

Future of SRA in hands of canals and village

St Francis property owners in the Village and Canal areas are being asked to re-vote on the revised SRA Proposal which the St Francis Property Owners Association (SFPPO) presented at two Public Meetings at The Links on 20 December and 3 January.

A 50% +1 majority vote is required for the levy to be applied to all residents in the demarcated area. All residents or property owners in these two areas are now urged to vote or vote again on whether they wish to pay the levy or not.

The votes cast by all homeowners last year, 2017, are no longer applicable as Kouga Municipality changed its SRA By-Law and Policy (gazetted on 29 December) and the SFPPO revised its SRA proposal. So all residents in these two areas need to vote again. Last year all St Francis Bay areas, except Sea Vista, were included in the voting and process but the SFPPO failed to get the 50 + 1% majority as required by law.

Only residents in the demarcated area of the Canals and the Village need to vote. Santarame, St Francis on Sea, Port, Olfers Landing, Industrial Sites and The Links could be included at a later stage if the property owners in these areas decide to participate.

New SRA proposal:
The SRA levy of 25% of property owners' monthly/annual rates has been reduced from the original 50%. The shortfall in revenue will be contributed from alternative sources i.e. Riparians, Kromme Joint River Committee, the Port, Kouga Municipality and donations.

* The scope of projects and services include:

* The restoration of the beach, spit and river (priority 1)

* The repair and maintenance of sections of the arterial roads and parking areas to be limited to the Village centre and main intersections along with pedestrian and cycle

tracks along main arterial roads (priority 2)

* The installation of CCTV camera surveillance in the demarcated area (priority 3)

* Rebuild of the arterial roads (priority 4)

How to vote:

* SMS: If the SFPPO has your cell number you will be sent an SMS inviting you to vote. You can reply to

the SFPPO SMS with your ID number and your vote (Yes or No). If you haven't received an SMS and would like to vote this way then send your cell phone number and sfnr number to: contact@sfrsidents.org

* SFPPO Website Voting system at: <http://stfrancispropertyowners.co.za/>
* Voting form at the SFPPO office at 115 St Francis Drive.

Municipal News

Unqualified Audit report

Unqualified audit report for Kouga Municipality

Kouga Municipality received an unqualified audit report from the Auditor General for the 2016/17 financial year.

However, performance management was criticised by the Auditor General and water losses representing 38,5% of water purchased were identified.

The water losses were due to leakages, tampering with meters, incorrect ratios used for bulk meters, faulty meters and illegal connections (theft of water).

The municipality raised R148-m in property rates for the financial year and received R144-m in the form of grants and subsidies from national and provincial government.

Income of R337-m was raised through the sale of electricity, water, sanitation and waste removal.

Staff costs showed only a slight decrease of R700 000 with a total cost of R228-m to the municipality.

The purchase of water and

electricity cost R220-m, while R51-m was spent on operational costs. This includes items such as legal fees, chemicals, insurance, telephone and postage.

The municipality ended the financial year with R84-m in the bank. It reduced contingent liabilities from R109-m to R49-m.

Outstanding trade creditors dropped from R114-m to R91-m and debtors showed only a slight drop from R77-million to R73-million.

Mayor of Kouga Elza Van Lingen say water losses are a serious concern... She said the municipality budgeted for additional vehicles for the infrastructure department to equip it to attend to water leaks more efficiently.

The municipality, she said, spent R23-m on the Kruisfontein and St Francis Bay Waste Water Treatment Plants, plus R4-m upgrading bulk infrastructure in Knysna.

This led 391 RDP houses being constructed in Kruisfontein.

Corporate, new-look municipality

Kouga Municipality has now become more like a corporate body. This follows the name changes that the municipality recently adopted and the hiring of specially trained 'corporate' staff members.

First of all the departments are called directorates. The municipality says the new names are for 'strategic objectives'.

Most ratepayers are unaware of the name changes and have only found this out when they have asked for different departments telephonically and this has caused confusion, some told *St Francis Chronicle*. But ironically the municipality said in a press release that it changed the various municipal divisions' names 'to avoid confusion'.

The following are the name changes:

* Social Services is now called Community Services directorate. It incorporates environmental management, community amenities, environmental health, cleansing and parks and protection services.

* Administration, Monitoring, Evaluation and Special Projects is now called Corporate Services directorate and is responsible for

responsible for administration, human resources, legal services and strategic municipal projects.

* Infrastructure and Engineering directorate incorporates water, sanitation, electrical services, roads, project management and fleet management.

* Planning, Development and Tourism Directorate incorporates Local Economic Development (LED) and Tourism departments.

* The Finance directorate has retained the word 'Finance'.

Mayoral committee members who head up these new directorates are Hatting Bormann (Corporate Services), Brenton Williams (Finance), Daniel Benson (Community Services), Freddy Campher (Infrastructure and Engineering), Bryan Dhludlu (Planning and Development) and Frances Baxter (Tourism).

Krishen Moodley is the Director: Corporate Services, Selwyn Thus is the Director: Finance (CFO) and Victor Felton the Director: Infrastructure and Engineering. The other two director positions are currently vacant and will be advertised shortly.

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