

FISH HOEK VALLEY RATEPAYERS & RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

(Incorporating Fish Hoek, Clovelly and Sun Valley)

Central Circle, Fish Hoek 7975

Web: <https://www.fhvrra.org.za/> Facebook: www.facebook.com/FHVRRRA/

Heritage Western Cape: Conservation Body

TO: Budget.Comments@capetown.gov.za

SUBJECT: COMMENTS ON CITY'S 2023 DRAFT BUDGET

DUE DATE: 5 MAY 2023

Our hope is that In the next budget, we will see budgeting for the Environmental Impact Assessment required before the dualling of Ou Kaapse Weg. Even an occasional third lane would allow traffic to pass around a slow vehicle, usually trucks trying to pull this mountain. It has been argued that alternative routes are available, but one is a toll road, mainly used by tourists, and not generally used by daily commuters for work purposes. When there is a crash on Ou Kaapse Weg, it pushes its traffic onto Boyes Drive and Main Road, which bottlenecks at Lock / Clairvaux Roads where Boyes Drive end at Main Road.

The explanation for item, "Remuneration of councillors" of "Retrospective councillor remuneration increases" being not budgeted for nor reflected in the 2021/22 original budget, does not look well for a City that claims a clean financial audit as this distorts the year-on-year comparison against the original budget.

Operating

1. Tariff increases for all major services ie water, sanitation, electricity except waste management far exceed inflation. Electricity is egregious.
2. Revenues for electricity for 2024/5 & 2025/6 are forecast to grow by 17 % & 14% respectively - probably unrealistic because of availability and own generation.
3. Revenue for water and sanitation for 2024/5 & 2025/6 forecast to increase by $\pm 10\%$ - unrealistic?
4. Rates are contained, but the business, commercial and wealthy segment are bearing an increasing subsidy load - if you want less of something tax it!
5. Personnel expenditure increase above inflation and SALGA increase. As one of my managers used to say, "Why can't you just work smarter and harder?" It is concerning when there are staff salary increases in "supporting function" votes. Corporate Services seems well contained within the SALGBC agreement, but this includes R20m "to capacitate the Recruitment & Selection Department". Also, the Finance increase of 7.18% is beyond the CPI 5.4%.

According to BusinessTech ¹ South African businesses spent 14% of their total spending on their employees over the past decade. Asset rich organisations, like the City of Cape Town, should be spending an even lower percentage on their employees remuneration, certainly lower than the 31.2% proposed in this budget.

¹ <https://businesstech.co.za/news/banking/281589/how-much-does-south-african-business-spend-on-its-employees/>

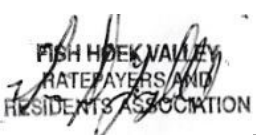
Capital

The Capital Replacement Reserve at 11.2% seems too low. We had hoped to see capital investment closer to 20% of the total budget.

1. Capital expenditure on alternative electricity generation is welcome, but too little, too late. We see no allocation to smart management of the grid which is an essential component of SSEG and commercial power feedback.
2. Water and sanitation capital expenditure welcome, similarly wetland/environmental. We think the quadrupling of sewer pipe replacement from 25km in 2021/22 to 100km annually is a correct decision due to the breakdowns we have seen in our valley.
3. We disagree with the budget's statement, "no major corrective interventions are currently required". As bio-active pharmaceuticals have been continuously found in our drinking water, the water quality standard needs to be improved and interventions (tertiary treatment) done to remove these harmful chemicals ².
4. We had hoped to see the Newlands closure of Upper Hillwood Road and Fernwood Avenue onto the M3 and southbound closure of the median at Upper Torquay Avenue allowing four times faster travel with fewer crashes between the M3's Wynberg Hill and Newlands Avenue. Perhaps this is contained in the "M3 Corridor: Hospital Bend - Constantia Main Road" line item on page 46.
5. Shouldn't a cost / benefit study be performed on replacing Mercury Vapour lamps with LED lamps at a rate greater than 2,860 per year based on their greater electricity consumption.
6. We had wished to see something about expropriation of land for a generator at our Vallyland Sewage Pump Station.

Many of our older residents remember getting a small, but free, amount of water and electricity without having to apply for indigent relief. There were also clean public toilets and sufficient rubbish bins so that rubbish didn't end up on the streets. To them, our City is worse off.

"SWA" needs to be explained somewhere.

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DATE	22 April 2023

² "Pharmaceuticals, endocrine disruptors, personal care products, nanomaterials and perfluorinated pollutants" by Prof L Petrik, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10311-015-0537-z>