

# *The Longacres Mailer December 2019*

## **Monthly feature**

After an absence of a year I have been requested to resume the newsletter and I also believe it should be done

As in the past I will more than likely step on toes by asking sensitive questions and making statements that I personally believe to be true and correct. Anyone is of course welcome to criticize what I am saying openly but please do stick to the truth and researched facts.

I cannot condone in any form or manner the past endeavor to stop people from asking questions and voicing opinions in an open forum such as this news letter or the Wharsupp groups. I certainly have nothing to hide and as I have made clear have no personal agenda other than to make Longacres a better place for all

## **Editors notes**

Hope all is wearing hard hats and safety boots because the ride, if you read all, will be rough!!

When I was precluded from doing a news letter the committee at the time was going to provide one within 48 hours of their meetings which we saw only twice.

## **Questions that I ask myself today**

I again try and place myself in the shoes of all who live here. When we as the new committee took over on 22/5/2019 we were very well aware of a huge task lying ahead of us to get everything sorted out. What I can say though is that despite that knowledge the work was significantly more than what we expected. Also that for several reasons, which I will explain, our task was made even more difficult by many members. From a personal perspective I am the first to admit that I never thought we would encounter so much negativity around what we are trying to achieve. By the same token, the appreciation by many members is what keeps us going albeit slowly.

## **Finansies**

Daar was GROOT ongelukkigheid rondom die finansieele aspekte van LAHOA en dit was waarop ons eerste gekonsentreer het. Julle mag dalk onthou in my laaste uitgawe het ek 'n hele reeks vrae gehad rondom finansies, state ens.

Vandag kan ek eerlik se dat alhoewel daar steeds baie werk voorle om byvoorbeeld agterstallige skuld in te vorder ens is die boeke op datum reg en glo ek ons het antwoorde op enige vrae wat mag opduik. Dit was da nook vir my 'n groot skok toe daar by die laaste AGM 'n paar lede was wat teen die aanvaarding van die state gestem het. Ten spyte van verskeie Eposse na die betrokke lede om te probeer vasstel wat die probleem is sodat dit onmiddellike aandag kan geniet kon ek nie daarin slaag om uit te vind wat pla nie. Maar ek rig hier 'n uitnodiging aan almal om my te kontak as daar enige vrae rondom finansies is.



Twee aspekte wat ons steeds mee sukkel is uitstaande skuld wat soos op vandag, 6/12/2019 R93 820 beloop (R40530 subs, R53290 Sekuriteits heffing). Ons moes noodgedwonge sekere mense oorhandig vir regsaksie, iets wat ons as kommittee ten sterkste wou vermy.

Die ander een is bou depositos. Alhoewel dit uiteindelik balanseer en ek elke sent daarvan op rekord het met die rente is dit so dat van dit is reeds sedert 2013 op die boeke. Seer sekerlik behoort daardie partye klaar gebou te wees? Ook is ons bewus daarvan dat daar heelwat bouery aangaan van mense wat nie betaal het nie en ons werk tans daaraan.

## Perimeter Fence

This has been an ongoing bone of contention for a long time and at the AGM a decision was taken to at least try and do the western side, our “sitting room” with a better looking and more appropriate fence. This project took some careful planning and a lot of hard work but finally members can now see what the end product will look like. In this context I believe we all owe Giel and Johan a very big thank you for their personal hard work and dedication. We are really getting many compliments, not only from residents but also from outside parties.

Unfortunately we have to remain within budget constraints and we will not be able to do the entire western perimeter now. It has to be seen as work in progress and when we get money available we will continue. For now we have completed the section from Seeskulpie southwards to the south entrance gate.

Another party that I believe should be complimented and thanked is Jason Marx from Brights who regularly provides the guys with coffee and even stuff such as gloves as well as Vanessa du Plessis.

Then we have a few people that still constantly moans about the fence and have even threatened to take legal action against me personally for something which I can only guess relates to the fence as the specific party does not seem to have the guts state what his problems are. We have invited him to a committee meeting to tell us what is wrong and get answers to all his questions but so far he only comes up with bad mouthing the committee.

Regularly I hear and see people complaining about what the committee is doing and not doing but then the complainant also does not know what the committee are in fact doing. I am not saying we are doing everything right nor wrong but unless I have gone to some trouble to establish what they are doing I should not complain. That I firmly believe can all be resolved with open two way communication which is my main focus at this stage.

## Social events:

We have had one small event when horse riders took a Saturday morning excursion around the perimeter fence and my impression was it was well enjoyed by participants

We are planning another event which could be seen as either work or social but in the interest of our estate. The idea is to on Saturday 2 November ask all residents to take a black garbage bag and walk 300-400 along your properties on the “pavement” picking up the garbage. We will then at around 1pm collect all the bags and dump it in a skip that will be placed at the two entrances. That way there will be community involvement to clean up the estate for the festive season. A very nice example was recently sent by these children that did a lot to clean up the place

## What is the committee doing:

This is by far the most difficult part of this Newsletter to do which is crazy as it should be the easy and nice part.



As in the past I believe both the good and bad should be reported on and even though I as chairman try to lead and co-ordinate the committee to reach goals we have set ourselves and been set by members we still have problems and it is pointless to try and hide that away. At the AGM we set the following goals.

<b>Financial</b>	<b>Illegal business</b>	<b>Rules</b>
<b>Building deposits</b>	<b>Estate cleaning</b>	<b>Gates</b>
<b>Fence</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Greenbelt</b>
<b>Arrear accounts</b>	<b>Roads</b>	
<b>Electrical</b>	<b>Building matters</b>	
<b>Communication</b>	<b>Gated community</b>	<b>Complete</b>
	<b>Firehydrants</b>	<b>Well underway</b>
		<b>Busy with</b>
		<b>Not started</b>

Reporting and commenting on each matter probably is the best even it does take some doing but the last thing I want is for people to be in the dark.

### **Financials**

This has been a bone of contention for some time but I am happy to say the books have been audited and we can now account for everything. Unlike in the past the entire committee gets a full bank statement, an Income & Expenses statement and a budget comparison each month to ensure all is above board.

### **Building deposits**

While it all balances and interest is calculated on amounts monthly it still concerns me that despite several attempts to get to a point where we can repay deposits we have not been that successful as people simply don't respond. Some deposits have been with us since 2013 and according to our rules building operations must be completed in 12 months! We are aware that people have been building without paying deposits and even without submitting plans to either LAHOA or SBM and we are now working closely with SBM to eradicate that problem. Unfortunately it is very time consuming but we will eventually get there. Here I would like to appeal to all that we hold a deposit for to let me know when you expect building operations to be complete so that we can refund you.

### **Perimeter Fence upgrade**

Ek dink almal het reeds gesien hoe die "nuwe heining" gaan lyk as dit voltooi is en gegewe die komplimente wat instroom daarvoor dink ek Giel Pretorius en Johan Scholtz wat elke dag die warm son trotseer moet 'n pluimpie kry. Aanvanklik was daar bedenkinge en negatiewe kommentaar het ingestroom maar dit het verander na 95% positief en 5% negatief!! Dan is daar natuurlik nog R53 290 uitstaande van lede wie nie vir die heining betaal het soos die res van ons nie en dit sou ons kon help om heelwat verder te kom as wat nou die geval is wees.

## **Agterstallige rekeninge**

Weer eens 'n baie groter kopseer as wat meeste besef. Soos op datum is daar R53290 uitstaande ten opsigte van sekuriteits heffing asook R40530 vir gewone ledegelde. Daarvan is R88 000 nou oorhandig aan prokureurs vir invordering en briewe na al die res. Party mense het wel reeelings getref om af te betaal wat ons natuurlik waardeer en hoop hulle sal daarby bly. Dit is ons mikpunt om hierdie syfer aft e werk na R25 000 by sluiting van die boekjaar.

## **Communication**

As with most other matters this has been a challenge. While we have spent endless hours searching for up to date details like Email addresses and telephone no's we still a way to go. For many the whatsapp groups is a effective way of communication but then it also becomes a platform for extremely negative comments and accusations, many of which is unfounded and without substance. The website is not used very effectively and that is why I have again started the newsletter. The problem with it for the time being is that it is a one way dialogue with me saying everything. To chance that should be simple as I will publish comments you want me to provided you can Email it to me but that seldom seems to happen.

## **Illegal Businesses**

Firstly there seems to be people that believe to close a business that has been operational for a number of years takes a day or a week. Let me however assure you that is not the case and we have a constant struggle with this matter. It has taken us 4 months to get SBM around a table to discuss all our problems but we finally managed it and they have now pledged their full support . That means we can now work towards firstly getting rid of what we call industrial type businesses, then "unwanted" businesses followed by unregistered businesses. Where a business like a guesthouse or coffee shop is registered and therefor legal it obviously has no problems but people conducting business from their premises that is not registered as such with both LAHOA and SBM should perhaps start to get their documentation sorted out. We are willing to assist where possible but within boundaries.

## **Skoonmaak van Landgoed**

Ons het vir Wiseman aangestel om allerhande take te verrig op die landgoed en een daarvan is die skoonhou van sypaadjies en tot dusver het hy baie goed gedoen en reeds 100 swart sakke rommel weggewerk!! Dan gaan hy die brandkraan pale plant en daarna aandag gee aan die padteken. Dit gaan hy doen deur hulle skoon te maak en oor te verf. Ons hoop ook om dit te lig vir beter sigbaarheid.

Die skoonmaakaksie is ge-inspireer deur die 3 kinders wat dit op hulself geneem het om te help skoonmaak!! Baie Dankie julle.



## **Paaie**

Soos meeste mense bewus is van word Loopstraat eersdaags oorgedoen. Die huidige komitee kan nie enige eer daarvoor kry want dis al 'n vier jaar proses. Ons is egter in 'n feitlike permanente stryd gewikkel met SBM om die grondpaaie meer gereeld en beter te skraap, die stormwaterslote beter skoon te maak, sygaardjies te sny en padtekens te herstel en vervang. Daar is egter lig in die donker tunnel vir die pad vorentoe en dit sal bekend staan as SRA, iets waaraan ons werk en ek later meer van vertel.

## **Brandkrane**

Hier het die committee en meer spesifiek die Voorsitter gefaal. Dis 'n klein projek wat net moet klaargemaak word. Die krane is identifiseer en getoets, die pale en tekens is bekom en moet net geplant word en weer om die kraan skoongemaak word. Dit sal nou dringende aandag kry.

## **Building Matters**

A much more complex subject than what most are aware of. It consists of several sub divisions

**Illegal building** Mainly where plans are not submitted and/or not done correctly including alterations

**Non compliance to rules.** Where building takes place after hours, where registers of contractors are not kept and so forth. Painting "funny" colours is another.

**Buildings not completed in time**

Our rules state that buildings are to be completed 12 months. But this is not happening as is evident by the fact that we have deposits made in 2014!!

**I would like to encourage every-one to check the building rules and make sure you comply to it in all respects**

## **Wat doen die Komitee nog?**

### **Straatname**

Wiseman is besig om al die ou straatname af teskuur en oor te verf. Ons kyk ook na die moontlikheid om hulle effe te lig met sowat 600mm ten einde dit beter sigbaar te maak. Die paar wat reeds gedoen is vertoon al baie beter!!

### **Website**

Willie Timmerman is busy revamping the website to make it more user friendly and attractive

### **Spoedbeheer**

Een van ons almal se kopsere!! Ons skilpaaie en bokkies word raakgery en die jagery op die paaie skep gevaar vir kinders, perderuiters en ander gebruikers. Ons is op soek na manier om dit beter te beheer.

### **Greenbelt**

We really want to develop the greenbelt area into something nice that residents can use and enjoy. This we would like to do with lots of involvement and participation of residents. Something you can be of help with immediately is to tell us what you would like to see happening there. Currently we are considering establishing a picnic site with a few braais and tables amongst the bluegum trees with swings etc for children. Then plant up to 2 hectares of lawn that can be used for a huge variety of things such as polo, gymkana, playground, flea market stalls etc. It will have an added advantage that the lawn can be harvested once a year and provide an income to continue developing the greenbelt. We are

also looking at a horseriding trail, adding some animals such as springbuck and bontebok etc.

If you have any ideas or would like to become involved in the project please let us know. Send me an Email or contact Gerhard Brune who will be doing this within his portfolio.

### **SRA (Special Rates Area)**

This is a rather complex project which in very brief detail would mean that a portion of our rates and taxes payable to SBM would be returned to the LAHOA to be used to improve the estate. Basically works in 5 year cycles whereby we need to provide SBM with a 5 year development plan which they would monitor and it could eventually lead to a gated community for Longacres. At this early stage it appears that we could get around R60 000 per month to use for things like security, general improvement and beautification of the estate development of the greenbelt, and eventually even doing the roads.

Several places including Cape Town CBD have gone this route and are extremely happy with the results. Closer to home it has been implemented in Paternoster and Saldanha with huge success from all accounts.

We will keep you informed of progress in this regard.

### **Sekuriteit**

Die belangrikheid hiervan kan nooit oorbeklemtoon word nie. Ons ervaar daaglik die toename in misdaad en geweld in Suid Afrika en om te dink dit gaan nie hier vererger is bloot wensdenkery!! Daarom is dit vir ons as committee uiters belangrik om soveel as moontlik te doen met wat ons het om dit te verbeter vir LA se inwoners. Tans ondersoek ons 'n baie beter kamera stelsel om toegang beter te monitor.

Die buurtwag bring steeds hulk ant dubbel en dwars veral gegewe die feit dat net 'n handjievul inwoners daaraan deelneem en ons bedank weer vir Kiewiet wat baie tyd en aandag daarn skenk.

**Fluit-Fluit my storie is uit!!! Lank gelees ne maar ek belowe sal dit korter wees!! As jy nuus het of enige iets wild eel met ons kontak my asb by [landi@skoups.com](mailto:landi@skoups.com).**

**Groete**



## **What are the community doing/not doing:**

I have been asking myself, the community and the committee questions for some time now. I have also tried to point out what I believe is not done right, not done at all and what could assist in improving life for all on the Estate.



As we know a fair number of “irregularities” and shortcomings have been identified. I believe this was very much a result of collective thinking. Unfortunately it has also resulted in a lot of negative bickering and moaning. This has even go so far as to threats of legal action, which I believe could and should be avoided.

What we all as a collective group now need to do is tackle the problems and get them resolved. How are we going to achieve this should be the question everybody should be asking. My personal suggestion would be to instruct the committee in the correct technical manner to attend to these problems in a specific manner.

highlighted three aspects which I want to discuss as a starting point.

According to the financial statements there are close on R200 000 outstanding the bulk of which must be levies. (I don't have a breakdown yet) Our budgeted income for the year from levies amounts to R156 240 so there is more than a years levies outstanding. This can only lead to disaster.

Currently our levies are extremely low but the main source of income. Can we fund any improvements and or security like that? We want a clubhouse and many other things but at this rate Kyk ek na ons 28/2/2018 balansstaat mag ek dink ons sit nie te sleg daarin met R968000 in die bank nie!! Dis egter nie heeltemal waar nie want R480 000 daarvan is Bou depositos wat eintlik in 'n Trust hoort, sedert Feb is waarskynlik heelwat spandeer op die heining wat die prentjie drasties sal verander.

There may be reasons why levies are not being paid and that needs to be addressed but can only be done if we know what it is. Maybe this should be a project as well?

The next thing I would like to touch on today is whether we keep ourselves informed as to what is happening on the Estate. Hopefully this Newsletter will help with that being the main reason for me doing it. However, we also need to get information elsewhere such as the AGM, security meeting and website. The meetings were poorly attended, for whatever reason, and currently the website is not really functional (something we are addressing).

Daar is 'n gesegde “Kennis is mag” so hoe meer jy weet hoe sterker is jy. Dis, myns insiens, verkeerd om te kla en te mor oor sekere dinge as jy nie alles weet of probeer uitvind nie. Ook om dinge vir jouself te hou end dan te kla daaroor.

Hier wil ek graag 'n voorbeeld gebruik.

Regularly I hear and see people complaining about what the committee is doing and not doing but then the complainant also does not know what the committee are in fact doing. I am not saying they are doing everything right nor wrong but unless I have gone to some trouble to establish what they are doing I should not complain. That I firmly believe can all be resolved with open two way communication which is my main focus at this stage.