

Minister probes Fairbreeze mine proposal

Lesley Naudé

MINERAL Resources Deputy Minister Godfrey Oliphant chastised Exxaro KZN Sands for poor communication with stakeholders during a discussion with the parties concerned at Hlanganani Hall in eSikhaleni on Wednesday.

Oliphant came to hear the concerns of the community regarding the proposed Fairbreeze titanium mine, south of Mtunzini, and visited the current Hillendale mine, adjacent to eSikhaleni.

The meeting was attended by Exxaro, representatives from the six tribal authorities neighbouring the proposed Fairbreeze titanium mine, the Mtunzini Conservancy, Wildlife and Environment Society of SA (WESSA) representatives, disgruntled residents of the area next to the current Hillendale mine, and other stakeholders.

However, the hall was far from full and there were numerous complaints that people had only been notified the previous day and had been given the incorrect time.

After listening to all concerns raised Oliphant promised to return with feedback within two months.

'We are not here to take sides but we must listen to all concerns to ensure

that the final decision is in the national interest.

'Our minerals belong to the people of South Africa and not to any group of individuals.'

Oliphant stressed that the government takes environmental issues very seriously, but that it is their responsibility to strike a delicate balance between conservation and taking care of the needs of the country.

'The issues brought up here today are important but they are not insurmountable.'

Looking forward he stressed the importance of Exxaro and all the stakeholders talking openly about the issues at hand.

Exxaro was given the opportunity to address stakeholders but declined.

Concerns raised over the proposed Fairbreeze mine:

- The Mtunzini Conservancy are asking for a full Environmental Impact Assessment to be conducted because they believe the current BAR to be inadequate and full of discrepancies
- WESSA are concerned about the environmental impact of the mine on the sensitive protected area adjacent the mine and the future of Twinstreams Environmental Education Centre

PHOTO: LESLEY NAUDÉ



Mineral Resources Deputy Minister - Godfrey Oliphant addresses stakeholders during the Fairbreeze titanium mine proposal meeting at Hlanganani Hall in eSikhaleni on Wednesday

- WESSA and the Mtunzini Conservancy believe the mine will destroy the area's potential as a tourist destination and have greater long-term negative impact than the short-term benefits of local employment
- The Mkwazazi community say Exxaro have not been consulting them adequately
- The land claim on the Fairbreeze mine area was also raised.

Hot move for local fireman

Conelia Harry

WELL known fire fighter, Busani Ndlovu has relocated to Pietermaritzburg taking up the position of Sales Executive within the Rural Metro EMS group.

The 30 year-old, who was born and bred in Empangeni is a popular face with the public having been the uThungulu District Chief Fire Officer.

Previously responsible for providing emergency services to the rural community in uThungulu area, managing fires, ensuring that firemen attend to all incidents and carrying out fire prevention activities in the district, Ndlovu was excited to start this new chapter in his career in sales.

He attributes his success to hard work, respecting others, associating with progressive people and taking care of his health.

'After being so closely linked to this community, I bid farewell to Zululand but am excited about this promotion.'

'The move will equip me with knowledge and information around the fire service and will give me the opportunity to influence other municipalities to consider opening fire services in their areas to protect the vulnerable communities,' he said.



Born and bred Zululander Busani Ndlovu has taken up a new position at Rural Metro Emergency Management Services in Pietermaritzburg

Ndlovu's future goals include seeing all municipalities in SA, especially rural areas, having their own Fire Department and seeing a decrease in fire-related fatal incidents.

While he adds that this career indeed places strain on the family, they all understand his duties and are supportive.

'They know I am passionate about saving lives, reducing injuries and saving property and the environment.'

'I will really miss Zululand and its people for their spirit of Ubuntu,' he said.

• PUBLIC / LEGAL NOTICES •

FOSKOR NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION

PROPOSED ROCK PHOSPHATE STORAGE FACILITY ON PORTIONS 55 AND 56 OF ERF 5333, RICHARDS BAY

Foskor (Pty) Ltd (Foskor) is lodging an application for Environmental Authorisation with the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) in compliance with the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations No. R. 543, R. 544 and R. 546 of the National Environmental Management Act (Act No. 107 of 1998), as amended.

Notice is also given in terms of the National Environmental Management: Air Quality Act, 2004 (Act No. 39 of 2004) (NEM:AQA) under listed activity 14, category 5, subcategory 5.1, which requires an application for an amendment to Foskor's existing Atmospheric Emissions Licence (AEL) for the proposed project. The amendment required for this project will be incorporated as part of an overall AEL amendment application conducted by SRK Consulting (Pty) Ltd.

Arcus GIBB (Pty) Ltd (GIBB) has been appointed as the independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to compile the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) application and undertake the Basic Assessment Process for the rock phosphate storage facility project.

Project details:

Foskor is proposing to construct a new additional rock phosphate storage facility on portions 55 & 56 of Erf 5333 at Richards Bay. The proposed bunker type storage facility will accommodate approximately 200 000 tons of rock phosphate to supplement Foskor's current storage capacity. The rock, an inert raw material mined at Phalaborwa is railed to Richards Bay and off-loaded at Grindrod's existing rail tipping facility, located adjacent to the site. From the tipping facility, delivered rock will either be conveyed to Foskor's existing store on site or diverted to the proposed storage facility by means of an enclosed pipe conveyor. An enclosed pipe conveyor will also be used to transfer the rock from the proposed store to the existing store on site as needed, by means of an automated reclamation system.

Public Involvement:

All I&APs are invited to participate by registering their comments and contact details and an indication of any direct business, financial, personal or other interest which they have in the application, by post, fax or email to:

Mrs Gisela Fechter

Tel : (031) 267 8560

Fax : (031) 266 3310

Email : gfechter@gibb.co.za

Post: Arcus GIBB

P.O. Box 1365, Westville, 3630

GIBB will distribute further information on the project to all registered I&APs. Registration by 12 May 2012, will allow timeous distribution of information.

Date of this Notice: 12 April 2012



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Port set to boost trade links

Angela Kelly

A DEAL between Transnet and the Airports Company of South Africa for the purchase of the old Durban International Airport will see economic spin-offs that will reach to Richards Bay.

The airport has been sold for a hefty R1,8-billion and will soon become a dug-out port.

Dr Zweli Mkhize, KZN Premier welcomed the signing of the deal.

'Our efforts aimed at positioning KZN as a gateway to Africa and to the world have received a major boost,' he said.

He added Durban was the busiest port on the continent and Richards Bay managed the biggest volume of cargo in the country.

'With the addition of the dug-out port, we have a base of a transportation and freight logistics facility which will provide an effective platform for forging trade links between provinces, with neighbouring states and the rest of the world.'

'This will offer the province considerable investment spin-offs and opportunities,' said Mkhize.

Mkhize said the new facility's proximity to the harbours of Durban and Richards Bay will give it the edge as a transport and logistics hub.

'Rail and road links up and down the coast to these two major seaports will make it easy to switch cargo between different modes of transport.'

'Large quantities that arrive by sea can be dispersed in disaggregated volumes at speed by air,' he said.

The dug-out port is expected to be completed by 2019.