

## **EXECUTIVE MAYOR RAMAILA'S REMARKS AT THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING ON TUESDAY 26 OCTOBER 2021.**

Honourable Speaker,

From the start, allow me to borrow a famous quotation from Ecclesiastes Chapter 3, Verse 1 of the Holy Book.

And I quote: "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens," close quote.

Honourable Members,

I am certain that I speak for many of us, if not all, when I say "today feels like the day we were sworn in as the 4th Council in 2016."

How time flies !

On this day as it officially marks the last Council meeting, heralding the end of our term, we take this opportunity to reflect on the work and duties we were entrusted to perform.

We took up our roles as public representatives, after the people of our district so decided when they exercised their universal right to vote for the government of their choice.

We came from various political parties, big and small, some with rich political heritage, and others were fairly new in the political arena.

Despite our ideological differences and political disagreements, the people, in their wisdom and out of trust, gave us the mandate to lead this institution on their behalf.

Although some among us already had experience in local government, others were new to this sphere of government.

And as was expected, it wasn't long before our differences began to show, and ultimately played themselves out in the public eye.

It was as if our years in Council would be defined by political intolerance.

We hardly trusted one another and we saw each other as enemies along political lines.

But after all the drama, we all acknowledged that the task at hand was bigger than all our egos and political partisanship.

Upon our shoulders rested a massive responsibility to serve the people of Sekhukhune.

In the end, this reality compelled us to put our differences aside, to appreciate that disagreements did not make us enemies.

Along the way we harnessed and channeled our energies toward building an institution that sought to benefit our people.

Looking back, as we now formally cut ties with this era, it is my considered view that collectively, have done everything humanely possible to serve our people.

Honourable Speaker,

Despite the concerted efforts we put in place to reposition our municipality as a leader in service delivery, we are fully aware of the enormous water services infrastructure backlog.

In addition to joblessness and poverty, lack of water in some parts of our district is the biggest challenge that must get our undivided attention.

We are alive to the fact that there is still more to do-if we are to deliver fully on the services that our people truly deserve.

However, looking back in the past five years, as this outgoing administration, we believe we have worked tirelessly to deliver basic services.

Honourable Members, water is a human right.

Section 27 of the Bill of Rights in our constitution outlines basic rights such as access to healthcare and water, which our people are entitled to receive.

And in light of the fact the financial resources are not unlimited, against the historical backlog owing to past decades of neglect by successive colonial and apartheid governments, our constitution compels us, depending on the availability of financial resources, to progressively provide these basic rights to our people.

Honourable Speaker, as we speak now, several construction works are underway in various parts of our district.

We are hard at work, working toward availing services to communities that never had running water in the past.

Where there is adequate water source, depending on the availability of funding, we are installing metered stand pipes inside yards.

The Flag Boshielo Water Treatment Plant, which was upgraded from producing 8 mega litres to yielding 16 mega litres a day, was recently commissioned.

This will bring some relief to residents in about 157 villages which will benefit from the water treatment plant.

In Jane Furse, we have recently commissioned a new reservoir and package plant that supplies water to over 1000 households through standpipes that are connected into yards, at the RDP section.

Despite challenges that we had faced with regard to the Moutse Bulk Water Scheme, we have now begun to make notable progress.

The Department of Water and Sanitation has allocated R90 million that will go toward refurbishing the pipeline from the Groblersdal Water Treatment Plant to the areas of Moutse.

A large part of this funding will complete the outstanding bulk projects in Moutse.

We have already invited competent bidders, and work will commence before the end of this financial year.

Regarding the upgrading of the Water Treatment Plant in Ga-Malekana, the good news is that the Department of Water and Sanitation has approved our technical report.

This means that we have ticked all the boxes, and the department is on the verge of allocating us the funding to upgrade this plant, on which much of the projects are dependent.

Finally,

Honourable Speaker, the founding president of our country Nelson Mandela, has planted in all of us the seed of compassion and service to our fellow countrymen and women, especially those who are disadvantaged.

Inspired by Madiba's lifelong service to humanity and the Thuma Mina call to action by His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa, we decided when we took up office, to do all we possibly could, to serve others.

To date, through the support of Good Samaritans, we have managed to build fully furnished houses for five indigent families in Tsimanyane, Phokwane, Maseven, Ga-Maroga and Glen Cowie.

The construction of the sixth house in Ga-Moretsele is practically complete and it will soon be handed over to the family.

This week on Friday, we are hosting the Sekhukhune District Mayoral Golf Charity Day, working with social partners, all with the aim to fundraise to build a decent house for a family of three, a mother and her teenage boys-who currently share a one room shack in Zaaiplaas.

In conclusion, I want to thank the governing party, the African National Congress, for guidance and support.

Thank you, to all political parties represented in Council.

As councillors, we worked tirelessly together. But we have now reached end of the road.

Some are not returning. To them we say farewell.

But we know you have served our people with dignity, diligence and love.

Those who will come back-know that more work awaits you.

Honourable Speaker, Cllr Maria Manamela, you led this Council with distinction and impartiality.

Re a leboga.

Our Honourable Chief Whip, Cllr Maleke Mokganyetji, you took up the reins and hit the ground running.

Re leboga tšhomišano.

MMC Mahlangu, MMC Manganeng, MMC Mafefe, MMC Matlala, MMC Nkosi, MMC Mnisi, MMC Mmakola and MMC Phaladi, thank you very much for your service.

Working with you was a great pleasure and honour.

We also remember and salute MMC Nchabeleng-who has now transitioned from this land of the mortals.

Municipal Manager, Mme Ntshudisane and your team, thank you very much for your dedication and hard work at all times.

To the organised labour, thank you for continuing to serve our people, for standing in the frontline, even in the face of a devastating pandemic which is COVID-19.

We send our heartfelt condolences to all of you, because in the process you lost some of your colleagues.

We also pass our condolences to all the families who lost their loved ones to Covid-

19 in our district.

We still make an appeal to one and all, that let us go and vaccinate, so that we can stop the spread of the corona virus.

Honourable Members, the local government elections are just less than six days away.

I believe all of us, including our eligible family members, are registered to vote.

Let us all exercise this democratic duty and vote.

On a lighter note though, let us all vote for the ANC.

Thank you very much.