

## **MARINA DA GAMA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – REPORT BY CHARPERSON ON BEHALF OF EXCOM**

I would firstly like to say thank you to the following members of the Community who have offered their services to EXCOM over the past year, giving up their time behind the scene as volunteers on security, parks and gardens and Archcom, but in particular:

- Alan Hepple as chair and Eduardo Nunes, the independent architect on Archcom;
- David Jubb for his assistance on the maintenance of the parks and guardians
- We must also thank the very competent, helpful and friendly staff – Marcia and Bob – they have made our jobs that much easier whilst we probably made life a little more difficult for them.
- Carol Watts, our minute secretary. Carol has tendered her resignation and the Association will be looking for her replacement.
- Dieter Dolinschek, Mike Ryder and Susan Haywood resigned during the course of the year for various reasons and to Trish Naidu who is not standing for re-election this evening.
- I thank all those sitting beside me this evening for all the efforts that you have put in throughout the year, the long hours and stress – the meetings this year were extremely pleasurable, we managed to wade through insurmountable amounts of documentation and accomplished many things during this period. Thank you

As is the norm, a short report from ExCom was distributed with the notice of meeting. It is necessary, however, to expand on a number of the items that were briefly mentioned at the time.

ExCom has been posting all its minutes and portfolio reports on the ExCom@work. Unfortunately not all our members are subscribers to our noticeboard so they may not have kept up to-date with all that has been happening in and around the Marina.

Our accomplishments have been many – but like all major interventions and changes – some of the benefits will only be visible in the long term.

As all members here are aware, we are accountable, not only to our members, but also to Council. Most of the area that is managed by the Association is owned by council – but to ensure that our area remains prosperous and thrives, ExCom has had to step in more and do more as the years go by, to pay for the lack of funding by Council.

Rather than manage the Marina as a Homeowners Association, we have managed it like a small business – we have implemented policies and practices which should benefit all future committee members – they will not have to re-invent the wheel. These policies include communications, procurement, gardening and standards to name a few.

We have updated the Constitution and are proposing more resolutions this year to tidy up the Constitution. There are also numerous resolutions to update the design manual, which has not been reviewed for many years.

We have been extremely careful with our limited resources – saving on overheads where possible – for those that reviewed our annual financial statements thoroughly – the savings on electricity, rent, annual general meeting costs and armed response has amounted to over R20 000.

Our debt collections have increased resulting in the provision for bad debts decreasing by R12000. It should be noted that some of these outstanding debts go back more than 10 years. Presently, about 55% of members are paid up for this financial year which bodes extremely well for the incoming committee – their headaches are going to be a lot smaller.

So we are in a really good space, financially, at the moment. There is approximately R720 000 in our bank accounts, about R200 000 more than when I took over as treasurer of the Association.

We realised that we would need to retain funds to implement a security system around the Marina using camera recognition and other modern technology. The ad-hoc funding of security initiatives over the years has not been a success. Under the watchful eye of Robin, the security initiatives in the Marina, have all found a home, a place to discuss issues and plan the way forward. All other joint initiatives have failed in the past. It is because of this loose informal structure that the guardians have grown momentum and are so successful.

So we have money, we have a security initiative and we are transparent and open in everything we have done. This is only the start.

Lathif has been serving us extremely well on the Ward64 committee – he attends all the meetings and meetings with representatives of the other areas in the Ward. They are a joint task force looking after the needs of the Marina, Muizenberg and up to Fish Hoek. This must be a first for the Marina.

Angus is representing us on ZPAAC, Zandvlei Protected Areas Advisory Committee, and other committees relating to Water Affairs, and has an excellent working relationship with Josh Gericke and his team. ZPAAC, the Zandvlei Area Advisory Committee comprises representatives of all the relevant City Council departments, Provincial and National Government departments, the Zandvlei Trust as well as vlei users such as the Peninsula Canoe Club/ Zandvlei Sports Club, Imperial Yacht Club, Sea Scouts, and Cape Bird Club. There had been a terrible fall out in previous years and the Marina was not represented on one of our most important treasures.

We have amazing relations with our new councillor, Aimee Kuhl and her right hand woman, Yvette Stephens. This relationship has resulting in amazing progress of specific projects over the last couple of months.

Some of the projects raised include:

- Visit by the traffic department to review the hotspots in the Marina
- New signposting in the Marina
- Retarring of the road in Uitsig
- The purchase of the new kingfisher is now on track – but due to the exorbitant price tag of close to R10m, Council may need more time to raise the funds We may have less weeds in our waterways soon.
- Continuous pressure to repair the Eastlake Island Bridge – I do believe that this time round, it will not only be more promises – our Councillor will be driving this forward, with Lathif pushing her along if she lags
- Lathif still continues to fight and rally for a police station to be built in our area
- I think our biggest accomplishment is putting the link from the M41, Steenberg Road, to the M5, Prince George Drive, back on the agenda. Last year we were informed that it would not be for another 30 years. I believe that this timeframe will be vastly reduced.

Toni continues her wonderful work with the people of the Parks and gardens. We still manage, although slowly, to get most of our materials for free. This positive relationship resulted in the Marina obtaining the free use of a building for storage in Eastlake Island – this accomplishment may mean very little to most members – but it saves us close to R10 000 a year, which can be better utilised elsewhere.

The first meeting of IMBY was held recently to give the care of the public open spaces back to the members. It has become an impossible task for 1 member to oversee with a handful of volunteers (thank you).

We do have one further problem that is partially resolved. We have inherited workers that are not legal. Regardless of their legal status we cannot fire them unless there is reason to do so, they have the same labour rights. They have been very loyal to the Marina over the past 7 – 8 years. Efforts have been made to rectify the problem. ExCom has already implemented the hiring of labourers for the litter collection via the Link, who vets all employees. All future employees will be hired through this channel.

We have even, over the past few months forged a better relationship with the town planning department and Quinton, the building inspector. Quinton and Alan were actually seen laughing and chatting after the meeting – an unbelievable sight. We managed to get a stop building placed on a current renovation – but unfortunately, this eyesore will be there for a couple more months until the matter is finalised by council. Other matters, new and old, have been placed on their radar. Our next quarterly meeting between the town planning, our councillor and ExCom is set for August, which is followed up by Aimee and ourselves.

We took legal action against the rezoning of the Marina Towers. The Association won the first round, but despite our representations the appeals committee overturned the decision to the regret of the 300 objectors. We were notified about 2 weeks ago on the ruling as well as the restrictions and conditions imposed on the restaurant.

Last year, at the AGM, the members passed an amendment to the constitution, to include all matters of rezoning in its mandate. Notwithstanding this amendment, ExCom was further authorised, by virtue of the 300 plus members that objected to the rezoning, to contest the application. Only six members thought it was a good idea – the number of objectors were more than the members present here tonight.

Excom, as your elected body, agreed to fund the legal expenses as is our mandate to do so. Residents funded R25000 towards the rezoning costs in 2015.

We have resumed the practice of taking important matters to court, as is our mandate and incurred legal costs to sort out the 6 worst standard infringements in the Marina. These funds were approved in the previous financial year but they only came through this year. Five of the 6 offenders have been sorted out, the sixth offender has been taken to the ombudsman for resolution. We have lodged another standards application with the Ombudsman. This avenue will now cost under R200 and the Ombudsman's decision is final.

We have introduced a new management system that applies severity, status and elapsed time to each transgression. This system assists the inspector in setting priorities and time management, and provides management reports. At present we have 5 cases – classified as severity 1 – all of which require engagement with Council. There are 12 cases of severity 2 of which we have already lodged 3 with the Ombudsman. And finally, 60% of 127 current cases are about painting - one or more of house, wall, garage or parapets. This is possibly a reflection of the financial climate, but we do not understand why anybody would not want to maintain his/her major asset? Clearly we do not discuss individual cases in this forum.

There has been increasing friction between members of ExCom and a handful of members.

The Marina is home to 1320 households. Eight to ninety percent of all mails come from this small group. It has been extremely time consuming and has resulted in much unpleasantness. We have held many meetings with this small group, made overturns to meet again, but they were not willing.

ExCom has been taken to the Ombudsman citing mismanagement. This must relate to mismanagement in prior years as all the points raised by the member have been resolved by the present committee. The hearing is next Monday.

As part of a similar pattern, there is a legal matter pending between a nominee standing for election and an ExCom member regarding conflict of interests.

ExCom can only manage the Marina properly if there is a certain level of respect and trust amongst its members. Without a good relationship, the meetings will be ineffectual, nothing will be accomplished and the Marina as a whole, will bear witness to this breakdown.

I am very proud that, due to increased communications by Jimmy and Geri, all our minutes, reports and decisions have been circulated via the noticeboard in the most transparent manner possible.

Every meeting over the past 2 years were quorate, the majority of the decisions taken were unanimous. In short, we had a very well - functioning team. This team was made up from members distributed equally across all the islands, a system that obviously works well. At the beginning of the year Uitsig made up 50% of the members on ExCom and was the only area that had its own representative.

So what has ExCom accomplished – a security initiative, a gardening initiative, excellent set of financial results, increase of collections and a decrease of overhead costs; good communications, transparency and good practices.

But most importantly we have forged excellent relationships with our major external stakeholder – the City of Cape Town - which will result in a new Kingfisher, the repair of Eastlake Bridge and hopefully, within the next couple of years – a road that will circumvent Military Road – residents have been dreaming of this for many years.

I applaud the members sitting beside me tonight – they are a super team – and it has been my privilege and honour to work together with them.

A special thanks to all our families who have been waiting patiently whilst we put in all the hours that this volunteer committee required of us. I know we all spent many hours of every week on ExCom matters – thank you for your patience. And an even bigger thanks to my husband for being with us, every step of the way.

Thank you