

# STRANDMEER HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

DECEMBER 2019

### Introduction

The Strandmeer Homeowners Association is a Body Corporate and is administered through the Executive Committee, which is a body of persons elected by homeowners, and for the past year consisted of Peter Redmond (chairman), Gerry Schulz, Kobus Potgieter, Hempas Rademeyer and Rob Webster. The day to day management of the Estate is performed by Rowan Jones and his team. The administration, accounting and secretarial duties are carried out by Plett Property Management. The Estate Architect is Roberto Boni.

Rowan has to be commended for keeping the Estate in pristine condition and for his commitment in keeping homeowners aware of the latest Estate and other news and happenings.

Patrick Sassin and Johann Koch and the rest of the Plett Property Management team as well as Roberto must be thanked for their (always available) support and advice as well as the efficient performance of their duties.

Strandmeer encapsulates assets with a value probably in excess of R 200 million. It is therefore in everyone's interest that all homes and common areas are kept in top condition and security is kept as tight as possible at all times. Furthermore the Estate must be financially sound so that value can be maintained as best as possible despite the general depressed market conditions.

### Financial Report for the year ended 31 October 2019.

Plett Property Management have circulated the financial statements and management accounts for the last financial year.

Income for the year exceeded budget by R 22 426. This was mainly from interest received as well as recoveries from other Keurbooms River Road Estates of their share of costs for security cameras installed on the road.

Municipal charges recoveries exceeded expenditure by R 70 388. This position has come about as the accounts now show thirteen months of recoveries against only twelve months of expenditure. Historically recoveries were raised in the Strandmeer books two months after the internal readings had been taken by the Estate Manager, while the municipal bill on the bulk supply meter taken by the Council representative, relating to readings for the same time period as the internal readings, was brought to book one month earlier. This position made it difficult to monitor break even on recovery over expenditure in the monthly management accounts. In order to rectify this position the Excom resolved to change the basis so that both the expenditure and the recoveries for a period are reflected in the same accounting period which is one month in arrears.

Salaries and wages was in excess of budget mainly because an amount of R 6 000 was provided for the pension reserve, however a surplus of R 16 796 on the security monitoring expense was achieved

due to the fact that although the monitoring commenced on 1 July we only commenced monthly payments from 1 October 2019. Garden refuse removal and expenditure on swimming pool walls was more than budget but savings of R 96 600 was brought about by the change to palisade fencing despite the greater expenditure on cameras etc. An overall surplus of R 86 877 was achieved despite having budgeted for a deficit of R 156 640. This resulted from the security fencing changes and the municipal charges recoveries mentioned above.

Budget for the year ending 31 October 2020.

It is proposed that the main levy for the year to 31 October 2020 be maintained at R 1522.50 per month, which is the same as for the last year, and is budgeted to leave a small surplus. General expenditure is budgeted to increase by 11% over 2019 budget. This is caused mainly by inflation and small additional items. Repairs and maintenance has increased by 35% mainly due to the need to provide substantially more for garden refuse removal and for an upgrade to the gate intercom. Extraordinary expenditure is substantially reduced as the security upgrades budget for fencing and cameras falls away. However items have been budgeted for various minor improvements and for possible pool area repairs to paving and walls.

Security.

Strandmeer has experienced two attempted burglaries, two stolen TVs, two boat motors stolen and an armed robbery in the past year. River Tides also had a couple of burglaries. However these criminal activities seem to have receded in the last few months.

The Keurbooms River area generally has experienced armed robberies, boat motors stolen and, at Keurbooms River Lodge, various break-ins. Again these criminal acts seem to have reduced recently.

One assumes that these perceived reductions in criminal activity have occurred due to the increased upgrading of security by Estates in the Keurbooms area. Criminal activities in the town area apparently have not reduced.

The following is a summary of the security upgrades undertaken during 2019:

It was agreed at the 2017 AGM that a more holistic approach to security be devised considering the vulnerability of our estate after several burglaries. A proposal was tabled at the 2018 AGM and an amount of R 450,000 was approved to install a fence on the northern and eastern boundaries and 4 cameras, to be monitored by Fidelity/ADT, at the river front.

As none of the previous local resident Trustees involved with the security proposal stood for re-election, and therefore were not available to supervise the implementation of the security system, Gerry Schulz was co-opted as a Trustee and, together with Kobus Potgieter, requested to take over from the previous trustee.

In January 2019 an on-site visit with fence contractors established that the Clearview fence proposed would not be suitable due to the steep terrain. The only place where this fence could be effectively installed would be the Tennis court area and the Botten's property. The Botten's agreed for the sake of uniformity they would accept a fence structure as most suited and effective to Strandmeer.

In February we requested new proposals for a 2.1m palisade fence to stretch from the tennis court wall (gate) to the Scott-Brown property. In addition, the palisade fence which was installed as an

emergency measure at the Botten's was to be removed and re installed down the south section from the Scott- Brown property along Rivertides. To increase the security level, and minimising the risks of penetrating the palisade fence at ground level, we added razor wire cast in concrete to the entire length of the fence. In comparison the Clearview fence was only to be 1.8m with no ground protection.

The level of security between the two different fences are very similar, both can be breached given time and the right tools. The order was placed on the 19 February 2019 to proceed with a palisade fence.

Due to the savings achieved by opting for the palisade fence we could now improve on our early warning system (CCTV) to include the back fence, the slipway up and down, the entry from Rivertides ,the estuary path facing south , internally up and down the main road and the entry and exit gates. We now have 16 cameras that are being monitored with the previous 4 gate cameras still only recording. These 4 cameras were re sited to give the best coverage.

We now have a more integrated security system whereby Gate – Keeper plays a major role in conjunction with the gate cameras to monitor and record all activities at our entrance gate.

The monitored cameras employ analytical software that will only alert the control centre once a human is detected in the view of that camera. The estate manager and a trustee are notified by phone and WhatsApp of any breaches. Armed response is also dispatched. A screen shot of the breach is also sent via WhatsApp. Our local recorder is set to record any change in picture from any camera. It is therefore very easy to play back any activity activation the camera recorded. Trustee's also have the option to view these activities on their smartphone's.

Practicalities prevent us having the cameras monitored during the day although activations are still recorded. This was recently demonstrated whereby youngsters climbed our entrance gate wall after failing to gain access. We are now in the process of heightening the walls and installing an alarm that will trigger an armed response

#### Amendment to Building Guidelines.

Building Lines can be encroached in certain cases. However in order to give effect to homeowners to build decks over building lines and, in the case of river fronting properties, to restrict the possibility of decks advancing too close to the west (river fronting) boundary and thereby diminishing the river front open feel (but as well as taking heed of what has already been built), it is proposed that an amendment to the Guidelines be made as per the attached resolution, to be put to the AGM to be approved with or without amendment or rejected altogether.

#### Electricity Demand Charge Out

It has been requested that the method of calculation to individual homeowners of the maximum demand element of the Strandmeer electricity bill be reviewed. It is expected that alternative proposals to the current method will be put forward at the AGM.

General.

Excom Committee Members and the Estate Manager are not policemen. Owners must develop good relations with other owners and try to resolve issues amicably. This will be more effective and sustainable than trying to enforce changes in behaviour through fines and regulations via the Executive Committee.

Homeowners are expected to abide by the building guidelines, plan submission procedures and Estate rules and regulations which are available on the Strandmeer Estate website.

Conclusion

I must thank my fellow Excom members for their input and especially Gerry Schulz for the many hours he devoted to the security fencing and cameras, Rowan Jones who is doing a great job trying to keep some order in our Estate and together with his team keeping everything in pristine condition, Patrick Sassin, Johann Koch, Lois van Wyk and the Plett Prop staff, and Henry Timme and all homeowners who gave their support and opinions.

Finally I wish all of you the best for a happy season and a prosperous new year.

Peter Redmond

Chairman