



28<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Dear Valued Members,

I trust that you are all staying safe and keeping the faith...? Since my last 'members letter' to you in early June, there has unfortunately not been much change in terms of what the Club can and cannot do. Sadly, we remain pretty much locked down and closed - whilst still trying to 'keep the home fires burning'. Covid-19 has no doubt disrupted all of our lives, and the Club has sadly also been caught up in all the crossfire. In saying this, I remain quietly confident that "WE WILL SURVIVE", as with such great members and supporters like yourselves who are always prepared to go the extra mile for our special club - there is no reason as to why we shouldn't survive.

***"So What All Has Been Happening At The Club Over The Last Few Months"***

1. 'OUR' Staff:

Our staff are all still unfortunately laid off, other than our Club Manager Lizette Driescher who is on a reduced salary and is keeping the Club ticking over and operating. At this stage our staff are all still able to claim from the UIF / TERS funds – but these are all obviously vastly reduced amounts and we do not know how much longer we will be able to claim for this from the government. Furthermore the Club has managed to continue to support all of our staff each month with food parcels, due mainly to the wonderful donations received from you and many other non-members and supporters into our 'Staff & Club Welfare Fund'.

2. 'OUR' Sections:

Wonderfully this last weekend we saw our first Sports Section return to play. The Bowlers were out in full force as the government permitted play again under some pretty tough and tight Covid-19 protocols. The Main Club provided all their PPE requirements, whilst the Bowls Committee managed all the protocols and requirements superbly well to just make it happen. It was great (from a distance), to see everyone on the greens again – even though I am sure that there were a few rusty rolls and stiff backs the next day... Unfortunately, our other sections (Cricket, Hockey and Soccer) still seem some way off in terms of a return to play. Hockey and Soccer seasons are now basically out of the picture for this year I would think – but both sections still have a few plans up their sleeves to still possibly and hopefully get something special in when we are open again and we are all able to get together again. Cricket season remains in the balance – but I do know that Gauteng Cricket still seem positive about trying to have some cricket before the end of the year.

3. 'OUR' Tenants:

The Club has continued to engage with each and every tenant individually over the last few months, and we have worked with all of them to try support them and their businesses where possible. As things stand, we have Rustic Café now fully open as they offer both a sit-down option and a delivery option through Uber Eats. All within the Level 3 regulations we have also been able to permit certain activities like the 'Bio work and Physio work' in the Gym area which is great news. Unfortunately, the 5 A-Side Football and the RAC Running side of things remain closed and are not sure when they will be allowed to re-open their activities.

4. 'OUR' MANCO & EXCO:

Your Executive and Management Committees have continued to hold various 'online meetings'. MANCO are engaging now almost daily as we work with Lizette our Club Manager to assist and to make key decisions that will hopefully see us all coming out of this mad period. I know I said it in my last 'members letter' – but I would once again like to just take the opportunity to sincerely thank all of our EXCO and

MANCO Committee Members for their awesome efforts and care at this time. It is very time consuming and I know that most of you are under your own and different types of pressures. SO THANK YOU!

5. 'OUR' Finances:

The reality is that things are tight, and our Treasurer Birgit Lategan along with our Accountant Sharon Eloff and Club Manager Lizette Driescher are well on top of where things stand. These three ladies have worked tirelessly, and we are indebted to them for their efforts. As a Club we have various payment arrangements with suppliers which will still need to be paid, and we are also managing every cent as best as possible. Our staff however remain a big concern for us as they are all currently laid off and we are still trying to assist them financially, but quite simply down the line we do not know what 'Post Covid-19' is going to look like - and how we will best be able to manage our people going forward. As things stand, we probably have two main and rather worrying concerns hanging heavily over our heads – and these are both frustratingly City of Johannesburg (COJ) issues:

- The one issue is related to our 'Rates Bill and Status' and is in fact currently with our lawyers and on its way to the High Court – as we have even well before Covid-19, and in fact for many years, believed that we have been unfairly billed and penalised for what we believe to be their misunderstanding and error.
- The second issue is more recent and relates to our electricity bill – where even with us turning off basically all our power needs like bar fridges, floodlight use, pumps and geysers etc. over the last 4 months – COJ have continued to charge us a heavy rate for normal use and a 'supply use charge' which during these times we simply just cannot afford. Our normal monthly bill is in the region of R100k, and according to our electrical experts we managed to take our usage down to almost a "normal household" level by turning most of our power needs off – yet each month we are still receiving bills well over R50k per month. We have tried to address this issue with COJ but with zero success to date, and so have now recently also addressed this concern with our Councillor David Potter – and are busy following up on his advice to try to change our 'usage status' so that we can then address the bill.

As you can see this is all an uphill and ongoing battle with COJ which is taking a lot of energy, and so if anyone out there can assist or if you know someone who can assist us with these issues through a quicker/direct network – please contact either myself or Lizette as we would greatly appreciate such assistance.

6. 'OUR' Property Development:

Last year towards the end of July we had 'AdvTech' withdraw from an agreed to property development deal due to their financial concerns and status at the time. It left us pretty much in the lurch with the 'Property Development Sub Committee' having to once again get around the table to try to forge a new way forward. After much debate and after much discussion, the sub committee decided to re-engage with 'Nova Pioneer' who were one of the initial two preferred developers when the process was started some 24 months ago. Nova immediately showed interest again, and in September last year we began working on some sort of a new deal. During this process we fully included the Old Parktonians Association and more specifically the Parktown Boys Headmaster (Malcolm Williams) and Parktown Girls Headmistress (Tracey Megom) – as their buy in and understanding of the Nova Pioneer school product was paramount in terms of us making the correct decisions. The initial discussions and dealings with Nova were all really positive and even right on up until the start of Covid-19 it all looked very promising that we would be able to do a deal. Unfortunately, the news I now share with you is not good – in that we as a Property Development Sub Committee have just a week or two ago decided to amicably walk away and to part ways with the Nova Pioneer negotiations. The main reasons for this were that we felt that the negotiations were becoming less and less favourable for the Club each time we engaged, we did not feel that we were prepared to 'sell our souls' for the offered amounts and once Covid-19 hit us all some of the details of the deal were simply just not in our best interests as a Club. Sadly, this means that we will once again be looking at various property development options with immediate effect, as some sort of development remains absolutely key for us to

sustain and to retain the Old Parks Sports Club and the Old Parktonians Association brand in its current state.

## 7. 'OUR' Fund Raising Efforts:

### a) Joker Jackpot =

The Joker Jackpot was started about a month ago, and immediately got some wonderful support from you all – thank you SO much! As a committee we wanted to have some fun and we also wanted you all to remain engaged with the Club as best as possible. As you may know, we have set it up online with some great help from our IT expert Terry Theron and his TNT Digital team. Terry and his wife Kirsten, who are both supporters of the Club, have both been instrumental in this fund raiser – along with our very own live presenters and 'Jokers' Mr Gavin Taylor and Mr Conn O'Donoghue. Both Gavin and Conn, along with Lizette, Terry and Kirsten behind the scenes have been superb in terms of making it happen each week – thank you so much ladies and gents, let's keep it going...

*\*\*To date the JOKER JACKPOT is working really well – it is a lot of fun – and it is really safe as an online product - so PLEASE do remember to get your tickets this week before Friday 17h00 on the Clubs website { [www.oldparks.co.za](http://www.oldparks.co.za) } - as the 'Accumulative Jackpot' is now growing and growing by the week.*

### b) Staff & Club Welfare Fund =

You may have noticed that we have backed off for a month or two in terms of trying to raise money for this much needed fund. We did not want to pester people and we did not want people to start thinking that we were just begging and begging each week. The initial amount of R160k raised is now however down to around just R40k in the bank – with every cent being carefully accounted for and with to date our staff being the sole benefactors. Over the coming weeks, Kevin Robertson and his Sub Committee will once again become active and will re commence the fund-raising drive for our much needed 'Staff & Club Welfare Fund'. Without the money which all of you have so kindly donated as both once off amounts and monthly amounts – we quite simply would have been in a lot more trouble. Please look out for the Sub Committees new communication – or simply once again kindly donate into the following account:

Please EFT your donation into the following Old Parks Account:

Name: Old Parktonian Sports Club  
Bank: Standard Bank of SA Ltd.  
Account No: 022286349  
Branch Code: 006605  
SWIFT Code: SBZAJJ  
Email POP: [lizette@oldparks.co.za](mailto:lizette@oldparks.co.za)  
Reference: STAFF WELFARE

*\*\* (Anyone needing a Section 18 (a) Certificate for tax purposes can email [Lizette@oldparks.co.za](mailto:Lizette@oldparks.co.za) to simply request such)*

*\*\* (All such 'donations' will be formally acknowledged)*

*\*\* (Any amount deposited without a POP Email will be taken as an anonymous 'donation')*

### c) Liquor Sales:

During the time when we were allowed as per Level 3 Covid-19 Regulations to sell alcohol, we were able as a Club to sell off most of our liquor in stock, whilst we also brought in some quality Cape Wines which we marketed and sold off to members at a superb rate. In fact, right up until the alcohol ban came into effect again – we continued to sell wine from Cape Town, as it seems as though we definitely have a market at the Club for such.

## 8. 'OUR' Facilities & Exercise:

The Clubhouse remains closed at this stage as per the law, yet as above a few of our tenants are permitted to operate namely the Gym businesses and the Rustic Café business. As above, the Bowls Club is now also

open during specific time slots which need to be pre booked, and some of our Private Sports Coaches are also permitted to coach on a limited basis. In terms of the 'general exercise allowances' under Level 3, we have as a Club 'opened' our gates and allowed for all and any runners and families to run or to walk around the premises and on the B Field as they wish - as it is during these tough times that we believe that you our members and the wider community deserve to be able to make use of our beautiful outdoor facilities. In saying the above – please do be aware that we have had one or two nasty stealing incidents down at the back of the Club next to the B Field and on into the spruit where there is no fence, so please all do be safe and sensible on your runs and walks. We have as far as possible escalated our security surveillance and our awareness to such incidents with 24/7 Security, but without a fence along that boundary it is rather open...and so such activity is done at one's own risk.

Apologies for the rather lengthily letter – but I do want everyone to know what is happening at YOUR Club and to get a real feel for where YOUR Club stands in these times. It is also important for you our valued members to know we are all still fighting for you – and so hope that you will continue to support us and this special place along the way. Please all do stay safe from Covid-19 and do look after yourselves as I am sure there are still a few more stages to play out in this whole saga...and as always please feel free to contact me at any stage if so needed.

Yours faithfully,

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