP FOR MEMBERS

We have established a WhatsApp group for paid up members of BRRAG. It is an additional communication channel to improve communication with members. If you were on this group, all the above news would have been with you as it happened. If you want to join and read our communications or communicate with us, please send your name and surname and cellular number to us by email. Send it to our email address boesmansratepayers@gmail.com with the words WhatsApp group in the subject line.

WATER WATER WATER

As we all know, our area has suffered both low and no water periods, especially during the holiday seasons. Certain areas have had no water for years. Some of our community members have served on a water group for several years where ratepayers, Ndlambe, Department of Water as well as Amatola Water are represented. At this group we were able to give input and advice. One such input was that we have no confidence in Amatola's capability to produce sufficient water. Note: Amatola is the water producer (like other water boards in the country) and it supplies water Ndlambe. But its operations were / are so inadequate that it never fulfilled its mandate and did not supply sufficient water to its customer, Ndlambe, resulting in Ndlambe not being able to supply us, the consumers. Thanks to the tireless work of the water forum, it has now been accepted that Amatola is incapable of running the water production plant efficiently and that they must be replaced. This is now common knowledge and accepted by all, including Amatola. This step is a first win for our community who can now look forward to a new water producer. An abundance of water will not result overnight, but it is a beginning. Once Amatola departs (and it appears that they have lost all interest since it became a fact that they are leaving), there is a whole process of determining the ownership of the water plant and appointing a water producer. In governmental offices, these things are not easily resolved, but we are fortunate to give input and keep the pressure on.

Once the ownership of the plant is resolved a possible transfer thereof to Ndlambe must be looked at. Only when this happens, will Ndlambe be able to source and employ a contractor, who will only invest in such a huge project if it can obtain security for its investment (such as security in the water plant, like a bond). Then there are the procurement laws with which Ndlambe must comply. No doubt that these developments will all take time. But we have it in our reach to have a contractor appointed to take over the water production at the RO (reverse osmosis) plant. If we get a respected operator and not a fly by night tenderpreneur…. It is good to know that we are moving, albeit slowly, in the right direction. No amount of rabble rousing by politicians or social media groups will resolve the water problem. It takes cool heads at the right forum to assist with the correct resolution of our scarce water problem.

MUNICIPAL VALUATION ROLL.

NOTE: WE SHALL CONVENE A FURTHER MEETING TO ASSIST MEMBERS WITH OBJECTIONS ON THURSDAY 28 MARCH 2024 AT 17h00 IN THE TOWN HALL.

Ndlambe property valuations

Ndlambe must base property taxes on the actual market value of property.

Municipalities are obliged to tax properties in their jurisdictions according to the real value.

A formal process whereby each property in Ndlambe was evaluated was performed to determine the value of each property as at 30 June 2023

Principles applied

- Ndlambe appointed specialist evaluators to perform the evaluations.
- Previous valuations are not considered.
- Evaluations will be valid for the next 5 years.
- Mistakes could have been made by valuators.
- Objection can be made, and each one will be considered, and feedback provided.
- If property owners are not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal the matter can be referred to the valuation court.
- Municipal service levels have nothing to do with valuation.
- The evaluation provided by estate agencies may not be considered since they are not registered valuators.

Work method followed by valuators.

- Their own fly overs were conducted.
- Pictures were taken from street level by special vehicles.
- Property selling prices were used for different areas.
- Google earth was used as a tool.
- Lightstone property evaluation system information employed.

Property owner responsibility

- It is the responsibility of each property owner to evaluate the preliminary value attached to the property.
- Objections must be made on the Ndlambe objection form for residential properties which can be obtained on the Ndlambe website.
- An objection number will be provided to you

Some handy tips for objection appeal

- If you are unsure or are unable to lodge an objection, get help.
- Consider the true value of your property.
- Ignore your previous valuation it was not used and may or may not have been correct.
- Age of the house.
- Construction of the house i.e. wood brick etc.
- Size of the house.
- Flood and other risk.
- Use pictures to support your objection.

Ndlambe Ratepayers' Forum (NRF)

- All Ndlambe ratepayer organizations are represented on NRF.
- NRF held meeting with Ndlambe to discuss ratepayer concerns and the impacting factor of higher rates (25% on average) on ratepayers and pensioners.
- Areas of concern identified.
- Property owners can be taxed out of their own properties.
- Pensioner policy is not adequate and excludes many people and will be addressed during budget preparations.
- The property rate factor of Ndlambe is amongst the highest in SA. Ndlambe will determine if the rate can be reduced after the valuation list has been finalized and income can be determined.
- Debt collection to be improved to share the tax burden over the widest base possible.

BRRAG actions

- Held a discussion and information forum in the BRM Town Hall during March 2024.
- Attended the NRF meeting and provided input.
- Consulted with some members on one-on-one basis.
- Will arrange another information session during the week of 25 March 2024 in the BRM Town Hall.
- Provided contact details of specialist who can assist property owners to lodge an objection at a fee of R2500.

OBJECTIONS MUST BE LODGED BY 9 APRIL 2024 - also see statement issued by the NRF – CLICK HERE

SNIPPETS

110 Club Winners – Congrats

Winners of 100 Club February draw:
1. Peter Campbell (nr 93) R975
2. Martin Smith (nr 30) R650
3. Lientjie Minnaar (nr 35) R475.

- **ART ON THE VERANDA – TOWN HALL**
  Every last Saturday of the month 10h00 – 14h00

- Also diarise the Easter Weekend Art on the Veranda on 29 and 30 March.

Did You Know?

What are the mysterious wet patches on our dry roads and garden paths? Will you believe it is the excretion of a bug? The spittlebug insect belongs to the family *Cercopidae*. The spittle is found on a variety of plants and trees and is generally not considered harmful to the vegetation they infest.

The spittle bug produces a protective foam or spittle to protect their young during the nymph stage. The spittle nymphs extract plant sap using their piercing sucking mouthparts and then excrete fluid as bubbles through their abdomen. These bubbles mix with air and the excretion from the bug, creating the characteristic frothy spittle.

Many nymphs huddle together within the spittle mass. They cannot survive in dry, sunshine conditions, so the foam keeps the nymphs cool for as long as they are feeding. This foam serves as a shelter, providing protection from predators such as birds, other insects, and environmental conditions. The spittle provides insulation, helping to regulate the temperature inside the shelter maintaining a favourable microclimate.

As to why the spittle drops to the ground - it's a natural consequence of the nymphs crawling along the stems and leaves and is dislodged by wind and rain.

The adult stage of the spittlebug is known as a froghopper due to their appearance, which somewhat resembles a tiny frog. While nymphs are known for producing spittle to protect themselves, the adults do not exhibit this behaviour and rather jump from plant to plant in search of suitable sap and mates.

TAILEND

The BRRAG TEAM

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