

Kogelberg Villages Environmental Trustees NPO Proposal

Joint response by Conservation representatives in Betty's Bay, Pringle Bay and Rooi Els to the request by Executive Mayor Annelie Rabie for a Community based alternative for managing our local baboon troops.

Background

Human/baboon interactions in the Kogelberg Biosphere villages

How we got here.

- Increase in number of residents in the Kogelberg Biosphere Villages.
- Houses were not baboon proofed.
- New residents were not aware of how to ensure their waste was baboon proofed.
- Supplementary feeding of wildlife by residents also attracted baboons to the urban area.
- Human/baboon conflicts increased.
- Residents pressured Overstrand Municipality (OM) to act.
- OM used a deviation procedure to expedite a contract with a service provider to keep the troops out of urban areas.

Current Tactics

Fear, Intimidation, & Pain

- Chasing
- Paintballing
- Bear bangers

Disrupting Patterns

- Aggressively chase from sleep sites
- Forced relocations
- Virtual Fence
- Limiting access to natural food sources (mussels, natural lowland fynbos)

Results

- Troops scattered over several kilometres
- Baboon presence now unpredictable causing more frustration
- Scattered baboons difficult to manage

- Relocating troops creates opportunities for other troops to move into the vacuum
- Troop relocation not proven to be successful
- Hungry baboons are more determined

Decades of research demonstrates that using aversive-based methods such as pain infliction - especially in high proportions - **are ineffective**, inhumane, and compromise the welfare of the animal.

Sources available.

Impacts on Baboons Under Current Program

2019-2022

- Under the current program, the relocated Pringle Bay troop numbers have declined and no babies have survived.
- Troops splinter into smaller groups or troop members hide to evade monitors.
 - Small bands continue to raid unpredictably.
- Human/baboon conflict and tragic accidents increase when baboons run from monitors.
 - Baboons seek refuge in gardens which increases their risk of being harmed (dogs, pellet guns).
 - Chased baboons get hit by cars.
 - Baboons more likely to opportunistically encounter human food sources in new gardens.
- Aggressive management tactics stress the baboons, resulting in unnecessary intra baboon conflicts.
- Chased baboons require even *more* daily food.

Community frustrations under the Current Program

- Residents are unprepared.
 - The service provider does not warn when baboons enter an area, so doors and windows are left open, and dogs remain loose.
 - Poor waste management draws baboons to urban areas.
- Many residents are frustrated and anxious by ongoing baboon incursions.
- Many residents are distressed by the violent tactics of the current program.
- Many residents feel OM is unresponsive to requests for information, concerns, and alternative ideas.
- There is increasing division and acrimony within the community over methods, expenditure, etc.

We're *all* here looking for a solution

The Mayor called upon the Kogelberg Biosphere village communities to come up with an alternative proposal to managing the baboons in our area.

It was clear in the meeting in Kleinmond on October 18th, 2022 that:

- There was a need for a **community driven option** to the current issue regarding managing our existing urban baboons.

On the 3rd November in Betty's Bay and the 10th November in Pringle Bay:

- The proposal for a non-profit Community Board of Environmental Trustees was **presented to the villages** as an option for baboon management with a positive reception.

We Propose:

Kogelberg Villages Environmental Trustees (KVET)

A non-profit organization of locals managing baboon matters, with funds provided by the municipality on an annual basis ***without tenders***.

This will be an ongoing relationship between the municipality and the KVET.

Primary Goals of the KVET Urban Baboon Management (UBM) initiative

- To **minimize** human/baboon and human/human conflict.
- To **actively** help keep baboons out of properties.
- To help **remove** baboons from properties.
- To maintain the troops as **cohesive** units.
- To **calmly** steer the baboons away from the urban area.
- To give **advance warning** to residents of baboons close by.
- To **hire, train and upskill local members** of the community.
- To help **educate** the community regarding baboons.
- To function as a **Non Profit** to minimize costs to the Community.
- To always be **transparent and truthful**.

Primary Goals of the KVET Urban Baboon Management (UBM) initiative (continued)

- **Serve all members of the community**, not only serve the least tolerant residents but to include those that have made investments into the environment such as baboon-proofing of homes and waste. **Overstrand for All!**
- To establish and manage an ongoing **education and awareness** campaign.
- To **repair** the current behavioural harm (which will not be easy or quick.)

What the KVET UBM will NOT do!

- ***Disturb*** the ***baboon's at their sleep sites*** in the ***protected areas***.
- ***Forcibly*** move the troop away from their home range.
- ***Collar, tag or kill*** baboons (unless for humane euthanasia reasons).
- Use ***negative reinforcement*** methods ie ***chase or shoot*** at baboons with paintball guns.
- Neglect to report and follow up on abusive and illegal behaviour towards baboons.

The Model

Community-based non-profits

Municipal Public Library Trustee (Experience from Bettys Bay Resident Richard Gould)

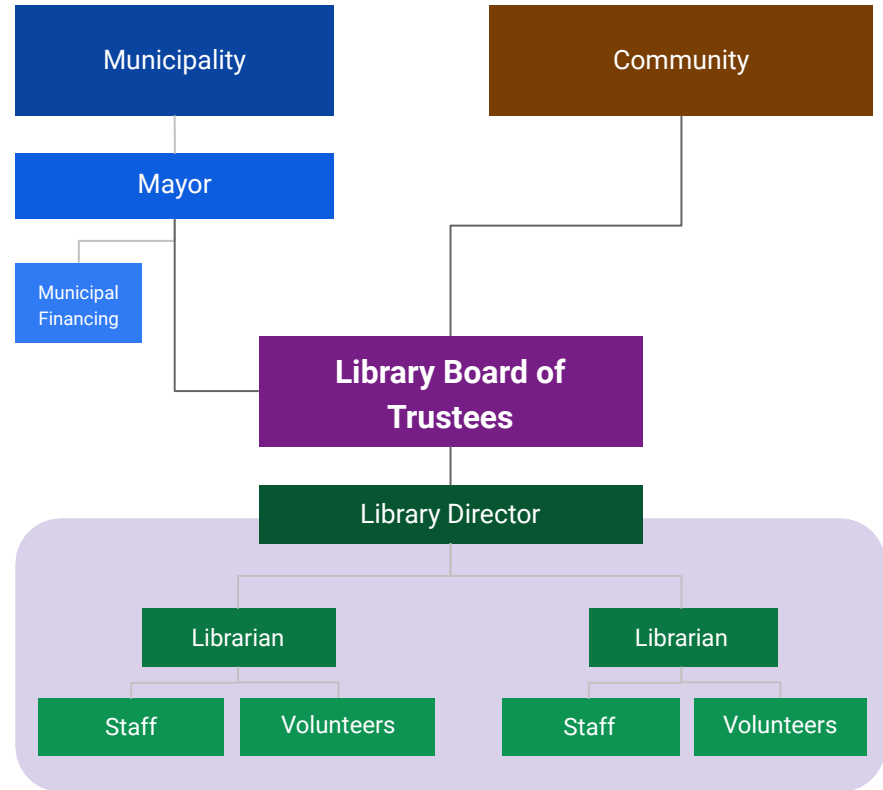
- Was a municipal level public library trustee for 18 years in America.
 - Wasn't a librarian, was in Technology (IT) with an interest in libraries.
- The board was comprised of the following, each with their area of expertise:
 - Mayor
 - Library Director
 - Library collection management
 - Volunteers coordination
 - School representatives
 - Senior citizens
 - Foreign language constituents
 - Children's services
 - Technology (myself)



Example: US Public Libraries

How It Works

- A non-profit is formed, managed by a **Board of Trustees**.
 - Trustees come from the **Community**.
- The **Board of Trustees** hires the **Library Director**, who in turn hires the librarians and other **staff**.
 - The **Trustees** and **Director** essentially assume all responsibility for the library functions.
- The **Library Director** reports to the **Board of Trustees**.
- The **Municipality** provides administrative support in the form of budget, payroll, benefits, etc.
 - The library's budget comes from taxes collected by the **Municipality** for this purpose.
 - The **Municipality** has a representative on the **Board**, often a mayor or financial administrator, to provide input and oversight.



Community Boards of Trustees are Independent NPO's

- The Trustees and Director essentially assume all responsibility for the library functions.
- By being independent self-managed non-profit public libraries assume responsibilities that would otherwise have to be a service provided by the municipality.
- This concept of outsourcing a service to a non-profit organization is established and functions well when properly funded.

Non-Profit Boards of Trustees are Successful

- The concept of Community Boards of Trustees is nothing new overseas.
- Environmental groups in the US and Canada are successfully operating similar non-profit community boards of trustees to manage bear incursions.

Example: Canada's WildSmart

- Bears in America and Canada have become urbanized and raid human food sources.
 - Bow Valley in Alberta, Canada, contains both a provincial park and increasing urbanization, leading to human/wildlife conflicts.
 - The Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley was formed as a non-profit in 1997 for public education, research, and conservation.
 - The WildSmart community initiative was created "after a horrific human-wildlife encounter ending in a fatality."
- WildSmart's public education, and bear-proof solid waste management program, has **"all but eliminated human-bear conflicts in town."**
 - WildSmart's work has been **recognized by UNESCO**, and voted **"best environmental program"** by residents.

Example: Canada's WildSmart

Mission: Empowers community leadership to address environmental challenges.

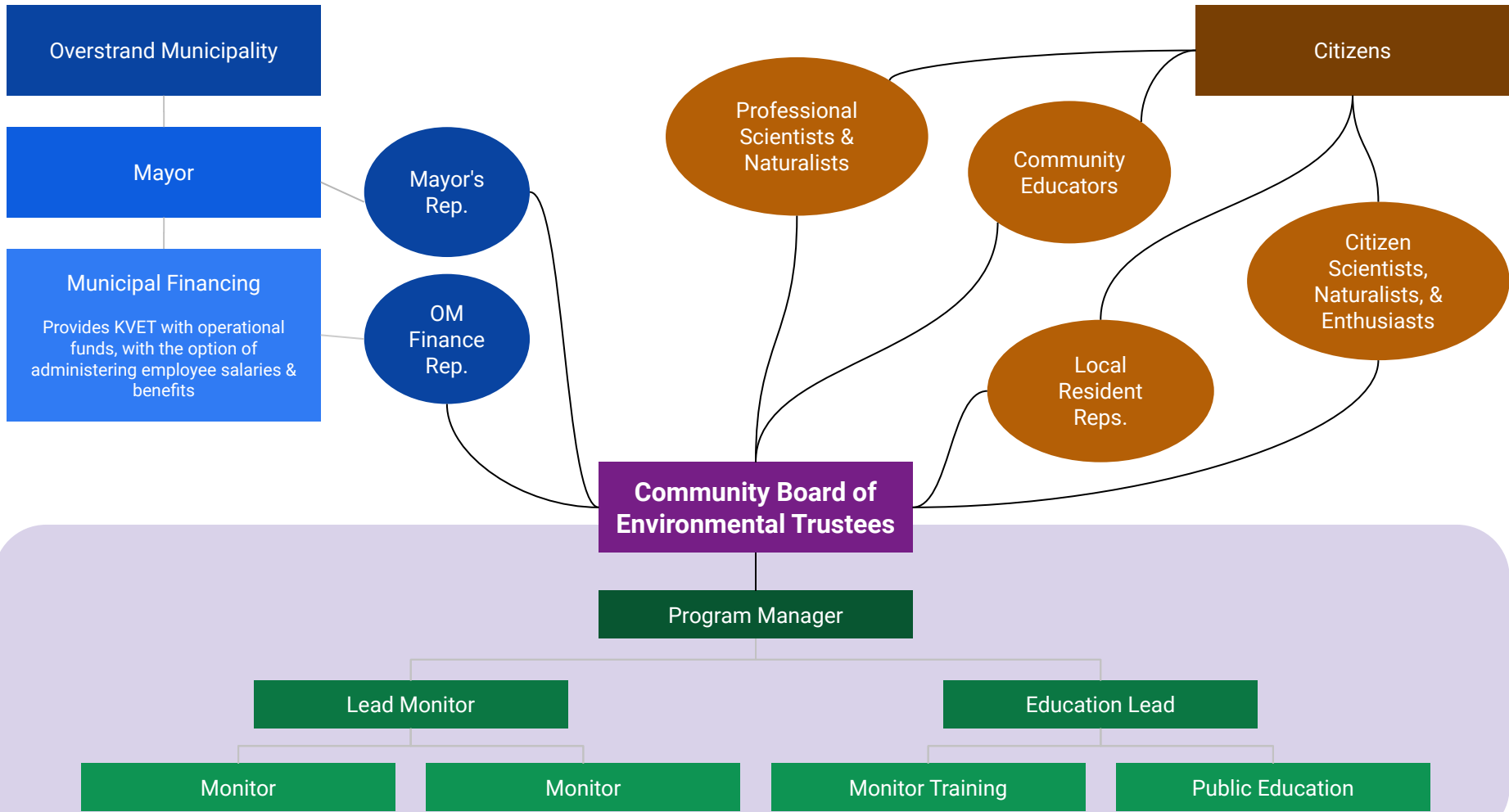
Vision: Residents actively engaged to ensure a thriving ecosystem – now, and in the future.

Programs: Education and outreach programs.

Community: Interaction, networking, sharing and inclusively

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Collaboration
- Evidence-based
- Advocate for the environment
- Seek multi-solving solutions
- Equity, diversity, and inclusion
- Empower community
- Help others develop their leadership
- Evaluate our success



Structure of the Proposed KVET

An independent non-profit community board of **Environmental Trustees (KVET)** where:

- The **Board** hires an urban baboon management (UBM) **Program Manager** reporting and providing input directly to the **Board**.
- The **Program Manager** will be responsible for hiring, assignment, and oversight of **baboon monitors**.
- **Monitors** will be **local residents** trained by primatology experts in baboon behaviour and upskilled for effective management of the troops.
- Funding will be provided via the **OM**.

The **KVET board** would include:

- Members of the **OM Council**.
- **Community members** who are “citizen scientists” closely involved in the sustainability of our environment.
- **Community members** from diverse backgrounds and regions of the Kogelberg Biosphere villages.
- **Program / Operations Manager**
 - Members of their **team of monitors** with relevant experience.
- **Treasurer / Chairperson**
 - Knowledgeable of municipal regulations and bylaws.
 - Work with **OM Finance** and **Program Manager** to set appropriate hiring, wages, and benefits for monitors and other employees within the program.
- **Rooi-Els** has a coexistence model that can **provide years of experience** to the initiative, however residents of Rooi-Els have opted for no monitoring within the village.

Benefits of a community based non profit (KVET)

- Trustees come from the local **community**.
 - More in touch with the community than the city based municipality.
- **Faster response** to community needs.
- **Methods** would be flexible according to what is found to be effective and **not limited by a contract**.
- Non-profit will be fully **transparent**.
- NPO's are **cost-effective** because there is no profit motive.
- **Less liability risk & management burden** for the Municipality.

Our Vision:

Community collaborating with the OM

What will KVET Urban Baboon Management need?

- **Community trust, buy-in, collaboration, tolerance and patience.**
- A community effort to ensure public and household **waste is baboon-proofed.**
- A community effort to ensure other **supplemental foods**, such as bird seed, are **not available to baboons.**
- **Collaboration** of veterinary professionals and first responders.
- **Funding and support** from the Overstrand Municipality.

A Community Based Board of Trustees concept has proven itself to be successful for various municipal issues over many decades.

Together we can provide a solution that will be durable, functional and responsive to our community.

In summary this proposal is designed to build bridges so that, as a community, we are actively engaged in the preservation of our beloved environment.