

MAY 2013

Bulletin

Official newsletter of the Overstrand Municipality

DRAFT MUNICIPAL BUDGET FOR 2013/2014 INCOME NEEDS TO INCREASE SHARPLY, BUT SO WILL EFFICIENCY

A double digit percentage increase in income will be needed in the next financial year to ensure that Overstrand Municipality stays financially viable, but that will go hand in hand with a major effort to increase efficiency.

This was the gist of the presentation on the draft budget for 2013/2014 by Cllr Ben Solomon, Mayoral Committee Member for Finance and Economic Development, and the Director of Finance, Mr Henk Kleinloog, to the Overstrand Municipal Advisory Forum on 3 April 2013.

The proposed revenue budget amounts to R748 million (an increase of 13.75 per cent), the expenditure budget to R829 million (an increase of 9.26 per cent) and the budget for capital projects to R104 million (a decrease of 37.5 per cent).

The difference between the revenue and expenditure budgets of R81 million is the result of technical provisions for depreciation and other items that do not affect the municipality's cash position. The actual cash surplus will amount to R8 million.

The overall impact of tariff increases on household bills has been kept below 10 per cent and for indigent households less than 5 per cent.

A new rate has been introduced for undeveloped land. The rates increase for commercial land and improvements is 10,12 percent and for residential land and improvements 6,94 percent. The reason for these increases is to accommodate increased expenditure, the higher cost of the indigent policy and to raise money for capital projects in the following financial year in the form of the surplus of R8 million.

According to Cllr Solomon the most contentious issue apart from the increases in rates, is that from the new financial year only the indigent will receive the 6 kl of free water. Other consumers will now have to pay R3.50 per kl for that. This is in line with the statement of the Minister of Finance in this year's Parliamentary Budget Speech that free water was never intended for everybody.

The basic monthly charge in respect of electricity will increase by 22 %. Consumption cost increases will vary between 3 % and 9 % (with an average of 5.27 %).

He said that cleaning contracts and other projects to the value of R3 million that was partially funded by the Extended Public Works Programme, will have to be carried fully by the

municipality in the new financial year because the EPWP funds must be used on new projects.

Cllr Solomon described the 2013/2014 Draft Budget as the most difficult one of his seven years in Council. He pointed out constraints such as the maintenance of municipal buildings and infrastructure, the ageing of the vehicle fleet and wages and salaries.

Due to capital spend, the maintenance of the municipal assets is increasing at a much higher rate than the inflation rate.

Cllr Solomon also said that the staff component increased by only 92 posts to a total of 1032 from 2006 to 2012, a growth of only 12 per cent over the period of 6 years or 2 per cent per year.

Amongst others, staff were added to the departments of Environmental Management Services (from 1 to 12), Law Enforcement (from 9 to 18), Fire and Emergency Services (from 3 to 12) and Finance (from 87 to 114).

With regard to capital projects he said no surplus funds are available and the municipality has reached its prudent borrowing limit.

Since 2006 more than R1,04 billion was spent by the Municipality on infrastructure, mainly on the development of water sources and plants for the treatment of drinking and waste water (R451 million), the upgrading of electricity feeder and substations and networks

(R209 million) and roads (R127 million)

Cllr Solomon added that the Western Cape government has invested about R4million over the same period in the area in the form of the improved hospital and clinics, new and upgraded schools, and major road projects on the R43, the Hemel en Aarde Valley and the link between Gansbaai and Elim.

The public and other roleplayers could comment on the draft budget for 2013/2014, the 2013/2014 review of the IDP as well as draft budget related policies until 30 April and these comments will be taken into consideration when the budget is finally considered by Council on 29 May 2013.



FALLEN SOLDIERS HONOURED

Mayor Nicolette Botha-Guthrie placed a sheaf of proteas to honour the soldiers that were killed and wounded in the Central African Republic on behalf of the Overstrand community when she visited the Cenotaph in Hermanus on 26 March 2013 to gain background information on proposals to maintain and extend the monument. These proposals will be passed on to the Ward Committee, the Heritage Committee and other roleplayers before a final decision will be taken. With her from left are Charl Wilmans, deputy commander of the local MOTH branch, Don Kearney, senior manager of the Hermanus administration, Harvey Saayman, commander of the local MOTH branch and member of the Regiment's Council of RWP, and Stephen Muller, Director of Municipal Infrastructure and Planning.

EXPLORE HERMANUS ON BICYCLE TAXIS

A free bicycle taxi service was added in April on a pilot project base to the unique experience visitors can enjoy in Hermanus, a town which is world-wide renowned for the best land based whale watching and the planet's only whale crier.

The purpose of this service is not only to impress visitors with the abundance of attractions and hospitality of the town without them getting lost, but also to drop them off on the doorsteps of the many exciting shops and other businesses in the CBD of Hermanus.

At the same time jobs are created and skills training and transfer to unemployed young people will take place.

At this stage three bicycle taxis traverse the business district from 9 am to 5 pm from Monday to Saturday on a hop-on-hop-off basis with designated stop points along the route, which will not only cover the beaten track, but also include hidden alleys and byways.

The cost of the service is carried by businesses, who can participate in the project by taking a listing or an advertisement on a map of Hermanus,



Back row from left: Adinda Jantjies (LED/Tourism), Soli Madikane (Director: LED, Overstrand Municipality), Lorenzo Isaacs (Senior Superintendent: Traffic Operations) Suné Greeff (Tourism Manager) and Chantelle Hill (LED Officer). Front row from left: Michellis Page, Sikholele Mvimbi and Lee-Roy Slingers. (Cyclists not on the photo: Yamnkela Silwana, Dylan Beukes and Avuyile Nkololwane.)

which is given free of charge to visitors. A simple listing costs about R30 per month, or R100 per month for bigger advertising space.

The first six taxi cyclists, drafted from the Overstrand Municipality's database of unemployed persons with an interest in the hospitality industry, received a week long training to become true "tourism ambassadors" for Hermanus, with a good knowledge of everything our town has to

offer to guests.

Customer care training and an educational tour to familiarize themselves with the attractions and points of interest of Hermanus were provided by the municipality's Tourism Department and the Overstrand Traffic Department gave them instruction in traffic safety.

The route was approved by the Overstrand Municipality's Traffic Department and will exclude the three major traffic circles of the town for safety reasons. The pedicabs are equipped with 18 gears, battery operated lights and indicators and special brakes to ensure safe stopping when loaded. Each bicycle can seat two

guests at a time.

The Bicycle Taxi project is a partnership between Overstrand Municipality, the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) and the Businesses of Hermanus. **For more information regarding advertising or listing on the map contact Mia at: 028 312 4228, 028 312 2660 or hermanusbicycletaxi@gmail.com.**

BE ENERGY WISE

Here are some more energy saving tips to help consumers in their daily activities to use electricity effectively and efficiently:

COMPUTER

- Always switch your computer off at the main power switch.
- If you leave it on standby or on sleep mode, it uses up to 50% of the power it uses when it is actually on.
- This is the same for all computer peripherals such as modems, network switches, sound systems, etc.

CELLPHONE

- If your cellphone is not charging, unplug the charger from the wall. Remember, while it is plugged in it still uses current.
- This is the same with all other charging type electronics.

AIR CONDITIONER

- Avoid using the air conditioner to heat or cool your bedroom, because as far as appliances go, it's the largest user of electricity in your house.

PRINTER AND RELATED EQUIPMENT

- Any office equipment, such as printers, should be switched off when they are not in use.
- Similar as with TVs by leaving them on, you're just wasting electricity and putting the machine under unnecessary strain.

LIGHTING

- Replace as many of your standard incandescent lamps as possible with CFL (Compact Fluorescent Lamps) or LED (Light Emitting Diode) energy-saving lamps.
- The CFL lamp lasts 6 times

longer whereas the LED lamp lasts 30 times longer.

- The standard incandescent lamp cost 10c/hour to run, the CFL lamp costs 1.5c/hour to run and the LED lamp costs 0.9c/hour to run.

- Also, remember to switch off non-essential lighting; you'll save a lot of money in the long run.

HEATER

- To save electricity in winter, use a temperature-controlled oil heater or a gas heater.

- It is much more cost effective to dress more warmly than to switch on the heater.

ELECTRIC BLANKET

- Instead of heating the entire bedroom with a heater or air conditioner, use an electric blanket to make your bed cosy.
- But switch off the electric blanket before you fall asleep. It's not only dangerous to keep it on while you are sleeping, it's an energy waster.
- Use nice warm winter pajamas

GEYSER

- To save electricity, get a geyser blanket.
- Insulate the hot water pipes and turn the thermostat down to 60 °C in winter and 55 °C in summer.
- Better still, switch it off after you have used it and back on 2 hours before you need to use it again. You'll save up to 50% of the energy consumed by your geyser and therefore about 20% of your total electricity bill (in the case of one geyser)
- Take a shower rather than a bath, and as mentioned before use an energy-saving shower head.

CLEARANCE CAN BE INFLUENCED BY BUILDING INSPECTIONS

The municipal property clearance process includes an inspection of the property by building inspectors when it is sold. The main purpose of that inspection is to establish if all structures on the property were approved by the Building Control Department, including sheds, lean-to's and conversions of garages into apartments, as well as if building lines were adhered to.

A report on illegal works and other irregularities is supplied to the buyer because he will be responsible for rectifying the problems after completion of the transaction.

Although illegal works per se would not stop the issuing of clearance certificates, it could happen that the buyer withdraws from the transaction because he was not aware of the problems.

Owners planning to put their properties up for sale, are advised to ensure upfront that there are approved building plans for all structures on the relevant properties.

Enquiries can be directed to the Building Control Services Department at 028 313 8089.

MAKE SURE ABOUT SARS DATES

Please note that there can be changes at short notice in the schedule for the monthly SARS visits to the Overstrand area for dealing with matters such as tax clearance, status checks and tax returns this month. Notice will be given to the local newspapers and on the municipal website.

Enquiries may also be directed to Jolanda Hendriks of the Local Economic Development Directorate at 028 313 8928 or to SARS at the following e-mail address: EngagementCT@sars.gov.za The next SARS dates are 7 May 2013 and 4 June 2013 from 11:00 to 18:00 at the Harmony Square Building on the Overstrand Municipal Campus in Hermanus.

ITALIAN SIBLINGS IN STRING TRIO

OAK will present an exciting young string trio in concert at 19h00 on Friday, 10 May, in the Civic Auditorium. Two sisters and a brother from Italy, known as TRIO BROZ, will play works of Beethoven, Sibelius, Schubert and Bacalov on the violin, viola and cello and will provide a wonderful evening of music!

Tickets are R100 (R50 for students). Book at BELLINI GALLERY on 028 312 4988. Further enquiries to René du Plooy, Secretary, on 082 940 4238.

