

OLD PARKS SPORTS CLUB

CHAIRMANS REPORT

2022

The past year has been pretty much all about the aftermath of a pandemic, and the various attempts and initiatives to recover and to take the Club forward. Although at the start of the year there were still a few Covid restrictions in place, much of it fell away including the absolute need for masks in June 2022. This then all allowed for some normality as we slowly but surely started the long haul to get the Club back on its feet...

With an extremely proactive and driven Club Executive and Management Committee, the Club has this year seen some great new initiatives and slowly but surely it is making its way towards being wholly sustainable. There still however remains a few historical matters which hang over the Club's head – but there was some good progress and hopefully in the not too distant future some of these matters can be resolved.

As a community, our Club Members and Staff have all felt the pinch financially as the country and world work through a 'cost of living' crisis. Naturally, this has knock on effects into our Club space and so we have had to try to be prudent where possible – but also smart in terms of attracting and generating new income and entertainment for our valued patrons. On this note, I would like to start this report and bit of feedback with a huge 'thank you' to all our superb Committee Members, Our loyal Staff Members, and especially our extremely supportive Club Members and Club Visitors. Without all of your efforts and support – quite simply 'Old Parks' would not still be around...

Let us now have a look at the key areas which we have addressed, are addressing, and have driven this past year:

1. City of Johannesburg (COJ) – Municipal Matters:

"The COJ matter regarding our Zoning Status thus affecting our Rates & Taxes bill etc., continues to drag on a touch. This historical matter as we know goes back decades and came to a head a few years back when COJ out of the blue started penalising the Club for not having the correct 'zoning' to operate. Over the last few years - we have sought senior legal counsel, gone to court on their advice, lodged applications, had approvals, lived with inefficiencies from COJ, and basically hit a brick wall at every turn. 'Everyone' has a solution and 'everyone' a connection at COJ, but when push came to shove it has remained a huge and ongoing challenge."

- a) Property Zoning = The good news is that finally towards the back end of last year our new application for the correct zoning of 'Private Open Space' was lodged. After some inefficiencies from COJ, eventually in the first third of this year we received correspondence stating the zoning application was successful – and that there were a few last items that just needed to be lodged for final approval. To date, we have lodged the necessary and now await COJ's official notice of full approval.
- b) COJ Penalties = This is the biggest issue hanging over the Club's head. Penalties for the incorrect zoning were implemented as we all know, which totalled up to over R2M at one stage. As a club, we kept on 'fighting' against these penalties and engaged with COJ to no avail just about every week on our own and also through the legal systems. As things stand today:

- We have managed to get some penalty relief due to Covid matters and the current penalty owed remains at R1.75M
- We have managed to get the penalties stopped, as finally we submitted the correct Zoning applications which in their mind had been neglected for years – yet we have much documentation ‘protecting’ ourselves and showing the efforts we made. Not to mention the fact that each and every year they approved our liquor license.
- The MANCO recently held a ‘High Level Meeting’ with COJ senior officials, where it was agreed to try to resolve this penalty matter once and for all.
- COJ agreed to look at the figures owed, and to return to the Club with an improved amount payable. The Club will then if comfortable with the settlement amount return to COJ, with a proposal to pay such off over a given period.
- If the above does not suite the Club and no agreement can be reached, the Club retains the right to present to the COJ Council or to look at our legal options once again.

It is sincerely hoped that this matter can be resolved, as the entire OPSC’s Executive Committee, the Old Parks Association Committee, and its Trustees all believe that this is the best way forward – to achieve an amicable ‘settlement agreement’.

- c) COJ Costs = Like many of our patrons, the Club is also suffering in terms of our electricity and water costs. In the long term, it is crucial for the Club to become self-sustainable and so as soon as there are enough funds for things like solar systems and water tanks etc., this is something which will need to be addressed and implemented.

2. Tenants and Partners:

“Our OPSC Tenants and Partners have themselves been hard at work, trying to recover from Covid and trying to get themselves back on their feet. As a Club, we can be proud as to how we supported our tenants during Covid as it has allowed most of them to continue with their businesses as best as possible.”

- a) The Gym Area = Over the last year, we have had a few comings and goings in terms of the ‘Wellness Centre’. Sadly, the Cardio Concept group did not work out too well and they gave the Club notice towards the back end of the year, and the Physiotherapy Practice chose to move to premises in Sandton which housed a swimming pool. In saying this, the ‘Robbie McIntosh Cycling & Fitness Centre’ has been superb and kept operating successfully throughout the year – then we managed to secure a new tenant in ‘Deidre Ras Biokinetics’ which seems to be working well – and at the back end of last year we signed an agreement with the ‘Swing Shack’ which is a golfing specific experience which seems to be getting some early traction. Overall, we have a good mix of tenants in this space - and we hope that they can continue to grow.
- b) The 5 A-Side Courts = Our ‘Fast Sports Fusion’ tenants seem to have had a much better year with a lot more activity since Covid hit them hard. Towards the back end of the year, some of the playing surfaces were also replaced – which going into this

year should make a huge difference in terms of actual play and also in hopefully attracting new players and teams.

- c) The Running Area = Rand Athletics Club (RAC), our oldest partners and tenants, have themselves over the last year fought hard to keep going in tough times. Behind the scenes both the OPSC EXCO and the RAC Committee have been engaging in terms of drafting a new and up to date contract – as the current contract dates back to before 2010. The process has been slow as the Clubs EXCO have certain reservations in terms of how to best align the various needs and running opportunities in this space, whilst the elected RAC Committee have had some of their own matters to deal with in terms of mid-year resignations and then some operational issues at the annual Tough One Marathon which is still being addressed. We hope that matters can be solved in the first quarter of 2023. Further to RAC being a tenant, so too is ‘Michelle Mee Running’ a tenant who operates out of Old Parks on the B Field as a coaching specific running operation. Michelle herself is very hands on and to date has attracted many new faces into the Old Parks space.
- d) The Catering = Tipu Café have now been in operation for just on 2 years and have been a superb addition to the club. There are some new and exciting things to come in their space – as there are some expansion proposals as well as a few upgrades to take the facility and offerings to a new level. This will all need to be agreed to in the coming months if the new Executive approve such.
- e) The Padel Tennis Courts = After much research, many proposals, and plenty presentations - in September 2022 the club appointed Africa Padel as a tenant to operate and build the new Padel Tennis courts in full. At the same time Africa Padel upgraded our bar area and created a brand new outdoor seating area. This allowed for the club to open the new ‘Heritage Café’ which with our own servers has allowed for drinks and food options to be served and sold throughout most of the week. To date the facility seems to be rather busy and it has definitely attracted many new visitors to the club. We hope for a long and mutually beneficial relationship.

3. The Club:

As we all know, Sports Clubs across the country and world have been under extreme pressure. So too has Old Parks been under pressure – yet somehow through your great support and belief in the club, we have soldiered on through many challenges and some very tough months in terms of finance.

- a) Staff = Our staff have been superb this last year, as they have literally on a daily basis kept the clubs ‘engine room’ running in an attempt to keep the doors open for us all. On top of this, our finances, and the knock on effect of the pandemic have not allowed for any increases for a while – but at least we were able to give our staff a bonus payment this last December. Over the last year or two, quite a few of our staff have gone on retirement and so you are sure to see a few new faces serving you and keeping the club at its best. To Lizette Driescher our Club Manager, and the entire staff compliment – a huge ‘Thank You’ to you ALL for your efforts and commitment to the club. You ARE all greatly valued!
- b) HR = Our HR Consultant Mr John Povy, has been hard as work once again this last year – in a world where each and every aspect of Human Relations is key. There are various laws which we need to abide by, and so he has been a great help in terms of

managing our staff in their own best interests and also in the club's best interest. I have no doubt that as we move forward this will be an area which will require more and more attention.

- c) The Bar = The Old Parks Bar remains legendary and is our main line of income. Over the last year, the bar has maintained and even surpassed previous years in terms of sales – which shows that our offerings are hitting the right spot and that our patrons remain extremely thirsty which is just great! Behind the scenes our staff have managed a tight ship – and Gavin Taylor our Bar Committee Chair has himself been legendary in keeping things ticking over. Thank you to Gavin and all involved in the bar.
- d) Facilities = Our facilities are a major asset to the club, but also one of our biggest cost centres. As a private club - there are no municipal workers, or fertilizers, or mechanics, or discounted services etc. – as it all comes out of our budgets and your memberships for which we are extremely grateful. Penquip are contracted as our lead grounds experts and appoint their own Head Groundsman to operate the facilities along with our own ground staff. In general, we get a lot right and are able to offer quality fields and facilities compared to many clubs – but there are indeed times when there are certain challenges and we do get things wrong. Overall, I can assure you though that every member of staff in this area give their everything day after day out in the hot sun – and for this we are extremely thankful.
- e) Security = Most security experts will tell you that there is just no 'Silver Bullet' to fully curb crime. Yet, at Old Parks we are doing everything possible within our rather tight budgets to keep up with the latest trends and security needs. It was in fact just 4.5 years ago that we basically had no security at the club – and now at least we have strategically placed cameras, a boom gate, full alarm systems, proactive security responses, and just recently the management committee have through improved finances been able to approve 24hr guards at the main gate. Some of the big security challenges have been load shedding, the open fence at the bottom of our property, and believe it or not some of our own members whose behaviour and adherence to security protocols and security staff has not been respected. Overall, we will keep fighting crime as best as possible as we absolutely want our patrons to feel safe at Old Parks.
- f) Membership = Membership at the Club is slightly on the decline during these tough financial times and is an area which definitely needs some serious attention. During 2023, there needs to be a few new ideas around membership and there definitely needs to be a bigger drive from the club and its sections to attract more members who also receive greater value. To our loyal and regular members from far and wide, I would personally like to thank you for your commitment to your membership and to the club – YOU ARE all greatly valued and appreciated.
- g) Fund Raising = This has been a really tough area to drive and to manage at the Club, yet over the year we had a few great events – none better than 'Doggie Day' which was a great success. We also held many more End of Year staff parties than in the past, and also attracted the likes of RMB, Standard Bank, and other big corporates to come and enjoy our facilities. Again looking ahead – this is an area in which we need growth and so hope that 2023 can be even a better year.

- h) Social Media = The last 2-3 years has seen a drastic change in this area – as TNT Digital, lead by Terry and Kirsten, have been superb and have made huge strides forward to really get us on the map. In my mind we now have a platform, and we now really need to escalate things to the next level so that we attract even more people to enjoy our very own ‘green belt’...

4. The Clubs Finances:

Our finances are the most important part, and probably should have been listed in this reported as the first point! As I have eluded to throughout the above points, things have been tough and we as a club have been fighting hard to generate new income streams, to save where we can, to find like minded tenants, and to encourage you our members to become more and more involved. We all know that prices are still on the rise, and the general cost of living is making things tougher for us all – yet at Old Parks we remain determined and committed to offer you our best rates and prices, whilst ensuring that our standards do not drop and that we give you all as much as we can.

- a) The actual financials which have been produced and shared with all members before the AGM.
- b) As mentioned above, the City of Johannesburg issues remain a dark cloud over the club, even though we have made some good progress towards try to solve things.
- c) As predicted last year, this year’s financials clearly show the huge gap which we lost when Vega College decided not to renew their student memberships.
- d) As a club, we remain in ‘survival mode’ and are hoping that somehow with your support as members that we keep moving forward slowly but surely towards breakeven point.
- e) A huge thank you to Doug Tuck (Treasurer), Sharon Eloff (Bookkeeper), and Lizette Driescher our Club Manager for their great efforts in managing a tight ship in the finance department.

5. Old Parks Association Property Development/Land Sale:

The proposed land sale by the Old Parktonian Association Trustees, has now reached a stage where an agreement has been signed by the Trustees and the Developers to enter into a Due Diligence phase. This is great news for the club as once again if this all works out, there will be real growth as the club will be transformed for the better and the club will be on hugely better footing when it comes to finances and its long term sustainability.

There is still a lot of water however to still go under the bridge during the due diligence phase, which the developers will be driving and managing at their own cost. As an Association, they will naturally need to manage the process and ensure that any income is managed and invested in the very best interests for all the many generations to come.

6. Sports Sections:

Our Sports Sections are the HEART and SOUL of the club without a doubt. Yet, many of the sections have seen a decline as many of our members have been hit hard financially due to the pandemic, and there are now also many other competitive sporting options for the community to choose. In saying this, our sections remain committed and are all trying extremely to keep members happy and to keep their beloved sports sections on the move...

- a) Bowls =

The Bowls Section was ably led by Bill Bowen as Chairman and more recently after their AGM by Bill Bowen and their Committees. The section continues to be extremely well supported by many loyal bowlers, and there also seems to be some positive and proactive activity happening on the greens and within their structures. Facility wise both the bowling greens have now had their banks upgraded, through both the Bowls section fund raising efforts and also the financial support of the main club. As a section, there has been numerous superb results on the greens in the various JBA Competitions – and from these and various Provincial tours and selections, it is clear that our Bowls Section are clearly and strongly on the map as one of the top Bowls Clubs in the Gauteng.

b) Cricket =

The Cricket Section was ably led by Bryan Jacklin as Chairman and more recently after their AGM by Ryan Wessels and their Committees. The section has had it pretty tough time during Covid and have lost many youngsters in the Junior Section whilst at Senior level it has been at times tough to fill all the teams which were entered. Club fees and match fess have it seems been tough to secure – but the let it be said that the Cricket Committee have remained committed and vigilant so as to ensure that their members who have paid up, get game time before others who have not. The Premier A League team just recently brilliantly secured their place for the 2022/23 season again in the A Section – by beating some big named clubs and some with a lot more financial support than what our cricket section receives. In saying this, the section did manage to secure a few crucial sponsors this last season - which did allow them to appoint a Head Coach which made an enormous difference.

c) Hockey =

The Hockey Section was ably led by Andrew Todd as Chairman and his Committee. The section has played with 2 teams this last year and due to results and league positions – it looks like both teams will end up playing in the same league this coming season. Sadly, Andrew Todd the current Chairman will be stepping down as Chairman – and after some 27yrs at the club will be immigrating to New Zealand. This will be a huge loss and it is hoped that the players in the section can pick things up and continue to operate an especially important part of the club. GO well Andrew, thank you – and all of the very best for the future...

d) Soccer =

The Soccer Section has had a tough few years, with no less than now 4 Chairmen operating the structures. The coming and going due to various work and relocation issues, has left the section somewhat unstable and of major concern as it is a crucial part of the club and we need a strong soccer section. At the sections recent AGM, there has been a totally new Committee elected and there is a new Chairlady in place which already has things moving in an improved direction. As a Club, the Executive will continue to monitor and to support the section wherever possible – so as to once again get on track and to ensure that we retain our reputation as one of the best Soccer Clubs in Johannesburg.

7. Club Committees:

Quite simply put – without volunteers and committed people, there simply would be no club but a private entity who was there to just make money and to serve their shareholder... At Old Parks Sports Club, we have been blessed to have many loyal members who have put their hands up to serve on our Executive Committee (EXCO) and our Management Committee (MANCO).

- a) Executive Committee = Our EXCO this last year have been great! Many have got their hands dirty, and all have at every turn ensured that our finances have been managed, that various protocols and club improvements have been driven, and that in general the club and its members are placed first and foremost. Without this great group of people, the club would not still be around today – after the pandemic and during these last few financially draining years. THANK YOU TEAM – you have never once turned your backs on any work, you have always been around to support and guide, and you have all really cared about your great club...
- b) Management Committee = Our MANCO meet at least once a month, are on whatsapp or email most days – and we all spend a lot of time at club both socially and working for our members and the community. This past year was especially tough as we have all together worked towards trying to close off a few historical issues whilst at the same time trying to keep our finances on track and in check. Each month we address and make decisions on our finances, our human resource aspects, our various day to day club matters, our sections status', our tenant's contracts and relationships, our facilities, our bars and public areas, our members, and just so much more! The Old Parks Sports Club believe it or not is actually a huge business, a non-profit entity yes – but a business which is getting busier and busier to operate and to manage as the various demands increase and as the club keeps growing. With the above in mind – the MANCO members all deserve a medal, as month by month / week by week / day by day / and even hour by hour they are harassed and interrupted (mostly by me!), to make a decision or offer an opinion on how best to manage a matter or to take the club forward. Each and every time they all communicate be it via email / via phone call / via zoom / or especially via whatsapp... THANK YOU TEAM – you never cease to amaze me and you have all been a great support to my Chairmanship, and quite simply I would not have been able to do it without you ALL!!
- c) Along the way we have also had the following Sub Committees formed from our EXCO, who have all operated on various levels of efficiency within these trying times – meaning some have been able gain more traction than others:
 - Transformation Sub Comm = This group was once again led by Nishaan Kishore. Unfortunately, after last year's growth and movement in this area, things slowed down a touch due mainly to time constraints and a committee which had their own personal matters to manage. In saying this, once again the club was transformed when we hosted the annual Formies Day which saw 100's of young people at the club enjoying the day. We also hosted the annual Parktown Boys and Girls matric lunch which was a huge success after some changes were made in terms of how it was run. Across the sports sections and tenants, we have made great progress in terms of transformation - as now more than ever we

are seeing so many young sportsmen and sportswomen of all cultures and races participating and getting involved. Also, for the first time in the club's history, we had our first Black African Section Chairman in Ben Matai – who has now only recently due to work commitments unfortunately stepped down.

- Broken Windows Sub Comm = This group led by Sean Harmer, and their main project this year was the full renovation of our staff quarters – which was funded by member donations and club funds. It was an extremely successful project and our staff all seem to be a lot happier.
- Constitutional Alignment Sub Comm = This group led by Eleanor Talbot and Kevin Robertson. The project is a huge one – and both Eleanor and Kevin have spent hours working through various options and various combinations to try to find what is best for the club in these modern times. Hopefully during 2023 and through the Association some real progress can be made towards this area's transformation.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support over the last year. Without our hard working staff, our Executive Members, and especially the Management Committee Members – ably led by Lizette Driescher - keeping our special place open and operating would not have been possible. Thank you to each and every one of you our 'Valued Members' – who support and pay your way to also keep the club alive and well. We know we do not always get everything right – but at least if you do communicate, we make every effort to correct things in yours and the club's best interests.

In closing and from the above, one can see that 2022 has been another tough year – YET here we all are alive and well... Please do continue to support your club, please do put your hands up to make a difference where possible, please do feel free to speak to us through the office or a committee member, and please do wherever possible appreciate our hard working staff and your elected officials who do it for the love of the game...:)

"Keep the FAITH and stay POSITIVE"

Yours faithfully,

Dave Nosworthy
OPSC - Chairman