



## INTRODUCTION:

Looking back at the past financial year, I am reminded what a privilege it is to be the chairperson of an organisation that plays a crucial role in positively influencing the development of Stilbaai.

This year, we celebrate the 37th year of existence of a Business Chamber that aims to promote the prosperity of Stilbaai and thereby ensuring an environment conducive to business enterprises thriving, a milestone that we should all be very proud of.

The positioning of the organisation, as a respected and influential umbrella business association known beyond the Hessequa region in recent years, comes with greater expectations and pressure on the current operational model. Therefore, it is a privilege for the current committee to act innovatively in order to optimise the opportunities presented by the new business cycle, by proposing a repositioning of the Chamber.

## GOALS OF THE BUSINESS CHAMBER:

The primary objective remains to facilitate the development and success of our business community. We remain committed to promoting an environment that enables growth, innovation, and collaboration. During the reporting period, we have actively worked towards achieving this objective, and several noteworthy activities and achievements have been accomplished, which I proudly highlight to you:

### 1. CULTIVATING A CULTURE OF RECOGNITION:

- ✓ The Business Chamber's annual Prestige Awards were, for the fourth year, one of the highlights on Stilbaai's calendar.

This year, the Entrepreneur of the Year category also made provision for an informal entrepreneur. A record number of 195 enterprises (a 17% growth) participated to be recognized as Stilbaai's best businesses in seven sector-driven categories.

The tickets for the glamorous Gala Evening in June, with the theme "Havana Nights", sold out very quickly, and Gertjie Odendaal, of Oppiostoep fame, served as the master of ceremonies, setting the right atmosphere from the beginning for a delightful and enjoyable evening for the 210 guests.

We were privileged to welcome as Honoured Guests the Western Cape Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Ivan Meyer, Minister of Human Settlements, Tertius Simmons, local council members, the new municipal manager, Albert de Klerk, and a well-known businessman from Albertinia, Boy van Rensburg, at the event.

Dr. Ivan Meyer, as the guest speaker, talked about leadership in turbulent times and made it clear that with the right leadership, any challenge can be overcome.



The trophy winners were

- ✓ Charity and community services: Jagersbosch Community Care
- ✓ Food and beverage/Travel and Tourism: Coffee en Cream Coffee Shop & Restaurant
- ✓ Health and beauty enterprises: Blombos Pharmacy
- ✓ Manufacturing and construction: Kloof Houtwerke
- ✓ Real Estate market: Amana Properties
- ✓ Retail businesses: OK Foods
- ✓ Service enterprises: Pakketmoles

The Entrepreneur of the Year in the formal sector is Ursula van Huysteen from Bastion Business Consultancy, and in the informal sector, it's Kobus Smit with his gardening services. The Chairman's Trophy was awarded to Adolf Botes and Johann Vermeulen from Stilbaai Kelders.

The fifth Prestige Awards event is planned for mid-September 2023

- ✓ With the conclusion of Women's Month, we once again thanked the eleven women who have been honoured via the Prestige Award recognition program over the past 5 years for their exceptional achievements, hard work, perseverance, and contributions to the local economy in an article (Suid-Kaap Forum).

The women were: Alida (Ida) Prinsloo (Coffee & Cream), Dr. Karlien van Zyl, Didi Serfontein, and Thelma Oosthuizen (Allegaartjie), Duhne Liebenberg (Namo Natural Health), Johann Vermeulen (Basil & Biltong), Magda Niemand (Lilliput), Rene Haarhoff (Sterreheem Café & Restobar), Ria du Preez (Amana Properties), Tanya Schreuder (The Skin Zone), and Ursula van Huysteen (Bastion Business Consultancy).

- ✓ The well-known businesswoman, Linda Gorden of Riversdale Skoenwinkel & Kothuis, celebrated her 40 years in business, and we arranged an outstanding article by correspondent Johan Victor from Suid-Kaap Forum.
- ✓ Kobus Smit, the informal sector entrepreneur, was nominated by us for the AHi 2022 awards and was honoured as a finalist in the Beginner Enterprises category.

- ✓ Certificates of appreciation were presented to the staff of Jongensfontein, Stilbaai, and Preekstoel Caravan Parks to thank them for their hard work and dedication in making the caravan parks such sought-after destinations.
- ✓ Owners and managers of various businesses were thanked for outstanding service highlighted on social media through email correspondence.

## 2. NETWORK OPPORTUNITIES

The business breakfast sessions organised during the past year have gained significant popularity among local business community.

- ✓ Andrew Stroebel, Speaker of the Hessequa Municipality, was the guest speaker during the first breakfast session, where he explained the management structures of the municipality. Representatives from fifteen Stilbaai businesses attended the session.
- ✓ Immediately after the appointment of the new municipal manager was announced, a series of breakfast sessions were organised with council members and Albert de Klerk, the new municipal manager. The sessions were attended by 158 businessmen and women representing 137 enterprises, and the feedback was very positive.



**STILBAAI SAKEKAMER SE**  
**SAKEONTBYT**

saam Burgemeester Grant Riddles en Albert de Klerk,  
nuut aangestelde Munisipale Bestuurder van Hessequa

Donderdag:  
20 Oktober,  
08h00 stiptelik  
te Coffee and Cream  
R165pp



stilbaaisake@gmail.com  
Bevestiging geskied met bewys van betaling.

Bankbesonderhede:  
ABSA 632005  
Spaarrekening nr: 2188146166  
Verwysing: Sakeontbyt 30 Okt (Maatskappy/Individu)




www.stilbaaisakekamer.co.za

## 3. INVESTMENT IN OUR TOWN

An initiative to enhance the appearance of our town for visitors, including aspects such as cleanliness, uniformity of notice boards, and identifying structures in need of repair, was launched in November. It included the following:

- ✓ Restoration/painting of several structures by Hessequa Municipality, such as the barriers on both sides of the eastern entrance of the bridge, bollards and lighthouse at the harbour, a broken panel on the skateboard park, cleaning of the N2 sign, etc.
- ✓ A neat advertising board was erected at the corner of Hoofweg-Wes and Buitekantstraat, available for businesses in that area.
- ✓ The installation of the "Enjoy Stilbaai" banner at the four way stop near the Engen filling station.

## 4. INVESTMENT IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR

Since the Hessequa Municipality Council granted permission for the Brugmark site to be leased to the Business Chamber for an initial five-year period in September 2021, it can rightly be said that the Brugmark has undergone a transformation.

At the time of the change in management of the market, there were approximately 40 exhibitors in December and 20 on a Saturday. The market has since grown to an average of 52 exhibitors unpacking their products for the public to enjoy and 56 stalls were ready to surprise holidaymakers in December.

The newly built atrium, which is the first phase of the architectural proposal and site development plan, was officially opened before the December market in a ceremony by the executive mayor and municipal manager. The fact that visitors to the December market could enjoy a glass of wine, gin, or local beer under the newly built atrium contributed to a unique experience.

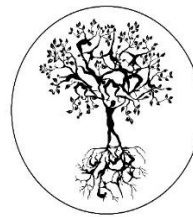
There are still many plans in the pipeline. The first priority is obtaining a liquor license and the construction of a double and two single lockable stalls. We also aim to start the construction of open-plan stalls, as the second phase of the architectural plans. However, this will depend on the availability of funds.

## 5. THE VALUE OF COLLABORATION

The good relationships built over the past few years with stakeholders from various organisations definitely contributed to the success of Stilbaai Business Chamber. Not only has it given us access to information and resources, but it has also created a platform that has enabled us to express collective viewpoints and provide aligned comments on the municipality's planning processes

Some of the umbrella organisations that were consulted and worked with include:

- ✓ AHi Western Cape, Sakeliga, Small Business Institute (SBI), and Hessequa Business Forum..
- ✓ In Stilbaai- Belangeforum, Tourism, Community Police Forum, and Residents Associations of Jongensfontein, Melkhoutfontein, and Stilbaai East.
- ✓ Other business organisations: Due to the leading role played in the Hessequa Business Forum, we enabled the establishment of a business organisation in Witsand.
- ✓ Support was also provided to Bonnievale, Swellendam, and Robertson business associations.



## 5. INTERACTION WITH HESSEQUA MUNICIPALITY:

The positive attitude and open-door policy of Hessequa Municipality are sincerely appreciated. Due to the mutual respect and trust among the various stakeholders, we are able to openly and honestly discuss complex and sensitive matters.

In addition to formal invitations to participate in public engagement events, there is also regular interaction with the council and officials.

Some of the key matters addressed during the year through formal participation processes as well as informal interactions include:

- ✓ Proposal for a long-term future vision (how the Hessequa region will look over the next 20 to 30 years) to be developed with the assistance of advisory groups from local communities. We further proposed that the same advisory groups should also be involved in the formulation of the Integrated Development Plan before it is presented for public participation.

- ✓ Investigation of solutions for energy security.
- ✓ Optimization of revenue streams: We are concerned about the implications of electricity sales losses due to load shedding. Our proposal is that this and the disproportionate contribution of Stilbaai to the Hessequa fiscal should be urgently investigated to identify risks and opportunities.
- ✓ Tariff policy: Excessively high tariffs (Electricity, Water, Sewage, and Waste Removal) and the current block tariffs are not conducive or justifiable for small business enterprises when compared to other similar vacation towns adjacent to Hessequa.
- ✓ Planning and expansion of the central business district and industrial areas.
- ✓ Revision (in collaboration with business associations) of the existing Tourism Framework.
- ✓ Stilbaai harbour and Lappiesbaai developments.

The municipal council has already agreed, based on the request to utilise advisory groups for planning, to hold a joint workshop between the municipality and the business sector to discuss the Local Economic Development Plan and Tourism Framework. Arrangements for the workshop are currently being finalized.

District committees are also effectively utilised to support issues that affect business owners, such as rezoning applications and leasing of municipal properties.

A request was also made to the municipality during the year to take over the contract with an external company regarding the management of the cement garbage bins, which are currently in poor condition, as well as the two large advertising billboards (Ellensrust and Jongensfontein caravan parks).

## 6. UTILISATION OF BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

It is evident that the business environment is moving at a tremendous pace, and therefore, the context in which businesses operate is becoming increasingly unpredictable.

Consequently, we find ourselves in an era where the availability and analysis of data for making better-informed decisions are of critical importance. For this reason, the decision was made to launch a Business Intelligence Program. The program involves various methods of collecting, storing, and processing data

The first project in the program was launched in October 2022 through the development of a portal ([www.sb4u.co.za](http://www.sb4u.co.za)) that lists businesses with an easy-to-use icon interface to websites and/or Facebook pages of businesses. The portal also includes links from which residents, businesses, and visitors can fill out surveys. All processed survey results are made available on the portal.



Afterwards, questionnaires were developed targeting the following groups:

✓ **Holidaymakers:**

The survey took place during the December 2022 holiday period. Valuable information about the demographics of holidaymakers, places visited, activities engaged in during the vacation, experiences with municipal service delivery, importance of Blue Flag status of beaches, traffic flow, and general service from businesses was obtained.

The questionnaire results' statistical accuracy for survey is 75%, and the results were released in February 2023.

✓ **Permanent Residents:** The survey took place from November 2022 to February 2023. The statistical accuracy of the questionnaire results is 95%.

The obtained demographic information includes education, age, and average income levels.

Useful trends were determined regarding the availability of goods and services, handling of load shedding, development preferences for the growth of Stilbaai, as well as expectations of the role of the local municipality.

According to the survey, the community is satisfied with the offerings of our local supermarkets and they also believe that dining facilities at Stilbaai restaurants are very affordable. The necessity of an ambulance service is highly regarded, and the affordability of housing has been highlighted as a problem area.

The survey also revealed an interesting shift in consumer behaviour should load shedding worsen, which has significant implications for the municipality.

✓ **Businesses:**

Further investigations are currently underway to obtain a holistic picture of the business sector in Stilbaai. However, it is clear from the surveys that Stilbaai's economic activities are driven by micro-businesses. The majority of our local businesses employ fewer than 10 employees.

Once the business sector investigations are completed, an integrated result will be made available on the portal ([www.sb4u.co.za](http://www.sb4u.co.za)).

## **THE FUTURE OF STILBAAI BUSINESS CHAMBER**

Due to the organisation's growing role in local economic development over the past few years, the Stilbaai Business Chamber developed into much more than just an informal membership organisation. However, the current business model is no longer sufficient, and if not addressed, there is a risk that it will negatively impact the organisation's effectiveness.

To prevent this, we propose that the future vision for Stilbaai Business Chamber should include the following:

A formally registered non-profit company that has:

- ✓ A management structure with the necessary human resources capable of being available on a daily basis and providing immediate value to business people and other stakeholders.
- ✓ Capacity, backed by digital technology, to proactively obtain and process information to identify and respond to changes, risks, and opportunities.
- ✓ Further collaboration agreements with business groups in South Africa.

The core elements required for the transformation process are:

- ✓ Registration of a non-profit organisation.
- ✓ Review/expansion of income streams.
- ✓ Revision of the management structure and operational model, including permanent appointments and investment in technology.

In Stilbaai Business Chamber, we dream of a future where all the key players involved in the development of our local economy (Hessequa Municipality, Business People, and Local Communities) pursue the same vision and work together to achieve economic development success.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

We salute all businesses for their perseverance despite challenges such as load shedding, fuel levies, bureaucratic government processes, and many more.

Thank you very much to all our members for your continuous support.

To previous committee members of the Chamber, thank you very much for your exceptional contributions in the past, as without them, our success and continued existence would not have been possible.

Thank you also to the Council of Hessequa Municipality and the administration officials, as well as the numerous community organisations with whom we closely collaborate, for your help and support.

Lastly, but certainly not least, I want to thank my management team for their selfless service to the Stilbaai, Jongensfontein, and Melkhoutfontein communities over the past year. It is a privilege to lead a team with so much perseverance, professionalism, integrity, and a passion to serve.

It has been a special honour to serve as your Chairperson during the past few years.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Rachel Wall