

*We, DOCRRA, will continue to promote and protect the interests of all residents and ratepayers within the jurisdiction of the Dolphin Coast area*



Supporting the Community

NOVEMBER

Dolphin Coast Residents & Ratepayers Association



## Launch of KORA

### Kwadukuza Organised Residents & Ratepayers Alliance

DOCRRA is pleased to announce the formation of KORA which will share relevant information, best practices and form a collective voice on behalf of Residents and Ratepayer Associations in Kwadukuza.

The founding members are DOCRRA and the Residents and Ratepayer Associations of Tinley Manor, Blythedale and Zinkwazi.

A further goal is to obtain a seat on the IDP Representative Forum as mentioned before and to actively assist with the formation of a Residents and Ratepayers Association in the Town of Kwadukuza.

DOCRRA is excited about the potential of this newly formed alliance.

## Chairman's Report

### Taking action!

*It has been a very busy year on the Dolphin Coast which is also reflected in the activities of your active citizen group, DOCRRA.*

*This report aims to highlight some ongoing and new issues with more in depth information available on the DOCRRA website.*

### Property Re-valuations

As anticipated the new and comprehensive property re-valuation for Kwadukuza was presented for the consideration all property owners. It became evident that previous re-valuation was not done systematically and with new technology used now (aerial photographs and drones) the increases in many cases were large. Errors in updating new developments could also be highlighted.

As a result, there was much furore about the new valuations. DOCRRA obtained legal opinion for its members, contracted a property sales data base company. Lightstone, to assist members and made all the paperwork required available to object to valuations that exceeded market value. Some 1,600 objections were lodged.

KDM itself lodged some 1,000 objections of under valuations.

The last batch of 500 objections will receive their feedback during November.

The new valuations were implemented and a rebate of 25% built into the eventual rates calculation. The KDM systems could not accommodate the DOCRRA request to scale this rebate according to the highest increases. Confirmation was however received that the rebate will remain at 25% for the next two years.

The eventual increase in property rates seems to be around the 5% mark with some ratepayers paying less and other more than they did before. The new values seem to have gone a long way to right sizing rates amongst ratepayers. There were several property owners that were paying rates on outdated zoning and or on vacant land where their improvements were not updated on the municipal systems. The DOCRRA legal team has been available to assist property owners in these cases.

DOCRRA keeps monitoring the property re-valuation issue and are pleased with the support they could offer their members.

# 2021 Activities

## Interaction with KDM



DOCRRRA attends all stakeholder engagement sessions publicised by KDM. Especially those relating to finances and service delivery.

We manage to eventually get copies of all critical or relevant reports and make them available on our website.

Many emails are sent to the executive team at KDM which sadly does not get answered. We do know they are received and read as we do not see some actions taken on them.

Despite the much-maligned platitude of “We have an open-door policy”, lip service is the order of the day.

We have however discovered that driving over to the KDM offices and hand delivering copies of emails or demanding a meeting, works best.

As a result, we have had a number of MS Teams meetings with the mayor and other members of the executive.

In addition, we sit in as silent observers on the KDM Council meetings held on the last Thursday of the month. These are very lengthy and often we pick up on some interesting information.

Two members of our committee serve on Ward Councillor committees.

Although our network in KDM is improving and we are finding new avenues to interact and communicate, it is very evident that the KDM executive is grappling with our new proactive, informed and participative approach. DOCRRRA will keep working to improve this.

We can confirm that the concept of “the squeaky wheel gets the oil” is alive and well!

## The July insurrection

What a travesty this was! The Dolphin Coast community is blessed with many citizen organisations, and it was amazing to see how quickly they all came together and formed GBOC. DOCRRRA is grateful to our vice chairman Flip Helberg who worked nonstop in the control centre and for all the other organisations that pulled together to secure and manage our area.

We trust this never happens again, yet it is heartening to know how quickly a community can organise and muster the required resources if needed.



**We, DOCRRRA, applaud and thank GBOC and the Dolphin Coast community, for managing to secure our area and keep us safe.**

## KDM Integrated Development Plan (IDP)

**DOCRRRA has applied to sit on the IDP Forum**

As there will be an election and as a result a new Council for KwaDukuza, a new 5-year IDP for the area has to be developed.

KDM issued their IDP project and action plan for comment and DOCRRRA studied it and submitted its report. From the agreed IDP, annual budgets and performance targets are established.

It became evident that to have meaningful influence on the affairs of KDM, DOCRRRA should seek representation on the IDP Representative Forum.

DOCRRRA is currently lobbying for a seat on this forum, and we are adamant to achieve same.

# 2021 Activities



## Roads & Traffic Plan

Early this year the long-awaited plan for the extension of the M4 and related arterial roads was presented for comment. The DOCRRA appointed committee chaired by Ken Lever studied the plan and a long list of issues were identified and presented.

Notably the integration of the plan with the rest of the road network, included walkways, pavements, speed monitoring, trees and verges, traffic circles and calming zones did not get the attention it needed. As a result, the KwaDukuza Municipality (KDM) has appointed a specialist company (SMEC) to research and present a comprehensive and integrated plan for the greater area.

DOCRRA will follow up on the progress of this plan.

## Roads & Streetlights

The struggle to get roads and streetlights repair remains an ongoing issue. There has definitely been an improvement in action from KDM, yet it is still insufficient and the quality of work circumspect.

We are pleased to note that our Ward Councillors in some of the Wards are very helpful in getting some action. We are also aware and appreciative of the efforts of our



## Water our new liquid gold? Impending water increase!

### SIZA Water Challenge

DOCRRA is alarmed at the challenge Siza Water is facing with the 40% plus increase that Umgeni Water and the Ilembe Municipality wishes to implement.

The DOCRRA dedicated committee has researched the issue and produced a comprehensive report which is available on the website.

DOCRRA will continue to liaise with Siza Water and keep our members apprised of developments. Both the cost, reliability of supply and quality of service is at stake.

## Whistle Blowing

DOCRRA has recently been approached to investigate several issues. These range from bad practices in procurement, substandard and incomplete projects and quality of work to abuse of assets.

These are handled with respect and confidentiality and once researched, handed over to the appropriate authorities that have the mandate to act thereon.

## The use of external resources

DOCRRA continues to work with many locally based organisations. These include Neighbourhood Watches, the Conservancy, The Urban Improvement Precinct of Ballito, the Ilembe Chamber for Business, Ward Councillors, the Orphan Fund and many similar initiatives.

The strong allegiance that DOCRRA has formed with the Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse (OUTA) and the Auditor General (AG) is proving very beneficial in providing resources and information, as well as clout. DOCRRA continues to try and establish an effective contact and network within the Provincial CoGTA structures.



## KDM Audit and Annual Report for 2019/20

The DOCRRA Finance committee eventually managed to get a copy of the 500-page draft report. The report was analyzed, and a long list of questions, suggestions and corrections were submitted to KDM.

At a high level the following main issues emerged.

- The collection of rates and electricity charges were better than expected. As was the surplus
- Once again there was gross underspending of both operating and capital budgets
- Productivity yet again decreased with the performance of KDM being 47% of their own targets
- The bulk of Auditor General (AG) findings from the previous year were not attended to

The DOCRRA finance committee considered the internal audit, external audit and AG findings and compiled a list of some 40 queries and questions. These were submitted to the Municipal Public Accounting Committee (MPAC). DOCRRA was a full participant at the MPAC meetings, and the answers and outcome of this interaction is contained in the final KDM Annual Report.

## The KDM Budget for 2021/22

DOCRRA eventually obtained a copy of the 400-page budget and the committee headed up by Brian Botes spend many hours drafting our response.

Some of the main issues identified was the unavailability of actual finances for the previous and current year to compare the budget with. The trend of either over budgeting or under spending of budgets, or both. Over the last few years this has resulted in growing cash surpluses in the coffers of KDM and non-service delivery, lack of maintenance and underspending on capital projects. This severely effects the service delivery to the community.

During our interaction with KDM it became quite clear that KDM is not familiar with a ratepayer's association going into such detail and demanding to participate in the formation of the budgets. They are more used to a "show and tell" form of interaction, or non-response from the community.



# 2021 Activities

## Localised Community Concern Groups

DOCRRRA continues to work with local informal and formal communities to address their specific concerns. These range from the irregular attempt to sell part of a public open space in Townsend Park, paid for parking in the old village, road wash-away in Sheffield Beach to a cavalier restaurateur and guesthouse breaking bylaws on parking and noise pollution.

The management of derelict buildings, removal of alien plants and trees and the protection of indigenous trees are also on the radar of DOCRRRA.

The sharing of ideas and information with Estates that are planning to move to a bulk purchase and self-management of internal infrastructure is a role DOCRRRA assists with.

Currently an action group is being formed to mitigate the Squatter problem developing in the South of Umhlali. This came about after the successful eviction from private land and the recent insurrection. As the squatters are settling on KDM land and for various other reasons there does not seem to be much action coming from KDM. DOCRRRA will assist the local committee to find a solution for the problem and highlight the plight of these squatters.

## The Dolphin Coast Outreach (DCO)

The Outreach is the paying it forward division of DOCRRRA. The virtual soup kitchen initiative from last year has grown in scope and impact and currently provides around 10,000 portions of soup meals in selected communities from Frasers in the South to Groutville in the North.



After the insurrection the DCO managed to obtain a few tons of fresh produce, maize and meat and could treble its impact for the following four weeks.

The Outreach also assists with the coordination and distribution of clothes, blankets, linen, support for babies and the elderly and liaises with many charitable organisations in the community.

## Coming Soon.....

We look forward to this year's election and the impact that may have on the composition of the new KDM Council, Mayor and management team.

By the end of November, the AG will have completed its audit and early in 2022 we should receive the annual report for 2020/21.

By January or February, we will hopefully be attending the IDP and receive the mid-year reports on the activities of KDM.

## Conclusion

We trust this has given you some insight into the activities of DOCRRRA and if you are not a member yet, please follow the links below to join this active citizen group.

**Become part of the solution.**

# 2021 Activities

## Social Media and Membership Benefits

In order to communicate more regularly and to engage with our members and the community, DOCRRA has expanded its frequency and presence through blogs, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

The traffic on the DOCRRA website is increasing and we will continue to expand this form of communication.

DOCRRA has recently purchased a branded gazebo and banners and will be seeking opportunities to engage in person with the community and our members.

The DOCRRA membership **Benefits Card** has had a pleasing growth with more local companies joining and offering benefits to participating members. Visit the DOCRRA website for more information.



## Membership and DOCRRA



- The DOCRRA membership has grown over the year to well over 4,000 paid up members.
- The 10-person voluntary committee remains very active with meetings every second week. This is apart from all the other structures they serve on and represent, meetings and research time.
- We are pleased to have an advisory board of specialist individuals that give their expertise and time on ad hoc projects.
- DOCRRA has a virtual administration office which represents roughly 70% of the operating cost of the association.
- DOCRRA publishes articles frequently and when appropriate have a discussion on our own radio station 88FM

## DOCRRA Membership – Help us to help you

To have meaningful influence and impact, DOCRRA needs your support - as members, as sponsors, as volunteers and committee members.

The more community representation and support we have, the more influence we have. The fee is R250 per household per annum.

For more information go to [www.docrra.co.za](http://www.docrra.co.za)

OR

Contact us on [admin@docrra.co.za](mailto:admin@docrra.co.za)

## How to become a Member

Memberships fees are modest and affordable for all residents and ratepayers.

Annual Fee is R250 per household.

Can pay via

**EFT** (Details on our Website)

or

**ZAPPER**

Please ensure you enter your email address for communication purposes and to add to our Membership Database

