

NEWSLETTER

#002

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MARRRC

Msunduzi Association of Residents,
Ratepayers and Civics

ON THE MARRRC

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MARRC

Msunduzi Association of Residents,
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1 NEWS

MSUNDUZI FULL COUNCIL APPROVES RATES AND TARIFF INCREASES!

The Msunduzi Municipality has approved the 2023-2024 budget despite objections by residents.

The council meeting on the 31 May 2023 approved the rates and tariff increases as follows:

Rates
Electricity
Refuse
Sanitation
Water

7%
21.69%
7%
16%
10%

Also increases from 500%-2000% for hiring a hall, using public swimming pools, burials etc. These increases come into effect as of 1 July 2023.

Let us not forget the autocratic imposition of the multiple billing cycle which is irregular and unlawful.

This municipality doesn't care about the plight of its citizens.

<https://www.citizen.co.za/.../municipality-pushes-ahead.../>

CLELAND/MEADOWS RRA, AGM 13 APRIL 2023



Our AGM was the most successful one to date and it took teamwork to achieve this. The Cleland & Meadows RRA committee, in the last year, together with the residents, realised that working towards a common goal is what gets the results we want.

Our approach is to work with the municipality for service delivery. The proof is in the amount of work that has been done in our area in the last year months. Teamwork makes the dream work is our tag line and we live by it. Maureen Govender – elected Cleland/Meadows RRA Chairperson.

Below are a few messages from residents who are members of the RRA.

Without community support, we will not be able to do the work that we do.

“I would like to say that the work being completed and handled is incredible, the proof lies in the upkeep of the area, the numerous projects the RRA is working on to make Cleland a safer and crime free suburb, the growth in numbers shows this recognition and the funds growing as well. I was impressed by the work being carried out by volunteers who also have busy lives which is why I am proud to be a part of it, sadly I didn't join sooner, but I'm here as a resident and love Cleland as well as our life here. I can't thank the RRA enough for their awesome tenacity, perseverance, and resolve. Well done and keep up the great work, you have our support.” Arvin Tiluk

“The AGM was well organized and informative. The ability to refer back to matters that happened +-5 years show how committed the community is. The updates on ongoing matters within the community brought us an idea of how far we've come and how far we still need to go. I was impressed that members of the committee were still willing to stay on which for me shows unity.” Nosipho Nduli



MESSAGE FROM OUTGOING CHAIRPERSON OF THE CLELAND / MEADOWS RRA, *JACYN FANNER*

As my time as chairperson comes to an end, I have spent much time reflecting on the incredible work that we have accomplished as a committee.

The highs, the lows, the lessons, and the wins.

Most importantly, the Cleland & Meadows RRA has made a significant impact on this community, and I am so proud of all that we have achieved.

From developing and supporting community initiatives to advocating for change, we have worked tirelessly to make a positive difference in the

lives of those around us.

Together, we have shown that when we come together with a shared vision and a commitment to action, we can create real change. As I look back on my time as chairperson, I am grateful for the opportunity to have worked with such an inspiring group of individuals.

I have learned much, and I am confident that the RRA will continue to thrive and make a difference under its new leadership.

Thank you to the community for trusting me over the past four years. I am grateful for the privilege of having served as your chairperson.

LINCOLN MEADE RRA, AGM – 1 APRIL 2023

Message from Chairperson of the Lincoln Meade RRA, Kantha Naidoo

The meeting went well, the turnout was satisfactory, however there were much more people who attended the meeting via zoom.

This was an elective Annual General Meeting, and hence I chaired the first session, which entailed myself, my treasurer and Neighbourhood watch chairperson submitting their reports as well.

We then handed the next session to Mrs. Jacyn Fanner- Vice Chairperson of MARRC, who facilitated the election of the office bearers that were up for election; which were: Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer and the other MANCO members who



came into office at the time we did.

The MANCO expanded to include more members that joined MANCO and provided for a diverse skill sets of members.

CITIZEN ISSUE OF THE MONTH: **MULTIPLE BILLING CYCLE! IRREGULAR AND UNLAWFUL!**

Residents of certain areas in Msunduzi were horrified to receive two utilities bills in April – their normal one which they had been faithfully paying at the end of the month for many years and another bill, also for utilities, dated the 15 th o of April to be paid by the 15 th of May. In most cases this second bill runs into thousands of rand far in excess of what they had previously been paying. Only residential properties are involved. Businesses and government departments still pay at the end of the month.

It is at times like this that you appreciate being a member of a rate payers association who are on your side in trying to sort out the mess. The municipality has introduced the multiple billing cycle in an autocratic manner without due process and public participation.

Residents are deeply concerned about how this new billing cycle has been imposed on them which has caused much confusion and stress for all residents.



the billing cycle to the ministerial representative and the MEC of COGTA. If there is no response MARRC will escalate its objection to the Public Protector.

MARRC has been engaging with the CFO and revenue staff but to date have not received any responses to numerous questions and queries to the multiple billing cycle. The silence is deafening!

MARRC and all resident and ratepayer associations have been engaging with residents to provide guidance to residents amongst all the confusion.

The picket received widespread media coverage.

<https://youtu.be/PLJg8hTudGo>

<https://www.citizen.co.za/witness/news/pietermaritzburg/rate-payers-to-march-to-pietermaritzburg-city-hall-over-billing-system/>

<https://www.citizen.co.za/witness/news/city-offers-three-months-grace-period-to-pay-bills/>

**THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
“MULTIPLE BILLING”
WITHOUT DUE PROCESS IS
IRREGULAR AND UNLAWFUL!**

MARRC held a picket outside city hall on the 11 May 2023 to highlight resident's dissatisfaction in the whole process of introducing the multiple billing cycle.

A memorandum was handed over to the municipal manager who informed MARRC that he would meet them in the week to discuss the memorandum.

MARRC also submitted objections on



3 RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION OF THE MONTH

GREATER EDENDALE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION



To understand the issues of the Greater Edendale Residents Association one needs to know something about the history of Local Government in South Africa.

Under Apartheid the Group Areas Act had divided South Africa up into hundreds of different areas for people of different races. So, there were many types of local government.

At first townships were administered by the council of the neighbouring white town but the Bantu Affairs Administration Act of 1971 removed responsibility from these councils. They established Bantu Affairs Offices in all townships to administer them. In 1977 the apartheid government tried to get people living in the townships to support Community Councils.

After the 1994 elections a new constitution was passed in 1996 and all discriminatory laws were done away with. In 1999 that the common voters' roll was introduced. In 1998, the Municipal Demarcation Act (Act No. 27 of 1998) and Municipal Structures Act (Act No. 117 of 1998) were passed to divide the whole country up into municipalities for all people and to lay down the laws on how municipalities would work. This was when the problems of the people living in the Greater Edendale area started.

There had been some development in these areas with roads being tarred and RDP houses built. Eskom brought electricity. People understood that

they had to pay for the service. Some people have prepaid meters and others have their meters read and bills delivered to their houses. In the main people are happy with this system. The problems started when people started to receive rates and water bills. They had not paid rates before only a flat fee. They did not understand what rates were and no one from the municipality came to explain to them.

Similarly with water, some people did not have meters, in other cases the meters were buried under ground. How was the municipality deciding how to charge them for water?

Also, there were lots of leaks with water running down the streets for years. Who was paying for this? Then residents of the Greater Edendale Area started getting letters of demand for large amounts of money they could not afford.

This is when the Greater Edendale Residents Association was formed. Their main demand is for the municipality to meet with the residents to discuss these matters.

The committee can remember appealing to mayors of Msunduzi going back to the time of Zanele Hlatshwayo who was mayor from 2006 to 2010 without any luck. The municipality is only prepared to meet with individuals not community organizations.

Some people have now been handed

3 **RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION OF THE MONTH** **GREATER EDENDALE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION (CONT.)**

over and are in danger of losing their home. As GERA members say – we are all paying lots of tax for example through VAT, fuel levies etc.

All over South Africa there are municipalities that are failing to deliver services to their citizens. Some of this is due to

corruption and incompetence but a big problem especially in rural areas is that there are not enough people who can afford to pay rates and for services.

GERA asked MARRC to run a workshop in the community to discuss municipal funding.

4 **ACTIVE CITIZEN OF THE MONTH - (NOT AN AWARD)** **JACYN FANNER**

Jacyn Fanner, the former chairperson of the Clelands Meadow Rate Payers Association (CMRA) and deputy chairperson of MARCC is our Active Citizen of the month.

She is a true citizen of Msunduzi having been born here and lived here all her life. She grew up living in the pretty Victorian double story red brick house at number 2 Prince Alfred Street. Her fondest memories though are of visiting her grandmother who lived in Hayfields.

There was a real feeling of community. Everyone knew their neighbours; children played together and were often sent down the road to borrow a cup of sugar. It was this sense of community unity that she longed for after she moved to Cleland Meadows. In the beginning she just lived behind her high walls and did not even know her neighbours. But the longing to live in a connected village was still there.

In 2019 she was inspired by a notice in one of the community newspapers saying that so few people were involved in the local community policing forum that the community hall was about to be given



back to the municipality. Jacyn decided to set about reviving the CMRA which had collapsed.

She went door-to-door to all 550 houses in the area distributing notices of a community meeting. She was assisted by people who had previously been involved in the RA as well as Anthony Waldhausen and Kantha Naidoo from MARRC.

A successful meeting was held and the CMRA re-established. It has gone on to be a strong force in the community.

People have been able to share their knowledge and experience. When approaching the municipality there is always strength in numbers. Through MARCC the RA also had access to expert advice on local government issues.

4



ACTIVE CITIZEN OF THE MONTH - (NOT AN AWARD) JACYN FANNER (CONT.)

As one of the main aims of the RA was to create community unity, they arranged a series of community events like a pensioners' day. Things are not always easy when trying to organize an RA.

People are very disillusioned with organizations and reluctant to get involved. Political parties and the municipality are resistant. The political parties think that RRA's are trying to muscle in on their territory and the

municipality is very happy to have unorganized citizens who do nothing other than grumble, Funding is always an issue, Nevertheless, Jacyn remains convinced that "We all love Our City".

She has recently moved to Pelham. Although she has plenty of interests such as health and fitness and recipes for a start it seems there will soon be a Pelham RRA under the MARRC umbrella.

5 BE AN ACTIVE CITIZEN

TO BE AN ACTIVE CITIZEN, KNOW THE LAW!

Section 17 of the Municipal Systems Act requires municipalities to put in place systems for communities to participate in the decision-making process. These include:

1. **The process of receiving, processing, and considering petitions**
2. **Procedures for notifying the public of issues being considered by the council and a process that allows for public comment**
3. **Procedures for public meetings and hearings by councillors and officials**
4. **Regular sharing of information on the state of affairs of the municipality through consultation with community organizations and traditional leaders**

Municipalities must ensure the participation of people who cannot read or write, people with disabilities, women, and other disadvantaged groups.



HOW IS OUR MUNICIPALITY DOING?

6 CURRENT NEWS:

Anthony Waldhausen, chairperson of MARRC was selected to attend two training courses one on facilitation which run by Anew facilitation training and Amplify Mobile Change an online communication course.



anew

AMPLIFY MOBILISE
CHANGE

CONTACT DETAILS OF RRA'S

List of contact details of MARRC and Resident and Ratepayer Associations in Msunduzi

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