



FRIENDS OF PILANESBERG

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Minutes of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held on 16 November 2024 commencing at 10h00 and held at
Kloofendal Nature Reserve - 38 Zircon St, Kloofendal, Roodepoort, 1709.

Warren opened and thanked Friends of Kloofendal for the use of the venue. Karin from Friends of Kloofendal gave a small presentation on the reserve.

1. PRESENT

43 members present, including committee.

2. APOLOGIES

Mark Hosken (P)
Penny Hosken (P)
Greg De Villiers
Ruth De Villiers
Craig Anderson
Tony Bridger (P)
Sue Temple
David de Vlamingh
Liesel Allen (P)
Barbara Viljoen
Tammy Holmes
Dave Wright
Nigel Adcock
Hayley Young
Wim Van Skie
Ann Nicolson
Bruce & Wendy Porter
Wendy Kenyon
Ralf van den Brink

3. NOTICE OF THE MEETING

The notice of the meeting having been given in the prescribed manner and there being a quorum present, the meeting was declared duly constituted.

4. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The minutes of the previous AGM, held on 18 November 2023 were confirmed as a correct representation of the proceedings. A motion to confirm the minutes was proposed by John Pitchford and seconded by John Livock.

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Warren Best tabled chairman's report.

- Everyone was welcomed and thanked for taking the time to join on the morning.
- On suggestion from Remco it was decided to try a new venue which looks great and hopefully makes the morning more enjoyable to spend in such a lovely environment.
- Each year it seems we look back at previous years we thought were tough and realise it's not getting easier. This year we take a moment to remember another member of the FOPS family that has passed and as we remember Lexi let us also remember the other members we have lost over the last few years. All people that have contributed to making FOPS the strong, proud family that it has become and will continue to be. A moment of silence was upheld.
- Difficult financial pressures in a challenging work environment and economy have continued, but despite this work party numbers and member numbers remain stable to positive. For me this highlights the point that not only is the work FOPS does good for the park but it is good for the wellbeing of our members as well.
- Park liaison has continued with Steve on most projects and good relationships across the organization have been established. There are some changes happening within parks as always with some changes in acting positions. FOPS needs to remain cognizant of these changes and adapt where necessary.
- The relevance of the NGO's -FOPS, Makanyanes and Wildlife Leadership School remains high with park financial constraints remaining and increasing over time. As mentioned last year we still need to operate within the limitations that we have as an organization.
- FOPS has undertaken its second major project within a few years with the rebuilding of Ruighoek hide, that coupled with the challenges faced in camp means increased costs, so finances need to be managed well. A job Lampies does very well.
- The camp has seen significant change over the last year, unfortunately not the kind of change we would have liked. Our latest camp visitors seem to have bent towards tree vandalism and have cost us financially in terms of time and resources much to Rolands frustration. This is part of having a bush camp and we will adapt and have to find new, creative ways to protect the camp going forward.
- Our thanks go out to the firearm qualified members who take on a huge responsibility at each work party. I again encourage everyone to cooperate with and respect the decisions they make around safety. Shoot weekends are expensive operations but remain critical to our continued operations.
- The decision last year to appoint a work party 2IC onto the committee to assist with the work load and project management has proven to be a good one with Pieter stepping up becoming an integral part of the team. The co-opting of Remco onto the committee has also been a good decision. He has more ideas and enthusiasm than I thought possible.

- FOPS involvement in the Pilanesberg Wildlife Trust cycle tour was once again a great success and much appreciated by the PWT, our congratulations go out to Pieter and his team.
- The reintroduction of walks at FOPS under the competent guidance of Bruce is, I am sure, also a welcome activity. It remains important to still enjoy the bush and learn about it while working.
- In an environment of increasing social media impact, political sensitivity and scrutiny as FOPS we need bear this in mind and always ensure that whatever we are doing in the park is done representing FOPS.
- As always, I would like to take this time to thank the committee for all their hard work and time put into running FOPS. The positions can take up a lot of personal time and effort with expectations that they are available 24/7. The committee members sitting here take on the work with passion and a strong commitment to the organization, its principles and its future.
- Thank you to all our members particularly the work party members, there are many of you that go above and beyond what is expected, and it is much appreciated.
- On a personal note I will be stepping down after more than 20 years on the committee over the last 26 years. Paddy always told me he would allow me to step down when he stepped down.
- Thank you all and I know the new committee and chair will take FOPS into the future with the challenges that they will face with good steady hands at the helm.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT

Lampies Lamprecht tabled the finance report. The audit of the financials was conducted by Lloyd Viljoen and Associates.

- Lloyd Viljoen and Associates were officially thanked for once again providing their services, almost paperless, and free of charge to FOPS
- Lloyd Viljoen and Associates were adopted unanimously as auditors for the coming year.
- Key income and Expenses for 2024:
 - Clothing sales down by R 2,000. No mark-up is placed on the clothing.
 - Membership income decreased by R 3,616.
 - Tent income down by R 25,000. There was a sharp decline after each fire incident
 - Donations increased by R 18,000. Special thanks to: Estate Late Hagans, Catherine Ruth White - The following contributed towards Potokwane clean-up after fire – (Esther Appleyard; Allison Moolman; Ruth Coxall; Warren and Marie Wells; Courtney Bysse; Tracey Palay; John Lawrence) - Special Trees Weekend; N Searle. A donation in memory of Paddy. HO's towards Ruighoek (special thanks to Ronel Treasurer)
 - Camp costs R 124,000. Mostly due to the fire, these are costs after the insurance claim was accounted for.
 - Donations made by FOPS – R 6,700 towards Cycle Challenge & R 1,200 towards Water Pumps
 - Equipment Maintenance decreased by R 9,000 – this expense is mostly for Chain Saws and Bush Cutters
 - Project Expenses down by R 5,800
 - Function expenses increased by R 7,000. This includes the Christmas Function, AGM and committee meetings
 - Overall income R 357,693 (Up R 81,000) vs overall expenses R 444,098.
- Overall shortfall thus R 83,795 mostly due to fire damage expenses
- Total net assets: R 359,575 (Decreased by R 83,975)

- Lampies Tabled potential increases in Membership and Tent fees
- Membership R 180 to R 200 ind. and R 210 to R 250 Family. Tents R 250 to R 300 & R 350 to R 400 – No objections. Effective 01 December 2024.
- There were no questions regarding Finances.

7. WORK PARTIES: PILANESBERG

Roland White presented the Work Party Report.

This report covers the period November 2023, to November 2024.

- The past year has been an interesting, albeit trying one. We have been faced with numerous challenges to the work parties themselves, as well as to our camp, Potokwane, which seems to have stumbled from crisis to crisis throughout the year.
- November 2023 saw the gradual return to normality for Potokwane, with the water tank (the new one) being installed, and we were hoping that the annus horribilis was a thing of the past. We had managed to get camp reasonably tidy, and we had every reason to expect that we were on track for a good year.
- April seemed to be the start of the slump. Heavy storms hit camp, resulting in damage to some of the tents, as well as some vegetation damage. So far, a setback, nothing more. We diverted some of the crews to camp clean up, but otherwise, business as usual.
- June, the first of the four elephant break-ins. We suspect that the onset of winter, as well as the fact that Potokwane has (had) a list of fantastic trees not to be found elsewhere in the park, was part of our down-fall. From this point on, we had break-in, after break in, costing us a huge amount of time, and not inconsiderable money, in repairs. Lampies has highlighted the camp costs, but to reiterate, we have spent a massive amount of money just keeping the camp alive.
- Work-parties have also faced considerable challenges; the fuel price alone (averaging around the R24 mark for most of the year), has had an impact on our disposable revenues (if that were ever a thing). Added to this gloomy picture, the work situation for many of us has been tight, to say the least; all factors that could, and should contribute to a decline in our numbers reporting for duty. I am very pleased to say that, despite the difficulties faced, our incredible members have, as always, risen to the challenge. Whilst I cannot say that the devastation of the trees in camp has made me even remotely happy, I can say that our member turn-out has restored my shaky faith, and I am certain that we will continue to deliver the most astonishing work rate (as is sometimes mentioned in (small) jest – we are the most hard working bunch of OAPs (Old Age Pensioners) that anyone could ever wish to meet). Apologies to our younger members – we couldn't do the heavy lifting without you.
- Our numbers for the year:
 - Total manhours worked – 5,733 (at the official RSA minimum wage rate, this equates to almost R 160 000,00 in direct value).
 - Total mileage driven on duty – 7,969 km (estimating 10 l/100 km and R22 per Liter, this adds another R 17,5 k in direct value added to the Park).
 - The pleasing trends here are that our average manhour contribution per month is on the increase, whilst our average mileage driven is decreasing, both of which are great to see.

There is no doubt that a very special thank you goes out to our members – the old faithful's, who turn up every month, like bad pennies; those who look closely at the numbers, and get in a work party whenever possible, as well as those new members who have given it a try and decided that it isn't all that bad.

Without all our members' dedication, FOPS just can't happen. A very special mention must be made to Heidi and Morgan Lowe, and all the wonderful learners and Staff from Selly Park secondary school, in Rustenburg. A truly incredible bunch of people, and a group of learners who must inspire confidence in our future. Well done to all of you.

8. SPECIAL PROJECTS:

- Ruighoek Hide rebuild.
 - This seems to be moving slowly, but, if I may remind you, we have had a long wait for the water levels to drop to where we can get onto Site. The past few months have seen the demolition, excavation and foundation pour on this Site. I can report that we are still well within budget, thanks in no small part to the magnificent donation of R 18,500 from Afri Readymix in Rustenburg – thank you Gerhard Maree and your crew. We are looking at completion early second quarter 2025 and encourage you to join special work parties (as well as regular work parties) wherever possible, so that you can get your hands on a piece of this construction action.
- Potokwane security upgrade.
 - Ongoing, but necessary. We are looking at a few options to secure and rehabilitate camp and will work hard towards this end.
 - Other projects are in the pipeline, but challenges at Manyane have dictated caution in their implementation. We will keep you informed.

In conclusion, I believe that, despite the challenges we face, and will continue to face, that FOPS is in sound and solid shape. I know that we will continue to provide meaningful and well-appreciated assistance to the Park, and perhaps have a little fun along the way.

9. ELECTION OF VACANT COMMITTEE MEMBERS & SECONDS FOR VACANT COMMITTEE POSITIONS

- Chairman – Nominations received for:
 - Bruce Allen – No opposition.
- Treasurer – Nominations received for:
 - Lampies Lampbrecht – No Opposition
- Secretary – Nominations received for:
 - Lauren Gunn – no opposition
- Social Media
 - Debbi Adcock – no opposition

There were no opposition or alternative elections.

10. GENERAL

- Question on Picnic spots closed – Moloto south closed due to safety. Potential for us to assist on inside. Motata Parks board call. Lodges adopted 2 picnic spots which helps. Elephants broke fence at Fish Eagle which is why it is closed.
- Potokwane now visible from the road – need a sign for the gate advising who we are, with QR coding. No Entry and Chain being sorted. On work party weekends to have FOPS Sign.
- Donation Tree list out for us to populate camp again – list to go out for donations.

- Ingrid raised locking the gate for when we are out at work parties. Potential to look into combination lock. To be looked into
- Mankwe Hide – recommendation that FOPS do not work on this to fix, too dangerous. Assessment is that it gets demolished and rebuilt.
- John Livock thanked the committee and welcomed Bruce.
- Bruce gave a thanks to Warren for last 20 years.
- Lampies gave a speech to Warren and Heidi on the years with FOPS – offered honorary lifetime membership

Certified a correct record of the proceedings:

CHAIRMAN

DATE
