



MUNISIPALITEIT MUNICIPALITY UMASIPALA

PRESS STATEMENT

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For immediate release

VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE WITHDRAWN – A victory for sanity

Earlier today (12 April 2022, [11h00]) the Cederberg Municipality held a Special Council meeting to discuss and debate the motion of no confidence brought against the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the Speaker of Council on 31 March 2022. In addition, Council deliberated on the implications and consequences of the ongoing Qualifications Audit as well as Disciplinary Matters pertaining to the SIU investigation into the alleged fraud and misconduct perpetrated by a Director-level staff member of the Cederberg Municipality.

VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE: The Patriotic Alliance (PA) and the African National Congress (ANC) who served the original motion of confidence withdrew their motion today. Therefore, the outcome is that the status quo remains: Ruben Richards, remains the Mayor, Johan van Heerden the Deputy-Mayor and Josef Farmer the Speaker of the Cederberg Municipality. The opposition political parties (PA & ANC) may not table a similar motion for at least the next three months, after which they may exercise their right to table another motion if they so wish.

QUALIFICATIONS AUDIT: In December 2021, the Council instituted a qualifications audit to verify that staff who have been appointed are in possession of the appropriate and requisite qualifications for their job/post. The preliminary results of that audit were tabled to the Mayor at a meeting held Friday 8 April 2022. On Monday 11 April 2022, a senior manager voluntarily resigned with immediate effect, after admitting that he falsified his qualifications. Further steps will be taken against this manager.

This morning, other senior staff were invited to prove their qualifications for the positions they hold in the municipality. The Mayor and his team are determined to ensure that the Cederberg Municipality is staffed with properly qualified people. As a result of this qualifications audit process, each staff member will be investigated to verify that they have not been appointed fraudulently.

SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT (SIU): On 25 January 2022, President Cyril Ramaphosa released the Consolidated Report which contained findings on Cederberg Municipality regarding alleged fraud and corruption linked to the PPE tender and in which three (3) Cederberg municipal officials were implicated. On 7 February 2022, the Cederberg Council suspended a senior director in the administration of the municipality subject to further investigation. The allegations pertain to the period when he was the Acting Municipal Manager. After duly considering the results of the further and internal investigation, Council made the decision today (12 April 2022) to institute formal disciplinary procedures against the director.

The clean-up process at the Cederberg municipality is now well underway and takes place in the midst of a financial and service delivery crisis in the Cederberg. Nevertheless, the Mayor, Dr Ruben Richards, supported by his Mayco and the Municipal Manager, remains committed to ensuring and delivering a clean administration, clean water and clean towns to the residents of the Cederberg municipality. The municipality is in a very deep financial crisis which was inherited from the previous ANC-led Council. The delivery of basic services is also under threat from both incompetence and potential sabotage on the inside. The Mayor continues to fight raging fires at the moment and remains determined to implement a turn around plan so that the residents of Cederberg can again feel proud of their municipality.

Executive Mayor
Dr Ruben Richards

*For enquiries: Media Department: Mr Brian Blaauw (Manager Strategic Services) on 027 482 8000
brianb@cederbergmun.gov.za or mayor@cederbergraad.co.za*