



WARD 90 NEWS

Official Newsletter of the Ward Councillor & Ward Committee



Volume 1

Issue 1

January 2010

DEAR RESIDENTS, COLLEAGUES & FRIENDS



Welcome to this very first edition of Ward 90 News – the official newsletter of the Ward Councillor and Ward Committee. It has been a long time coming but now that its here expect it to become a regular feature of your inbox over the next 18 months as we

progress towards the 2011 local government elections.

This newsletter will be the primary communication platform through which the Ward Committee and I will communicate to you the residents about issues that matter to you. As such, this newsletter aims to be brief and to the point, balanced, informative and helpful. If it fails to achieve any of these goals please feel free to let me know what you think works, what you think doesn't and what your thoughts for improvement might be.

Your feedback and thoughts should be sent to ward90news@yahoo.com.

IN THIS ISSUE:

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- Ensuring Service Delivery: Report, report, and report again!
- Did you know?
- Making sense of Africa and South Africa's changing political landscape in the C21.
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REPORT BACK

It's somewhat hard to believe that almost 7 months have passed since I was elected in July 2009 to replace former Ward Councillor and current Member of Parliament, Ian Ollis.

For those of you who may have missed the publication of the final electoral results - I was elected to replace Ian by a landslide of 92.6% of the votes cast. This is an outstanding result and I wish to thank all voters for coming out in the cold to cast their ballots.

The months since my election have been extremely busy. In addition to finding my feet as a Councillor (an ongoing process to be sure), attending to sittings of Council and oversight committee meetings (such as the Miss World debacle); I have also met with each Resident's Association in the Ward and become acquainted with the myriad of issues affecting the 70 000 residents of the Ward.

Overwhelmingly, problems in the Ward relate primarily to urban planning issues and aging and poorly maintained infrastructure.

Some of the highlights over this period have included:

- ***The finalization of the Ward based plan*** - working with the Ward Committee, we have now determined and listed the main focus areas to be considered by Council in the allocation of Opex (budget for operational projects in the Ward). This document will form the basis of the 'relationship' between the Ward and the City and is a list of projects requiring the City's attention.

- **Road resurfacing** – Residents will have noticed the resurfacing of: the north bound lane of William Nicol between Hyde Park and Craighall; Sturdee Avenue and Rosebank Road. This was achieved despite the lack of formal budget allocation for the 2009/2010 financial year; and in spite of the fact that City currently faces a backlog of more than R200 million with regard to road resurfacing.
- **The successful completion and acceptance by Council of the Parkmore Precinct Plan** - This is a significant achievement that will go a long way in restoring certainty to the property market of the suburb, prevent unscrupulous development and reinforce property values. A big congratulations goes out to all at the Parkmore Community Association for staying the course through an arduous process.
- **Discussions with JRA** in preparation of Rosebank for the World Cup., specifically regarding street signs and appropriate road markings as the world visits our Ward.
- **Removal of the homeless from along the Braamfontein Spruit and private properties throughout the Ward** – a persistent and ongoing problem made worse by the complete inaction of the City which refuses to acknowledge the existence of the homeless. This situation is made worse as a result of the lack of social infrastructure across all of the City's northern suburbs. Various resident groups and churches are attempting to assist and address the problem with mixed success.

ENSURING SERVICE DELIVERY: REPORT, REPORT, AND REPORT AGAIN!

Residents returning from their holidays will no doubt be shocked by the appalling state of many parts of Johannesburg, where reduced staff over the holidays and general lack of interest has resulted in overgrown parks, a pandemic of potholes, unkempt sidewalks and traffic islands.

I have this week been actively reporting problems across the Ward and we should see a general improvement as City officials and employees return to work this week. That said it is well worth reminding residents of their responsibility to ensure that the City provides the services which we, as rates payers, are entitled to.

Under the current system, the onus is placed on all of us to actively report service delivery failures or breakdowns to the City. In possession of this report (be sure to get a reference number for your report), the City is committed to responding and rectifying the situation within a reasonable time period. Note: This turn-around period varies by type of Municipal Owned Entity (MOE). Further, this turn-around period is not supported by enforceable service level agreements – as the ANC lead administration refuses to establish them.

As many of you are aware, service delivery breakdowns can be reported by calling the City's Call Centre on 011 375 5555. I am however, aware from numerous resident reports and personal experience that this Call Centre is grossly inefficient and many residents have been discouraged by what they see as a deliberate attempt to prevent them from reporting their service delivery problems!

There is a better way and it works (well mostly!)

Residents can take heart that there is a better way. Earlier this year the City expanded its E-Servicing capability to give residents the option of reporting their problems via the City's internet site. Requiring once-off registration, the E-Servicing functionality allows quick, convenient and hassle free reporting.

This system is, in my experience, is the most effective way of resolving problems in the City and I actively encourage ALL residents to make use of it for speedier resolution to problems in our Ward.

That is not to say that the system is perfect. For indeed it is not! I have; for example, had some references

issued by this online service which have never in fact been logged with the appropriate MOE.

Site availability is also sometimes a problem – as the City’s server does crash from time to time. In these cases, the City’s Call Centre remains the better option.

How to report a service delivery problem to the City using the E-Services

1. Log on to www.joburg.org.za.
2. Click on the E-Services tab at the top of the screen or on the menu on the left of the screen.
3. First time users should click on the “Register for E-Services” tab.
4. Once registered you will receive a confirmation email confirming your registration.
5. Once logged in, click on the “Log & Query Problem” tab.
6. A report form will open – complete it fully. It will generally ask you to locate the problem by nearest street corner – so make sure you know this before attempting to report a problem. The report itself is self explanatory and is very easy to use.
7. Once you have completed the form, the system will provide you with the all important reference number to be used for all future enquiries. It is very important that you keep this reference number in a safe place. The reference number remains valid for a period of 6 months.
8. Should the City fail to take action within 21 days – you are required to send the reference number with a brief description of the problem to me at the following email address: gordon.mackay81@gmail.com. Once in receipt of a reference number I will be able to assist you in the resolution of your problem.
9. **PLEASE NOTE THAT I CAN NOT ASSIST YOU WITHOUT A REFERENCE NUMBER!** - As no official or City employee will assist me with your query in the absence of a reference number.
10. The E-Service functionality also provides you

with ability to check on-line whether the problem has been resolved. I haven’t used this particular function personally and welcome feedback from residents on its effectiveness. Comments are welcome at my regular email address as stated under point 8 above.

DID YOU KNOW?

In every Newsletter I will seek to shock or amaze you with a factual tidbit about the Council or the City that I will have encountered in the course of my work over the past month or so. Each tidbit will attempt to help you better understand the way the City works (or doesn’t work) and just how Ward go fits into the greater scheme of things. This month:

- 33% of water bought by the City from Joburg Water never reaches the end users due to losses arising from the transport of the water from source (Mayor’s Speech 2009).
- Zero. The total capital budget for new pole signage in the City
- R1 Billion. The total cut to the City’s budget for the 2009/2010 financial year.

MAKING SENSE OF AFRICA & SOUTH AFRICA’S CHANGING POLITICAL LANDSCAPE IN C21

Over the course of the last 6 months a number of residents, noting my background in political science and international relations, have asked me for my opinion or understanding on various aspects of politics and governance in South Africa and Africa at large.

In conversations with residents, a number of you were interested in developing your own understanding and insight into the South African political process. In support of these attempts I thought residents might find the following resources useful:

- *Africa Works – by P. Chabal & J.P Daloz* – A contentious but fascinating book about the politics of the continent in the post-colonial period focusing on the increasing

informalisation of the State and the consequences for the exercise of power in African polities.

- ***The Dinokeng Scenarios*** - Attempts to sketch a picture of SA in 2020. Based on the work of pre-eminent South Africans across civil society, academia, business and government – these scenarios based on current trends aim to enliven the citizenry and revitalize civil society.
- ***SA Today – is the weekly Newsletter of Helen Zille , Leader of the Democratic Alliance*** – Love her or hate her, Helen Zille’s insight and analysis of the South African political climate are second to none. Her ‘tell-it-like-it-is’ attitude and writing style makes for interesting reading. You can register for Helen’s Newsletter at: <http://www.da.org.za/newsroom.htm?action=view-page&category=newsletters>
- ***National Executive Committee Bulletin of the ANC*** – a regular report back on the ANC’s most powerful body. It’s a useful source of information and can be accessed at: <http://www.anc.org.za/>

DA Membership: Joburg North Branch
Pat Scott (Membership)
patscott@email-sa.co.za

NEXT ISSUE

The next issue will be released towards the end of February/beginning of March. This issue will kick off the introduction of the 10 member Ward Committee and explain how the Committee assists in Ward governance. It will also provide details on the 2010 Service Delivery Campaign to be run in the Ward.

In the meantime be sure to check out my monthly “Councillors Feedback” in the pages of the Sandton Chronicle.

Finally, all that is left to do is wish all residents the best for 2010!

Best wishes,

Gordon

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Service delivery breakdown: 011 375 5555
e-mail queries: joburgconnect@joburg.org.za

Emergency Services: 011 37 55 911

Ward go News – Subscription, questions feedback:
Wardgonews@yahoo.com

Councillor Gordon Mackay:
Gordon.mackay81@gmail.com

Region B Customer Service Centers:
Sandton Customer Service Centre cnr West and Rivonia roads
(parking available in allocated area off Dudar Road)
Office hours: 7:30 -16:00
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