

# MSUNDUZI ASSOCIATION OF RESIDENTS, RATEPAYERS AND CIVICS (MARRC)

Tel: 072 536 2978      E-mail: msunduziarrc@gmail.com  
PO BOX 100969, SCOTTSVILLE PIETERMARITZBURG 3201

26 August 2019

Contact: Anthony Waldhausen  
Phone: 072 536 2978  
E-mail: msunduziarrc@gmail.com

Press statement for Immediate Release

---

## OBJECTION TO VALUATION ROLL!

At a Public Community Meeting on 21 August 2019, Msunduzi residents and ratepayers, many of them pensioners and unemployed, strongly raised their very real concerns and anxieties about the recently released 2019 Valuation Roll for Msunduzi.

They described how the latest valuation of their properties increased dramatically, in some cases by 50% or more, since the last evaluation in 2014 and the devastating impact the resultant exorbitant increases in monthly rates payments will have on their livelihoods.

Serious flaws in the property valuation process and methodology used in compiling the new Valuation Roll have been identified which, in a very large measure, resulted in grossly inflated property values. The methodology used has been described as a “desktop and aerial viewing exercise” with minimal physical inspection of properties on the ground actually having taken place.

One of the outcomes of the meeting was a decision to start a petition that would be presented to the MEC for Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs for KwaZulu-Natal, Siphon Hlomuka, requesting his urgent intervention in terms of Clause 32(2) of the Municipal Property Rates Act 6 of 2004 and to cause the Msunduzi 2014-2017 General Valuation Roll and the 2018-2019 Supplementary Valuation Roll to be extended for a further year from 1 July 2019.

The grounds for seeking this urgent action are as follows:

1. Msunduzi Municipality is under Section 139 administration, as stipulated in the provisions of Section 32(2) of the Municipal Property Rates Act.
2. The Municipality commissioned a review of the General Valuation Roll which used flawed methodology, resulting in 4,379 written public objections and an objection by the city administration itself, as quoted in The Witness of 12 August 2019.
3. The Acting City Manager has posted a general public notice in the local media advising that the objections will be processed in monthly batches until and including December 2019. Following completion of the municipal valuer's review of objections, ratepayers need to be notified of the outcomes and have the right to request reasons from the municipal manager for each decision reached. If unhappy about the outcomes, affected ratepayers have the right of appeal to a Valuation Appeal Board. These processes will take the better part of the current financial year to be fully implemented.
4. Extending the 2014 valuation roll by 12 months will enable the Msunduzi Administrator appointed by CoGTA to have the objections processed fairly and timeously, in terms of the legislative provisions set out in the Act, while allowing time to initiate and conclude a review of the methodology used in compiling the current flawed General Valuation Roll.

Tel: 072 536 2978 | E-Mail: msunduziarrc@gmail.com

P.O. Box 100969, Scottsville, PIETERMARITZBURG, 3201

5. Additionally, there have been numerous reports of ratepayers not receiving Section 49 notices, and there were no visible notices of the revaluation as contemplated in Section 4 of the MPRA, thereby depriving them of the right of objection.
6. Those ratepayers who did receive Section 49 notices in April and objected before the deadline – extended to 31 May due to late posting of the notices -- have to date received no acknowledgement. Instead, the Acting City Manager has posted a general public notice in the local media advising that the objections will be processed in monthly batches until and including December 2019. That is halfway through the municipal finance year.
7. Thereafter, ratepayers have to be notified of the outcome of the municipal valuer's review of their objection; have the right to request reasons from the municipal manager; and thereafter have the right of appeal to a Valuation Appeal Board (still to be appointed) as contemplated in Sections 53 and 54 of the Act.
8. Those ratepayers whose values were adjusted by more than 10% have an automatic right of review and referral to the municipal manager and Valuation Appeal Board as described in Section 52 of the Act.
9. Clearly, these processes will take the better part of the current financial year to be exhausted. This will give rise to significant recalculation of rates due over an extended period, with ratepayers whose properties were overvalued entitled to a refund with interest as described in Section 55 of the Act.
10. Many ratepayers have suffered erroneous accounts over a prolonged period due to the incapacity of finance staff to work with the SAP system effectively and efficiently. We do not believe the administration has the capacity to manage the review, objection and refund processes competently or timeously for the reasons stated above.

Anthony Waldhausen, a local resident from Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg who attended the meeting undertook to coordinate the petition campaign. He developed an online petition already with Awethu Amandla website and has gone viral on social media and shared it with local WhatsApp groups to garner much needed support for the campaign.

A hard copy of the petition was also developed in order to maximise residents' participation and have been circulated around shops etc. This approach also assisted those who do not have access to the internet or who are not tech savvy to also get involved.

To date the online petition has reached **1000** online signatories already.

Anthony Waldhausen, the petition campaign coordinator said "With already 600 online signatories already, the petition has shown that Msunduzi residents are unhappy about the flawed process and would continue individually to submit their objections with the municipality.

We are also going to start the process to establish a Residents and Ratepayers Association umbrella body in Msunduzi on 29 August at the YMCA, Alan Paton Ave, at 6pm and encourage all residents to attend. This umbrella body will start establishing, or reviving, local Residents' and Ratepayers' Associations in all areas of the Msunduzi municipality where they don't currently exist or function, in order to give residents and ratepayers a collective voice and to keep the municipality accountable."

Another strategy to get more signatories would be to have petition tables at all the malls in Pietermaritzburg. Those who are keen to host petition tables can get hold of Anthony Waldhausen at the following cell: 0725362978 / email: arwaldhausen@gmail.com

The residents may also access the online petition at  
<https://awethu.amandla.mobi/petitions/objection-to-current-valuation-roll-in-msunduzi>

The petition campaign is an initiative of the residents and ratepayers of Msunduzi municipality.

ENDS

**Issued by:**

**Msunduzi Association of Residents, Ratepayers and Civics (MARRC) MANCO**

**Tel: 072 536 2978, 067 759 2908, 082 863 0291**

**E-Mail: arwaldhausen@gmail.com**