

Opebrief

Aan die Cederberg Eerste Familie

6 Maart 2025



Cederberg Eerste

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Gemeenskapsorganisasie

Cederberg First Residents Association

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CE IS ONDER AANVAL – MAAR ONS KAN TROTS STAAN VIR ONS PRESTASIES

Geagte CE Familie

CE ONDER AANVAL

Dit bly 'n eer om julle leier en hoof van die CE-familie te wees. Dit is dus my plig en verantwoordelikheid om die familie te beskerm en te verdedig teen diegene wat ons wil vernietig.

In die stilte, hou ek nou al 'n paar maande dinge dop. Oor die afgelope paar dae is ek oortuig daarvan dat CE onder doelbewuste aanval is van diegene wat geen respek vir die wet het nie. Ek moet nou inspring en iets sê en doen.

Aan die een kant, laat my toe om te sê dat ek 'n baie goeie pa is wat baie omgee vir sy familie. As pa sal ek alles in my vermoë doen om my gesin te beskerm en te help. Aan die ander kant, as politikus, glo ek nie daarin om politieke sake op sosiale media te beveg nie. Ook, wanneer ek wel baklei, pak ek die kwessie aan (d.w.s. ek speel die bal), nie die persoon nie.

Die kwessie hier vandag is dat die reputasie van CE en sy leier aangeval word deur gerugte en leuens wat deur die raadslid van die Demokratiese Alliansie, dr John Hayes, versprei word. Miskien is dit net deel van die DA se 2026 politieke veldtog wat vroeg begin het. Ek weet nie. Miskien is dit normaal dat politici en politieke partye leuens vertel, en onwaarhede versprei, en onakkurate inligting oor hul

opponente wanvoorstel en versprei en erger nog oor raadsake. Miskien is dit normaal om die reputasie van 'n opponent aan te val en almal in die Cederberge te probeer oortuig dat die burgemeester korrup en onbevoeg is. Ons is egter 'n gemeenskaps- en familieorganisasie waar ons mekaar respekteer, selfs al huldig ons verskillende sienings.

Ek kan die CE-familie verseker dat ek niks het om weg te steek as 'n Burgemeester of as besigheidspersoon nie. Ek nooi enige en alle ondersoeke na my rol as burgemeester of sakeman uit. Ek deel graag toegang tot al my e-posse, telefoonboodskappe, dokumente, lêers, besigheidsbesonderhede, of wat ook al nodig is deur enige formele ondersoekproses. Ek glo vas in die oppergesag van die reg en behoorlike proses. Ek verwelkom dus enige ondersoek en sal ten volle saamwerk.

Ek sal egter nie geboelie word deur 'n vigilante-groep of 'n wettelose of selfs 'n rassistiese gepeupel wat dink dat die een wat die hardste op sosiale media skree of die een met die meeste hulpbronne of geld die waarheid het nie. Daardie dae is lankal verby. Ons leef nou is 'n oop en demokratiese samelewing en nie onder die tirannie van diegene wat skuil agter sosiale media beskuldigings nie. Kom ons gaan hof toe en toets die bewyse.

As julle Burgemeester het ek gister 'n formele klag by die Cederbergraad ingedien oor die optrede van raadslid John Hayes. Dit is die proses wat deur die wet voorgeskryf en gelei word en die wet sal nou sy gang moet neem.

CE KAN TROTS VOEL OP SY PRESTASIES

Ten spyte van die negatiewe, is die positiewe dat die CE-familie rede het om trots te voel oor sy prestasies tot dusver in die Cederberg munisipaliteit.

Ek herinner die CE-familie daaraan dat dit onder die CE-geleide munisipaliteit is dat ons die munisipaliteit van bankrotskap gered het. Lank voor John Hayes 'n raadslid was het CE 'n kwalifikasiesoudit begin wat daartoe gelei het dat mense vir korrupsie en vals kwalifikasies blootgestel was. Dit is onder CE-leierskap dat ek die eerste befondsde begroting van die munisipaliteit in meer as 'n dekade ter tafel kon lê. Onder die DA leierskap van die raad kon hulle dit nie doen nie. Ook nie die ANC nie. Onder 'n CE-geleide munisipaliteit kon ons ons diensleweringinfrastruktuur en toerusting verbeter.

Ons sal byvoorbeeld in die volgende paar weke weer geskiedenis maak deur byna 300 chemiese toilette in Citrusdal informele nedersetting te installeer en sodoende die besoedeling wat in die Olifantsriviervallei invloei te beperk en ook die lewenskwaliteit van ons mense te verbeter.

Ek kan vir julle baie ander voorbeelde gee van die suksesse in die munisipaliteit onder CE-leierskap. Ek glo dat omdat ons suksesvol is, 'n opposisieraadslid van die Demokratiese Alliansie, John Hayes, CE se reputasie wil aanval en vernietig en ons laat lyk asof ons korrupt en nutteloos is. Soms is daar mense wat nie jou sukses in die lewe kan en wil vier nie. Doen John Hayes dit om stemme vir die DA te kry? Miskien is dit hoe politiek werk, naamlik, vertel leuens oor jou opponente en stel die waarheid verkeerd voor. CE doen dit nie en onder my leierskap sal dit nie gedoen nie.

Kortom, CE kan trots voel dat ons die munisipaliteit van bankrotskap gered het en dienslewering teruggebring het as die hoofokus en taak van 'n munisipaliteit. Ons het baie om te doen om die munisipaliteit met mededingende prioriteite vir ons nou groeiende begroting reg te stel.

GEVOLGTREKKING – ONS STAAN VERENIG

Ten slotte sal ek weer 'n beroep doen dat ons ons probeer laat lei deur die feite en nie emosie of opinies nie. Ek wil julle ook verseker dat die CE raadslede wat julle aangestel het (Bergh, Mouton, Richards, Heins) verenig is in hul pogings om dienste aan ons mense te lewer en CE trots te maak.

BYKOMENDE NOTA: Die CE-raadslede beplan om binnekort alle dorpe te besoek vir 'n aangesig tot aangesig met ons CE-familie om al julle vrae te beantwoord en bekommernisse aan te spreek, en ook oor die 2026-verkiesing te praat. Laat ons intussen die prestasies van CE vier en laat niemand die wonderwerk wat CE vir die Cederberge gebring het, ondermyn nie.

Groete

dr Ruben Richards

CE Leier

Open letter

To the Cederberg Eerste Family

6 March 2025



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CE IS UNDER ATTACK – BUT WE CAN STAND PROUD FOR OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Dear CE Family

CE UNDER ATTACK

I remain honoured to be your leader and head of the CE family, as it were. It is therefore my duty and responsibility to protect and defend the family against those who want to destroy us.

I have been quietly observing things for a few months now. However, as of a few days ago, I am now convinced that CE is under deliberate attack from those who have no respect for the the law. I must now step in and say and do something.

On the one hand, allow me to say that I am a very good father who cares deeply about his family. As a father I will do everything in my power to protect my family and also to help my family. On the other hand, I do not believe in fighting political matters on social media. Also, when I do fight, I tackle the issue (i.e., I play the ball), not the person.

The issue here today is that the reputation of CE and its leader is being attacked through rumours and lies spread by Democratic Alliance councillor, Dr John Hayes. Maybe it's just part of the DA's 2026 political campaign which has started early. I do not know. Maybe it's normal for politicians and political parties to tell lies, and spread untruths, and misrepresent and spread inaccurate information about their opponents and worse still about council matters. Maybe it's normal to attack the reputation of an opponent and try to convince everybody in the Cederberg that the Mayor is corrupt

and incompetent. We however, are a community and family organisation where we respect each other, even if we hold different views.

I can assure the CE family that I have nothing to hide as a Mayor or a business person. I invite any and all investigations into my role as mayor or businessman. I will gladly share access to all my emails, telephone messages, documents, files, business details, or whatever else is needed by any formal investigation process. I am a firm believer in the rule of law and due process. I therefore welcome any investigation and will cooperate to the fullest.

However, I will not be bullied by a vigilante group or a lawless or even a racist mob who think that the one who shouts the loudest on social media or the one with the most resources or money has the truth. Those days are long past. We now live in an open and democratic society and not under the tyranny of those who hide behind social media accusations. Come, let's go to court and test the evidence.

As your Mayor, yesterday I lodged a formal complaint to the Cederberg Council about the actions of councillor John Hayes. That is the process prescribed and guided by law and the law will now need to take its course.

CE CAN FEEL PROUD OF ITS ACHIEVEMENTS

In spite of the negative, the positive is that the CE family has reason to feel proud about its achievements in the Cederberg thus far.

I remind the CE family that it is under the CE-led municipality that we rescued the municipality from bankruptcy. It is under our CE leadership, and long before John Hayes was a councillor, that CE initiated a qualifications audit leading to people being exposed for corruption and false qualifications. It is under CE-leadership that I was able to table the first funded budget of the municipality in over a decade. Neither under the DA nor the ANC leadership of the municipality could they achieve this. Under a CE-led municipality we have been able to improve our service delivery infrastructure and equipment.

For example, in the next few weeks we will again make history by installing almost 300 chemical toilets in Citrusdal informal settlement and thereby limiting the pollution flowing into the Olifants River Valley and also improving the quality of life of our people.

I can give you many other examples of the successes in the municipality under CE-leadership. I believe that because we are successful, an opposition councillor from the Democratic Alliance, John Hayes, wants to attack and destroy CE's reputation and make us look like we are corrupt and useless. Sometimes there are people who cannot and will not celebrate your success in life. Is John Hayes

doing this to get votes for the DA? Perhaps this is how politics works, namely, tell lies about your opponents and misrepresent the truth. CE does not do that and under my leadership will not do that.

In short, CE can feel proud that we have rescued the municipality from bankruptcy and brought back service delivery as the main focus and task of a municipality. We have much to do in order to fix the municipality with competing priorities for our now growing budget.

CONCLUSION – WE STAND UNITED

In conclusion, I will again appeal that we try to be guided by the facts and not emotion or opinions. I also want to assure you that the CE councillors whom you have appointed (Bergh, Mouton, Richards, Heins) are united in their efforts to delivery services to our people and make CE proud.

ADDITIONAL NOTE: The CE councillors are planning to visit all towns very soon for a face to face with our CE family to answer all your questions, worries and concerns and to talk 2026 elections. In the meantime, let us celebrate the achievements of CE and let no one undermine the miracle that CE has brought to the Cederberg.

Greetings

Dr Ruben Richards

CE Leader