



Southern Cape Fire Protection Association NPC
Annual General Meeting
George Municipality Conference Hall, 25 January 2019
Minutes

1. Opening & Welcome

- Deon van Zyl, Chairperson of the SCFPA, opened the meeting and welcomed all present.
- Mr van Zyl indicated that he is a non-executive director and is not involved in the day-to-day operations of the company.
- There is no quorum at this meeting. According to the SCFPA Constitution, 30% members present will constitute a quorum, thus no resolution will pass at this meeting and a special general meeting will be held in 2 weeks' time.

2. Approval of previous minutes

- The previous meetings minutes was approved be Keith Spencer and seconded by Ray-Yaan Majiet.

3. Chairperson's Report

- Mr van Zyl gave a presentation on the various aspects of the SCFPA, namely Integrated Fire Management (IFM), the Fire Management Units (FMUs), membership growth and the current status of the FPA. Paul Gerber, General Manager of the FPA and the DAFF Fire Advisor, concluded the presentation with an overview of the recent disastrous fires in the area and the lessons learned.
- Mr van Zyl indicated that with all the fires the past 2 years, the SCFPA personnel have not been focussing on the main purpose of a fire protection association, which is prevention, but rather on firefighting. To get ahead of all the fires, more personnel are needed to increase the effectiveness of the association.
- Mr Gerber mentioned that the SCFPA personnel must ultimately only be 5 - 10% involved with firefighting, but this is very difficult with the limited personnel. He

referred to the burn scar map and indicated the many areas that have not burned and are still a fire risk.

- Mr Gerber gave a quick overview of the causes of the recent fires:

- Drought (Fuel moisture content)
- Extremely high fuel load
- Ignition Point
- Extreme weather (90–120 Km/hour)
- Agricultural land are not being managed
- No defendable spaces (on farms and around towns)
- Lack of resources (Fire Fighting & Prevention)

Ultimately, a lack of Integrated Fire Management

- A discussion was initiated regarding the implementation plan of the SCFPA, the effectiveness of the FMUs and how to obtain official recognition as a 'Fire Management Unit'. Mr Gerber indicated that the SCFPA has a 5 year Strategic plan that will be revised in the following 2 months. An FMU workshop will also be scheduled to discuss matters above and the outcome will be send through to the members. The AGM is not a platform to discuss operational matters.

4. Financial Report – Francois Slabber

- Francois Slabber, the Treasurer of the SCFPA, gave an overview of the 2017-2018 financial statements and mentioned that the complete statements are available on request from the FPA Knysna office.
- Due to the public interest score of the company being above 350, a separate independent auditor must be appointed. In this case the auditors for the company is PKF VGA Knysna.
- The company has applied to SARS for a Public Benefit Organisation status but was denied. Further effort will be put into this to obtain the status.
- Mr Gerber clarified the recent funds received from the Business and World Wide Fund (WWF) and how these funds may only be used for a specific purpose within the SCFPA, e.g. alien invasive vegetation clearing, fire breaks, etc.

5. SCFPA Membership Fees

- Mr Gerber indicated that currently the SCFPA is financially secure but there are no indication of what might happen in the future. Currently the SCFPA are in partnership with Working on Fire (WoF) and manages 12 WoF teams. The current WoF program runs until 2021 and although it might not stop, the management might change and there are no guarantee that the current funding the FPA receives will continue. The SCFPA are currently struggling to efficiently do integrated fire management with the limited personnel at hand.

- A comparison was made between the SCFPA's fees and fees of other FPAs in the Western Cape. With the increase as proposed, the SCFPA will be in line with the other fire protection associations in the province, and in some cases, depending on the size of the property, be less expensive.
- A suggestion was made by a member to add FMUs as a category on the fee structure. Mr Gerber indicated that this will be discussed at the FMU workshop as discussed during the chairperson's report.
- A membership fee proposal was made by one of the members present - all members falling in the agricultural, small holdings, lifestyle farms, conservation areas and private nature reserves category must pay the annual R500.00 fixed amount as well as the rate per hectare (currently R0.83c/ha). It also proposed that the municipalities pay the fixed R500.00 on top of their annual membership fee. No objections to this proposal were received at the meeting. A special general meeting will be held in 2 weeks' time to ratify the proposal.

6. SCFPA Eastern Region's Report:

7.1 Regional Manager's Report – Dirk Smit

- Mr Smit gave an overview of the current status of fire prevention, protection and suppression in the SCFPA eastern region. He touched on public education done, total controlled burns, clearing and fire breaks created as well as enforcement of the NVFFA and staff/member training achieved.

7. SCFPA Western Region's Report

8.1 Regional Manager's Report – Charl Wade

- Mr Wade reported back on public education, membership, total prevention work done, enforcement of the NVFFA, FMU plans and the current resources in the region.

8. SCFPA Directors - Nominations

- According to the SCFPA Constitution, the company must have 9 directors, currently only 3 positions are filled, and we are struggling to find willing candidates for the positions. Mr Gerber stated that directors must be an FPA member, a non-government official and preferably have knowledge of the workings of a fire protection association. The SCFPA directors receives no remuneration.
- A proposal was made to include a category for non-members as directors. Mr Gerber indicated that this will be investigated.
- An email requesting additional nominations will be circulated early in February.

9. Additional Points:

14.1 Invasive alien management after recent fires - Japie Buckle (DEA: Chief Directorate Natural Resource Management)

- Mr Buckle proposed that a training course be developed for SCFPA managers as well as land owners on the best methodology to do alien clearing as it is very site specific.
- Garden Route Environmental Forum (GREF) developed a fire management plan for the entire Garden Route District Municipality (GRDM). Agreements and collaboration is needed from different stakeholders, as well as the community, to create more secure environment and tackle to problem at hand.
- Recent fires provided an opportunity to deal with the invasive aliens now, before the vegetation becomes too large to manage. A prevention plan must be drawn up and all stakeholders must sign off and implement as agreed.
- Plans are in place to try and establish a resilient fund with the remaining money from the Business Fund and attempt to get additional funds to assist with this process.
- It was calculated that it will cost approximately R700 000 000 per year within a time frame of 9 years, to clear all alien vegetation in the GRDM (on all land).
- There is a great need for assistance on private land, land owners do not have the financial capability to deal with the problem. A future project is to provide herbicide assistance to private land owners to develop an alien management plan for the property and provide herbicide and training for the owner. The labour is the responsibility of the land owner. An application was submitted and still await the outcome.
- Mr Gerber indicated that the SCFPA FMUs and their members will be the first contact for the herbicide assistance as they already showed intent to comply by belonging to the SCFPA. The SCFPA is also part of the GREF committee.
- Mr Buckle indicated that they are aware that there are alien vegetation properties on state land as well. If money becomes available from DEA, they will have to look at state land first.

14.2 Presentation on F-500, a multi- purpose fire suppression agent - Hazard Control Technologies

- For more information, please contact Dirk de Waal at dirk@dhct.africa or 082 332 8733.

10. Closing