

**OPEN REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MAYOR, DR RUBEN RICHARDS
ON OUTCOMES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD 31 AUGUST 2023
AND OTHER MATTERS**

**CLANWILLIAM
5 September 2023**



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DEAR RESIDENTS OF CEDERBERG

Last week, Thursday 31st August 2023, the quarterly council meeting of the municipality took place in Clanwilliam. It was a huge and bulky agenda, which contained 38 items for discussion and decision-making, as well as three In-Committee and confidential matters for consideration. In addition, to a big council agenda, much has been taking place in our region and with this report back I wish to update all residents.



There is too much to report so I have selected just a few matters to report back.

CLANWILLIAM DAM IS NOT FOR SALE

The municipality does not own the Clanwilliam Dam. It therefore cannot sell what it does not own. Unfortunately, some political parties, supported by their councillors, issued an untruthful, mischief-making and racist press statement trying to incite xenophobic violence in Cederberg. They claimed that the governing coalition of the municipality was planning to sell the Clanwilliam Dam and all the

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parks and resorts of the municipality to white people referred to as “Wit Mafias”. The Cederberg Municipal Council categorically distances itself from such racist remarks.

The Council stated clearly on 31 August 2023 that the Clanwilliam Dam which it does not own, is not up for sale. In fact, the Clanwilliam dam area is an active construction site as the Department of Water and Sanitation is now actively working to raise the wall of the dam. Council also confirmed that it will not sell any resorts or caravan parks to white people as alleged by the mischievous politicians. However, council is in search of a more profitable way to manage the resorts and will explore possible public partnerships to achieve this goal.

FIXING 1000 POTHOLES IN 3 DAYS

The recent floods caused huge damage to roads, especially Citrusdal. I am proud to report that the municipality was able to fix almost all the potholes in Citrusdal this past week. Over one thousand potholes were repaired in 3 days by our teams. The Municipal Manager, Gerrit Matthyse, with Jacques Kotze, mobilised municipal work teams from the other towns to join in the repair of Citrusdal's eye-sore



potholes. A total of 4 teams, and 35 workers from our other towns completed the job. The project proceeded in compliance with all occupational health and safety as well as road safety measures in place. There were no casualties.

Mayor and Municipal Manager join pothole repair teams in Citrusdal



Work teams in Citrusdal with Municipal Manager, Manager Jacques Kotze and Cllrs Venter and Kamfer

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Thank you to the private business sector and farmers for their assistance with buying food for the whole team and also purchasing some of the technical supplies needed to fix the potholes. We simply could not wait for disaster relief support from government so “we made a plan” with the help of the private sector. The next town to be fixed is Lamberts Bay, weather permitting, and then all the other towns will follow.

I wish to applaud and congratulate our Municipal Manager and his “dream team” for their commitment and hard work. It just shows that we are capable to delivering services if we put our mind to it.

CLEANING UP OUR TOWNS

On 3 August 2023, we received 5 skip bins for garbage collection from the national government, through the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment (DFFE). These bins were placed in Citrusdal. In May 2023, the private sector donated ten skip bins, which were placed in Clanwilliam.



Skip bins placed in Citrusdal

On Saturday, 19 August 2023, I joined a group of residents clean up the town of Clanwilliam. These were members of the Cederberg/Clanwilliam Chamber of Commerce who have committed themselves to clean the town every third Saturday of each month (i.e. walk through the town and pick up garbage). I am deeply grateful to these residents for their commitment. My hope is that each town will have a group of residents who will take ownership and assist the municipality to clean up and keep the town tidy.



Outside the Clanwilliam Primary School fence on a misty Saturday morning - 19 August 2023:

Mayor Richards and Councillor Maxwell Heins joins members of the Chamber of Commerce in their effort to help clean up Clanwilliam.

FIRES AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Unfortunately, we have had two terrible fires recently. On Saturday 28 August 2023, around 16h00 in the informal settlement of Khayalitsha-Clanwilliam, a fire burned down nine (9) structures. The municipality dispatched a full team to the scene (three fire trucks, six firemen, law enforcement officers and disaster management personnel) to stop the spread of the fire and manage the crowd that gathered. A number of Khayalitsha residents were injured by the fire but no one died. The cause of the fire is unknown.



Fire destroys 9 structures in Khayalitsha-Clanwilliam on 28 August 2023



Last month (22 July 2023), in Lamberts Bay, after midnight, a fire broke out and destroyed two structures. The fire was caused by a candle. Our disaster management team received a call at 01h18 and immediately went to the scene to try and contain the fire. Tragically, two persons were burnt alive in their sleep (male and female). Our sympathies were conveyed to the remaining family. Four other persons (mother and three children) were rescued and evacuated by our Disaster Management team. The municipality has, since that fire, converted one of its bakkies into a “mini-fire engine” to be stationed permanently in Lamberts Bay so that we can respond sooner and more effectively to fires in that area, instead of waiting for a fire truck from Clanwilliam.

GRASSROOTS DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

KHAYALITSHA – Informal Settlement committee

elected: The residents of Khayalitsha Informal Settlement, Clanwilliam, have elected the members of their new Community Committee on Saturday 2 September 2023. After long and hard negotiations with the office of the Mayor and Municipal Manager, it was agreed that elections would take place to enable the appointment of a committee of 22 members to represent the Khayalitsha residents. The election process took place peacefully and successfully. A municipal “dream team” of 40 members of staff sacrificed their Saturday to do all the preparations and assist SALGA (Western Cape) led by Donovan Joubert, who coordinated the voting process.



Residents filling in ballot papers

the grassroots upwards in order to elect a legitimate Khayalitsha community committee.

Voting closed and 18h00 and counting began. The votes were counted in the Clanwilliam Municipal Council Chambers in full view of members of the public. At just after midnight, on Saturday night, SALGA announced the names of the new committee members and that the election process was free and fair. The newly elected Khayalitsha Community Committee office bearers are Chairperson (Herbert Ramakoka); Vice Chairperson (Thabang Mabotse); Secretary (Thabo Masiu); Vice Secretary (Makhubelu Tolo); Treasurer (Letsie Mamemelo) and Deputy Treasurer (Papali Shale). The names of the full 22-member committee was read out to the public.



The IEC schedule was already full and therefore were not able to assist with the voting process. The process saw many residents voluntarily arrive to cast their vote. This was the first time ever that the residents of Khayalitsha participated in a process of democracy from



Ballot boxes emptied and votes counted inside the Council Chambers-Clanwilliam, while public observes

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ELANDS BAY – Fish Market Committee elected: The combined efforts of the Municipal Manager (Gerrit Matthyse) and Director of Community Support Services (Henry Witbooi) and fellow municipal staff saw the election of an Elands Bay Community Committee to manage and oversee the Elands Bay Fish Market during July-August 2023. The Elands Bay Fish Market project started during 2013, after the need was identified by the fisher community of Eland's Bay. After a few recent proposals were received, the Eland's Bay community voted that the original intention for the project should enjoy precedence. Consequently, a management committee was elected on 02 August 2023 consisting of members of the community, small scale fishing cooperative and other members of the fisher community of Eland's Bay. The Local Economic Development section of Cederberg municipality will form part of the committee and is committed to assisting through identification of economic development and export opportunities for Eland's Bay.

The committee members in the picture: Back row left to right Mr A. Abrahams (Deputy Secretary), Mr. A. Booysen, Mr G. Smith, Front row Left to right Mr. A. Lesch (Secretary), Mr.P. Boois (Vice Chairperson), Mr W. Nero (Chairperson), Ms. E. Danster, Ms. S. Lukas (Treasurer) Mr. N. Van Wyk.



COUNCIL AGENDA OF 31 AUGUST 2023

The Municipal Council held its quarterly meeting on 31 August 2023 in the Clanwilliam Chambers. The agenda was comprehensive and covered a wide range of topics including:

- **GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS ALIGNED TO RECENT LEGISLATION:** Council adopted revised and updated governance-related documents such as System of Delegations, Rules of Order and Uniform Standing Procedures.



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- **POLICY COMPLIANCE DOCUMENTS APPROVED:** A range of policies were tabled and approved including: Records Management; Attendance; Internship; Communication; Debt Collection.
- **FINANCIAL MATTERS:** A range of financial reports and documents were tabled and approved including; Draft Financial Statement for year ending June 2023; Supply Chain Report; Deviations Report; Debt Write Off for Old Age Homes; Write Off and Sale of Obsolete Assets; Write Off of Indigent Debt; R3,3million Write Off (discount) by District Municipality in respect of fire fighting fees and services; Eskom Debt Relief Package approved by National Treasury.
- **TOWARDS A FUNDED BUDGET:** The Cederberg financial recovery plan was updated called the *Budget Funding Plan*. Costs are being contained and the financial belt remains very tight. The municipality is still technically bankrupt with expenses exceeding income (i.e. an unfunded budget).
- **INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT:**
 - **Waste Management:** Council agreed to participate with the West Coast District Municipality in the construction of a regional landfill site in Van Rhynsdorp.
 - **Thusong Centre in Graafwater:** The municipality removed a contractor due to their poor performance and causing a delay in the completion of the centre. A new contractor will need to be appointed.
- **PERFORMANCE REPORTS:** Various performance related reports were tabled including; The Annual Performance Report; Audit and Performance Audit Committee Report.
- **FRUITLESS AND WASTEFUL EXPENDITURE:** Report back was received from the Disciplinary Board for Financial Misconduct indicating no fruitless and wasteful expenditure for period ending June 2023.
- **INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION:** Councillors were assigned to the various SALGA Working Groups and Committees.
- **WATER SECURITY:** The water security for Cederberg in general is a priority matter. Lamberts Bay is a particular concern. The Desalination Plant is not yet completed and there are also delays with this project. The viability of this project is being reassessed.
- **INDEPENDENT LEGAL OPINION REQUESTED:** A decision was made to refer certain matters for outside legal opinion regarding potential fraud and maladministration within the municipality.
- **FINDING AN ENGINEER:** Council agreed to readvertise for the position of an engineer to head up the Technical Services Division. It is proving difficult to find suitably qualified engineers willing to come to the Cederberg.
- **PARTNERSHIPS WITH PRIVATE SECTOR:** Agreement was reached to explore partnerships with the private sector to improve the performance of the municipality's delivery of basic services.

2023 WILD FLOWER SHOW – CLANWILLIAM

The Annual Wild Flower Show was opened on 24th August. Guests were treated to a wonderful display of wild indigenous flowers, which can be viewed at the Flower Church (i.e., the old Dutch Reformed Church) which serves as the annual venue for the show.

I wish to thank all who have contributed to making the show a success. This is a signature event for the tourism calendar. I am pleased to see the increase in the number of tourists to our towns of the Cederberg during this flower season.



*Flower display inside the Flower Church-
Clanwilliam.*

Flowers are handpicked and re-planted inside the church for display over a three-week period.



A FINAL WORD - EPILOGUE

I am convinced that the Cederberg Municipality is on the mend. We have a growing and good team of people, who judging from the above projects have shown their commitment to repairing many years of maladministration, neglect and abuse.

I feel proud to be part of TEAM CEDERBERG MUNICIPALITY. We have a long way to go, but we are on the move in the right direction.

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