



# THE PROBUS ASSOCIATION OF THE WESTERN CAPE

**Minutes of a meeting held at the Highlander Club in Grahamstown  
At 10h00 on Wednesday 4 March 2009**

## Present

Representing the Probud Clubs of the Eastern Cape -

19 Delegates from 10 Probud Clubs (see detailed list of delegates attached)

Representing the Probud Association of the Western Cape (PAWC) -

Derek Erickson - Vice chairperson & Mike Underwood - Secretary

### 1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Derek Erickson (DE hereinafter), on behalf of the PAWC, warmly welcomed the delegates & thanked them for their attendance.

Apologies for absence had been received from the Graaf-Reinet, Queenstown & Western Suburbs Probud Clubs.

### 2. ELECTION OF MEETING CHAIRPERSON & MINUTE SECRETARY

DE was proposed, seconded & elected unopposed as Chairperson & Mike Underwood (MU hereinafter) volunteered to act as Minute Secretary.

### 3. THE ROTARY - PROBUS RELATIONSHIP

MU explained the establishment of Probud in Southern Africa & the original relationship of Rotary, the five regions, the SA Probud Council, Regional Probud Associations, Rotary appointed Probud Coordinators & Probud Clubs. The link between the Council & the clubs was intended to be through a regional association or the Probud coordinator. Since the Eastern Cape clubs had neither an association or a coordinator, it had no joint permanent representative on the Council & it was to try & overcome this problem that the meeting had been called.

The matter was further complicated by the fact that in 2002, the District Governors of Rotary in Southern Africa had declared that Rotary had "no jurisdiction" over Probud. This made it anomalous that Rotary clubs were being called upon to sponsor new Probud Clubs & the Standard Constitution for Probud Clubs has been amended accordingly. New Probud Clubs can be sponsored by existing Probud Clubs but where there are no existing Probud Clubs, a Rotary Club can still sponsor a new Probud Club if it so wishes.

MU likened the current relationship to an "amicable separation" rather a total "divorce". Probud Clubs could establishment any sort of relationship they liked with their local Rotary Clubs.

#### 4. THE STRENGTH OF PROBUS IN THE EASTERN CAPE

Delegates from each club were invited to talk about their clubs.

**Arcadia** - 50+ strong. Going well but experiencing some recruitment problems. No relationship with Rotary. Initially felt that they did not want an "association"

**Boardwalk** - Very strong. No problem with recruitment. Well lead & administered. They too felt initially felt that they did not want to be part of an "association" but felt that they should attend the meeting & listen.

**Diaz** - Strong club; men only; ladies have own clubs. Swallows amongst membership. Inter-club activities with Kowie Club. A little isolated - have trouble finding speakers.

**Dolphin** - a mixed club but no male members. Had become an 'old ladies' club' & found it impossible to recruit men.

**East London** - club collapsing. Is there a place for Probud clubs in inner city centres which are in "decay"? Arcadia & Boardwalk suggested looking at the possible formation of a new club in the suburbs of East London.

**Grahamstown** - A mixed Club where the ladies outnumber the men 2 to 1. No real problems. No relationship with Rotary.

**Hogsback** - a recently formed mixed club which encourages "couples" only recruitment but "singles" are not barred. Sponsored by the Arcadia Rotary Club which whom they have an excellent relationship.

**Kowie** - men only with 70 membership limit & a waiting list. Speakers no problem. Loose relationship with local Rotary Club. Originally not very enthusiastic about "association" proposal.

**Port Elizabeth** - 50 strong mens' club with a waiting list of 30. No lunch - just tea & biscuits. Outings every month with partners. No relationship with Rotary. Club members are "not very enthusiastic about an association". PE clubs exchange newsletters.

**Port Elizabeth South** - Very poorly - only 7 members at the previous day's meeting. They think a change of meeting venue might revitalize the club.

## 5. THE PROMOTION OF PROBUS IN THE LOCAL PRESS

DE circulated the article about Probus that had appeared in the Cape Times in February. He urged clubs to provide reports & photographs of their activities to the local press to create Probus "awareness" & help recruitment.

## 6. THE EXTENSION OF PROBUS FELLOWSHIP TO INCLUDE INTER-CLUB ACTIVITIES

MU stressed that Probus was not just about a monthly meeting. Apart from a club's own outings, fellowship, friendships & FUN could be extended by interclub activities. These could include sporting events between clubs, combined outings with neighbouring clubs or merely a lunch with another club. A loose structure with liaison officers responsible for the "welfare" of a small group of clubs would encourage & facilitate inter-club activities.

## 7. THE CONCEPT OF PROBUS CARE

DE emphasised the need for Probians to look after one another in times of need. A visit to a sick fellow member, a lift to the meeting or to the shops & some help with a heavy task were just a few of the ways we could help one another & show that we CARE.

## 8. THE GARDEN ROUTE EXPERIENCE

MU explained that a few years ago the Probus Clubs on the Garden Route, although members of PAWC, felt isolated & "out of it". They were reluctant to send club representatives all the way to Cape Town to attend the AGM & Buzz Gatherings & were not kept informed of what was going on in the Association. They threatened to leave the PAWC & form their own local association.

After the PAWC Exco met with the clubs, it was decided to form the Probus Garden Route Committee, a sub-committee of Exco. The committee is composed of club presidents and/or secretaries & only meets as & when necessary. One member, ideally the Chairperson, acts a liaison between the clubs & Exco, attends Exco meetings if possible & reports back to clubs via the Garden Route committee. It is essential that this committee sends at least one representative to the yearly PAWC AGM & the Buzz Gathering which takes place every other year.

The system works. The clubs are kept fully informed & Exco knows what is happening in its Garden Route clubs. Liaison is good between the clubs & inter-club activities now include Garden Route Golf & Bowls days amongst other activities.

## 9. WHY A FORMAL STRUCTURE ?

An organization like Probus must have form of structure however loose & informal it might be in practice. DE stated that we had covered many of the benefits of having a structure in

the earlier discussions. MU explained the tremendous help that had been given to the Western Cape clubs by PAWC to help them with applications to SARS to have tax exemption status. Advice on travel insurance for club outings had also been offered.

#### 10. FORMATS FOR A STRUCTURE

There was general agreement that it was not feasible to create a Probus Association of the Eastern Cape - too cumbersome & expensive.

A Garden Route type structure within PAWC might work but would require some careful thought because of the great distances between clubs. Greater telephone and/or Email communication might be the answer with perhaps three liaison officers covering a group of, say, four clubs. These were details that could be resolved if the Eastern Cape clubs decided to go along with some form of structure.

#### 11. FORMAL RESOLUTION FROM THE FLOOR

Delegates did not think it practicable to propose a formal motion on the whole subject. It was agreed that delegates would discuss their findings with their clubs at their March/April meetings & pass their decisions back to Bob Goebel by the 30 April 2009.

DE again thanked the delegates for their attendance & their input to the meeting.

The meeting closed at 12h33 after the saying of the Probus Grace by DE.