

# Dorfling: 'People of Msunduzi are also to blame'

**THOBANI NGQULUNGA**



PHOTO: THOBANI NGQULUNGA

Robbie Mkhize of Msunduzi Municipality, Ben Dorfling a senior member of the Provincial Task Team, Executive Director for BESG, Cameron Brisbane and Mayor Mike Tarr.

COMMUNITY members who attended a stakeholders' meeting in Pietermaritzburg on Monday welcomed the presentation by a senior member of the provincial turnaround strategy team, Ben Dorfling, but they were cynical about its implementation.

In a meeting held at the Golden Horse Casino's conference centre, community members expressed concern about Msunduzi Municipality's ability to implement some of the findings by the turnaround team as they said the same people, both staff and politicians, were still in charge of the embattled Msunduzi Municipality.

The meeting was hosted by the Built Environment Support Group (BESG) and aimed to create a strategy for meaningful public participation.

The main focus of the meeting was about deepening democracy in the municipality.

BESG executive director Cameron Brisbane said, "The objects of local government are to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities and to ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner."

Unplaced staff on full pay, the absence of strategic management skills and illegal and wasteful spending were some of the issues Brisbane highlighted as part of the municipality's downfall. Dorfling presented a

detailed analysis of the municipality's turnaround strategy, including the team's findings and progress.

He said, "It is easy for people to sit on the side and point out problems, but if you have a house that you have not been maintaining and all of a sudden it falls down, you cannot fix it in three months."

He said they had to identify these problems in order to come up with a concrete plan to fix them.

A lot of problems were identified within the municipality but the people of Msunduzi were also to blame for some

of the problems.

"Some individuals within the city owed the municipality about R500 000 and the problem of a dirty city can also to a certain extent be attributed to individuals within the community who just litter anywhere," he said.

Dorfling added, "Ever since Operation Pitbull was implemented the municipality has been able to collect

over R45 million."

He said the municipality will ensure that there is accountability in all sectors; previously staff could do whatever they wanted to do and the same applied to management.

"We will promote a safe and healthy environment, which we are failing to do at this stage," he said.

He said the bylaws would be enforced strictly to ensure that members of the public are held accountable for their behaviour.

As part of their turnaround strategy recycling would be introduced at landfills to generate much-needed revenue.

They have put in place Operation Chiwhawha as the municipality's constant watchdog to ensure that everyone within the municipality performs accordingly.

"We will hand some of the cases to the members of the Hawks to deal with those individuals that have been found guilty by the municipality," added Dorfling.

The meeting was attended by Mayor Mike Tarr, Speaker Babu Bajjoo and acting municipal manager Thokozani Maseko and various members of the community.

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