

Subject: Feedback on Events Discussion held on April 19

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To: "Tourism CEO - Shaun van Eck" <ceo@knysna-info.co.za>

CC: "Tourism Development - Glendyrr Fick" <development@knysna-info.co.za>

It was immediately obvious that all who intended had a lot to say, so much so, that we ran out of time. Emotions ran high at several stages but, overall, civility was maintained. It was good to have Glendyrr's new assistant/stand-in join the meeting. It will give not only give you a second opinion on the meeting but was practical in that it allowed me to direct some queries by the participants directly at Tourism.

MAIN COMPLAINTS

1. Oyster Festival targets white people and central town, not non-white communities and the townships
2. Year round, high profile events need to be held in the townships.
3. The largest Oyster anger and criticism was directed at Proudly Knysna which is considered to be inexperienced, disorganized and dictatorial.
4. The Oyster "fair" at Hornlee Secondary School lacks adequate security, waste management and toilet facilities.
5. Lack of support from the Dept. of Arts & Culture for township eventing.
6. Lack of support from the Greater Knysna Cultural forum.
7. Money is spent on outside groups (e.g. large sponsorship to bring a gospel group in) yet locals not supported in the same way.
8. Sponsorship monies need to be more transparent.
9. The Rastafarian community is not being utilized sufficiently by Tourism as a marketable product.

IDEAS & POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

1. All agree that the move of Oyster Fest back to Loerie Park is more central to all communities than Knysna High School's sport ground.
2. Although there is a split between Oyster whether hosting a main multi-cultural, music event at Loerie Park or several smaller shows in the townships is best, the consensus is that:
 1. Ideally, both kinds of events should occur.
 2. A large show at Loerie would be assisted by the municipality providing transportation.
 3. A travelling show featuring 3 bands from different communities is the best route for the smaller shows.
 4. Shows should be low priced but not free so as to keep out the worst of the alcoholic and druggie elements.
 5. The Hornlee Oyster eventing programme should be shorter so as to be more impactful i.e. have a compact weekend of activities and then focus on a different event at a different location.
3. Sport eventing would be boosted by:
 1. Soccer events aimed at getting united Knysna team to represent the town.
 2. Trophies for main events.
 3. A cycle race through Khayaletu and Concordia.
 4. A fun walk (during Oyster) from Hornlee to Loerie Park.

Personally, the eventing workshops and my recent township discussions and visits make me feel like a community worker. This meeting emphasized that. It's important to help people who help themselves or others but, personally, i know that i can help everyone at the latest meeting to some degree, whether small or large. But time and money plays a part in hindering that. Nevertheless, although the number of obstacles and size of problems facing Knysna are daunting, i believe that we can make a difference. Projects need to be long term and not one-off efforts for seemingly one-off events. Resources need to be allocated more carefully and more done more consistently for less.

More specifically, regarding this meeting, i do believe that we took a step in the right direction. Thanks for that opportunity.

Wicked Mike

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"The world's a stage and the people prancing upon it are actors; empty shells of living that haven't realized that opinion is proportionate to knowledge and belief proportionate to action."