MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF GLEN AUSTIN RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION HELD ON SATURDAY 26TH JANUARY 2013 AT 1300 HOURS AT CRESSET HOUSE, 141 HAMPTON ROAD, GLEN AUSTIN.

Present: 56 signed the Attendance Register, but counted 80 in the room.

Apologies: Jonathan Cain, Nicolette Niemiec, Maureen Harrington, Ilse Welters, Themba Ngobese, Laurie Kay, Rachel Peattie, Michelle Randall, Maria McGibbon, Maria van Kroonenburg, Donald Burnett, Anna Haberkorn, James and Marguerite Mackay, Pete Uys, Sue Gornall, Terry Thorpe,

Jenny Froome, Glenda Franco, Glenda James, Cathie and Walter Webb, Guy Venter, Dave Sewell, Rad Hadfield-Jones, John and Sylvia Lowman, Garth Edwards, Kay and Graeme Penny, Robert Southy, Xaviar La Cante, Ivor and Elizabeth Cartmell, Trudie Geldenhuys, Rita Sierts, Malia Roets.

Glenn Sheppard, Chairman GARA, welcomed all present .

**GUEST SPEAKERS**

**KAREBO**

The first guest speaker was from Karebo who are working with Eskom to replace in the homes the old light bulbs with CFL’S, LED downlighers, shower heads, flow restrictors, geyser and pool timers. This service is free of charge. There used to be a system where you could exchange your old light bulbs at shopping malls, but to make sure that the lights are actually installed in the home, Karebo are supplying this service. Tel: 086 999 0900 or email green4free@karbeo.co.za.

Leaflets were distributed and the service is very good, usually the same day or next day.

**KRISTEN KALLESEN FROM JUST ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION, MIDRAND**

Kristen first showed a short video clip on a very funny interview about a tanker breaking up and losing oil.

She informed us of a lot of misleading information about energy saving. People need to do their homework on types of solar panels. We must recycle paper, glass and food. Grey water has to be saved and recycled as by 2015 the country will have serious problems regarding a clean water supply. Conservancies are important.

**MINUTES OF THE AGM MEETING 27 JANUARY 2012**

The 2012 Minutes had been distributed by email. They were confirmed as a correct record by Steve Johnstone and Patsy Kreel.

**THANK YOU’S AND CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**

Glenn thanked the following.

Theo Antoniades of Thila Printing for printing all our AGM notices and various notices during the year free of charge.

Isisango Convention Centre – Ilsa Welters for hosting all the GARA Executive Committee Meetings each month and providing delicious snacks.

The GARA Committee for dealing with sometimes complex problems. Thanks to Christine as Secretary for dealing with all the incoming email questions from Members and Non Members.

The Newsletter sent out weekly – unfortunately only read by around 30% of the community.

Glenn asked residents to read the Newsletter as it contained a lot of useful information.

Thanks to our City of Joburg contacts which have been built up over the years and are very useful.

**COJ RATES AND MEETINGS**

This was discussed last year. The public meeting on the Rates Policy held on 21st January 2013 was poorly attended by Glen Austin Residents. If the residents do not attend these meetings our voice will not be heard.

When reporting any problem GARA cannot do it on behalf of the residents. A resident has to report on 011 375 5555 and pick the correct option and get a reference number. After 3 weeks if the problem has not been fixed i.e. water, potholes, street lights etc., then email the full information to info@glenaustin.co.za. and GARA will chase it up.

There had been fundraising and social events by the Conservancy during the year – Rob Fowler, Chairman of the Conservancy, will elaborate later.

Councillor Leepile Motsumi is our Councillor for Ward 92. We must involve him more in Glen Austin issues such as pushing for a better rates discount or a separate Category for our area.

His email is leepilemotsumi@gmail.com,leepilemo@mweb.co.za or leepilemo@webmail.co.za. His COJ email address is very unreliable.

**SPENDING FUNDS**

As the COJ do not seem to be able to replace the stolen street names we are in the process of obtaining quotes for large paving slabs to be put on the street corners with the street names stencilled on in white reflective paint.

**MEMBERSHIPS**

In 2007 we had 23 members and this rose in 2012 to 252. To date this year GARA has 154 members.

This is pathetic out of the 650 or so email addresses we have on the database. A request to please talk to your neighbours and friends in Glen Austin to join. The fee has not changed for 12 or more years and is R240 for the membership and an optional R70 for the Glen Austin Conservancy.

 **MEETINGS ATTENDED**

There has been three years of negotiations with Old Mutual Properties regarding fencing the Grand Central Airport area – along the whole of Dale Road from the Pik it Up Refuse Depot to Church Street and on New Road from the Gautrain fence to the first company buildings. This is Clear Vu fencing and should stop infiltration of Glen Austin from the Donovan Road area.

Joburg 10 Plus is the new system replacing the old contact system we used to put forward the problems Glen Austin experiences. These meetings will be quarterly. We have a very good relationship with the Regional Director or Region A, Abigail Ndlovu with the old quarterly system and this has continued.

We had the meeting with the MMC of COJ last September at Cresset House.

There have also been other environmental meetings attended by Christine.

**FINANCE**

The slide explained the income and expenditure.

The cost of running the office/website etc., is around R35,000 per year so with an income of around R56000 from Memberships, there is not a lot of money left.

Patrol Glen Austin received contributions but the replacement of safety equipment is an on-going expense.

Donations were made to Sector 1 Police. You may have seen the container at the Midrand Police Station, which required an air conditioner and office furniture. Replacement torches and spare cell phones were also donated. When the Sector 1 cell phones have to be repaired there are two cell phones that they can use in between time.

**SECURITY**

Steve Johnstone, Chairman of Sector 1 Police reported that crime is still increasing. There are patrols from 7pm to 6 am weekends. Patrol Glen Austin - the number of volunteers has drastically reduced to a handful and Steve needs around 80 people to offer to do even a couple of hours a month. Out of the 800 properties in Glen Austin, this is not an unreasonable request. He thanked those who are patrolling. Volunteers will be the ears and eyes only to report suspicious events.

He also thanked Isisango Convention Centre for hosting the Sector 1/CPF meetings free of charge.

He thanked Shirley Winter – Secretary of the CPF for her assistance during the year.

It was hoped that the container at the Midrand Police Station would be operational soon and those who volunteered to be Commissioner of Oaths should be interviewed in the near future.

It is important to report even the smallest crime of a fence cutting. If crimes are not reported then the resources provided by the police will be reduced as they will be deemed to be unnecessary for our area.

Steve reiterated the plea we do every year, year in and year out and in the Newsletters. Please put your House number (not your Plot Number) on your gate or at the entrance of your panhandle. Steve and his team waste hours and hours trying to find a property when there has been an emergency call out. Last week a child drowned on George Road and the emergency services could not find the house.

The Glen Austin Radio Network - a poor response to the Sunday night roll call.

The Radio Licence is paid for by GARA and all those using the network have to be members of GARA.

Mrs Kok from the floor complained that she could read the Newsletter but not open the attachments on her phone. She has to wait until she gets home to do this.

Trevor Stacey suggested Google used to locate premises. There were other suggestions of having a map of the area with house numbers printed on, but Glenn responded that in an emergency the team do not have time to look up maps. A street number on the gate is the answer.

**GLEN AUSTIN CONSERVANCY**

Rob Fowler (Chairman) thanked his committee team for their support and help during the year.

The highlights during 2012 were the film One Life, breakfasts and sundowners at the Glen Austin Pan. Three dog walks were well supported. There was also a Bonsai Meeting and a Gluhwein Evening . Volunteers also went out to tie up the trees planted by the Parks Department and to remove weeds and collect litter. Litter bags had been put on poles on George Road which were emptied by Pik it Up.

There is around R18,000 in the bank account and some of this will be used for education.

There is a concern for the safety of horse riders in the area due to the traffic – perhaps traffic calming is required.

Put up bird feeders to enjoy the variety of birds we have in our gardens.

Glenn added that due to constraints – the Parks Department are only going to cut the pavements once a year and so requested residents to do this to make our area look a nice place to live in.

**GATED COMMUNITIES**

**BLOCK 4 & 6**

Block 4 & 6 were forging ahead with their target of two thirds of the residents to agree to the closure. A bank account had been opened to commence paying for all the formalities required by the City of Joburg.

Mr W Strydom of Strydom’s Farm had requested that the block come to the table with payment for part of the wall proposed along Van Riebeeck Road.

**GLEN AUSTIN ESTATES – (BLOCK 5)**

Douglas Road gate had been automated. The main entrance at Rosies Place needs to be completed. The erection of CCTV cameras is next. Glen Austin Estates are looking into leasing the roads from JRA. They will also have to reapply for the closure in July 2013.

**ILLEGAL BUSINESSES**

Residents have reported such businesses and we await response from the Council

**ILLEGAL SIGNAGE**

This is also a problem and has been dealt with by Bruce Beevers. We aim to be a poster free area.

**ROADS**

General potholes are escalated by GARA. George Road sand section is still an ongoing request for tarring with JRA but it may only be compacted and gravelled.

Speed , tonnage and stop signs have been requested where they have been stolen.

**PARKS DEPARTMENT**

As mentioned earlier – pavement grass cutting will only take place once a year. Several open plots with long grass have been reported.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

Carl Winter is keeping in touch with Mr Colin Holmes of Kerry Seppings Environmental Management Specialists, regarding the planned Sasol Gas Pipeline which at the moment has two routes – Van Riebeeck Road and Pitzer Road. There will be a Public Participation Meeting called and residents will be informed of the date and venue as soon as we receive the information.

Illegal dumping – please take details of the offender, record date and time and if possible take a photograph.

Burning of garden rubbish and grass - this is against the by-laws for Agricultural Holdings. We suggest, bin, bury or compost.

**GLEN AUSTIN WEBSITE**

The website crashed last year but we thank Andriette Ferreira for persevering and rebuilding it from scratch. Christine does the content of the Newsletter but Andriette adds all the lovely pictures. People must use the website as there is a large amount of information about such items as by laws and notices from COJ.

Andriette is looking into the bulk SMS system for urgent messages.

**ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS**

All the committee at the date of the AGM had agreed to stand. There were no objections.

A request for extra hands was made.

**QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR**

A request was made for GARA to set up a Face Book Page. Glenn thought this a bad idea as all the confidentiality of email addresses etc., would fall away.

Ian Measures commented that more plots are being sold but for leasing to tenants. This is a big problem in President Park.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 15.30 hours.