



Annual General Meeting 2018
Venue: Observatory Community Centre
Time : 18:00 - November 13th, 2018

Chair's Report

Some time ago, not too long ago in our recent history, the living definition of a Civic was one of relatively simpler terms and concerns. A ratepayers association that functioned under a Management Committee with guidance by a paid City official with vital issues such as security, business licencing from liquor to entertainment, arts initiatives, Architecture and Heritage, Social cohesion, community activities, the building contestation. A year ago, this changed. Today, with all the above vital issues included, the range of responsibility and scope has intensified on all levels.

With this, and also seen across the City, the Civic has become a emblem of democracy. A clean place of democratic functionality. Perhaps even, the first port of of call in reminding a resident that she is a citizen, and although we had State Capture, we resisted Civic capture.

During the time of our civic challenge last year which you overcame to where we are now, historic macro and micro events have happened. A change of State President, a change of Mayor, and a radical change of Mayco. You are needed once more tonight to make decisions towards our path to justice. This evening, you will decide on whether or not we take the City to task on violations against us, and you will be tasked with guiding this committee on how best to do so. Whatever the outcome, let it be said, that in Observatory, we observe the principles of democracy and public participation, a notion perhaps almost extinct these days. But like the leopard toad, year in and year out, will will survive with a little help from each other.

I am extremely grateful to the team I have worked with this year. Extraordinarily talented people, kind, tenacious, courageous and loving.

These recent significant political changes in our Country and City have ushered in hope, as well as, a deep sense of uncertainty and anxiety. Yet, from a Civic perspective, all this somehow has brought strength and meaning to the role of the Civic. Its emboldened sense of of who we are as South Africans as we face a growing oceanic troph of disappointed with all major political parties and their promises. Macro politics has failed us. In the Water Crisis, it was the residents who came to the call. Residents who looked toward the higher ideal of putting water savings first despite the failings of political system of a City that knew about the crisis long before it occurred.

As well as a government that had the money to support and chose not to. Both were the wrong kinds of politics. In all honesty, the City and this national government erred in the crisis, but it was you, the residents that reclaimed the dignity of the City in which we live. The City administration is being showered with praise the world over, for saving its population from a disaster. The truth is we, the people, did it. Because we recognised a reality, quickly mobilised, and did something about it. We stopped a very threatening outcome.

In this regard, Observatory was at the core, as well as, the forefront. We held town hall meetings, started online groups, including two whatsapp groups, a Facebook page just on water in Obs. The Observatory Water Warriors came into being. A task group was endorsed by the OCA, known as the Water and Sanitation Committee, we engaged in a census, and Observatory, on Malta park, was earmarked as the site of the world's first drive-in Water depot should day Zero occur. Well, an astro turf is there now... so one would have to wait and see where the goal post lead to.

Today, right now, a few hundred metres away, we face a multi billion rand private development proposal on the banks of the Liesbeeck, assisted by the City, as well as, various government departments. A development that defies morality, science, and history. One that defies the essence and soul of Observatory.

We face also an alleged hundred million rand development of a stadium that is eeking its way to certainty. What we do in so uncertain terms face are series of process violations On Malta Park. In Dec last year, a steel fence was erected. Today an astro turf imposes itself on Malta Park, which is a flood plain, part of the The Two Rivers Urban Park, and an historical precinct of the first Free Burgher farms whose top soil was ploughed by the first slaves brought in to the country by the the VOC.

In the absence of political courage, we have our own moral courage, one that we choose to enshrine. One we choose to fight for though service and commitment to each other.

These are the tasks and services the OCA has engaged for you.

Occupy Movement on Malta Park in January 2018

Held a successful AGM in January 2018 [with huge growth in membership](#)

Held public meetings [on Water Tariff and Water Crisis](#)

Held public engagements and formulated comment [on the River Club development](#)

Development resulting in a two-year protection order by Heritage Western Cape.

Awarded [Most Active Conservation Body](#), 2018, by the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sports.

Started the [Obs Water Warriors and online platforms](#)

Adopted a new task committee, the Water and Sanitation Committee.

Initiated an [online map of large developments](#)

Public engagement and comment [on the City's draft Budget](#)

Town hall meeting [on Hartleyvale](#)

Implementation of an Action Group on the Malta / Hartleyvale issue

Held a [Visioning workshop](#), 2018

Activation of a Constitutional Task Committee to strengthen the OCA's constitution

Screening of *Living History of Obs*

The OCA's Architecture & Heritage and the Large Developments Group continue to monitor and comment on developments in the area.

Workshop on [social issues and homelessness](#), June 2018

Submission of [community objections to Hartleyvale / Malta Park](#), June 2018

The Ministerial Tribunal of TRUP

A PAIA request on Malta Park

Hosted Talks on History, Dr Robinson

On How To Capture A City, Crispan Olver

Shot two short documentaries on Malta Park

Hosted with CAPP, Albie Sachs, the Civic By-Law and public Consultation.

May we remain who we are, and never falter, for we are blessed as the custodians of the nexus of mankind.

Sincerely,

Tauriq Jenkins