

KRRA AGM CHAIR'S REPORT

1 June 2025 to 20 May 2026

Patrick Dowling

The oldest Kommetjie meeting minute I could find at short notice was dated 5th March 1949.

Surnames of those present included: Forsyth, Binnedell, Huskisson and Van Schoor. Noted in the finance report was a donation of one guinea from a Mr. Miller and three pounds in fees from the Cape Divisional council. The committee decided that the request from the owner of the barroom to use it for meetings was too high and rejected it. Luckily for the group they were all hunkered down at the bishop's house, wherever that was, or they may have been booted out on to the street that autumnal evening.

But on to the present.

The "new" KRRA constitution was drafted in 1999 in the early years of our democracy and has a formal, distancing tone. The committee would like a more user-friendly document, still fit for purpose legally, but more accessible. A local retired judge has kindly agreed to help us with some panel beating on this. Proposed changes will be advertised locally before being accepted and the changes being adopted.

Our financial good standing has been subject to a health check too. We sought formally to have the KRRA exempt from tax. This is a SARS process and may take a while. There is no cheque in the post I understand. We thank Dr Mike Smit for his guiding attention to treasury work.

We would like to acknowledge all the generous donors of their money, skills and labour who have contributed to our positive bank balance and all the practical project work such as clearing up rubbish under milkwoods, providing stepping stones on marshy paths, putting in a bike rack or removing alien invasive plants and keeping social media reports updated.

Kommetjie has been slapped with the best-kept-secret label by witty estate agents for several decades already, making "loudest revelation" a more appropriate tag. The number of building departure applications provides insight into the development pressure we are feeling. Key to our approval is neighbours having no objection, so please check the drawings and motivations of the plans that get thrust over the wall at you, before you sign them off. Some building additions require no waivers at all as they comply with all the regs, if not our wildest dreams. Quiet densification is going on a pace, folks, apart from the more in-your-face Protea Ridge and Riverside and retirement apartments and commercial centre and gentleman estate happening on the farm and four ambitious retail / group residential projects happening around the village centre.

There are many new residents whom we'd like to meet sometime and chat about our village, things that are encouraging and things that aren't and a long to do list with many opportunities for active involvement.

For a while now we have been concerned about the overzealousness of some of the professional security staff that work in and around Kommetjie. While we congratulate them and the volunteer members of Komwatch who continue to keep Kommetjie a safe and crime-free place to live, in a country where that is by no means a given, we believe there is room for improvement and a better

balance between vigilance and peaceful policing. We look forward to having a constructive discussion with those interested.

For more than ten years we have waved many a red flag at the traffic impacts of more development. The big slow down and bottle neck outside Masiphumelele that we thought was an intractable problem, ended up being solved with a strange three-lane configuration that took a frustratingly long time to complete, but seems to work now as long as everyone remembers which lane they are in and are not fazed by ghostly arrows. Let's hope that this new capacity will not be quickly absorbed by new development. More on that in a moment. Caro's dedication to making our roads and pedestrian routes safer must be gratefully acknowledged.

Kommetjie's intersection build went more smoothly, and we got kilometers of paved pathways as a bonus. Landscaping and planting up of these mobility improvements are on our agenda from this winter onward. Volunteer help will be much appreciated. To mitigate the problem of heat sinks for pedestrians many non-invasive trees, preferably locally indigenous, will have to be planted and we are working on the watering and maintenance plans needed to ensure their survival.

Traffic safety does not rely entirely on pavement quality and signage, and we hope there will be no more attempts to treat the circle as a speedway target, please. Love 30, after all and exhaust noise pollution is an offence.

I'm sure some of you have noticed changes in our local coastal and hillside environments like fewer duiker, hardly a francolin, chameleons a sad rarity, black girdled lizards equally scarce, little day time geckos displacing the usual nocturnal species, erratic toad breeding seasons – to name a few. I'm sure plant and bird enthusiasts would have similar reports. Who or what's to blame? We need to be more mindful that we live in a special place in a special biome and should accord our non-human neighbours respect.

There will be a baboon update shortly.

We need too to be more attentive to the non-living environment as well, including Coastal erosion, the possibility of staged retreats, hard and soft coastal defence systems like dunes, river floodplains and setbacks and water quality and supply. It's too wet to highlight wildfires here, but we haven't forgotten them and nor have our recently formed disaster risk management group that is foregrounding prevention. Thanks to Emily for all her detailed work on this and establishing our Kommetjie Green Drinks group.

The KRRRA has been an active member of the Far South Peninsula Community Forum for decades now, sharing concerns and solutions with other civics and speaking to the municipality with a combined voice. More recently we joined CTCRA (Cape Town Combined Rate Payers Association) which supported the case against the City's new fund gathering policy of charges based on house value rather than consumption. Now the City must go back to the drawing board.

On a conciliatory note, the City has adopted a new, more consultative approach to planning which should help reduce frustrations. Here we are well represented by Adina.

Communication stats tell us you like updates, pictures, explanations and reports on activities – big thanks to Steve, Tammy and Asanda for making this happen. The flow of information back from residents has been remarkable reminding us of how many active citizens we have here. Viva.

Kommetjie residents came in numbers to quite a few special topic meetings (like roads and malls and sewage for example) and there was lots of enthusiastic support for last winter's short film and discussion festival held at SEEC environmental centre in Soetwater. Many thanks to Lappies for making the centre available

Talking of festivals you have another few days to participate in the activities on the Norbertine festival that ends coming Sunday 24th May. Markets also a feature and the KRRRA holds strongly that such informal and creative trading initiatives should be supported. Mainstream, branded commerce should not be the ideal that we strive for.

We were impressed by numbers of people who responded to the SPAR departure applications and hopefully to property valuation exercise too. Ian will have more on that. Thanks to him and Mark for scrutinising all those departure applications.

We have had several resignations in the committee. Because of the calibre of individuals involved and the massive amount of work for Kommetjie each has done over several years this is unfortunate. We say thank you and au revoir to: Mike, Steve, Tammy, Michelle, Emily, John, Jenny, Eugenie. They may now be absent from meetings but are most certainly active in the community. However, we do need fresh recruits ready for the various frays that seek us out and can't be left to chance. Please consider joining us and taking up an interesting challenge or two. You'd be most welcome. Find out more from the labelled individuals at the end of the formal business this evening.

It wasn't an easy year, but much was accomplished.

Thank you.