

MINUTES OF THE WILGE FORUM MEETING HELD ON THE 21 MAY 2003 AT THE BETHLEHEM TOWN HALL.

1. WELCOME

The chairperson welcomed all members present and announced that he is no longer responsible for the Wilge River Catchment.

2. ATTENDANCE

Mathibela Khetsi	Water Affairs and Forestry
Anthony Jefferson	Department of Environmental Affairs
Moses Makhabu	Department of Health Qwaqwa
Pierre Swart	Maluti-a- Phofung
E. Janse van Rensburs	Department of Health Bethlehem
S. M. Van Schalkwyk	Department of Health Bethlehem
K. P. Mabale	Department of Health Qwaqwa
M.A. B. Mosima	Department of Health Qwaqwa
M. Moshoeshoe	Department of Health Qwaqwa
P. Machogo	Department of Health Bethlehem
T. J. Mofokeng	Department of Health
Q.D. Moloi	House of Traditional Leaders
B.S. Negovha	Dihlabeng Local Municipality
G. Groenewald	Metsi Metseng Geological Services cc
Japie Herbst	Leach Piggeries
Johan Jacobs	Mafube Municipality
Didi Masoabi	Rand Water
Tlali Ntholi	Rand Water
Thomas Gyedu-Ababio	Rand Water

3. APOLOGIES

T. Sekhobo	Maluti-a-Phofung
C. Mhlongo	Rand Water
D. Maree	Water Affairs and Forestry

4. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA.

D. Masoabi distributed the questionnaire for the Forum members to complete.
M. Selepe highlighted that the questionnaire is very good in that it will serve as yardstick as to whether we are doing well or not.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

5.1.1 KESTELL SEWAGE WORKS

The Kestell sewage works has always been overflowing, a site inspection should be conducted to see if the situation has improved or not.

Action: H. Mushwana

5.1.2 PERREIRA WORKSHOP

It was reported that there was dumping of oil in the river, Anthony Jefferson who is standing in for Justice will follow up and report back in the next meeting.

5.1.3 SAW DUST TO METSIMATSO DAM

Japie Herbst reported that the saw dust has been removed and disposed of at the municipal dumping site. M. Selepe asked whether the site is permitted or not.

H. Mushwana will follow up on the house-keeping practice.

Action: J. Hebst and H. Mushwana

5.2 NAMAHADEI SEWAGE WORKS

Mr J. Jacobs reported that the Environmental Impact Assessment report has been done by the consultant and it is with the Department of Environmental Affairs in Bloemfontein.

On the issue of licensing he indicated that the consultant is supposed to do it on their behalf.

Action: A. Jefferson and H. Mushwana

Mr Jacobs indicated that since their sewage was an oxidation pond system they were not discharging. The Council had a contract with the farmer to supply him with the water for irrigation purposes.

The farm has been sold to another person, the new owner of the farm has been told that he will no longer get the water from the sewage works because it has been upgraded and according to the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry requirements they have to apply for a licence for discharging to the river.

The new owner of the farm is now taking the council to court about the contract. M. Selepe requested Mr J. Jacobs to send the invitation for the meeting to Department in writing.

Action: J. Jacobs

5.3 QWAQWA BLUEGUMBOSCH RDP HOUSE SCHEME.

Mr Selepe indicated that section 144 of the National Water Act 1998(Act 36 of 1998) states that no person may establish a township unless the layout plan shows, in form acceptable to the local authority concerned, lines indicating the maximum level likely to be reached by floodwaters on an average once in every 100 years and that all persons who might be affected by the development must have access to information regarding potential flood hazards.

Dr Thomas said that the issue of the houses build next to the river environment cannot be resolved because the houses are already there, we should look at the question of how best can we mitigate the pollution.

Dr Groenewald said that people do not realise the importance of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA's) because that is where they get a chance to raise their concerns. Government give decision on opinion of the consultants only. He said that it is important that when there is a development consultation with the relevant authorities be done.

Mr Jefferson indicated that different departments and local municipalities are informed about the meetings for developments but the attendance is very poor. He further said that senior municipal personnel should attend such meetings as there are important for capacity building.

Dr Groenewald suggested that 2 or 3 of the forum members be responsible for the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

Dr Thomas said that the forum should be involved so that we can make the relevant contribution.

5.4 ARMY SQUADRON (BETHLEHEM) AND QUANTANI

The Sewage works of this barracks was identified as a source of pollution in the past because of its poor management. Officials from both the Department of Defence and the Department of Public Works attended meetings and promised that contractors were in the process of being appointed to refurbish the sewage works.

A site will be conducted to see whether there is progress made or not.

Action: H. Mushwana

5.5 ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES IN ELANDS RIVER.

It was reported that there are people dredging sand from the Elands River, a site inspection will be made to find out whether they have an authorisation or not.

Action: H. Mushwana and J. Herbst.

On the issue of status of authorisation of water users in the catchment a list will be compiled indicating water users that are authorised and those that are not authorised.

Reminder letters will be sent to relevant officials regarding license application and if they do not respond a meeting will be arranged.

Clover S.A. in Frankfort is irrigating and it is an existing lawful use.

The status of the following water users should be find out.

Mountain View One Stop garage

Balmoral One Stop garage

Swinburne One Stop garage

Star Stop Monte Vista One Stop garage

J. Herbst will follow up with regard to the license issue of the leach piggeries.

I. With regard to the license issue of Qwaqwa sewage works more pressure should be put on Mr Hasenjager.

Action: H. Mushwana

Mr M. Makhabu reported that the abattoir in Kestell is causing nuisance conditions. A site inspection will be conducted.

Action: H. Mushwana

5.6 WATER QUALITY STATUS IN THE CATCHMENT.

Dr Thomas presented on the water quality status of the catchment from October 2002 to April 2003.

He indicated that the Wilge catchment has good water quality and it should not deteriorate.

Mr Selepe warned that people should not be deceived by the dilution from the Katsi dam and the water that comes from Lesotho Highland water project.

He pointed that all municipal Sewage works are not performing and pressure should be put on them.

Jordaan spruit water quality in the Liebenbergvlei catchment is very bad.

Action: H. Mushwana and D. Masoabi.

5.7 POLLUTION INCIDENTS IN THE CATCHMENT.

Mr H. Mushwana and S.M. Van Schalkwyk will follow up on issue of French drain in Bethlehem.

6.1. FEEDBACK ON THE NATIONAL WATER WEEK 2003-07-02

Dr Thomas indicated that the National Water Week activities that were held in Kestell and Makgalokweng respectively were well done.

Ms D. Masoabi indicated that in future National Water Week planning should be done in advance.

Mr H. Mushwana raised a concern on the insufficient promotional materials that is supplied by the Department.

6.2 CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AGENCY(CMA) PROCESS.

6.3 TASK TEAM REPRESENTIVITY

Since Mr F. Opperman has left the Department of Agriculture a letter should be written to the Department requesting a someone to stand in his place.

There was a concern that Mr I. Hasenjager from Sedibeng Water is no longer attending the Forum meetings the Forum should elect the chairperson of the Forum Management Committee(FMC)

It has been proposed that Dawie will be the chairperson of the F.M.C. and that he will chair the next meeting.

The terms of reference for the Waterval River Catchment to be sent to all Forum members for comments. The due date for the comments on the terms of reference is 18 July 2003. Mr H. Mushwana will distribute the invitation for comments on the terms of reference.

Trends for the Resource Water Quality Objectives(RWQO) to be circulated for comments. Mr H. Mushwana will sent the contact list to Dr Thomas Ababio which will assist him in sending the invitation for comments from Forum members.

The Charter could not be signed because the chairperson of the Forum Management Committee(FMC) was not present, it will be signed in the next Forum meeting.

6.4 GENERAL

D. Masoabi announced that Rand Water has launched a website for all the people they are dealing with in the catchment.

6.4 CLOSURE

The meeting was closed at 13:10 pm.

Date of next meeting-20 August 2003, Bethlehem.