

No. 89 Yarona Building
2nd Floor
Cnr 3rd & Watt Street
Wynberg
2090

P.O Box 39108
Bramley
2018

Tel: 011 440 5419/21

Email: sales@alexfm.co.za
Web: www.alexfm.co.za

Registration: NPC 2015/404296/08



Annual General Meeting

Chairperson's Report

Date: 17 August 2024
Venue: Sankopano Community Centre
Time: 09h00
Prepared by: Isaac Mangena
Designation: Chairperson

Board of Trustees: Isaac Mangena (Chairperson), Refiloe Lekota (Deputy Chairperson), Gregory Baloyi (Treasurer), Mafasi Kubayi (Secretary), Zelda Hlongwane (Deputy Secretary), Keith Maphutha, Sicebi Radebe,

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[Greetings]

To: the Residents

1. Introduction

Kindly find below, the highlights of the Chairperson's Report for the elective AGM to be held on 17th August 2024 at Alex SanKopano. This report covers the 5-year term of the Board between 2018 and 2023.

Elected Board

This Board was elected by the community of Alexandra at a community Annual General Meeting held at Alexandra (Central Johannesburg College) in December 2018. The elected members are as follows:

i.	Isaac Mangena - Chairperson
ii.	Refilwe Lekota - Deputy-Chair
iii.	Mafasi Mafasi - Secretary
iv.	Zelda Hlongwane - Deputy Secretary
v.	Bongani Mandita - Treasurer
vi.	Keith Maphutha – Additional member
vii.	Vuyani Baloyi – Additional member

viii.	Mish Hlophe – Additional member
ix.	Sicebi Radebe – Additional member
x.	Greg Baloyi – Additional member

Unfortunately, the Board ended its term with seven (7) members after Mr. Mish Hlophe passed on during Covid-19, while both Mr. Mandita and Mr. Baloyi resigned. I then seconded Mr. Greg Baloyi to act as Treasurer until the end of our term.

Mr. Maphutha was appointed as the Board's Spokesperson and Stakeholder Manager to ensure we build relations and forge an open-door policy with every stakeholder within Alex FM supply area.

This is the team that you, the residents, entrusted to take care of and run your station.

Immediately after the Board was elected, we convened a bosberaad where strategies to talk to the above were forged and set in motion. Most of all that we set ourselves to do, was done.

2. Station's health

As you are aware, the Station was on shaky ground when this Board came through at the end of 2018. There was uncertainty, and disgruntlements by staff members. The morale was very low, and the team polarized.

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The Board managed to work on the staff issues, supported by the Station Manager Mr. Takalane Nemangowe, and we ensured that they are allowed to express themselves without any fear or interference to their work. We supported and guided, while exercising oversight. We arrived at a time when the Station Manager's contract was coming to an end. After Covid disrupted our recruitment efforts, we decided to renew Mr. Nemangowe's contract to create stability.

The morale is very high as I report now.

3. Station legal woes

The Board found the Station in a quack mire of legal challenges with the bill sitting at over R200 000. This was due to several cases that were defended before the courts prior to, and during the beginning of our tenure.

The Station was also taken to ICASA by some section of the community who were challenging several things including how the station was run, legal basis of its running, and the outcomes of the AGM.

These matters were ironed out, with some still underway, and the legal matters resolved. The matter concerning the deregistration of the Trust emanating from our early days has been resolved.

With the lessons suggesting that the Station needs to have a legal backbone, we insourced the services of Hlongwane SZ Attorneys Inc. to guard against any matters that need to be heard in court. This law firm, based at 4th Avenue, led our fight for the deregistration of the Trust, obtaining the License with ICASA, and recovering debts owed to Alexa FM.

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4. Finances

From -zero to + six zeros! This is where we hand over the station back to the community sitting.

One of the strategies we agreed on at the bosberaad was to embark on an aggressive sales and fundraising approach to ensure we bring the sunk ship back to the surface. We formed a Finance committee inclusive of Board members to focus on sales and marketing initiatives.

We went on cost-cutting measure with the Station Manager to ensure the station spends on what's relevant, cutting down on phone charges for example, and renegotiating some of the contracts we had, including the lease at Yarona Building. I must indicate that we are still operating on the 1994 license conditions. We want to change those. To do this, we have conducted done a study on our coverage, and where our signal is supposed to be. The Station Manager's Report will touch on this and go deeper too. We surveyed our listener's too to understand how they want to be serviced. There was a misalignment between the listeners and our programming.

In the cost-containment exercise, we did not retrench any of our staff members. Board members joined hands with management to go to the field to fundraise for the station, seek grants and donations.

To ensure that every cent is accounted for, and the books are in good state, we brought on external Auditors to review (others call it Audit) our books on regular basis. The Treasurer's Report will give clearer picture.

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5. Deregistration of the Trust

The thorny issues of Trust vs NPO was the primary feature of our tenure. It was one of the issues taken to ICASA and which really had a negative bearing on operations and the station finalizing getting the license from ICASA.

But I am happy to indicate that a lot of work has been put into this and progress made in this regard. We managed to trace the remaining Trustees to assist us with the deregistration process after the court demanded that. I would like to express appreciation to Mr. Ernest Ndlovu (Former Chairperson) and Mr. David Slovo Makhado (Former Station Manager) who, when called upon, and because of their love for the radio station, deposed to affidavits and signatures to enable this deregistration process to move with speed.

I am pleased to report that the Trust has been successfully deregistered through the office of the Master of the High Court, Pretoria.

6. License

As indicated above, one of the major reasons for us not receiving the license is due to the matters in court which included the Trust. We have met several times with ICASA over this issue, wrote letters to update them on every step we took concerning the Trust which has since been deregistered.

Nevertheless, the station remains on air and operates normally, with the elusive document still not there.

This I must indicate is one of the sore points of our tenure. The Station Manager will go deeper into what this meant.

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7. Listeners Club

I have indicated when I delivered my first speech to the community of Alexandra that a listeners' forum or club is very important in the running of any community radio station. Alex FM does not have a good experience in this regard based on past mishaps, and the skepticism is fully understood.

However, at the last community meeting I presented this need and highlighted the look and feel of this important animal so that the community could embrace and take part in this.

One of the things I indicated is that this club should be fully run by the residents, for their own benefit. I also indicated that it should meet often annually to take the mandate from the community and fulfil the wishes of the community. It should also not be seen as deputizing the Board, or co-governing with station management. I pledged that the Board of Alex FM will facilitate and fund the first workshop to start this process. I wish the residents could follow through this and ensure the in-coming Board sets this up as a matter of urgency!

8. Challenges

Resignation of Board members created minor instability, but we continued without replacing them as the remaining ones formed a quorum. However, in terms of the position of the Treasurer, which is crucial to the running of the station finances and our aggressive revenue enhancement drive, we brought in one of the former veteran Board members, Mr Baloyi to step in. We lost one

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of the Board members through Covid, which was the sad day for the collective.

This Board managed to go through some of the difficult times in the country in the form of Covid 19. This pandemic rendered the whole world under lock and key, with little or no movement. In Alex FM's work for example it meant ICASA imposed restrictions, effectively closing any process including that of license renewal with them. Advertisers left. It closed businesses, cost jobs, killed people. This Board lost the whole two years in which nothing much could be done.

In spite of all these, I am happy that the station remained on air, and none of our staff members went for a month without their salary!

The 2021 looting did not spare Alex FM unfortunately. Some of the community members who do not know the value of this radio station decided to target the station, stripped it bare, and left it with nothing – not even a bulb!

The unfortunate events of July unrest came with them abundant blessings. We received love from all corners of the province and country. We received support in terms of funds, furniture, laptops, and training opportunities for our staff, counselling, driving licenses for our teams, and many other opportunities. We were overwhelmed by the love and support. The treasurer will touch on some of those including where the money is and the property/inventory which belongs to you, the Community of Alexandra. How many of you have been to Alex FM studios recently? If you haven't, please come through. Those who have been you have seen the rebuilding work we've been doing following the looting. We have a new state-of-the-art studios, wallpapers and paintings, etc.

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We are not done. More is still coming including TV cameras to ensure that we livestream our shows on online TV and YouTube channels.

9. Opportunities ahead

I led one of the most incredible team! We are leaving Alex FM in a good space, and in good health. There are a lot of things we could have done if time allowed. But we have laid the foundation to most and believe the new Board will finish of and even start more incredibly good things that will lift the station to even bigger heights.

Satellite studios – we have already secured space at Alex Mall for the construction of the new satellite studios. These are important to create redundancy should the current studios have problems or as learnt during the looting, they get vandalized, then we can remain on air.

TV station – the current registration of Alexandra Broadcasting Corporation allows for the diversification of products under this umbrella, including the setting up of TV station and newspaper. TV station is easier, as seen with the podcasts, and modern ones do not need much equipment. This should be taken forward and implemented for the sake of generations to come. Other communities including Soweto, Tshwane, etc. have their own TV stations.

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Radio Academy and Youth Training Centre

10. Conclusion

I would like to thank the community of Alexandra for allowing me to lead this Board and be part of those who walked this journey on behalf of the residents. I did my best and believe that, with the team I lead, young and old, we managed to move the needle and set Alex FM on a path to greater heights.

I thank the community leadership, listeners, former Board Members who held our hands at the beginning and were some of the first respondents when crisis hit us, members of the defunct listeners' forum, Taxi Associations, Community Organizations, Churches, and many other stakeholders. *Le di bosso lona!*

Kea leboga! Na khensa! Ngiyabonga!

 (Signature)

Isaac Mangena (Chairperson)

Date: 22 July 2024