



Blairgowrie Community Association

Our Suburb, Our Home

Blairgowrie Community Association

Minutes of the AGM on 8 May 2012, 7 – 8 pm

Blairgowrie Recreation Centre, Park Lane, Blairgowrie

AGENDA

- Welcome - Linus Muller (BCA Head of Communications)
- Chairperson's Address - Jed Kemery (Chairperson)
 - Included:
 - Theme for the year; "Neighbour for Neighbour"
 - What can residents do
 - Blairgowrie Precinct Plan
- BCA Financials - Adriano Cosani (Treasurer)
- Blairgowrie Beautification Projects - Gail Jelley (BCA Head of Beautification)
 - Announcement of Park Champions for all parks in Blairgowrie
- BCA Marketing in Blairgowrie - Ashraf Essack (BCA Head of Marketing)
- Suburb Security - Presentation by Securitas
- Question and Answer Session
- CLOSE

WELCOME

Linus Muller, the BCA's Head of Communications, welcomed everyone and went through the Agenda for the evening. He also officially welcomed:

- Cllr. Bruce Herbert (Ward 99)
- Cllr. Tim Truluck (Ward 117)
- (Apology given on behalf of Cllr. David Potter – Ward 102 – who is on leave)
- W/O Spencer from Linden SAPS
- Jadd Harding – Chairperson of the Linden Community Policing Forum

He then introduced Jed Kemery, the current BCA Chairperson who immediately handed over to the BCA Treasurer, Adriano Cosani.

BCA ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Address by Adriano Cosani, BCA Treasurer

The BCA, being a registered Section 21 Company, is required to be audited and this is currently being arranged. We will let all residents know when this is complete. In 2013 the audit will hopefully take place before the Annual AGM but Adriano assured residents that due to the existence of a bookkeeper and a Finance Team, that everything was legitimate and above board.

He thanked the outgoing bookkeeper, Jan Cheney, for her good work done over the past year and welcomed the new bookkeeper, Monica Reimers.

He then presented the following information:

Blairgowrie Community Association (BCA)

Subscriptions analysis

	Subscription	Contributors	Single/annual payments	Reoccurring payments
Pensioner	R 50	35	12	23
Resident	R 75	204	99	105
Business	R 100	18	6	12
		257	117	140

	Subscription	Receipts	Single/annual payments	Reoccurring payments
Pensioner	R 50	R 10 770	R 2 650	R 8 120
Resident	R 75	R 133 738	R 74 625	R 59 113
Business	R 100	R 16 110	R 6 650	R 9 460
		R 160 618	R 83 925	R 76 693

Other Income

Advertising Income	R 32 250
Beautification Project	R 1 580
Interest Income	R 806
Pavement Competition	R 460
Total Income	R 195 714

- Blairgowrie is JHB's largest suburb, with:
 - +- 4000 homes, and
 - +- 200 businesses
- The current BCA subscribers represent:
 - +-9% of total homes, and
 - +-6% of total businesses
- Accordingly, amounts received by the BCA represent +-5% of total "available pool", being +- R3.3m, were every household and business to contribute to our suburb's upliftment.
- To date, R86,332 has been spent on the administration of the BCA and implementation of a number of projects (detailed in individual workstream detail presented) with a 60%/40% split between projects and administration.
- Project spend was across the following categories:
 - Spruit initiative; Gardening; Labour; Materials (refuse bags, paintbrushes, paint); Rubbish Removals.
- Administration spend was across the following categories:
 - Secretariat; Accounting; Web hosting; Telephony; Printing.
- Cash on hand amounts to R109,382 – envisioned that these monies will be allocated across various work streams and projects across 2012.

He encouraged residents and businesses in the area to contribute financially to the BCA in order to assist in achieving the goals and aims of the BCA (see below)

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Jed Kemery thanked Adriano and his team for the great work.

This is the presentation that Jed took the residents through (the whole AGM took 1hr 5 minutes!!)

- Introduction of BCA Committee
- What does the BCA do?
- Suburb highlights and current issues
- Blairgowrie Precinct Plan
- Street Captains – a learning
- What can YOU do?
- 2012 Theme: “Neighbour for Neighbour” – winning the suburb

What is the BCA? (A brief reminder)

- The Blairgowrie Community Association (BCA) is
- YOU!!! (in 28 months, the BCA database has grown to approximately 2000 homes – 50%)
- The BCA was first formed by a group of concerned residents at a Public Meeting on 28 January 2010
- BCA is a non-profit, registered Section 21 with 5 directors & 13 residents on the Committee

Aims and Goals of the BCA

- We want to achieve 4 main goals:

1. Educate the Community

- Details for Emergencies, Crime, By Law Violations, BCA Portfolio Heads etc.

2. Escalate Issues

- that are affecting residents to the relevant authorities

3. Ensure Good Communication

- within the suburb, making sure residents are informed

4. Fight Crime

- Fostering good communication with our Linden SAPS and promoting a Comprehensive Proactive Security Solution for Blairgowrie

Who We Are: Introducing the BCA Committee (Portfolio Heads) and Section 21 Directors – all volunteers

- Chairperson - Jed Kemery (Director)
- Head of Communications - Linus Muller (Director)
- Treasurer - Adriano Cosani (Director)
- Roads - Dave Lloyd (Director)
- Blairgowrie Schools Liaison / Facebook - Angela Clark (Director)
- Marketing - Ashraf Essack
- Joburg Water - Grant Lindhorst
- Smart Meter and Electromagnetic Radiation - Luisa Petrocchi-Bartal
- Delta Park and Fallen Trees - Shirley Tebbutt
- Pikitup - Valentino Hill
- City Parks - Pieter Van Zyl
- Administration - Margaret Sawyer
- Suburb Beautification - Gail Jelley
- City Power - vacant portfolio
- Head of Street Captains - vacant portfolio

All Committee members / Portfolio Heads will be assigned unique email addresses e.g. roads@myblairgowrie.co.za This email address will remain the same even if the Portfolio Head changes.

These **emails addresses may be used** by the **residents when escalating an issue that persists**, which they have first reported to the City and obtained a REF number.

These new email addresses will be put on the BCA website in due course and sent out to all residents along with a brief intro of the Portfolio Heads

Jed thanked the Committee for their incredible dedication and for working so hard in a suburb that we all love and want to see work. They are all volunteers and the hours that many of them put in are unseen but hugely appreciated.

He also thanked Colin Jones, who has just stepped down from the City Power portfolio, for his time with the BCA and for his continued interest in and involvement with the suburb.

BCA Committee Housekeeping

- The Committee meets once a month
- Minutes are kept – each point actioned; a Minute Book, containing the Minutes of all Comm meetings and Public Meetings held, is available for public viewing and was presented at the AGM. Thanks Margaret!!
- Sub-committees meet regularly
- From next year, the AGM in May 2013, Committee elections will be held; the Comm will be eligible to stand for re-election; this reflects the growth of the Comm and the development of the portfolios – it's where the BCA is right now. Jed asked if this was OK with the residents – all approved and there were no objections.

What does the BCA do? List of Accomplishments

- Registered a Section 21, not-for-profit company
- A bookkeeper in place – Monica Reimers; the BCA financials will be audited and presented to the community at an annual AGM
- City Power and billing queries; refunds
- BCA Constitution in place
- Attend to residents' emails, calls and queries
- The BCA mobile number – 071 345 0209
- Member database grown through campaigns and word-of-mouth
- Street Captains – a learning for the BCA. There are a number of street captains in place and quite a few new volunteers. The BCA Comm admits that the role of street captains has been neglected somewhat and that there has to be a change in strategy and approach. Jed thanked Angela Clark for heading up this portfolio and doing the good work she did thus far. Jed has contacted the new volunteers and will shortly be in touch with the existing street captains.
- Attend to illegal dumping, building and advertising (anything which defaces the neighbourhood)
- Regular updates on water and electricity interruptions including emergency assistance with the period of frequent water pipe bursts; constant communication with MS Pipelines
- Pikitup updates
- Frequent community clean-up campaigns
- Monthly "Classifieds"

- Vacation “Blairkids” publications
- Representation at:
 - Weekly CCF / CPF – 3 Comm members well-known amongst SAPS, good relationship
 - Non-political Ward Comm meetings of both Wards
- Successful evictions where community has been plagued by illegal squatting, use as a drug house, health and safety issues, environmental issues
- Special Operations with SAPS
- Smart meter issues including electromagnetic radiation issues; cell mast issues; wireless issues.
- The Tail Trails project – uniting pets with their owners
- Development of the BCA Website - www.myblairgowrie.co.za The website is still up but has been redesigned and the new proposal looks great. It has been handed over to a web developer who is working to get it up and running ASAP. We will notify everyone when this happens (as it will be one of my happiest days!!)
- Mobilitate project – residents can register their cell numbers and get daily crime reports
- Recycling initiatives; Pothole issues; Street light bulbs – and much more
- Securitas: the BCA has entered into its 2nd year of Service Level Agreement with Securitas in terms of Public Spaces Protection. The BCA now engages with ADT as well but does encourage all residents to please contribute to the Public Spaces initiative even if they are with another Security Provider

(At this point in the meeting both the BCA Beautification and Marketing Heads addressed the residents – however, for the sake of flow in the Minutes, their points have been included at the end of the Chairperson’s Report)

What it Takes to Manage Blairgowrie

- Blairgowrie: biggest suburb in Jhb, 70 – 80 streets, 4000 homes
- Currently divided into 3 Municipal Wards with 3 Ward Councillors
- Forms part of the Linden SAPS (Sector 1) and the Randburg SAPS (Sector 1)
- Comprises properties belonging to City Parks, JRA (Joburg Roads Agency), JPC (Joburg Property Company)
- Blairgowrie is **serviced by** :
- 2 Joburg Water depots

- 2 City Power depts.
- 3 different electricity meter reading companies
- 2 Pikitup depots with separate collection days

Suburb Highlights and Current Issues

- **Update on LISOF** (London International School of Fashion) moving to Blairgowrie; LISOF has begun renovations on the old Videolab building and hope to move their students in by Jan 2013; they are continuing their efforts with the City and JPC to obtain the lease for Erf 1715 (the parking lot and small park across the road from Videolab); the BCA is encouraging the lease as this Erf is the site of complete unruliness and disgust and is a major eyesore for our suburb. The JPC (Joburg Property Company) should be embarrassed that they allow this to happen on their properties.
- **Suburb Beautification / Marketing** – these are 2 relatively new and extremely exciting portfolio developments (see their points further below)
- **Speeding / Traffic calming measures** – you may have noticed manual speed trapping down Conrad Dr. This is at the request of the BCA and Cllr. David Potter. Almost 2 months ago, someone was knocked over and killed when a car went straight through a red traffic light at the Spar. There are dragsters and several motorbikes that make an incredible noise almost every Friday and Saturday evening both in Blairgowrie and on Jan Smuts Ave. The traffic lights at Vega on Jan Smuts are often knocked over in these races leaving the residents to suffer in the traffic. The BCA would like to investigate the possibility of laying charges against the individuals caught behaving recklessly in this regard.
- **Homeless / Displaced persons** – Jed has attended several workshops run by a City Councillor in this regard. There is a handbook being developed on what residents can do and where they can take the Homeless or who to contact. It remains a very difficult issue as some of these people have nowhere to go and residents feel bad chasing them away all the time. On the other hand recent information from SAPS shows an increase in house breaking with the suspected involvement of some of these people. The BCA is looking for volunteers to take over this cause and attend the workshops, engage with relevant role players and feed info back to the BCA Comm etc.
- **Smart Metre Issues:** The BCA continues to make its voice heard with the City Council in this regard. It was acknowledged that only 1 resident, a supporter of the BCA, had engaged with the BCA to voice his disapproval of our actions and expressed that he was happy with his smart metre. But why is this important to the BCA? There are health issues / human rights violations / resident consultation is a must). Jed did not go into detail as much info has been disseminated in the past few months.
- Residential / Business Zoning / illegal businesses leading us to ... **The Blairgowrie Precinct Plan**; it was announced that due to the increase in rezoning applications, the exposure of illegal business etc., that the BCA had begun investigating the possibility of a Precinct Plan

for Blairgowrie. (Subsequent to the AGM, Cllr. Herbert has contacted the BCA to inform us that such a plan exists and was submitted to the Mayoral Committee for approval in March 2011. He believes that it has been approved but has not received anything in writing. This also does raise certain issues – although there was public involvement, it was before we went and got ourselves organised as a suburb and before the existence of the BCA. The process started in 2006 and the last public involvement was 2009 – it may well be outdated in terms of what we feel is right for our suburb. We have requested a copy of the Plan, will scrutinise it and will then contact you, the residents, to give you our thoughts – and get yours.)

- **Continued Suburb / Crime Awareness measures / Hotspots** – it is frustrating that some residents will not pay attention to any efforts to increase the safety of the suburb; some won't join the BCA (even just get onto the free emailing list) to receive important info and updates; others continue to act negligently which means we struggle to get our crime figures down because of 'opportunity crimes'. The BCA has identified about 15 Hotspots in Blairgowrie and has made this info available to SAPS, Securitas and ADT for regular patrols.

What can YOU do?

- The theme for 2012 (and going forward) is **“Neighbour for Neighbour”**
- Know your neighbours from BOTH a crime and a social responsibility aspect. SAPS tell us that the only way to reduce crime in an area is to know your immediate neighbours. We also need everyone to find out if their neighbour is on the BCA database and receiving regular emails. We're not concerned if they're a member of another body – are they on the database of the BCA?
- Be aware; take note of things in the suburb; Get involved – please don't freeload
- Report any issues in your street (street light out; water pipe burst) to the relevant City Dept. (details on www.myblairgowrie.co.za) ; get a REF number
- Pay subscriptions – if this BCA is to continue and if it's going to get right what we need to, then it's going to take a financial commitment as well (THANK YOU to those who do!!)
- Know your street captain, or become one
- Know who your Ward Councillor is (there are 3 of them!!)
- You are at liberty to remove all illegal posters attached to STOP signs and Traffic lights. On your walk around the neighbourhood, take note of any posters attached to these poles. Please do not rip down election posters or anything that has an official City Council permission stamp (you'll know it when you see it)
- Report all suspicions and crime to the police (10111) / Call the SAPS Sector 1 vehicle numbers 071 675 6044/6
- Sign up with a Security Service Provider; it is suspected that a frightening number of homes only have security signage but are not linked to armed response. This endangers everyone.

BEAUTIFICATION OF BLAIRGOWRIE

Address by Gail Jelley, BCA Head of Suburb Beautification

- **Blairgowrie Parks Initiative** announced and more details will follow in the coming weeks. We have set up Park Co-ordinators for each of the Parks in Blairgowrie with a view to keeping them more litter free than is currently the case, supplementing City Park's efforts, planting indigenous trees where appropriate and keeping an eye-on security concerns in these open spaces and by-laws not being adhered to. An agreement with City Parks, the BCA, Securitas and ADT is in the process of being finalized with more details to follow. The Parks included are Delta Park, Nola Circle, Kenworthy Circle, Denise Circle, The Rose Garden, Blairgowrie Park and the section of Braamfontein Spruit along the Blairgowrie Border (Jan Smuts Avenue Bridge up to end of Blairgowrie Drive/Bantam Drive intersection). An acknowledgement was given to all those residents (even way before the BCA) have given so much of their time and energy in our various parks.
- **Conrad Drive Beautification Project.** This is a BCA plan to beautify traffic islands along Conrad Drive being the main road of Blairgowrie as a focal point, namely "Talisman Island" at the top of Conrad Drive, the two smaller islands in front of the Engen Garage and the Traffic Island at the Intersection of Jan Smuts and Conrad Drive. Spartan Computers have also requested that they be able to "beautify the open space in front of their boundary fence at the Intersection of Conrad Drive and Jan Smuts Avenue for which we now also have approval from City Parks. Fund raising has been difficult but some companies have committed funding and so has the BCA and we will be starting with the 2 islands in front of the Engen Garage in the coming weeks.
- **Painting of the Blairgowrie Swimming Pool wall** sponsored by the Yellow Paint Shop, Blairgowrie. Many residents of Blairgowrie came out in support and assisted in the painting work.
- **Recycling Proposal** for the suburb is pending as research is currently being done to offer residents the option of having their recycling collected weekly from their homes at a discounted rate as well as a central well-controlled collection area for the suburb. Pikitup are still some way off from rolling out a recycling solution to all suburbs as we heard from Councillor Truluck at the AGM given the funding problems Pikitup is facing so we are keen to offer residents an alternative until such time that Pikitup eventually are able to offer residents a recycling service.
- **1st Pavement Competition for Blairgowrie** launched late last year and judging finalized in March this year. It was moderately successful and we hope to grow the participation and enthusiasm for the competition over the coming years.

BCA MARKETING

Address by Ashraf Essack, BCA Head of Marketing

○ **Responsibilities**

The newly formed Marketing Portfolio will be responsible for:

- Branding the BCA
- Creating platforms whereby the BCA will have greater visibility
- More streamlined communications
- Facilitating interactive communications with the community via Facebook and Twitter
- Building on the four key points set out by the BCA (1. Educate the Community; 2. Escalate Issues; 3. Ensure good Communication; 4. Fight Crime)

○ **Active Participation**

We will also engage with the community via several active participation events. These will include the following:

- **“Neighbour for Neighbour”** – this campaign will be the primary drive for the year. More details will be released over the forthcoming weeks.
- **Pavement competition** – to build on this initiative that was successfully launched in 2011.
- **Spruit initiative** – to build on the work done by the Beautification Committee with regards to promoting the use of the Spruit and all the other parks and public spaces.

○ **Key Focus**

Not every household in Blairgowrie is on our database and we will be on an aggressive campaign to:

- Get every household onto the confidential database
- Grow the number of contributors and subscribers to the BCA
- Have a dedicated fundraising team

SECURITAS

Address by Lance Harris

- Securitas (who purchased Piranha Security) has essentially had a major presence in Blairgowrie for 2 years now
- Securitas has just acquired the clients from Top Security in suburbs where they felt they already had a presence – including Blairgowrie and so you should be seeing a lot more homes with Securitas Signage.
- There has been a general reduction in crime since Piranha / Securitas were appointed in August 2010
- We have an iron-clad Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Securitas which allows the BCA to protect the collective rights of Securitas members within Blairgowrie
- They have 3 dedicated vehicles in Blairgowrie
- They remain committed to providing an excellent service to the residents

A reminder of BCA Subscription Rates and Banking Details

- Subscription: Pensioner Home (PEN) : R50 per month
- Subscription: Resident Home (RES) : R75 per month
- Subscription: Business (BIZ) : R100 per month
- No joining fees / The fees are voluntary

BCA Banking Details:

Account Name: Blairgowrie Community Association (or BCA)

Bank: Standard Bank, Randburg Branch (code 01 8005)

SAVINGS account number: 027277259

Reference: Your STREET ADDRESS (plus PEN or RES or BIZ)

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

There was a brief question and answer session in which the following points we addressed:

- **Problems with Pikitup persist.** Cllr. Tim Truluck answered that they know that this City Dept. is essentially bankrupt and that we experience delays in the collection of refuse due to fleet problems. It is being addressed and apparently they are hiring in help.
- A resident commented that, having just moved into the area, he'd noticed that **electricity charges** were slightly higher than his previous neighbourhood. Linus Muller said he believed this was due to a "Service Charge" but would look into it.
- **Map of Blairgowrie:** after a resident enquired, Jed mentioned that there would soon be various maps on the website which would include the THREE WARD AREAS so you know where you belong and also the BCA's division of the suburb into FOUR AREAS in terms of managing our suburb from a street captain point of view.

A Final Word & Thank You

As the Chairperson, it truly meant a lot that people expressed their gratitude and appreciation to me and the members of the Committee during and after the meeting. It was superb meeting some new people and we know this year is going to be a good one for Blairgowrie.

Thank you to everyone who attended and also those who emailed a word of encouragement over the past year, challenged us, paid their subs (or wrote to say why they might not be able to do so), entered the Pavement Competition, arrived to help paint a wall, picked up litter in their street and so on and so on ... **You** make this suburb a great place to build a future.

The BCA would like to thank Barbara Day from Fine and Country International Realty for the generous donation of the spot prizes for the evening.