

MAYOR'S SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE MAYOR COUNCILLOR SK MNUKWA TO THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT ON 29 SEPTEMBER 2020

Madam Speaker

Executive Committee Members

Chief Whip and Whippery

Councillors

Traditional Leaders

Municipal Manager and Senior Management

Officials present

Ladies and Gentlemen

Ndiyanibulisa ngegama le ntuthukho kunye negama leNkosi yethu uYesu Krestu, Amen.

Ladies and Gentlemen; as the country concludes Tourism and Heritage Month Celebrations, we are reminded of our cultural diverse Municipality. Our Municipality boasts as one of the long reigning homes to Maskhandi in the Eastern Cape Province, since the proclamation by the former MEC for Sports, Recreation, Arts and Culture, Hon Pemmy Majodina in 2017.

Heritage doesn't only find expression in dress, rituals, food, music, art and language. It also finds expression in our natural world. It is the inheritance passed down from generation to generation, linking the present to the past.

This year's Heritage Day took place in the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic. This pandemic has taken a toll on human life, on communities and on our economy. However since the progression to level 1 of the lockdown, the country has seen the opening of tourism activities. This has also brought about a long awaited economic relief to our local accommodation establishments.

This pandemic also saw the Municipality conducting its first Virtual Tourism and Heritage Celebrations under theme: “Celebrating South Africa’s Indigenous Treasures”. The focus for this year’s heritage celebration was in aid of local communities.

It sought to highlight the importance of tourism and its social, cultural, and economic values within Umzimvubu. The programme was held on the 28th September 2020 together with panellists from different sectors within the tourism industry.

Fellow Councillors; on slightly different note, Infrastructure is critical for sustaining basic standards of living and economic activity. On the 17th September 2020, Umzimvubu Local Municipality handed over a new community hall to ward 19 residents in KwaBhaca.

The community hall that created more than 10 labour opportunities for local residents in ward 19 was named after the late former Mayor of Umzimvubu Local Municipality, Cllr Bulelwa Mabhengu.

The BP Mabhengu Community Hall is our heritage and a memorial centre that honoured the life of a struggle fighter and an influential female leader in the community. More than R1.9 million has been invested on the construction of the community hall and can accommodate a capacity of 250 people.

This community hall is a testament of our commitment to serving the community of Umzimvubu with due diligence.

Madam Speaker; as the country continued with the easing of COVID-19 lockdown regulations in aid of resuscitating our local economic activity, the Umzimvubu Municipal Council was unfortunate to have lost one of its young leaders that represented a segment of our young people.

Cllr Maqhashalala was a good man and a leader who cared about his community and worked diligently for the upliftment of this municipality. Let us unite and continue to mourn this young, passionate and selfless leader that he was.

Fellow Councillors; It is worth noting that the President of the Republic of South Africa has declared an extension of the National disaster in terms of the National Disaster Management Act of 2000 by another month ending on 15 October 2020.

This means that the country has progressed to level 1 of the Nationwide Lockdown. However residents are still urged to observe COVID-19 precautionary measures and adhere to the regulations are stipulated by the National Command Council.

Madam Speaker; The Council is further advised to note that Auditor General is on site to conduct a Financial Audit for the 2019/2020 FY. Municipal leaders and Management will be required to comply in terms of furnishing AG with all the statutory documents that will be required from their respective department from time to time. Your compliance and urgent response to these issues will be much appreciated if we are to provoke good results.