

**MINUTES OF THE EVERGREEN BERGVLIET RESIDENTS' MEETING HELD IN THE
CLUB HOUSE
AT 14:30 ON THURSDAY 21 OCTOBER 2021**

In Attendance : Joan Misplon (Chairperson) – John Bester – Jean van Rhyn – David Walker – Rene Essen - Brian Dalton

28 Residents were present at the meeting.

David Walker handed out an Income/Expenditure statement – year 2021/22 to all those attending the meeting.

JM opened the meeting, welcoming everyone to the first Residents' Meeting in more than 18 months. She introduced the Rescom Committee who had been elected at the AGM – Jean (Gardening) – David (Finance/Maintenance) – Rene (Maintenance) – John (Finance) – Brian (Security) – Colin (Co-opted) Finance – Lynne Perry (Minutes). Joan advised that all committee members were committed to improving the Village, and opened the floor to questions and comments.

Finance:

David Walker, John Bester and Colin Levine gave in depth replies to queries raised by several residents regarding the revised financial report. They acknowledged that, following enquiries about the possible treatment of the surplus of R1.2 million, Evergreen management had included additional costs which had not been previously charged to the village.

A pragmatic decision had been taken to leave the amended figures for the 2021 financial year as they were and that the finance sub-committee would seek clarity on the additional costs, particularly the head office expense allocation, the building maintenance provision, depreciation and the medical healthcare charge in the budget for 2022.

With reference to the R620.000 maintenance provision. Note that an Evergreen sales brochure provided to prospective buyers records that the developer is responsible for the maintenance of buildings and no special levies are raised for large scale maintenance items.

Maintenance: Older generation LRA's make provision for a contribution to a maintenance fund amounting to 5% of the profit arising on resale. The accrual of R620 000 per annum for repainting the village in 5 years is effectively a duplication of this 5% charge.

In terms of more recent LRA's, the refund on the resale of a unit is less than the original purchase price. It was felt that consideration should be given to using portion of this "extra profit to Evergreen" as a contribution to the maintenance fund.

D.W. trusted that the above explanation helped regarding questions raised.

C.L. commented that despite a number of meetings with Evergreen, some with unsuccessful approaches, it was decided to accept their explanations and move forward and although this does not make the past correct this does allow for future negotiations.

J.M. advised that the sub-committee will be meeting up with Evergreen at Head Office week 25th-29th October to discuss certain unacceptably high figures as reflected in the Income and Expenditure statements for year ending 28 February.

Question: Paddy Fordyce asked why should common property be part of levies.

Answer: D.W. stated residents use the common property hence part of levies.

Question: Mike Smith (No.67) what was the situation regarding reduction in property rates in the area.

Answer: JB advised that Council had incorrectly inflated property rates and the budget was as a result of that error. CL advised this was an interesting point and that the matter will be further investigated

Question – Trevor Honneysett (No 78) mentioned that increases in medical and other costs on the Income & Expenditure statement were extremely high, asking if residents had any recourse? He also enquired as to whether comparative costs were available over a 12-month period as reflected in previous years.

Answer - CL confirmed that during Covid and the lockdown period, there had been no gardening, catering, maintenance and medical services, for which residents had continued to be charged. This would be discussed with Evergreen and he would try to obtain comparative costs.

JB advised that although the Committee was prepared to approach CSOS, Evergreen felt this was not the route to take.

Question – Trevor Honeysett asked if it was possible to compare costs with other Evergreen Villages.

Answer – DW stated this would not be possible.

Capping of Levies

Question – Jo Nixon (No.36) asked whether Levies could be capped for residents who have resided in the Village for 5 years or longer.

Answer - CL advised this had been raised at the AGM and although he was fairly sure this was not possible, this topic would be raised again. James Wilson had agreed that levies were on the high side, but this matter has received no further attention from Evergreen.

Question – Jo Nixon – Enquired as to whether residents could lobby in favour of capping levies.

Answer: DW stated that he was aware of other villages which had ultimately suffered as the costs of properly maintaining them had increased and the capped levies did not cover essential maintenance and improvement costs.

Question - Alan Baxter (No 14) pointed out that all residents had invested substantially in the Village, and that any profits in the future should be reinvested in the Village for the benefit of all.

Answer – JB advised this point had been raised with Evergreen and the decision pending. Evergreen could look at other investment ideas.

Question - Heather Honneysett (No 78) referred to the Golf Cart, which she understood was to provide Village residents with transport, and appeared to be used more frequently by staff for carting trash and maintenance workers on their rounds. She did feel however that the Village staff did need transport to assist with the daily chores.

JM advised that staff had made use of the transport since lockdown, but this had now been stopped. She also mentioned that they were looking at a Night Duty Manager who would be able to transport Residents to and from home when necessary. She agreed to look into obtaining transport for the Village staff.

Question - Yolanda Bond-Smith (No 46) felt that charges for medical services were excessive.

Answer - JM agreed and advised this was being looked into, but was aware that costs needed to be in line with other Service Provider costs.

DW confirmed this was also up for discussion during meeting with Evergreen.

Snag List

Question – Stewart Fisher (Apt 101) mentioned that snags were reported constantly and although these were recorded by staff, they were not followed up.

JM advised this was becoming a problem, and residents should contact her directly should they not receive any satisfaction or feedback on their complaints, or make contact with the Rescom Maintenance team (DW or RE).

Trevor Honeysett felt that although everyone appeared to be doing their best, the Village was not being managed well.

JM advised the Village had gone through a difficult time due to Covid and the lock-down period, but this was temporary and that plans were in place to rectify the situation.

Wenche Hovstad (No 76) also advised that for some years she had submitted snag lists in writing, and staff had appeared from time to time to photograph and record snags, but there was minimal response.

Other residents mentioned issues, which had not been attended to; Yolanda Bond-Smith reported a leak on her patio – some 8 years. Jo Nixon reported damp areas in her unit, and was still waiting for Contractors to get permission to go ahead with repairs. Also waiting for lengthy period of time.

JM advised that Covid and lock-down were no longer an excuse, and felt that she was letting Residents down. However, Contractors were on site and were slowly attending to the many maintenance issues in the Village. She would speak to the Village Manager and in the meantime David and Rene were going around the Village to check on work that needed attention.

Heather Honeysett mentioned that the same issues were raised at each meeting and although reflected in Minutes, no issues were being resolved. Widening of the entrance had been on the agenda for some time, and she felt that just removing the island would make a big difference.

JM – Garry Reed advised that in discussion with EPI, work on the entrance, vibracrete wall, the boundary fence and the Berm were all on hold. She would put out added pressure for the entrance/exit to be widened as she agreed this was a dangerous situation and an annoyance to residents plus an accident waiting to happen. Extensions to the Club House were also felt to be a priority.

Cell Phone Reception

JM referred to cell phone reception, which had been a concern for sometime, and that plans for improvement of reception put forward by Vodacom would be too expensive and ugly and this would be declined.

Alan Baxter had done some research and found that the reception problem was not confined to EG, but affected the entire area. Cell Phone Companies were presently going through major changes, and selling their towers. Towers were connected to landline power and may not work directionally. He felt it was better to get Cell Phone companies to augment the existing towers. He was aware there were several boosters in the area and would investigate this further, as well as costs to the Village. It may also be possible to get shopping malls or Bergvliet High School to join Evergreen to augment the services. As Residents used different service providers – Vodacom – MTN – and masts were specific to these Providers, he hoped the new systems will broaden the signal to cover all service providers.

Alan Baxter advised that he had set up a Facebook page for Evergreen Village which Villagers were welcome to join, and he was happy to assist in setting them up should they need assistance.

Joan thanked Alan for the time and effort he had put into investigating solutions on behalf of the Village.

Residents thanked Joan for convening the first meeting in 18 months, also thanks were extended to the Events/Entertainment Committee for the delicious, tasty snacks which had been provided at the various events that had been organised.

As there were no further questions, the meeting closed at 15:40.

