

## ABOUT US

The eZasegagasini Metro is the official eThekweni Municipality publication through which ratepayers and residents are kept informed about news, entertainment and perspectives in the greater Durban region. It is also a forum for readers' views.

It hits the streets fortnightly on a Friday, with 450 000 copies distributed throughout the region.

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# Council approves big project

SIYABONGA MAPHUMULO

THE council has approved a R73.5-million low cost housing project in Verulam.

At a full council meeting this week, political parties unanimously welcomed a housing committee recommendation for the building of 1 100 low-cost houses in Hammonds Farm, in Ward 58.

It was agreed that portion 49, 50, 51 and 58 of the nearby Cottonlands farm would be acquired by private treaty for R5-million for housing.

The project, which involves building two-bedroom houses with reticulated sewerage, is partly subsidised by the provincial Department of Housing, which has pledged R49-million. The municipality, through its Community Infrastructure Housing Development fund, will contribute R24-million.

Ward 58 Cllr Mxolisi Ndzimbomvu said the houses would help reduce housing backlogs and restore peoples' dignity.

"Many people cannot afford expensive houses and through this, those earning R3 500 to R7 000 a month will now get decent yet affordable housing," he said.

The Hammonds farm project follows another similar development set to take place elsewhere in the city.

At the same meeting the council approved the release of vacant land in KwaMashu, Newlands, Chatsworth and Westville for the development of low income, social, affordable and gap housing.

Housing was not the only thing on the agenda of the council meeting, which was held in KwaXimba, to the outer west of the city

Besides officially opening the new iNkosi Simangaye Indoor Sports Centre in the area, councillors approved the upgrading of the Inanda Heritage Route to the north of the city at a cost of R2-million.

It was also agreed that portion 25 of Bartlett and Edwards farms in Mpumalanga be bought for R3.4-million for a cemetery.

## Phoenix

A report from the Masakhane Committee seeking a R2-million grant to develop the Phoenix Community Centre for youth projects was one of the few agenda items that did not receive approval from opposition parties.

The DA, IFP and MF said they were not familiar with the finances of the organisation seeking the grant.

"We need more details on the project and its board of directors before we can commit such a huge sum," said the DA's Colin Gaillard.

But in approving the grant, the ANC and smaller parties at council said that youth development had to be placed at the forefront.

"We support the project because it will assist the youth of Phoenix and surrounding areas such as Inanda," said Masakhane Chairwoman Zandile Gumede.

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**FLYING TACKLE:** South African defender Fani Shange tries unsuccessfully to avert a shot by Cape Verdean striker Polidio Brito  
Picture: SIYABONGA MAPHUMULO

## Sandmen bring us a dream

SIYABONGA MAPHUMULO

FOR the second time in as many years Durban has pulled off a successful Beach Soccer tournament.

This was confirmed not only by the city's meticulous preparation for the event, but by the hundreds of soccerholics who attended every match of the African qualifying rounds of the Fifa Beach Soccer World Cup 2007, played in Durban last week.

Eight African nations converged on Durban's New Beach, the chosen venue for the regional qualifying round of the Beach Soccer World Cup to be played in Brazil's Rio De Janeiro in November.

And although the South African side again failed to book a ticket to the South American country this year, their performance for the semi-final spot against the Nigerian Super Eagles fell

nothing short of superb.

Although the side got off to a shaky start after being defeated by Cote D' Ivoire in their opening match, they managed to redeem themselves by conquering Mozambique and Cape Verde.

But it was the game against Nigeria that would prove to be their toughest yet.

## Equalised

After notching a 2-0 lead in the early moments of the game, it seemed the South Africans were poised for victory. However, things took a different turn when the Nigerians equalised and ultimately forced the game to extra time.

It was during this period that Nigeria scored the winning goal, clinching the game 6-5.

For the Nigerian nationals who packed the stands this was a welcome repeat of

history as it was the Super Eagles who had last year dashed South Africa's hopes of qualifying for the Beach Soccer World Cup.

But City Manager Michael Sutcliffe and Mayor Obed Mlaba who witnessed the day's proceedings congratulated the South Africans.

Mlaba described the tournament as an ideal way of showcasing talent.

He called on other municipalities (without beach access) to build sand pitches for the youth.

"It is a non-expensive sport and as we prepare to host (the 2009) Beach Soccer World Cup we need more youngsters from across the province and indeed the country taking an interest in the sport," he said.

In 2006 the Fifa Beach Soccer Organising Committee voted Durban the best beach soccer venue after Rio de Janeiro.

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## Ingonyama penalties write-off

METRO REPORTER

ALL penalties and collection charges on residential properties on Ingonyama Trust land within eThekweni look set to be written off.

The city's executive committee last Friday voted to recommend to the council that it reverses penalties and collection charges totalling about R127-million, as at 30 June, against the trust.

The Ingonyama Trust was established by an Act of parliament on the eve of the 1994 elections as a way of dealing with land that fell under the KwaZulu bantustan. This included a number of townships within greater Durban, such as parts of Umlazi and KwaMashu.

Recovering unpaid rates on properties within the trust, including millions owed by government departments, has proved to be a big headache for the city.

People who own homes on trust land in eThekweni have also long been unhappy that instead of having a full title

## Trust area people must sit down with the city and air their problems and chart a way forward

– Mayor Obed Mlaba

deed to their properties, they have a deed of grant. This, they say, amounts merely to a "permission to occupy" and it makes it hard to raise mortgage bonds, keeping property prices down.

Mayor Obed Mlaba said the reversal of the penalties and collection charges amounted to considerable financial relief for the people of the affected areas. "It is important now that the people in the Ingonyama Trust areas sit down with the municipality to air their problems and chart a way forward.

"We need to avoid confrontations and situations in future," he said.

In terms of Section 10 of Proclamation No 80, all the former R293 properties which fall within the boundaries of the former North and South Central Councils were rated since 1 July 1996.

There are various types of properties within these areas, some of which fall under the trust. The municipality and the trust have been in negotiations for years about the liability for rates.

In 1998 the municipality sent letters enforcing payment of rates by all individual ratepayers in the trust areas.

These areas, as well as other former R293 townships, were previously not rated.

Eventually, a court order was sought which stipulated that: For the period 1 July 1996 to 2 October 1998, the trust would be liable for the payment of rates.

For the period 3 October 1998 onwards, the owners would be responsible for the payment of rates.

The municipality then had problems with incorrect addresses and as a result accounts did not reach ratepayers.

This resulted in the accumulation of debt due to penalties and collection charges that were levied on these accounts.

The executive committee agreed to the following recommendations:

□ That the penalties and collection charges raised against private residential owners in the trust area be deemed irrecoverable.

□ That subject to this, all penalties and collection charges accumulated up to 30 June 2007 against private residential ratepayers in the Ingonyama Trust be reversed.

□ The municipality has made provision for bad debts to cover this reversal.

□ Communities in the affected areas will be contacted to make payment arrangements.

The details of offices which will be handling these arrangements will be made known soon.

## Sizakala centre for Umlazi

DERRICK DLAMINI

A NEW Sizakala Customer Service Centre is set to open at the Umlazi Mega City later this month, improving access to services for residents.

A variety of city departments will be represented, ranging from Electricity and Water, to Metro Police. There will also be cashiers where residents can pay their municipal bills.

Cllr Zandile Gumede, Chairwoman of the Masakhane Committee, said: "We are trying to put municipal departments together.

"This will make it easier for residents to pay for their services without having to travel long distances.

"It's part of bringing government closer to the people. We are responding to a call, as the municipality, to enhance communication between our people and government institutions," she said.

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