

Jakkalskloof Farm Vision & Implementation

Back Ground Information Document March 2009

Purpose of this document

This document aims to give potential members an indication of the legal structures, governance, financing and operation of the activities at the farm Jakkalskloof.

First the administrative structures are explained, then the Vision and its implications are discussed, including how this may be monitored. Next the members' principle rights and obligations are summarized in a table. This is followed by an indication of the member's skills that will be needed to develop and run the farm. Then an indication of some potential entrepreneurial activities for the farm are given. Finally the current programme for the development of the farm is shown for the immediate future.

Administrative structures

The 160 Ha farm Jakkalskloof, 12 km from Swellendam, is owned by the Xhabbo Farm Trust [XFT] and was purchased by a loan of R 3 million from John Raimondo. Improvements to the farm by the Trust will be about R 500 000 in value. In due course John's current Will is to be altered to make this total amount a donation, thus the Trust will then not carry a loan. His Will is to be changed once the farm is operating in line with the vision of the XFT and has at least 5 members.

The farm is to be managed by a section 21 company [not for profit]. This company has been formed and is called Xhabbo Eco-village Community [XEC]. The XFT will enter into a nominal long term renewable lease agreement with XEC. The terms of this lease will be aligned with the Trust's vision and will contain certain guidelines for the activities on the farm.

Members of the XEC will form the community. They will have certain rights and obligations.

They will manage and administer their own day to day activities. The Trust will not be involved in the members' day to day activities, nor in the resolving of any conflicts that may arise, unless this is specifically called for by a majority of the members.

The Trust is administered by four trustees, John Raimondo, Nicola Robins, Paul Cohen and Matthew Walton.

XFT Vision

The XFT documentation states that: *John Peter Raimondo ("the Founder") wishes to establish a Trust to acquire a farm, and to promote the establishment at that farm of an ecovillage, namely a community of approximately ten families who will live at and off the farm in a manner consistent with the principles of permaculture, which principles involve living off and using land in a holistic, sustainable and ecologically-sensitive way.*

The XFT Trustees have noted the following points regarding this vision, its objectives and implementation.

1. The Trustees are responsible for being custodians of the land and ensuring that activities on the land are in line with the Trust's vision.
2. The Trust's vision is to facilitate the emergence of a community at Jakkalskloof that is locally self-reliant and integrated with its neighbours and local communities..

3. In order to meet this vision the land's functional systems must be restored and the community needs be integrated into the land through entrepreneurial organic farming and sustainable activities to meet their own and other's needs.
4. The Trust's vision implies that the community will strive to continuously reduce their consumption and levels of waste, increase their reliance on products from the farm and generate surpluses [good and services] to trade with or sell to local people. This will increase members' degree of self-reliance and interaction with local people and communities.
5. It is not the intention of the trust to set rigid guidelines and performance standards. It is the Trusts intention to give some broad guidelines and performance standards within which the members can draw up and monitor their own criteria.
6. Joining Members' investment in their sustainable lifestyle at the farm will currently be R 200 000. This investment is to be used for the development of the farm and community. It will not be used to repay the money that the Trust has invested in the farm.
7. The Trust, through its agreement with the Company, and hence members, will aim to ensure that member's rights and assets are protected.
8. All members of the community are obliged to have the farm as their principle place of residence.
9. All members of the community will be entitled to share in the produce and surplus of the farm, having taken into account that the farm company is a section 21 company [not for profit].
10. It is assumed that there will be one voting member per family, but that each resident and visitor over 12 years old at the farm will pay a monthly levy to cover farm maintenance and equipment depreciation. The current estimate of this levy is R 500 per month, but this can only be confirmed once the farm's own business plan has been completed.
11. In addition members and visitors will have to share the costs of any external supplies that are purchased for their communal use [eg food, other consumables, fuels, equipment rentals etc]. Once the community is generating a surplus then the monthly levy can be reduced proportionately.
12. The community is to create their own vision from Guidelines that are developed by the Trust. These Guidelines are to cover, Ecological, Social, Economic and Governance aspects of the Community's activities.
13. In order to meet the Trust's vision the community and its members will need to have the ability to recognize and adapt to changing circumstances as well as be innovative so that they can anticipate and seek opportunities in the changing conditions. They will also need to have the ability to develop and sustain mutually beneficial relationships of increasing depth and breadth.
14. The Trust will expect each potential member to present a business plan showing how they will generate an adequate income for their own long terms needs while also contributing to the benefit of the community. It is anticipated that all entrepreneurial activities based on the farm will give 10% of their sales to the community [this % may vary depending on the nature of the activity based on its value to the members, local communities and use of farm and community resources]. Those activities based away from the farm and not using its resources will not need to make a donation to the community.
15. In addition potential members will need to have certain personal attributes, such as
 - a. Actively engaging with the vision for Jakkalskloof,

- b. Being prepared to work on the farm with no remuneration, for a minimum average of 10 days per month for the benefit of the community and in line with the tasks that need to be undertaken to develop and maintain the farm and community.
 - c. Taking responsibility for their own issues and not expecting the community to solve these for them. If requested the community members may provide assistance, but do not hold that responsibility.
 - d. Being open to sharing their concerns and opinions, as well as respecting and considering other peoples opinions.
 - e. Being open to change and innovation.
16. These capacities will form part of the selection process and criteria for membership of the Jakkalskloof farm community.
17. The first 5 potential members will be selected by the Trustees; thereafter it is the intention to hand over this process to the 5 members.
18. Trustees may not be a member of the community and community members may not be a Trustee.
19. It is anticipated that a single dwelling may be constructed on the farm by John Raimondo for his own use and that of the other trustees in accordance with the framework, guidelines and vision of the community.
20. Potential Members will need to go through a familiarization process, both with the farm, the current members and the Trust's vision. Initially the Trustees will select the members in conjunction with any existing members. Once there are 5 members, then in it the Trust's intention to hand over the screening and selection of members to the current members.
21. Having been briefed by the Founder on the Trust's vision, and if this is accepted, then potential members are to:
 - a. Spend **one or two nights** at the farm. Then if they wish,
 - b. They will need to spend **at least two weeks** working at the farm, as though they were a community member. If they still wish to become a member, then;
 - c. They would be interviewed by the Trustees and any members and if then they agree that the potential member has the capacity [skills, attitude and character] to be a member, then the member is to spend at least **1 month** at the farm as a potential member. If they then still wish to become a member;
 - d. They would again be interviewed by the Trustees and current members who would then share their views of the potential member's competencies and agree with the member on the focus of their next stay at the farm. This stay would be for a minimum period of **3 months** working on the farm and developing or running an income generating project.
 - e. Thereafter there would be the final interview with the Trustees and Members and if they are deemed capable of being members, their exact conditions for joining will be finalized. There may be variations on how they will pay for their investment and on the income generating project that they will run.
22. The activities on the farm are to be managed in an entrepreneurial manner so that they generate surpluses for themselves as well as the community, and local communities. This surplus need not only be financial, but can be in the form of other resources and knowledge.

23. A person's rights to remain a member of the community will depend on their meeting and adhering to the community's own guidelines, which are to be set in line with those given by the Trust. There is to be a disciplinary procedure before dismissal can take place and this should be a matter of last resort after all parties have tried to resolve any conflicts or non-performance,
24. A member leaving the community will be able to recoup their original investment from the joining fee of the next member. Note that any increase in the value of the investment is not for the benefit of the member but for the community as a whole.
25. Members will be entitled to build a house for their own use if they do not wish to use the communal accommodation. The location and size of their site is to be agreed with the Trust. It is anticipated that all private use buildings are to be fairly close to one another and a new community centre so that infrastructural resource use and impacts can be minimized.
26. All buildings on the farm are to optimize the use of materials available from the farm and community members and others may help to build it. On leaving, the member may rent his or her house to another member or sell it for no more than the money paid to third parties for materials and labour. The right of first refusal on the sale of the house is to be given to the community, then its individual members, then the Trust and lastly to future members.
27. The Trustees recognize that potential members will seek assurance that their investments are protected and tradable in proportion to the risks that they are taking and the benefits that they are gaining. They will also wish to know that they have security of tenure while they remain a member of the community. Such mechanisms are to be incorporated into the lease agreement between XFT and the XEC as well as resolutions taken by the two organizations.

Quantification of the vision

It is important to try and quantify the vision so that progress can be measured and tracked. Having relevant metrics will help the trust and community to remain focused on the vision and not to be led by other outcomes that do not support the vision.

The above vision and objectives may be monitored by some of the following metrics.

1. The farm is to be managed according to a written plan based on permaculture principles. This plan is to have a rolling 3 year budget.
2. The community is to obtain 100% of its water from local resources.
3. All liquid and solid "wastes" are to be regarded as a resource and used on the farm or recycled if there is a demand for it.
4. All domestic energy use is to be from sustainable local resources [biomass, & solar power] within 3 years.
5. At least 50% of the community's food requirements are to be generated on site or via trade with other local producers by 2013 and 80% by 2020.
6. Energy [fuel] for farm implements and transport should be generated by local resources within 15 years.
7. *Other metrics are still to be developed with the help of the Trustees and community members – but we may need to have fewer metrics or group them under broad headings.*

Summary of Community Members' rights and obligations

Community members have the following rights and obligations once they have been accepted by the Trust as a member of the XEC.

Rights	Obligations	Comments
To share in community surplus: Food, resources, energy, income.	To work an average of 80 hours per month for the community undertaking farming, development and outreach activities. To pay a levy if the farm surplus does not cover depreciation and maintenance costs of about R 500 per month.	Balance of time to be used to run own entrepreneurial business.
To build a dwelling within a given footprint and agreed guidelines	To maintain the exterior and interior of the dwelling in an excellent state. To live on the farm and have this as their primary residence.	Guidelines to be developed but aim is to optimize use of local materials and labour.
To be able to sell their dwelling to the community at their capital and external labour costs.	To give the Community the right of first refusal to buy the dwelling and any other personal farm related assets for sale.	It is accepted that folk will come and go. The community will change as peoples' needs change.
To sell their shares in the Company to new members	To obtain acceptance by members of new shareholder.	Cost of each share is currently R 200 000.
To participate in all community activities.	To partake in most community activities, including the sharing of a daily meal if they are at the farm. To fulfill their share of tasks / duties for and within the community.	This helps us bring the spirit and sharing into our daily tasks. As well as reducing the cost of meals.
To run a business from the farm	To pay the community for any community resources used, plus a % of their turnover. To provide a business plan for consideration of the community and trustees before joining or starting any personal business on the farm.	Community resources are likely to be – facilities, food and accommodation. The % of turnover will be about 10% depending on the nature of the business.

At present it is anticipated that current old buildings will be ready for occupation in June 2009. The initial focus of the development is for members to develop and run the farm while living on and off the land sustainably in line with the Permaculture plans that have been developed for the farm.

Priority for membership will be given to folk who have experience and want to work on a communal farm undertaking typical farming activities such as animal husbandry, maintenance, building, vegetable farming, tree planting etc.
Priority will also be given to families who wish to join. It is not anticipated that any outside labour will be used on the farm, once the first 5 adults have settled on the farm.
It is expected that up to 30 people will eventually live on the farm.

Skills needed within and between the first 5 members:

- animal husbandry
- a knowledge of organic farming practices and the principles of Permaculture as applied to the development and planning on the land

- technical knowledge for building and maintaining infrastructure to support the community [building, carpentry, electrical, mechanical]
- financial and business administration
- managing a nursery
- cooking and food preservation

Examples of entrepreneurial activities that could take place on the farm:

- Selling organic foods over and above those needed by the community
- Hosting retreats, youth activities and other organizations
- Providing a place for recuperation from stress.
- Selling raw and processed produce from the farm
- Training local and other people in entrepreneurial farming practices
- Running a nursery, including propagation and sale of local medicinal and other plants
- Running a horse riding school
- Running a restaurant

The programme of development is currently as follows:

Month	Activity
April	Cost the detailed implementation plan. Refine and if possible have first draft guidelines for community membership, rights and obligations. Continue with implementation of Permaculture plan – have chickens producing eggs. Continue with the rehabilitation of the old buildings. Furnish old cottage for supervisor.
May	Complete rehabilitation of old house and start furnishing it Potential members can commence living on the farm on a trial basis Have cows producing milk and cheese being made. Vegetable garden supporting 4 to 6 people etc as per implementation plan. Complete the nursery and have it operational. Continue with alien plant removal
June	Ongoing implementation of plan, depending on number of members / potential members living on farm. Commence building of processing barn
July onwards	Receive Wwoofers and continue to implement development plan

John Raimondo
 24 March 2009