



Parkhurst residents and friends,

Thank you to all of those who have made the effort to attend our first in-person AGM in several years and thank you also to those choosing to attend online.

It is becoming trite to say that the state of our city or its sad trajectory remain alarming, but this is an inescapable fact. Political instability and a seeming inability to effectively deploy budgets as they are intended remain the most obvious issues, we as a suburb within Johannesburg are faced with.

Last year I implored residents to adopt a new attitude to the way we live in Johannesburg, what our expectations should be and how we can all work together to fill the many service delivery gaps we now experience daily. Efforts like this can only be effective if significant numbers of residents support them and “get involved.”

As I said last year, our roads remain potholed, and our streets unmarked. Our curb inlets have not been cleared in a decade. Our substations are old, unkempt, and mostly insecure and our streetlights work intermittently at best. There are ongoing issues with displaced peoples and the many related social ills. This year the old Parkhurst Bowling Club has become a crisis. While there are a number of initiatives underway to try and get the City to address this, all of these will require volunteering and funding. PRABOA is you, us and your neighbours. We can either do these things together or keep waiting for the City to do it for us.

Apart from occasional projects to clean/ beautify or even partially upgrade certain areas of our suburb, PRABOA has real and ongoing operating expenses such as accountants, town-planners, auditors, debit-order administrators, web-page management and a host of sundry expenses throughout the year. We need better support from our community to be able to meet the challenges of this failing city. Without this there are any number of other suburbs we can look to for a taste of what can happen.

Early in 2024 we will be launching our PRABOA membership structure which will see paying members being able to get help with escalations of critical City infrastructure issues, exclusive early access to certain events and discounts from various participating stores along 4th avenue.

PRABOA are a committee of resident volunteers, and the workload and demands are only increasing. Help us to help you.

4th Avenue

The vibrancy of 4th avenue continues to be a major drawcard for visitors and new or prospective residents – particularly as other city highstreets continue to degrade. This popularity does, however, have its drawbacks- notably grime and the increased incidence in petty crime. The traders of 4th avenue have been hard at work organising and have recently appointed Asset Watch security to conduct daily foot patrolling along the length of the street. PRABOA fully supports this initiative and encourages as many traders and landlords as possible to support their efforts. One month in we can all see the impact that it has begun to have. Congratulations to the traders and we look forward to continuing to strengthen our partnership.

The traders committee have also undertaken to pay for a weekly cleaning of the street using the PRABOA Bubele clean-up team. Xmas in July- organised by the traders committee and assisted by PRABOA- was a huge success this year and we look forward to a number of similar events in 2024, starting with the candle-light shopping this week Thursday. Please get out on the days and support these efforts.

Parks/ Environment

Our PRABOA Clean Team project, using Bubele Africa (a local NGO) to clean up the common areas of Parkhurst like Verity Park, 4th Avenue and certain sections of the spruit, is proving highly effective BUT we really do require more community support to ensure we can maintain and expand this service across the suburb. The annual Spruit Day was again a community success and well done to Paul Booth for his efforts managing this. We are hoping to be able to run a similar event at least quarterly with residents in 2024, as the Spruit desperately needs more TLC.

SafeParks

The SafeParks security initiative has stabilised since the CAP / Cortac upheaval of last year. Contributor numbers are creeping up month on month and we have been able to negotiate favourable cost increase with both 24/7 and Vumacam- the latter as part of the revised Safe City initiative which will see more parties paying less to access the camera feeds. Though we have had to pass on an increase to our members, the first in nearly 10 years, we are hopeful that going forward we will be increasing annually at smaller increments.

PRABOA Status

After many bureaucratic twists and turns, we have finally registered with SARS as both a VAT vendor and a Public Benefit Organization (PBO). This will allow us to finally issue S18A tax certificates to donors – a major headache we have had for the longest time and hopefully should see a marked uptick in donations to our various worthy initiatives. I would like to thank Sonette Lategan and Rogan Swart for their tireless efforts here as PRABOA seeks to professionalise for our new Johannesburg reality.

Fencing and upgrade project: Verity Park and 6th Street

Our beloved Verity Park was formally by PRABOA in 2017. Through this formal adoption PRABOA maintains and manages the park on behalf of City Parks. Last week we began the process of replacing the rusted and hold-filled fence around the park. This week the new fence will be extended around the kiddies play area, providing a secure space for our children to play. These 460m of new fencing will be joined next week by a further 100m+ of new

fencing along the 6th Street bridge, in the dip as you travel from Parkhurst towards Verity Park. These capital intensive projects are a by-product of recent corporate stakeholder engagement led by **Michael Barretta**. It is a trial of a new form of corporate engagement where PRABOA is working to build mutually beneficial relationships with businesses who have an interest in the residents and patrons of Parkhurst. In the absence of CoJ service delivery it is one of the ways we are trying to fill the many service delivery gaps we now experience daily. This is a model we are hoping to repeat in the coming year. If you or your business would like to partner with us on initiatives in the suburb please get in touch.

I should mention that PRABOA's contribution to the fencing project is a commitment to clean and repaint the walls of the kiddies play area and of the adjoining ablutions. This project will be completed by the end of November, in time for the children to enjoy our park and playground by the time the school year finishes.

Comings and Goings

We have not had the displeasure of any committee members leaving this past year and are grateful for the addition of **Michael Barretta** (who has overseen the very recent upgrade of Verity park's fences). Michael is an active member of the Parkhurst 'Little Chelsea' resident's association, and we are delighted that he can bring his considerable energy and the Little Chelsea perspective to the work of the committee.