



MEDIA RELEASE

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MUNICIPALITY STARTS THEIR BIO-WISE JOURNEY

Sue Swain, Executive Director of BioWise, facilitated a workshop at the Municipality on the WasteNothing Knysna programme last week.

The Municipality recently pledged their support for the programme when they undertook to transform, over time, the Main Municipal building into Knysna's first fully bio-wise building. The workshop was attended by the newly appointed Municipal Champions of Change and other key personnel whose task it would be to drive this programme internally at the Municipality.

Swain said that the first part of the workshop focused on discovering what it means to be earth-savvy with an interactive session on understanding the earth's unique operating conditions and working out what strategies would be needed to thrive as a species. "Comparing these 'savvy strategies' to how we as humans are currently operating was something of an eye-opener. But even more so was discovering how other earthlings are doing things so much better and so much more wisely by looking at some of the energy-wise, waste-wise and water-wise strategies of plants, animals, microbes and whole ecosystems. The workshop ended with each champion being tasked with starting their own bottle brick and speaking to at least one other colleague to bring them on board, starting the flapping Flamingo effect within the Municipality."

At a follow up workshop on Monday the "nuts & bolts" of how to translate those lessons into specific actions for the building and those working in it were discussed. There are 5 inter-related actions for each of the focus areas i.e. water, energy, waste and space and the starting point for all of them is 'Know and Understand'. "To achieve this 'knowing and understanding', the initiatives we are starting with are developing and conducting in-house audits to determine current use of resources and related costs in order to establish the baseline against which targets can be set and savings measured. Accompanying this is also a critically important educational campaign whereby all staff will discover exactly where and how the various resources they utilize come from and the impact of their use. The more we understand and the closer to home we bring things, the more we will be motivated to make the changes we need to start 'wasting nothing!'"

ENDS

Caption:

The appointed Municipal Champions of Change are (fltr) front – Sinetemba Mtwana (Corporate Services), Shane Rhode (Planning & Development), Natalie Salmons (Community Services), Sue Swain (BioWise), Zoleka Gutas (MM Department); back (fltr) Cllr Shakespeare Arends (Mayoral Committee Member Community Services), Ndiphiwe Naki (Electrical Services), Randall Bower (Manager: Solid Waste)