



## 2024 AGM ANNUAL REPORT

The Rosendal-Mautse Town Committee (RTC) was active and engaged this year. The quality and quantity of projects undertaken is high and is a good measure of civic engagement. It is worth noting that this is far above what is achieved in neighbouring towns in our region, if not the Free State.

Over the years the RTC has taken on a growing number of actions, projects, and activities. These all fall under the mandate and vision outlined in our Terms of Reference, which states the committee's aims to:

*"...coordinate and achieve social and economic potential through projects and initiatives, to promote community development and the aesthetic appeal of Rosendal as a tourism destination and the quality of life for all residents. A shared vision is for Rosendal and Mautse to be one of the most pleasant towns to live in in the Free State and in South Africa, and a place of harmony and increasing employment, able to support a decent life and income for a growing number of people."*

The RTC invites residents to get on board in 2025 either by joining the committee or making themselves available for ad hoc projects. Residents are also welcome to attend committee meetings on the last Wednesday of every month.

### MANDATE AND ACTIVITIES

Town committee's actions and activities are aligned with its capacities, in four areas:

1. As a **representative body** with lobbying capacity, the RTC provides a forum in which to express and represent community interests, in particular with provincial and municipal authorities. We have a specific need to engage with Dihlabeng Municipality at local level in favour of service delivery, and to cooperate with the SAPS Rosendal station on security and community matters.
2. As an entity able we **initiate and run small projects** directly, whether this is to plant trees and landscape the town's streets or install solar lights or fund marketing and tourism promotion.
3. As a **funder of projects** and initiatives with a view to social responsibility. The RTC receives limited income from the annual auction, ad hoc donations, and revenue from guesthouse listings. Projects, large and small, are considered for funding in light of our constitution and vision statement, especially where this enables youth activity and community cohesion. Sport teams and tournaments, for example, have been enabled

on a regular basis and this has helped to develop a positive bond between Rosendal and Mautse.

4. As an **intermediary**. There are autonomous or ad hoc groups that function independently from the committee in Rosendal and Mautse. The RTC receives and disburses funds for these groups on their behalf, in the manner of direct 'in-and-out' transactions. There are currently four such independently managed groups for which the RTC provides this service:
  - Tshepo soup kitchen (independent funding)
  - Rosendal Neighbourhood Watch
  - Rosendal Tourism Coordination Group
  - Rosendal Heritage Association

## **RTC ACTION AND ACTIVITY IN 2024**

A brief summary of the RTC's work this year follows. More detail can be found in the half-year report and in subsequent minutes distributed on the INFO group, available to anyone who requests them. Kindly email [rtc@rosendaltown.co.za](mailto:rtc@rosendaltown.co.za)

### **R70 Road Rehabilitation**

Two R70 road rehabilitation contracts were awarded, for Rosendal-Ficksburg (TauPele) and for Rosendal-Senekal (Actophambili-Busi). The RTC worked to be included in progress meetings. This proved difficult when letters and inquiries went unanswered as work started. We were told incorrectly that we were not a recognised stakeholder, yet the departmental guidelines proved our right to participate in oversight through the Project Steering Committee (PSC). Standing on the PSC was eventually granted in early August, after five months of effort, when our queries were sent to the companies through a pro bono attorney (NO Oelofse Ing., Senekal). An RTC representative participated in the second PSC meeting and will continue in 2025. These are two-year contracts so the Ficksburg section has been completed in half the time, and the Senekal section is on schedule. The road rehabilitation has resulted in a significant amount of work for local sub-contractors and creation of employment in Mautse. Local sub-contractors initially were at risk of being excluded and with these contracts going to companies in Bloemfontein and elsewhere.

### **Service Delivery**

This remains a serious challenge for Rosendal. Water, electricity, and town roads are our priority. The RTC received no reply all year from Dihlabeng's Municipal Manager (Bethlehem) to numerous requests for an urgent meeting to discuss the following: maintenance and upkeep of town boreholes; repairing streetlamps; grading and maintenance of town roads; a the honeysucker service; the town's electricity supply; and installing measures to reduce motor vehicle speeding in town. The RTC was successful in pressurising the municipality to grade roads, sort out the dump, fix streetlights, get a permanent electrician on call, communicate a honey sucker schedule, and other smaller. The RTC is very encouraged by the appointment of Keneiloe Mothibeli as Acting Unit Manager for Rosendal-Mautse who has made her mark with responsiveness and a willingness to act as well as keep the community informed on issues in an open manner. We wish her much success.

### **Water Supply**

Of particular concern is water supply because the pipeline from Bethlehem is to be shut down for repair. Although the pipeline is frequently inactive there are opportunities in this situation in as far as Dihlabeng Municipality is meant to invest in repair and upgrade of the town boreholes, which, together with the municipal dam, is our most consistent source of supply. The RTC did a costing to take this on as a project but it is prohibitively expensive.

### **The Neighbourhood Watch**

Following a crime spree involving robberies at homes in Rosendal, local volunteers set up a Neighbourhood Watch (NW) group. This was at the request of the local SAPS station commander. The RTC donated funds to reimburse volunteers for fuel. A suspect was later apprehended by police following the provision of information via the NW. There are current discussions for a community security service to be set up in which participating residents and homeowners will be able to call for assistance and have home alarms connected to a central number. This is a private initiative.

### **Safety and Security**

The RTC liaises with SAPS and the CPF. We were active in reminding the community to report any and all suspicious activity, providing the correct procedure protocols. It is vital that residents report incidents and that these are recorded in the local SAPS incident report. The RTC funded solar lights for the town, which have been placed on existing municipal street poles after appeals to the community for suggested locations.

### **Annual Auction**

The annual fund-raising auction was held in April at Yolla's Teater. It has been historically managed by a small group and began a month before the day with a call for donations and services. The event was a great success and accounts for the bulk of funding for RTC, the other being fees for listing guest houses on our website. The next auction will be in Easter 2025.

### **Funding**

This year the RTC funded the following major category projects: Upgrade of the town website; a Mautse food garden; heritage plaques for historic Rosendal buildings; a digital map of the town; the rehabilitation of the Rosendal cemetery; a hiking trail through Kestell Tuin and on the north side of Meulspruit; and the Let's Draw project. These are successful by majority vote at committee meetings where the merits are debated at length. Ad hoc funding is considered for applications below R1600. These are successful by committee majority vote to a funding cap of 10% of the RTC budget, after presentation and discussion on the RTC WhatsApp group. We believe that support for these initiatives contributes to community building. Ad hoc funded projects include: CPF youth league, woman's football, high school achiever awards, town clean-up and road filling, a netball team sponsorship, and the Mautse children's Christmas party. Monthly running costs are website maintenance and a new social media manager. The 2024 financial report gives full detail of income and expenditure.

### **RTC & Tourism**

Initiatives to promote Rosendal as a tourist destination are important. The Rosendal Tourism Coordination Group is very active and the RTC has assisted with the following:

- An independent company based in Rosendal was engaged to revamp the town website and be on standby for updates and new content. The town website is managed and paid for by RTC.
- A social media strategy and content manager from within Rosendal is working from December on recommendation from the tourism group in a probationary phase. An integrated, professional, social media content and marketing strategy will be designed and implemented.
- Funding was made available by the RTC for a walking, hiking, and cycling trail starting at the Retreat Hotel, creating an attraction for visitors. The project has applied for recognition from Park Run and the outcome is looking favourable.
- Funding for the highly successful “Let’s Draw Rosendal” initiative has been renewed and will commence in December and run during 2025.

### **RTC & Heritage**

The Rosendal Heritage Association (RHA) was active with a number of projects and initiatives this year to celebrate Rosendal’s heritage and promote the town as a heritage tourism destination. The RTC assisted with the following projects:

- The original 1911 town planning map was digitally scanned and is available for download from the town website.
- Heritage plaques will be installed at various buildings of interest around town. Anyone interested in local heritage or wishing to have their own building featured with a heritage plaque are welcome to contact, or become involved, with the RHA.
- The fence around the cemetery was replaced and a new gate installed. This has stopped livestock from entering and damaging the tombstones. Plans are to erect an entrance sign as a future project.
- A museum project is under discussion with a proposal to host this at the NGK.

### **Municipal Boundary**

The Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB) issued a change in local boundaries where Rosendal-Mautse would fall under a proposed new, and much larger, Mantsopa regional municipality. Fortunately, this proposal has been dropped. The RTC had submitted two objections and this was useful in having our voice heard in regard to this potentially troublesome proposal.

### **RTC Committee**

It is important that residents of Rosendal and Mautse are represented and take an active role in standing up for our rights as a community. The committee is an excellent forum for this. The committee thanks everyone who has assisted this year and invites those at the AGM to join as members of the exco or as ad hoc volunteers.

See you at the AGM!

## **Rosendal-Mautse Town Committee Annual General Meeting Agenda**

**Date:** 19 December 2024

**Time:** 15:00

**Venue:** The Service Station Wine Bar

1. Welcome
2. Register & apologies
3. Annual report
4. Financial report
5. Matters arising
6. Open floor
7. Proposed projects for 2025
8. Constitutional amendments
9. Election of new officers
10. Date for first Exco meeting
11. Closing remarks
12. Refreshments