



# OBSERVATORY

Civic Association

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES**

26<sup>th</sup> November 2025 6pm

at Observatory Primary School hall and virtual on Zoom (hybrid)

1. Welcome and outline of procedures for the AGM

The meeting opened at 18.05. The chair welcomed attendees and outlined the agenda.

2. Apologies, confirmation of member numbers and quorum

The chair noted that we had 67 paid up members which was up from 47 last year.

In attendance, there were 27 members in person and 6 online, which was more than the required quorum (a third of our membership or 23 members). (see attendees list below). The AGM was declared quorate.

3. Minutes of the previous AGM held on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2024 were circulated prior to the AGM and were available on the OCA Website. There was no discussion and the minutes were adopted as a fair reflection of the 2024 AGM.

4. The AGM then invited Cecil Madell, a Senior lecturer in Town Planning at UCT and a seasoned Town Planner to speak on the issue of a Local Area Plan for Observatory.

- a. In his talk, Cecil highlighted how an Area Plan is meant to be the basis for all development decision making in an area. He discussed the role of zoning schemes in establishing property rights and the need for structured local area plans to capture community input and guide future developments. He highlighted the necessity of integrating heritage planning within a broader community framework, advocating for a comprehensive local area plan that includes heritage considerations, environmental factors, and social issues. He suggested that detailed heritage information could be included as an addendum to ensure protection and recognition of heritage while addressing community needs
- b. In the absence of a Local Area Plan, the default is to revert to higher level spatial plans but that is unable to appreciate the needs of local communities. He pointed out that there are only about 7 local areas plans contained in the Municipal Planning Bylaw (Constantia, Scarborough, Simonstown, Sunnyside, Elsieskraal River Valley, Camps Bay, Durbanville CBD) and they are 'historical' as a result of the integration of multiple local authorities into on Metro over the years.
- c. The City has not done any local plans since then but they should be affording local communities input into local plans as per legislation.
- d. What would a local plan include? It would be broad, including issues related to public spaces, heritage, architectural design, tree planting, main street programmes, etc. It could inform budgeting. Therefore, we need to get our Councillor on board.

He suggested that the OCA formally request the city to commission a local area plan and encouraged participation in upcoming planning forums.

- e. The meeting agreed in principle that we should pursue the development of a local area plan and invite Obs residents to work on this, submit through our councillor to the City for the City to support the development of a local area plan for Observatory.

5. The Heritage or Environmental Consultant of Integrity (HECI) award was given to Aditya Kumar. He is an Observatory resident, architect and housing activist who served as Director of the Development Action Group and of Ndifuna Ukwazi in recent years. He previously held leadership positions in prominent civil society organizations across the globe and assisted the OCA with advice and with mediation support when our campaign against the River Club development was threatened by internal conflict. Adi expressed gratitude for the award and his commitment to continue supporting the OCA. The HECI certificate is attached (Appendix 1).
6. The Chairperson, James Clacherty, then gave his report which included as Appendix 2. He thanked the outgoing committee for their guidance as he navigated his first year in community organizing
7. The Treasurer's Report including the Annual Financial Report for the period April 2024 to March 2025 was presented. There was a modest surplus for the year and we are no longer having to raise and spend a lot of money on legal fees. We will discontinue our PBO status with SARS since the issuing of SARS S18A certificates is no longer needed.
8. No motions were received so we moved directly to the elections.
9. Ms Crystal West from DAG took over as election officer and outlined the procedures for the election. There were 8 nominations for 8 positions on the Management Committee, one nomination per portfolio. As a result, there were no competitive nominations but members were still invited to vote in favour, against, or to abstain. Nominees who did not achieve 50% of the vote would not be elected to the position. The results were as follows:

Position	Nomination	Votes for	Votes Against	Votes abstain
Chair	James Clacherty	32	0	0
Treasurer	Joy Robinson	32	0	0
Secretary	Leslie London	32	0	0
Communications	Edwin Angless	31	0	1
Heritage & Architecture	Andrew Massyn	32	0	0
Pepper Square car park	Devos Rabie	32	0	0
Social Issues	Anthony Hodgson	32	0	0
Environment	Puleng	32	0	0

#### 10. Discussion

In the closing discussion, the following points were raised:

- Marc Turok is engaging with a traffic engineer to propose a plan to improve traffic flow on the Main Rd. He invited anyone interested in assisting to contact him.
- Puleng Lange-Stewart invited anyone interested in working on environmental and greening initiatives to contact her.

- A concern was expressed about the proliferation of shops/businesses selling marijuana/marijuana products in Obs. It has been discussed in the CPF which noted that there are 14 such outlets in Obs alone. The concern is if the shops are used to sell other drugs under the counter. The current law has decriminalised private use but left a vacuum regarding the sale of marijuana and related products. In this gap, there has been an explosion of commerce. We will have to await a regulatory framework to manage this in future.
- A question was asked about the chaotic event held on the Malta Park fields a few weeks back. It was explained that the organisers relocated the event to Malta Park at the last minute because they were denied permission at a Wynberg site (fire hazard) and so the preparations for the event were completely inadequate and there were many problems (traffic, noise, lack of amenities). However, the second event was better organised.
- Participants were reminded of the public consultation on the Hartleyvale precinct. An exhibition and opportunity to comment will be included in the Streetopia festival on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup>, from 10am to 2pm in the Observatory Community Hall.
- OCA will host a stand at Streetopia inviting Obs residents to mark up a map of Obs with where they live, what they most like about Obs, or what they would like to see in Obs.

The incoming chair noted all these useful suggestions and indicated the new committee would look into how to follow through on those.

#### 11. Vote of Thanks and Closure

The chair thanked all those for attending both in person and online and closed the meeting at 7.20pm.