

BUDGET SPEECH BY THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF STEVE TSHWETE MUNICIPALITY, CLLR MIKE MASINA AT THE BANQUET HALL IN MIDDELBURG ON THE 31ST MAY 2012

**THANK YOU PROGRAMME DIRECTOR : MMC, ELPHUS MATHEBULA
HONOURABLE SPEAKER, CLLR ROBERT XABA IN ABSENTIA
HONOURABLE CHIEF WHIP, CLLR BUSI NDALA
CHAIRPERSON OF MP HOUSE OF TRADITIONAL LEADER, IKOSI SE MAHLANGU
MEMBERS OF THE MAYORAL COMMITTEE & FELLOW COUNCILLORS
THE ANC PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE MEMBERS
2ND IN COMMAND AT 4 SAI BATTALION, MAJOR MATLAILA
RCM OF 4 SAI BATTALION, MAKOFANE
CDW & WARD COMMITTEE MEMBERS
THE MUNICIPAL MANAGER
EXECUTIVE MANAGERS, HOD'S AND COUNCIL OFFICIALS
DISTINGUISHED GUESTS
COMRADES AND COMPATRIOTS
MEDIA
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR, IT IS ALMOST A YEAR SINCE WE HAVE BEEN IN OFFICE AND WHEN WE LOOK BACK AT THE ROAD ALREADY TRAVELLED, THE TANGIBLE WORK DONE PROMISES A REMAINING 4 YEARS JOURNEY OF HOPE CHARACTERIZED BY A HIGH LEVEL OF SERVICE DELIVERY.

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR, 2012 IS A HISTORIC YEAR NOT ONLY FOR SOUTH AFRICANS BUT FOR THE ENTIRE AFRICAN DIASPORA AND THE WORLD CELEBRATED WITH US ON JANUARY 08 AT MANGAUNG THE 100 YEARS ANNIVERSARY OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, THE OLDEST LIBERATION MOVEMENT IN AFRICA.

THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF GHANA NKWAME NKRUMA ONCE SAID "IF YOU DO NOT KNOW WHERE YOU ARE COMING FROM YOU DO NOT KNOW WHERE YOU ARE GOING AND IF YOU DO NOT KNOW WHERE YOU ARE GOING, YOU MAY END UP NOWHERE"

AS WE LAUNCHED THE 100 YEARS CELEBRATION OF SELFLESS STRUGGLE AT THE ANC BIRTH PLACE IN MANGAUNG, MEMORIAL LECTURES ON EACH OF THE 12 PRESIDENTS OF THE ANC ARE ONGOING, EACH MONTH DEDICATED TO ONE PRESIDENT AND WE ARE PROUD AS STEVE TSHWETE A THRIVING MUNICIPALITY IN MPUMALANGA TO HAVE HOSTED A SUCCESSFUL MEMORIAL LECTURE OF 03RD PRESIDENT ZACHARIAS MAHABANE RIGHT IN THIS VENUE WE ARE IN TONIGHT, MORE THAN 3000 PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE PROVINCE ATTENDED AND LISTENED ATTENTIVELY AS THE CURRENT PRESIDENT JG ZUMA DELIVERED THE ADDRESS.

AS WE ARE STILL CELEBRATING OUR PROUD HISTORY, A DARK CLOUD BEFELL US DURING THIS MONTH WHEN WE EXPERIENCED THE PASSING AWAY OF 5 OF OUR COMRADES AND PEOPLE'S SERVANTS.

FIRST IT WAS THE FORMER MINISTER OF COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS, CDE SICELI SHICEKA, FOLLOWED BY ANOTHER LONG STANDING MEMBER, THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICES AND ADMINISTRATION CDE ROY PADAYACHIE, WHILE HE WAS ON GOVERNMENT TRIP IN ETHIOPIA.

WHILE STILL IN GRIEF, WE LEARNT OF THE PASSING AWAY OF ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE ANC ALSO A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT CDE FLORANCE NYANDA, A SISTER TO GENERAL SIPHIWE NYANDA. IT WAS TRAGIC WHEN IN SUCH SHORT SPACE OF TIME WE LEARNED OF THE PASSING AWAY OF ANOTHER ANC MEMBER, THE FORMER LIMPOPO MEC FOR PUBLIC WORKS, PAUL PAGADI, FOLLOWED BY THE FORMER SPEAKER OF THE GAUTENG LEGISLATURE AND WOMAN'S LEAGUE VETERAN REVEREND MATLALIPULA CHABAKU. AS COUNCIL WE EXPRESS OUR HEARTFELT CONDOLENCE TO THE BEREAVED FAMILIES. KWANGA BANGALALA NGOKUTHULA, THEY FOUGHT A GOOD FIGHT.

NOT FORGETTING THE FORMER MAYOR OF THE MIDDELBURG TOWN COUNCIL OOM PIET BEZUIDENHOUT WHO ALSO PASSED ON DURING THIS MONTH OF MAY 2012.

WHILE STILL MOURNING WE HAD A FATAL ACCIDENT IN NAZARETH WHERE A TRUCK RAN OVER TWO CARS AND EVENTUALLY CRASHED ON TWO SHACKS, LEAVING 2 PEOPLE DEAD AND FEW OTHERS WITH INJURIES.

IN THE SPIRIT OF UNITY IN DIVERSITY WE CONGRATULATE THE ANC IN THE PROVINCE FOR A PEACEFUL CONGRESS, WE WISH THE LEADERSHIP COLLECTIVE ELECTED AT THIS CONGRESS ALL THE BEST AS THEY LEAD AND GUIDE US, HERE IN OUR MIST WE HAVE THE PEC MEMBERS, CDE SAREL MTSHWENI AND CDE LINDIWE NTSHALINTSHALI.

THE MONTH OF MAY IS SIGNIFICANT IN OUR CALENDAR AS A COUNTRY AND THE REST OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENT.

THE 31ST OF MAY 1910 SAW THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA, A MOVE THAT PAVED THE WAY FOR INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, AN ACTION THAT GAVE BIRTH TO THE DREAM OF 1912 WHEN THE FIFTH PRESIDENT OF THE ANC DR. PIXLEY KA-ISAKA SEME, A LAWYER BY PROFESSION, STEPPED UP IN 1911 TO BE INSTRUMENTAL IN THE FORMATION OF THE ANC IN 1912.

IT WAS THE AFRICAN DREAM OF 1912 THAT INFORMED THE FORMATION OF ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN UNITY (OAU) ON THE 25TH OF MAY 1963 IN ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA WHERE THE RESULTANT AFRICA LIBERATION COMMITTEE AGITATED AND INSPIRED ALL AND SUNDRY ACROSS THE GLOBE TO CONFRONT A SYSTEM THAT WAS DECLARED BY UN AS A CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY.

THE TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS THIS AFRICAN DREAM HAD TO ENDURE DURING SHARPVILLE MASSACRE IN 1960 – A MOVE THAT CULMINATED IN THE SETTING UP OF THE PEOPLE’S ARMY, UMKHONTO WESIZWE IN 1961 WHICH COINCIDED WITH DECLARATION OF SOUTH AFRICA AS A REPUBLIC, ONLY PROPELLED YOUNG PEOPLE TO RISE AND INTENSIFY THE STRUGGLE IN 1976.

THE DECLARATION OF MAY 25 AS THE AFRICAN LIBERATION DAY WAS A BEFITTING TRIBUTE INDEED GIVEN WHAT FOLLOWED LATER INCLUDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT WITH BISHOP TREVOR HUDDLESTONE AT THE HELM WHOSE ARRIVAL MARKED A NEW TERRAIN OF STRUGGLE – UTILIZATION OF ART AND CULTURE AS EFFECTIVE WEAPON FOR LIBERATION.

IT WAS AT THIS TIME WHEN REVOLUTIONARY MUSICIANS LIKE THE LATE GREAT PETER TOSH AND BOB MARLEY RAISED THEIR HANDS TO SPREAD LIBERATION GOSPEL THROUGH SONGS LIKE “EQUAL RIGHTS”, “AFRICA UNITE,” “FIGHT ON” AND “NOT GONNA GIVE IT UP” ..TO NAME BUT ONLY A FEW.

IT THEREFORE CAME AS NO SURPRISE WHEN IN 1979, A BLUES ROCK GROUP DIRE STRAITS WROTE TO THE THEN PRESIDENT PW BOTHA AND INSTRUCTED HIM TO END APARTHEID WITHIN 6 MONTHS, FAILURE WHICH CONSEQUENCES WOULD BE TOO GHASTLY TO CONTEMPLATE. NEEDLESS TO SAY PW BOTHA REMAINED UNSHAKEN AND INDEED DIRE STRAITS TOGETHER WITH MANY ANTI-APARTHEID ACTIVISTS AROUND THE WORLD INTENSIFIED THE STRUGGLE, HENCE THE RELEASE OF ONE OF THE BEST REVOLUTIONARY ALBUMS IN THE WORLD “BROTHERS IN ARMS”, FEATURING AN ARMED STRUGGLE SONG, “RIDE ACROSS THE RIVER” WHOSE CENTRAL THEME BECAME AN ELABORATION OF A SONG TITLED “RECRUITING SOLDIERS” BY THE LATE GREAT PETER TOSH.

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR, HOW ABOUT WORKING OUT A BY-LAW THAT WOULD COMPEL ALL RADIO STATIONS IN MIDDELBURG TO PLAY PETER TOSH AND DIRE STRAITS?

THE REST AS THEY SAY, IS HISTORY AS THE AFRICAN DREAM FINALLY CAME INTO FRUITION IN 1994.

I AM DELIBERATELY NARRATING THIS HISTORY AND EVENTS TO DEMONSTRATE HOW UNIQUE AND VITAL OUR DEMOCRACY IS. IT IS APPRECIATED AND EMBRACED BY THE ENTIRE WORLD. THE AFRICAN DREAM OF 1912 THAT CAME INTO BEING IN 1994 BELONGS TO US, THE AFRICAN CONTINENT AND THE ENTIRE WORLD – HENCE THE CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS.

AS WE TABLE THIS BUDGET FOR ADOPTION TODAY THE 31ST OF MAY 2012, WE MUST BE MINDFUL OF IMMENSE AND SELFLESS SACRIFICES BY ORDINARY PEOPLE AND FREEDOM ACTIVISTS ACROSS THE GLOBE. WE DARE NOT MAKE A MOCKERY OF THEIR IMMEASURABLE CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF OUR FREEDOM.

IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT THE INTERNALIZATION OF OUR ELECTION MANIFESTO GOALS HAS YIELDED MORE THAN WHAT WE EXPECTED. APART FROM OUR HEALTHY RESOURCES, THE CONDUCIVE ENVIRONMENT WE CREATED SO FAR HAS GIVEN US EXTRA-ORDINARY OUTCOMES.

IT WAS INDEED NOT SURPRISING WHEN THE MIDDELBURG OBSERVER, IN LAST WEEK FRIDAY EDITORIAL INDICATED THAT TO DATE OVER 500 000 PEOPLE HAVE FREQUENTLY BEEN TO OUR MALL AND THANKED THE STEVE TSHWETE MUNICIPALITY FOR THE STERLING WORK IN MAKING THE ENVIRONMENT MORE CONDUCIVE FOR LOCAL INVESTMENT.

PREMIER'S PRIORITIES FOR MUNICIPALITIES IN 2012

DURING HIS STATE OF THE PROVINCE ADDRESS THE HONOURABLE PREMIER OF MPUMALANGA HONOURABLE DAVID DABEDE MABUZA SAID; *"PREPARING FOR THE TOUGH JOURNEY AHEAD WE AGREED THAT ALL MUNICIPALITIES HAVE TO PRIORITIZE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE DELIVERING AGREEMENT AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT TURNAROUND STRATEGY, INCLUDING:*

- A. SUPPORTING THE PROGRAMME ON CLEAN TOWNS AND EXPANDED REFUSE REMOVAL;***
- B. COORDINATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF OPERATION CLEAN AUDIT 2014 IN ALL MUNICIPALITIES;***
- C. PRIORITIZE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TO CLOSE THE SOCIAL DISTANCE BETWEEN PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES AND COMMUNITIES."***

IN RESPONDING TO THE HONOURABLE PREMIER'S CLARION I WISH TO HIGHLIGHT THE FOLLOWING ACHIEVEMENT THAT WE HAVE MADE AS A MUNICIPALITY THUS FAR:

GENDER AND SOCIAL SERVICES

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE, THE NEGLECT OF CHILDREN AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, HIV AND AIDS CONTINUE TO BE A CHALLENGE IN OUR COUNTRY.

AS A MUNICIPALITY WE TAKE THESE ISSUES SERIOUSLY, HENCE MY OFFICE WORKS SO CLOSELY WITH THE GENDER AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT UNIT.

I AM ALSO CHAIRING OUR LOCAL AIDS COUNCIL WHERE WE ARE MAKING GOOD PROGRESS.

TO ATTEST TO THAT THE UNIT HAS RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING ACCOLADES:

- **THE 2011 AWARD ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TRANSVERSAL PROGRAMME**
- **THE PREMIERS AWARD 1ST POSITION ON YOUTH WITH DISABILITY IN THE COMMUNITY**
- **THE SA EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AWARDS: BONISA ECD IN MHLUZI CAME 3RD IN THE BEST COMMUNITY BASED CENTRE CATEGORY.**

OUR LOCAL AIDS COUNCIL MANAGED TO INSTILL THE CULTURE OF INVESTING IN LOCAL PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES ESPECIALLY TO OUR SURROUNDING MINES AND INDUSTRIES. ON THAT NOTE BHP BILLITON AND OPTIMUM COAL

TERMINATED THEIR FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS TO GAUTENG BASED ORGANIZATIONS AND PLANS ARE UNDER WAY TO REDIRECT THESE FUNDS TO OUR LOCAL CHARITY ORGANIZATION.

WE HAVE LAUNCHED A MORAL REGENERATION MOVEMENT. WE BELIEVE IT WILL PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN RESTORING THE COMMUNITIES' MORAL VALUES.

A. "CLEAN TOWNS & REFUSE REMOVAL"

WE CAME SECOND IN THE NATIONAL GREENEST TOWN AWARD. THIS FORMER CLEANEST TOWN AWARD NOW CONSIDERS A VARIETY OF ISSUES INCLUDING CLEANLINESS;

WE CAME BACK HOME FROM THIS EVENT HELD IN PRETORIA WITH A R3 MILLION CHEQUE;

HOWEVER WE HAVE NOTICED WITH GREAT DISAPPOINTMENT THE RECENT GROWING TENDENCY OF ILLEGAL DUMPING, MAKING US DOUBTFUL WINNERS AND BAD EXAMPLES.

THAT IS WHY PROGRAMME DIRECTOR, WE HAVE LAUNCHED THE SATURDAY CLEANING CAMPAIGN TO BEEF UP OUR WORK FORCE IN THIS SPHERE AND TO EDUCATE OUR COMMUNITIES ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT AND THE ROLE IT PLAYS IN ATTRACTING INVESTMENT AND CREATING A CONDUCIVE ENVIRONMENT AS THE FAMOUS CHRISTIAN SAYING GOES "CLEANLINESS IS NEXT TO GODLINESS"

WE APPRECIATE THE COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO OUR CALL; WE FURTHER ENCOURAGE YOU TO CONTINUE LOVING YOUR PLACE.

B. OPERATION CLEAN AUDIT

WE FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT THE FINANCIAL YEAR WE ARE CLOSING ON THE 30 JUNE 2012 WILL PRODUCE THE 3RD CONSECUTIVE CLEAN AUDIT FROM THE AUDITOR GENERAL UBABA U-TERENCE NOMBEMBE UMA EZA LA, AKASABUZI'NDLELA SEKAJWAYELE.

I MUST SAY THAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED THIS NOT ONLY BECAUSE WE HAVE A CAPABLE CFO AND THE FINANCE TEAM, BUT FIRST BECAUSE OF POLITICAL WILL, THE UNWAVERING COMMITMENT TO COMPLY FROM ALL OUR WORKERS FROM THE TOP MANAGEMENT TO THE LAST WORKER ON THE GROUND. WE ARE UNITED AGAINST CORRUPTION; THE COMMITMENT OF THE COMMUNITY TO PAY FOR SERVICES IS A MAJOR CONTRIBUTING FACTOR, AS WE ARE AT 99% PAYMENT.

C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TO CLOSE SOCIAL DISTANCE

THE HONOURABLE PREMIER IS SPOT ON, WITH HIS INTERVENTIONS. COMMUNICATIONS IS A CRITICAL TOOL IN THE WORLD.

AS REQUIRED BY THE CONSTITUTION, TRANSLATED INTO BATHO PELE PRINCIPLES IT IS VERY CRITICAL FOR GOVERNMENT TO INTERACT WITH THE PUBLIC, TO SHARE INFORMATION, GET THEIR VIEWS AND MAKE THEM AWARE OF THE CHALLENGES FACED.

IT IS THE SIMPLE MEANING OF DEMOCRACY "GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE BY THE PEOPLE" AS STATED BY THE SOUTH AFRICA'S 1ST DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENT, UTATA NELSON MANDELA.

OUTREACHES

WE HAVE HELD 5 MEANINGFUL OUTREACHES AT EXTENSION 24, KWAZAMOKUHLE HALL, EXTENSION 7 ADELAIDE TAMBO HALL AND EXTENSION 2 AT MPHANAMA SECONDARY SCHOOL.

BEFORE TODAY'S EVENT WE HELD A BUDGET INDABA WHERE WE PRESENTED THE DRAFT BUDGET, AND ENTERTAINED QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS. WE ALSO CONDUCTED SPECIAL OUTREACHES TO GIVE EDUCATION ON ***INCLINING BLOCK TARIFF***.

WE MAKE SURE THAT OUR RESIDENTS ARE CONSTANTLY INFORMED ABOUT MUNICIPAL PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES. WE EMPOWER THEM TO TAKE ACTIVE PART THROUGH EFFECTIVE AND PROMPT COMMUNICATION;

- WE CONDUCT WEEKLY MEDIA BRIEFINGS WITH OUR LOCAL MEDIA NAMELY;
 - GREATER MIDDELBURG FM (GMFM)
 - KOSMOS STEREO
 - RADIO KRAGBRON
 - MIDDELBURG OBSERVER
 - HERALD AND MHLUZI REFLECTIONS

WE UTILIZE OUR COMMUNITY RADIO STATIONS TO ENGAGE WITH THE PUBLIC THROUGH PHONE IN PROGRAMMES. WE ALSO UTILIZE BULK SMS'S TO COMMUNICATE URGENT NOTICES TO OUR CITIZENS. THIS IS EVIDENT ENOUGH THAT WE HAVE HEALTHY PUBLIC RELATIONS.

HUMAN SETTLEMENT

HUMAN SETTLEMENT BACKLOG REMAINS A SERIOUS CHALLENGE, NOT ONLY IN STEVE TSHWETE, BUT IN THE ENTIRE COUNTRY. PROGRAMME DIRECTOR, YOU WILL REMEMBER THAT HUMAN SETTLEMENT REMAINS THE COMPETENCY OF NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL SPHERES OF GOVERNMENT RESPECTIVELY, WITH A LIMITED ROLE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT. WE ARE AWARE OF YOUR DIFFICULTIES, AS THERE HAS NEVER BEEN ANY COMMUNITY OUTREACH WHERE THE ISSUE OF HOUSES WAS NOT RAISED.

WE HAVE APPLIED TO THE PROVINCE AND NATIONAL FOR LEVEL 1 AND 2 HOUSING ACCREDITATION. WE ARE NOW WAITING ANXIOUSLY FOR THE POSITIVE RESPONSE AND I BELIEVE WE WILL BE GIVEN THAT OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY A BIGGER ROLE IN ADDRESSING THIS CHALLENGES OF OUR GROWING COMMUNITIES AND THE LONG TERM EFFECT ON INWARD MIGRATION IN OUR AREA.

ACHIEVEMENTS AMIDST CHALLENGES

DURING THE TABLING OF THE POLICY & BUDGET SPEECH 2012/2013 OF THE HONOURABLE MEC FOR HUMAN SETTLEMENT, *UBABA USIPHOSWE MASANGO* ON THE 22ND OF MAY 2012, HE CONGRATULATED MR TT NTULI, CEO OF THE STEVE TSHWETE HOUSING ASSOCIATION FOR THE BEST RENTAL STOCK PROJECT.

WE JOIN THE MEC AS HE WISHED "ALL THE WINNERS GOOD LUCK AS THEY CONTINUE TO COMPETE WITH THEIR COUNTERPARTS AT THE NATIONAL AWARDS CEREMONY TO BE HELD TODAY AT THE GALLAGHER CONVENTION CENTRE". WE WISH *UBABU'NTULI ALL THE BEST*.

ON THE 22ND JUNE 2012 THE PROVINCIAL HUMAN SETTLEMENT DEPARTMENT WILL AGAIN HAND OVER TITLE DEEDS TO NEW HOME OWNERS IN THE NKANGALA REGION. THE STATISTICS IN THIS REGARD ARE AS FOLLOWS; VICTOR KHANYE 109, DR JS MOROKA 44 AND STEVE TSHWETE 1053, THIS EVENT WILL BE HELD HERE IN STEVE TSHWETE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY AT THE ADELAIDE TAMBO CENTRE, THIS GOES TO SHOW THAT WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR, IN PARTICULAR OUR SURROUNDING MINES. THIS CHALLENGE IS SLOWLY BEING ADDRESSED.

AGRICULTURAL SUMMIT

ON THE 28 & 29 MARCH 2012 WE HELD A FRUITFUL AGRICULTURAL SUMMIT UNDER THE THEME “EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES IN FIGHTING POVERTY AND CONTRIBUTING TO FOOD SECURITY”.

THE SUMMIT WAS TO BE HELD OVER TWO DAYS. ON THE FIRST DAY EXPERTS AND STAKEHOLDERS GAVE PRESENTATIONS ON THE WORK DONE AND ON-WAYS AND MEANS TO ENCOURAGE THE SMALL SCALE FARMERS.

THE SECOND DAY WE ATTEMPTED TO VISIT PROJECTS TO DO PRACTICAL WORK, BECAUSE OF PERSISTING RAIN WE WERE FORCED TO POSTPONE THIS INITIATIVE. HOWEVER, TWO WEEKS AGO WE WERE ABLE TO RECONVENE TO COMPLETE THE UNFINISHED STORY.

THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS WERE VISITED:

GREENHOUSE IN PULLENSHOPE: THIS ORGANIZATION IS DOING AMAZING WORK PRODUCING FRESH VEGETABLES BUT THEY DO NOT HAVE A RELIABLE MARKET.

KWAZAMOKUHLE COMMUNITY GARDENS THERE IS POTENTIAL; THEY JUST LACK WATER AND PROPER CO-ORDINATION AND YOUTH INVOLVEMENT.

TIMTHAK CHICKEN HOUSE WAS THE LAST PROJECT WE VISITED BETWEEN HENDRINA AND ARNOT. IT HAS A CAPACITY TO PRODUCE 80 000 CHICKENS AT A GO, HOWEVER THERE ARE NO ABATTOIRS TO SLAUGHTER THEIR CHICKENS.

EDUCATION

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR, I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT TO THIS FAR THE WORD I HAVE MENTIONED MORE THAN ANY OTHER WORDS IS EDUCATION. AS I NORMALLY ALERT THE STEVE TSHWETE COMMUNITY THAT A YOUNG PERSON (LEADER) WHO SPEAKS AND LEAVES THE PODIUM WITHOUT MENTIONING EDUCATION IS NOT A LEADER AT ALL.

I AM SAYING THAT BECAUSE EDUCATION REMAINS THE ONLY KEY TO THE FUTURE OF OUR YOUTH AND COUNTRY. IT ALSO REMAINS THE ONLY SOLUTION TO AFRICA’S DILEMMA: WHICH IS POVERTY, UNEMPLOYMENT AND SCARCITY OF SKILLS.

THE 2011 MATRIC CLASS GAVE US HOPE AS TWO OF OUR LEARNERS MADE IT TO THE PROVINCIAL TOP 10 BEST PERFORMING LIST WITH NUMBER ONE COMING FROM MIDDELBURG HOER SKOOL HERE IN STEVE TSHWETE MUNICIPALITY, A LEARNER BY THE NAME OF ELISA TIRSA KLEYNHANS.

THE DEVIL FINDS WORK FOR IDLE HANDS AND IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT HE DOES NOT FIND THE HANDS OF OUR YOUTH, WE RECENTLY OFFICIALLY OPENED A LIBRARY AT CHROMEVILLE.

THIS GESTURE, HOWEVER SMALL WILL GO A LONG WAY IN MAXIMIZING ACCESS TO INFORMATION FOR THE YOUTH. WE ALSO CONVENED A SUCCESSFUL EDUCATION SUMMIT UNDER THEME “MAKING EDUCATION EVERYBODY’S BUSINESS”. OUR ICON AND FORMER PRESIDENT NELSON MANDELA ONCE SAID “*EDUCATION IS THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPON WHICH YOU CAN USE TO CHANGE THE WORLD*”.

BLUE AND GREED DROP STATUS FOR STEVE TSHWETE MUNICIPALITY

THE STEVE TSHWETE MUNICIPALITY OBTAINED FIRST PLACE PROVINCIALY AND 11TH PLACE NATIONALLY IN THE BLUE DROP ASSESSMENT 2012, WHICH WAS ANNOUNCED BY THE MINISTER OF WATER AFFAIRS AT THE WISA CONFERENCE HELD IN CAPE TOWN ON THE 07TH OF MAY 2012.

OVERALL ALL THE SYSTEMS OPERATED BY STLM PERSONNEL QUALIFIED FOR THE BLUE DROP STATUS FOR A THIRD CONSECUTIVE YEAR, RESULTING IN AN OVERALL GOLD STATUS AWARD ACCORDING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF WATER AFFAIRS.

IF A FOURTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR OF BLUE DROP STATUS IS ACHIEVED, A PLATINUM AWARD BECOMES THE ACHIEVEMENT.

THE SYSTEMS ARE OPERATED BY ESKOM AND OPTIMUM COAL HOLDINGS, NAMELY HENDRINA POWER STATION, ARNOT, KOMATI AND HENDRINA/KWAZAMOKUHLE – WHO ALSO GOT BLUE DROP STATUS.

THE OUTSTANDING GREEN DROP AWARD FROM LAST YEAR FOR HENDRINA/KWAZA WASTE WATER TREATMENT PLANT WAS FINALLY DELIVERED TO STLM, ALSO A THE BLUE DROP AWARDS.

THE FOLLOWING EMPLOYEES AT STEVE TSHWETE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY WERE RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BLUE AND GREEN DROP PROCESSES:

- MS LUCIA MADISENG: FOR OUTSTANDING DATA MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT TO THE REGULATORY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (RPMS) (2012)
- MS ZELDA LOUW: BLUE DROP WOMAN FOR 2011, AND FOR OUTSTANDING WORK IN PROCESSING OF BLUE DROP INFORMATION AT STLM.
- MR EDSON WARAMBWA: OUTSTANDING MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP ON BLUE DROP PROCESSES (2012).
- STEVE TSHWETE MUNICIPALITY FOR THE BEST BLUE DROP TEAM FOR 2011.

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR; PLEASE ALLOW ME TO TABLE THE BUDGET AS FOLLOWS:

ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR, THE ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY WILL CONTINUE FOR SOME TIME AND ALTHOUGH THE SOUTH AFRICAN ECONOMY HAS DEMONSTRATED RESILIENCE, THE REAL GDP GROWTH IS PROJECTED TO SLOW DOWN FROM 3,1% IN 2011 TO 2,7% IN 2012.

THE ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY NOT ONLY AFFECTS BUSINESS, MANUFACTURING AND FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES OF SOUTH AFRICA BUT ALSO IMPACTS ON THE LOCAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES SUCH AS:

- INCREASE IN UNEMPLOYMENT.
- THE RISING COSTS OF FUEL WHICH HAS A RIPPLE EFFECT ON A NUMBER OF COMMODITIES CAUSING CONSUMERS TO HAVE LESS MONEY TO PAY FOR GOODS AND SERVICES.
- REAL HOUSE PRICES HAVE DECLINED WHICH WILL INFLUENCE THE FUTURE RATES BASE.
- THE STEADY INCREASE IN HOUSEHOLD DEBT WHICH REFLECTS THE VULNERABILITY OF LOW AND MIDDLE INCOME CONSUMER GROUPS IN THE MUNICIPALITY.

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PLANS TO IMPLEMENT A PROGRAMME OF ECONOMIC CHANGE THAT WILL STEADILY ROLL BACK UNEMPLOYMENT, POVERTY AND INEQUALITY.

THE MIDDELBURG MALL AND THE ENVISAGED NEW COLD DRINK FACTORY TO BE OPENING IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR WILL ASSIST WITH ABSORBING SOME OF THE ECONOMIC PRESSURES.

JOB CREATION

JOB CREATION REMAINS A CENTRAL PRIORITY OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT.

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR, THE MUNICIPALITY CAN ANNOUNCE THAT FOR THE CURRENT FINANCIAL YEAR, THROUGH THE EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME 1450 JOBS WERE CREATED AND WE PLAN TO IMPROVE ON THIS FIGURE FOR THE NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR. A NEW ENERGIZED FOCUS ON MAXIMIZING JOB CREATION NEEDS TO BE FOLLOWED THROUGH LABOUR INTENSIVE APPROACHES.

CONTINUOUS PUBLIC SECTOR INVESTMENT IN ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE IS CRUCIAL TO SUPPORT THE RECOVERY OF THE ECONOMY.

IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE FACTORS MUNICIPAL REVENUE AND CASH FLOW REMAIN UNDER PRESSURE AND THEREFORE A CONSERVATIVE APPROACH WAS ADOPTED WHEN PROJECTING REVENUE, CASH RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE TO ENSURE AFFORDABLE RATES FOR ALL.

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE MUNICIPALITY REMAINS SUSTAINABLE AND STRONG OVER THE MEDIUM TERM TO FACE THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS.

TODAY WE CAN PROUDLY SAY THAT OUR FINANCIAL POSITION IS SOUND. WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DO SO DUE TO EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE:

- POLITICAL OVERSIGHT.
- A STRONG PAYMENT RATE AND FOR THAT WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK EACH AND EVERY MEMBER IN OUR COMMUNITY WHO PROMPTLY PAY THEIR MUNICIPAL ACCOUNTS.
- GOOD GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION.
- WELL THOUGHT-OUT BUDGETARY AND FINANCIAL PLANNING PROCESSES.

WE ARE COMMITTED TO CONTINUE TO BUILD A HIGH PERFORMING ORGANIZATION AND IMPROVING THE CULTURE OF SERVICE DELIVERY AND ACCOUNTABILITY. THIS IS CONFIRMED BY THE TWO CLEAN AUDIT REPORTS RECEIVED FROM THE AUDITOR-GENERAL FOR THE 2010 AND 2011 FINANCIAL YEARS.

2012/2017 INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PLAN

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR, WE REMAIN GUIDED BY OUR SEVEN STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTAL PRIORITIES WHICH ARE:

- POVERTY ALLEVIATION.
- GOOD CORPORATE GOVERNANCE.
- ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT.
- GOOD CO-OPERATIVE GOVERNANCE.
- FINANCIAL VIABILITY.
- INTEGRATED ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SPATIAL PLANNING; AND

- COST EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE SERVICES.

A SERIES OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE MEETINGS WERE HELD AT WARD LEVEL TO ALLOW COMMUNITY MEMBERS WITH A FAIR OPPORTUNITY TO DELIBERATE ON ISSUES AFFECTING THEM. FROM THESE MEETINGS A NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS WERE RECEIVED WHICH HAVE BEEN FACTORED INTO THE IDP AND THE FINAL BUDGET IN LINE WITH THE MUNICIPAL STRATEGIC OUTCOMES.

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK COUNCILLORS, COMMUNITIES AND STAKEHOLDERS FOR PARTICIPATING AND MAKING A VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION.

FOLLOWING THE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROCESS THE ANNUAL BUDGET IS INTENDED TO ENSURE THAT THERE IS CONTINUOUS SERVICE DELIVERY TO ALL OUR COMMUNITIES.

2012/2013 MEDIUM TERM BUDGET

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR, GIVEN THE ON-GOING FUNDING CONSTRAINTS SOME VERY TOUGH DECISIONS HAD TO BE MADE.

THE MAIN CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED CAN BE SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS:

- THE ON-GOING DIFFICULTIES IN THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL ECONOMY.
- AGEING WATER, SANITATION AND ELECTRICITY INFRASTRUCTURE.
- INCREASED COST OF BULK PURCHASES – ESPECIALLY FOR ELECTRICITY.
- ADDITIONAL BORROWINGS TO IMPLEMENT THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME.
- THE CONTINUOUS NEED FOR THE UPGRADING OF INCREASED DEMAND TO BULK SERVICES.
- THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A NEW TARIFF STRUCTURE FOR RESIDENTIAL ELECTRICITY CONSUMERS NAMELY, INCLINING BLOCK TARIFFS (IBT).

CONSIDERING THESE CHALLENGES NEW IMAGINATIVE WAYS NEED TO BE EXPLORED TO BECOME MORE EFFICIENT IN GENERATING THE REQUIRED RESOURCES TO MAINTAIN, RENEW AND EXPAND INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE.

BUDGET ALLOCATIONS

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR, REVENUE MANAGEMENT IS FUNDAMENTAL TO THE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF THE MUNICIPALITY. IN ADDITION SECTION 18 OF THE MFMA REQUIRES THAT THE ANNUAL BUDGET MUST BE FUNDED.

THEREFORE TARIFF SETTING, ESPECIALLY WITH THIS BUDGET, WAS CAREFULLY CONSIDERED TO KEEP INCREASES IN RATES AND TARIFFS AT LEVELS THAT WILL REFLECT AN APPROPRIATE BALANCE BETWEEN POOR HOUSEHOLDS AND OTHER CUSTOMERS WHICH CAN ACCOMMODATE BASIC SERVICES DELIVERY AND ADDRESS THE INCREASING DEMAND FOR NEW BULK SERVICES AND THE REPLACEMENT OF AGEING INFRASTRUCTURE.

THE ANNUAL BUDGET HERewith PRESENTED PROVIDES FOR TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE OF R967,1-MILLION WHICH GROWS BY 13,5% FROM THE CURRENT BUDGET REVENUE OF R851,7-MILLION AND IT IS PROJECTED THAT THIS REVENUE WILL INCREASE TO R1,2-BILLION BY 2015.

REVENUE FROM PROPERTY TAXES IS EXPECTED TO INCREASE TO R227,4-MILLION WHICH IS R30,4-MILLION HIGHER THAN THE CURRENT BUDGET ALLOCATIONS OF R197-MILLION. REVENUE FROM SERVICE CHARGES INCREASES FROM R479,7-MILLION TO R540,8-MILLION. THE BULK OF THE REVENUE IS DERIVED FROM ELECTRICITY AT 39,4%, FOLLOWED BY PROPERTY RATES AT 23,5%.

AN ADDITIONAL AMOUNT OF R5,3-BILLION IS NATIONALLY ALLOCATED TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO EXPAND SERVICE DELIVERY AND PROTECTING THE POOR. SUBSEQUENTLY THE MUNICIPAL ALLOCATION IN TERMS OF THE EQUITABLE SHARE INCREASED WITH R8,5-MILLION TO R85,8-MILLION WHICH IS MAINLY USED TO PROVIDE RELIEF TO INDIGENT HOUSEHOLDS AT AN AMOUNT OF APPROXIMATELY R4,7-MILLION PER MONTH.

THE INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS INCREASED TO R49,2-MILLION AND TRANSFERS TO BUILD CAPACITY IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT INCREASED TO R2,3-MILLION.

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR, I'M PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE BUDGET IS BALANCED AND FULLY FUNDED.

IN TERMS OF THE EXPENDITURE FRAMEWORK THE BUDGET PROVIDES FOR R1,1-BILLION ON OPERATIONS AND R195,7-MILLION FOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURE WHICH IN THE MEDIUM TERM WILL GROW TO R1,5-BILLION. WHEN COMPARED TO THE CURRENT BUDGET, COMBINED EXPENDITURE GROWS BY 9,6%.

THE KEY EXPENDITURE ALLOCATIONS IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET FOR OPERATIONS INCLUDE:

- R369,1-MILLION FOR ELECTRICITY SERVICES
- R199,9-MILLION FOR GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION
- R162,5-MILLION FOR COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY
- R106,0-MILLION FOR ROADS AND STORM WATER
- R124,5-MILLION FOR WATER AND WASTE WATER MANAGEMENT
- R 63,9-MILLION FOR WASTE MANAGEMENT

THE MUNICIPALITY REMAINS COMMITTED TO MAINTAIN INFRASTRUCTURE AND AN AMOUNT OF R48,5-MILLION IS PROVIDED WHICH CONSTITUTES 4,7% OF OPERATING EXPENDITURE.

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR, I NEED TO MENTION THAT APPROXIMATELY 85% OF THE CAPITAL BUDGET WILL BE EARMARKED FOR INFRASTRUCTURAL AND RESIDENTIAL RELATED PROJECTS. TO ADDRESS BACKLOGS AND SUSTAIN SERVICE DELIVERY 30,9% OF CAPITAL EXPENDITURE WILL BE UTILIZED ON THE RENEWAL OF ASSETS WHILST 69,1% WILL BE UTILIZED FOR NEW INFRASTRUCTURE AND OTHER ASSETS.

KEY SERVICE DELIVERY TARGETS

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR, THERE IS AN INCREASED FOCUS IN GOVERNMENT ON IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY, VALUE FOR MONEY AND QUALITY OF SPENDING.

BASED ON THE IMPORTANT ROLE PLAYED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT, THE MUNICIPALITY HAS COMMITTED ITSELF TO THE FOLLOWING AREAS OF CAPITAL INVESTMENT AMONGST KEY DEPARTMENTS:

- R71,1-MILLION FOR ROADS AND STORM WATER INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

THE BUDGET WILL GO MAINLY TOWARDS THE CONSTRUCTION OF 7 KM OF NEW TARRED ROADS, 8 KM OF STORM WATER SYSTEMS TO BE INSTALLED AND 12 KM OF RESEALING OF ROADS TO PREVENT ROADS FROM DETERIORATING.

- R29,2-MILLION FOR SEWERAGE PURIFICATION AND RETICULATION

THE BUDGET WILL FOCUS ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF EFFLUENT QUALITY AND MONITORING AS WELL AS THE UPGRADE OF THE NETWORK OF WHICH THE LARGEST PORTION WILL BE SPENT ON THE BOSKRANS SEWER PURIFICATION PLANT.

- R27,8-MILLION FOR ELECTRICITY INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

THE BUDGET ALLOCATION AMONGST OTHER THINGS WILL BE USED TO IMPROVE STREET LIGHTING, THE UPGRADING OF THE RETICULATION NETWORK, THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF SUPPLY AND THE PROVISION OF INFRASTRUCTURE FOR APPROXIMATELY 900 NEW ELECTRICITY CONNECTIONS.

- R26,9-MILLION FOR GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

THIS ALLOCATION INCLUDES THE ACQUIRING OF A NEW OFFICE BUILDING TO IMPROVE OUR SERVICES AND THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF A MULTI-PURPOSE COMMUNITY CENTRE AROUND THE ADELAIDE TAMBO COMMUNITY HALL.

- R24-MILLION FOR COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

THE BUDGET WILL TARGET THE DEVELOPMENT OF BASIC SPORT FACILITIES, UPGRADING AND DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PARKS AND THE MAINTENANCE OF OUR CEMETERIES. IN TERMS OF PUBLIC SAFETY THE MUNICIPALITY WILL CONTINUE TO CONSTRUCT NEW SPEED HUMPS AS A TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURE AND NEW TRAFFIC SIGNALS TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW.

- R9,1-MILLION FOR WATER INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

THE ALLOCATION WILL BE USED TO IMPLEMENT PROGRAMMES TO REPAIR AND MAINTAIN OUR WATER NETWORK TO REDUCE THE INTERRUPTION OF WATER SUPPLY. FURTHERMORE, THE BUDGET WILL FOCUS ON THE PROVISION OF NEW WATER INFRASTRUCTURE FOR NEW DEVELOPMENTS.

- R5,9-MILLION FOR REFUSE REMOVAL

THE MUNICIPALITY WILL CONTINUE TO ADDRESS ILLEGAL DUMPING AND A NEW PILOT PROJECT FOR GARDEN REFUSE REMOVAL WILL BE LAUNCHED. HONOURABLE SPEAKER, I'M PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT THIS PROJECT IS ESPECIALLY THE RESULT OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS.

TARIFF INCREASES

IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS HAVE BEEN CONSULTED AND ALL INPUTS FROM THE CONSULTATION PROCESSES HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE BUDGET. UNFORTUNATELY SOME OF THE INPUTS CAN ONLY BE CONSIDERED OVER THE MEDIUM TERM.

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR, THE MUNICIPALITY NEEDS TO REMAIN FOCUSED ON EFFECTIVE DELIVERY OF CORE MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND IN DETERMINING THE TARIFFS WE HAD TO CONSIDER AFFORDABILITY, YET AT THE SAME TIME, TO PROVIDE SUSTAINABLE SERVICES THAT ARE ECONOMICAL AND EQUITABLE TO ALL COMMUNITIES.

TARIFFS FOR SERVICES MUST BE COST EFFECTIVE AND ADDITIONAL REVENUE BY MEANS OF PROPOSED RATES AND TARIFF ADJUSTMENTS OF R85-MILLION HAD TO BE SOUGHT TO BALANCE THE BUDGET.

THE PROPOSED TARIFF INCREASES TO FULLY RECOVER COSTS COME INTO EFFECT ON 1 JULY 2012 ARE:

- AN AVERAGE INCREASE IN PROPERTY TAX OF 14,95%.
- AN AVERAGE INCREASE IN THE SEWERAGE TARIFF OF 13,75%.
- AN AVERAGE INCREASE IN ELECTRICITY REVENUE OF 11,03%.

- AN AVERAGE INCREASE IN THE REFUSE REMOVAL TARIFF ON 15,9%.
- AN AVERAGE INCREASE IN THE WATER TARIFF OF 9%.

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR, THE BUDGET WE HAVE PRESENTED HERE TODAY WILL ENSURE EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY. THERE WILL ALWAYS BE CHALLENGES AND OUR NEEDS ARE MANY WITH LIMITED RESOURCES BUT WITH THIS BUDGET WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR VISION: –

“TO BE THE LEADING COMMUNITY DRIVEN MUNICIPALITY IN THE PROVISION OF SUSTAINABLE SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMMES”.

CONCLUSION

I WOULD LIKE EXPRESS MY PROFOUND GRATITUDE TO:

- MEMBERS OF THE MAYORAL COMMITTEE FOR THE NECESSARY POLITICAL OVERSIGHT DURING THE BUDGET PROCESS;
- COUNCILLORS, WARD COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES AND CDW’S
- THE MUNICIPAL MANAGER
- THE EXECUTIVE MANAGER FINANCE AND HER STAFF
- EXECUTIVE MANAGERS AND HOD’S
- ALL OFFICIALS WHO PLAYED A PIVOTAL ROLE WITH THE COMPILATION OF THIS BUDGET.

I THANK YOU!!!!!!

BAIE DANKIE!!!!!!

NGIYABONGA!!!!!!

NGIYATHOKOZA!!!!!!