

# **DARGLE CONSERVANCY**

## **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2016 at Tanglewood**

The meeting was chaired by Nikki Brighton, Chairperson of Dargle Conservancy (DC).

David Mann, owner of Tanglewood, thanked the DC for their support and extended an invitation to everyone to utilise the B&B facility for friends, family and functions.

Nikki opened the meeting by welcoming all members and guests present, and thanked them for attending.

### **APOLOGIES**

- Derek & Jenn Fly, Rob Crankshaw (CEO KZNCA), Tom & Lucinda Bate, Justin & Karin Herd, Tom & Kate Baynes, Alan Turner, Malcolm Stainbank (Chair KZNCA), Rob & Tinks Fowler, Chris King, Anne Weedon, Andrew Goddard, Sandra Merrick, Gugu Zuma, Pauline Holden & Ian King, Roger Poole.

### **MINUTES OF 2015 AGM**

- As the minutes of the 2015 AGM had been pre-circulated and made available on the DC website, the minutes were taken as read. No comments or reservations were noted and there were no matters arising.

### **Adoption of Minutes of 2015 AGM**

Proposed : Helen Booyesen. Seconded : Gilly Robartes

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

- On behalf of the Committee, Nikki thanked Kevin Culverwell & Vinusha Panday for providing auditing services to DC. This sentiment was further endorsed by Barend Booyesen.
- Nikki Brighton presented on behalf of Lynne Garbutt, Treasurer a summary of the DC's financial position and explained the main items.
- Having been pre-circulated, the detailed Annual Financial Statement (AFS) was taken as read. No objections or questions were raised.

### **Adoption of Treasurer's Report**

Proposed : Barend Booyesen. Seconded : Robin Barnsley

### **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

Nikki presented highlights of 2015/16, a full copy of which is available to be viewed on the DC website: <http://www.dargleconservancy.org.za/docarchive.php>

- There was a focus on the Dargle River and the importance of water, which was the main theme of the year.

- The “Dargle Water” SMS campaign was promoted by Steampunk Coffee, il Postino and Farmers Daughter. It only generated R400, which was rather disappointing, and this might have been due to some misunderstanding regarding how the system worked. However, it did serve to raise excellent awareness. It was suggested that we should all use every opportunity to promote Dargle water and to request donations.
- Jethro Bronner chose Dargle water as the primary cause on his epic “Dargle to Dargle” trip. He will be doing a presentation at the end of July at Old Kilgobbin.
- Logjams in the river have been cleared and are being followed up on.
- A picnic site has been built by contractors just above Dargle river bridge, and Nikki would like to arrange a DC picnic there.
- Alfred Zuma has been working on aliens, weed control etc. An interesting discussion around the succession of weeds was held. It was pointed out that taking out aliens is only part of the solution and the other things we do have a major impact. For example, keeping the river’s edge natural is critical.
- The Natal Fly Fishing club have undertaken a lot clearing which is making a positive impact. Nikki urged us to support them. Andrew Fowler has been the driving force behind this action, and Nikki proposed that he and his BRU (Blue Ribbon uMngeni ) initiative be awarded honorary membership of DC. This suggestion was met with unanimous support and **duly adopted through a proposal by Barry Downard which was seconded by Lynne Garbutt.**
- The Nature Reserve has been proclaimed at last. Barend & Helen were acknowledged and thanked for their hard work. Barend’s popular walks have contributed to the Conservancy and are greatly appreciated.
- The DC Education programme has lent assistance to MMEP, which supports the Dargle, Corrie Lynn & Lions River schools.
- Young Entrepreneurs Day was held at the Dargle Market where school children sold their ‘goods’. Further activities have included owl education, and an Inshlosane hike. The meeting thoroughly enjoyed the excerpts of children’s feedback.
- The Trashion Show held at Corrie Lynn school was great success. Nikki mentioned that a judge was required for wire car parade. Barry Downard & Lynne Garbutt volunteered.
- Pat McKrill gave a snake presentation which was very well attended and highly successful.
- The Dargle School benefitted from the DC “Play Day” which served to vastly improve the previous botched painting job.
- The DC provides support to Zandile Sikhakhane for the environmental education work she does at five Impendle schools. Any further donations would be greatly appreciated.
- In terms of the wildlife programme, the issue of the Reedbuck roundup ‘saga’ came under discussion. Nikki reported that there was an excellent response rate from members and other interested parties, although the matter remains unresolved. There is still no explanation as to how the permit was obtained. Nikki showed an extract from the permit application in question, and its content seems questionable. The problem lies with Ezemvelo, and DC is still trying to get them to agree to verify first before issuing permits.
- Conservation KZN is working with the conservancies and assisting us with this matter.
- Hunting with dogs has been an issue this year, but this is a minor problem compared to the “organised” hunting that is going on in the Dargle. Fortunately, perpetrators are being prosecuted when caught. There followed a general discussion around the diminished number of wildlife in the valley and how to manage this, e.g. planting cabbages on the outside of fields discourages bush pig who don’t eat them.
- Game Count weekend – 25/26<sup>th</sup> June. Nikki explained the programme and asked anyone who wants vehicles with search lights to refer to her.
- NB summarised all other events held during the year and expressed appreciation to all the donors.
- It was agreed that movies will be held at Tanglewood in future.

- Fracking : This is our biggest concern. The meeting was shown pictorials of the various meetings and protests involving the DC. Nikki stressed how important it is that we all submit comments. She thanked Malvina for inviting 50/50. Realistically the exploration company will probably be awarded the rights, and if they do find anything they will go ahead. This will be absolutely disastrous and we will then “have to do what we have to do”.
- Barry was thanked for designing the very popular Info boards.

### **Adoption of Chairperson’s Report**

Proposed : Wyndam Robartes    Seconded : Merrill King

### **COMMITTEE FOR 2016**

The current Committee was unanimously re-elected to office “en masse”:

Chairman	Nikki Brighton
Vice-Chairperson	Ashley Crookes
Treasurer	Lynne Garbutt
Secretary	Jenny Goddard
Development	Brenda Grant
Education	Gugu Zuma
Agriculture Liaison	Robin Barnsley

### **Adoption of 2016 DC Committee**

Proposed : Merrill King    Seconded : Helen Booyesen

### **WILDLIFE SIGHTINGS**

- The meeting watched the spectacular presentation by Ashley Crookes. Prizes, sponsored by Michael Goddard of Steampunk Coffee, were handed to the winners – Katie Robinson, Wyndham Robartes and Malvina van Bremem.

### **GENERAL**

- Helen Booyesen suggested that Dargle Water stickers be printed with the QR code and donation details to put up in local establishments and even private homes. We need to ensure that people understand how the SMS donation process works.
- Gilly expressed thanks on behalf of all members to Nikki and committee.

There being no further matters arising, the meeting was closed at 8.00pm.