

ACCEPTANCE SPEECH NOTES BY HER WORSHIP THE MAYOR HON CLLR NOMAKHOSAZANA NONGQAYI ON HER ELECTION AS MAYOR OF AMAHLATHI MUNICIPALITY ON THE 17 AUGUST 2022

SALUTATIONS

Hon Speaker

Members of the Executive Committee

Chairpersons of Section 79 Committees

Councillors

Abahlali bakuthi

My special people today “all women in this house”

Manene nama nenekazi abekikileyo

Ndiyanibulisa egameni lika Yesu

Madam Speaker

I am overwhelmed with gratitude to have been elected as the Mayor of Amahlathi Municipality. It humbles me to learn that this council trusts me with such a huge responsibility.

Ndiyabulela kakhulu kumbutho wesizwe ukundithemba ngoxanduva olukhulu kangakanana.

My heart is completely touched by the timing of the election, ngalenyanga yamanina kuvunyelwane ngazwinye uba inina malisikhokhele ukusa iinkonzo ebantwini bakuthi.

South Africa today is currently being devastated by numerous pandemics, with gender-based violence (GBV) as one of the worst. Just about three years ago on the 24th of August 2019 a young woman and an erudite scholar in drama and film making, Uyinene Mrwetyana suffered a brutal rape and murder while collecting her parcel at the Post office. Iliso lamadoda liyingozi. Her death successfully called for national unity against gender based violence and femicide.

Madam Speaker

I echo the words of my predecessor Cllr Mgunculu in November last year that I accept this responsibility fully cognizant of the challenge facing the municipality. The responsibility of addressing the challenges of Amahlathi is for all of us, the councillors, administration and the community. The hashtag Build and Grow Amahlathi Together must be seen in action not the lip service.

It should have come earlier if it did not that Amahlathi Municipality's main challenge is the lack of money. We can bring the best CFOs and Municipal Managers in the world, but if there is no money to manage, their skills won't help us.

We must understand this challenge very well and devise strategies to address it. I appreciate the fact that my predecessor laid enough ground for me. There is a revenue collection strategy and policies adopted by council to ensure that we maximise collections.

All I need to add from that is the diversification of revenue streams. We cannot depend only on equitable share and the current database of ratepayers. We must identify other possible revenue sources at our disposal.

For an example, there are billboards everywhere as you enter Amahlathi by N6 be it from Qonce, East London or Queenstown. That is untapped revenue in our case. BCMM next door is making millions year in year out from billboards. Within the next 100 days I need to table in council the state of readiness in unleashing that revenue source.

A month ago I attended the National Council of Municipal Speakers in Matjhabeng Municipality in Welkom. Just in 2018 that municipality was at the top to the country's top 10 municipalities that contribute to fruitless and wasteful expenditure. As if that was not enough the municipality was also in a legal battle with Zandile Management Services, a debt collection company, over the cancellation of its contract.

Madam Speaker

Today Matjhabeng Municipality is a success story with Executive Mayor Cllr Thanduxolo Khalipha at the helm. One may argue saying that municipality has mines and therefore its revenue base is way better than Amahlathi. That is true however we must ask ourselves what is our mine as Amahlathi Municipality. What are we doing with the timber we have, the sand we have, the agricultural land we have, the water streams we have and what are we doing with the industrial land we have? Nanko ke umceli-mgeni zi Councillors zakuthi.

Madam Speaker

The past two terms have seen sour relations and trust deficit between the employer and labour components in the municipality. We must, in our vision to build and grow Amahlathi, strengthen labour relations to ensure that the foot soldiers of service delivery are motivated. Amahlathi must be the employer of choice. We must encourage a healthy working environment. We must, together with labour, seek solutions to address the high employee costs and resolve the current scourge of suspensions. We must also invest enough energy to ensure we pay our debtors including salaries every month.

Madam Speaker

More than 35% of people in South Africa are classified as youth. In Amahlathi Municipality the youth aging between 15 and 35 years constitute more than 40% of the population. If you add children the overall proportion of youth is more than two thirds of our people. My concern is that youth in South Africa continue to be disadvantaged in the labour market with an unemployment rate higher than the national average. According to the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) for the first quarter of 2022, the unemployment rate was 63,9% for those aged 15-24 and 42,1% for those aged 25-34 years, while the current official national rate stands at 34,5%.

Madam Speaker

Our youth, as a means to escape life problems which include unemployment, use drugs and alcohol. Statistics confirms that drug use among the country's youth is rife and unfortunately continues to escalate. The average age of experimentation in South Africa is 12 and it is decreasing. While the age of patients undergoing treatment in Gauteng ranged from 9 to 82, the proportion of patients aged 10 to 19 increased to 29%, according to the South African Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (SACENDU) report of March 2017.

Madam Speaker

A study conducted in 2010 by Reddy et al reported that 12% of all South African learners had used at least one illegal drug such as heroin, mandrax and cocaine. This figure was one of the highest in the African region 12 years ago inoba kubekiselaphi ngoku kukho iinyaope, iiTick nezinye iintlobo zedrugs. Studies show that people who start drinking before the age of 15 are four times more likely to become alcoholics.

Manene nani Manenekazi ukuze sibenokwazi ukwakha ikamva le Amahlathi masiqiniseke ngokwenza izicwangciso ezizizo ukuphuhlisa ulutsha. Other than EPWP we must build on the relationships built during the Youth Expo to ensure that the life of a young person in Amahlathi is better.

Madam Speaker

We must prioritize the growth of our local SMMEs. The council adopted a policy on sub-contracting. What is left now is for me to develop a sub-contracting process plan within 100 days. We must be deliberate to grow our SMMEs to the extent that they can handle our project quite well. You will see the council in action in the next few days.

Madam Speaker

In few weeks-time we will enter the heritage month. In September Amahlathu was used to host Amahlathi Arts Festival which was later termed as Amahlathi

Crafts Mania as it focused mainly on hand work. Amahlathi Municipality is known for its promotion of sports, arts and culture.

Madam Speaker

Amongst my guests today I have one of the rare gifts Stutterheim soil has given birth to. A Master Orator, a talented Musician, an Administrator of note and a Chief-Pedagogist. This is none other than Mr. Mandlenkosi Anthony Gayoyo. Ubomi buka Mr. Gayoyo buyincwadi efundekayo. When he came back from UCT he revive the XI Attackers Football Club which grown to be one of regular league champions of STUSA.

Mr Gayoyo also revived school music within the King William's Town education district. He conducted the then-known Stutterheim Adult Choir. He also assisted significantly in the establishment of the Eastern Cape Choral Music Association. Mr. Gayoyo is a song writer and the founder of Stutterheim Harmonic Voice.

I called him today Madam Speaker to first acknowledge and encourage the good work he has done to his community. I also want to challenge you mnta ka Gayoyo that 24th September is around the corner. Let us remind the people of Amahlathi what we are capable of. I want us to organise once again the festival we used to have and allow crafters to put their stalls and all our working class people to come and pledge support in one place.

I know my predecessor was working on the concept of Mayor's Cup. My attitude is to put all of these in action.

Madam Speaker

I have seen a good initiative taken to ensure that Stutterheim Town is clean. Cleanliness and beautification is what Stutterheim was known for during the first decade into democracy. My vision is to ensure that such legacy is revived and extended to all our towns. I want to see landscaping done, trees planted and pruned. I want to see grass cut and flowers cultivated all over our towns.

Cleanliness and beautification will automatically unlock our tourism potential. We have the best accommodation facilities, forest hiking and water-falls, ingcwaba lika King Sandile, Intaba Ka Ndoda ne ngcwaba lika Anta.

Madam Speaker

I am committed to institutionalize the partnership we created with the Gift of Givers while I was the Speaker of Council. Through the Special Programmes Unit I will develop a comprehensive plan to better the lives of our people especially those classified as vulnerable groups which include people living with disabilities, women, elderly, youth, children and people living with HIV and Aids.

Madam Speaker

Today is not a day for long Speeches. Allow me in my conclusion to congratulate Cllr Onke Mgunculu on his election to a much more greater responsibility that of being the Speaker of Amathole District Municipality.
Lolona xanduva

Maphiko, Dlamini, I say to My Angel, Mntanam uthi wena “mama” abantu base Amahlathi kudala bakhala ngamanzi. Nathi singumaspala siyakhala iAmathole iyagrumba ifake opipe okanye ilungisele lonto ingavali kakuhle ishiye iindlela zethu zimoshakele. Usincedise Maphiko phaya eAmathole ubengathi uyaqinisa kuba abantu abanamanzi ngoku phaya . Ithemba lethu lonke likuwe.

Malibongwe

Igama lamakhosikazi

I thank you.