

SPEECH DELIVERED TO THE WORKFORCE OF GTM BY MAOR HIS WORSHIP CLLR GP MOLAPISANE

Date: 23 January 2023

Time: 8h00

Venue: Municipal Swimming Pool

Speaker of Council Ms Sani Tiva

Whip Cllr Given

Members of EXCO here present

Municipal Manager Nr D Mhangwana and Directors

Managers of different divisions of the Municipality

Officials from all our Departments in Greater Tzaneen Municipality

2022 is gone with its achievements and problems. We are in 2023 today hardly 4 weeks into the year. Let us turn the problems of 2022 into challenges, where others see a glass half empty, let us see a glass half full. Let the challenges we have turn into solutions.

1. Leave encashments

Amongst the challenges we had were issues of leave encashments, together we navigated this territory full of landmines. We avoided a strike because we were close to each other. Every family has its own challenges. We refused to let that which divides us to sour the relations we have as employer and employee. The territory is full of landmines because we had to balance legislation and demands for leave encashment. We avoided the consequences of a strike because we know that trashing of the town and burning of municipal infrastructure would have resulted. We had to fork out money that we don't have. We had to balance service delivery imperatives with the needs of the human resource. Here we are in 2023 and still have to navigate those landmines

2. Overtime

Overtime cannot be avoided in a setting like ours. We are on the coal face of service delivery. Electricity goes out at night, a sewage pipe burst at any time during the day, waste needs to be collected early hours in the CBD before economic activity takes place yet again, the Municipality does not have a bottomless pocket where money can just be thrown around in trying to alleviate these service delivery imperatives. We have to balance legislation and affordability with these demands for service delivery. It is therefore very critical that we have to work with you to mitigate expenditure on overtime, especially with SAMWU and IMATU. In order for us to keep paying salaries, we need to deploy financial resources in a prudent manner. Workers need to assist iOur Municipality to mitigate these issues of overtime

3. Loadshedding

We live and stay in Republic of South Africa. The problems and challenges of our Country are our challenges. Nobody is happy with loadshedding and load reduction. Yes, we are a licenced electricity distributor, but ESKOM has the final say ion how we need to respond to their loadshedding and load reduction challenges. December 2022 and January 2023 will go down as the worst months regarding the challenges of loadshedding and load reduction. We moved from aa scheduling of two and half hours to four and half ours. Two and half hours is good for household requirements. But four and half hours is good for production and the economy. It is good for the safeguarding of jobs. Loadshedding again impact us on issues of overtime alluded to above. Loadshedding has effects and affects our electrical infrastructure. Circuit breakers have to be switched on and off for more than 10 times in a day. Switching them on and off need us to service them every week, and it is not sustainable. As workers of GTM, let us be the communicators to the general citizenry of GTM, that we are forced to the hybrid way of switching our electricity distribution areas on and off. We are forced by circumstances

4. GTM our pride

Greater Tzaneen Municipality is admired by a lot of Municipalities and people. It is prided on its systems. We can handle our IDP processes very well. We are rated b COGHSTA to be having a compliant IDP. This enables us to deploy our meagre financial resources accordingly. We can spend our grants to the fullest every year. A good example is the Municipal Infrastructure grant, through which we received a bonus of R60 million rand in the 2021/22 financial year which assisted GTM to lay down infrastructure in our rural areas like roads and streets, electrification of households through the INEP grant and so on. He auditor General came in and rated our finances as unqualified audit opinion. This, though not enough, is a demonstration that our finances

are being handled in a professional manner; that we are able to account for the rands and cents given to us . we do accept that we have bigger challenges when it comes to general service delivery. Our gravel streets are not graded continually,; potholes are there but everyone agrees that we are doing our best under the circumstances; refuse removal is at its best, especially our clean streets and CBD, kerbside collection and we pride ourselves as the best clean town in the Province. And it is the sweat of you our workers that is yielding these results, amidst the problems we have. We are the best paying Municipality in the Province, we hold EXCOs and Councils as per the calendar, you are paid on time, we have an effective Employee assistant Program as would be demonstrated by the recent Men and Women employees' marches in November last year. You held farewell parties as per Departments in December 2022 which is a sign f the degree of happiness as employees; to top it all, you arranged a heritage celebration for yourselves, the whole workforce at the end of September 2022 at Jetty 3. All these are but few examples that make GTM to be envied by sister municipalities and the Country at large

5. Policies and discipline

Most among you lament the fact that you don't have travel allowances here, and a cell phone allowance there. You complain about workloads in both service and support Departments. These are challenges that we are dealing with through the application of policies. We have allocated two to three days next week to unpack and agree on these policies that will drive the Municipality. Gone are the days where other employees will fill as if they are discriminated. Gone are the days where employees fill that other employees are better than others. Policies will deal with issues equitably. Salary disparities for same category employees must become matters of the past. Equal work equal pay principles must apply. Employees will have to be brought into line for those that take the off-ramp, so that discipline is enhance. Punctuality, prudent use of Municipal resources should be the order of the day, employees that sit or sleep should be dealt with through these policies. We should have a workforce that is equal to the task of service delivery. We must collect that which we bill our communities, those able to pay must pay. Employees must pay for municipal services. Employees must reduce their state of indebtedness because indebted employees are counterproductive. Everyone, both officials and councillors must be whipped into line as per the GTN policies, so that the level of discipline is increased and therefore service delivery

6. What do we need to do amongst others?

The year ahead beckons. We still have to navigate these relations. We must improve from the 2022 state of relationship. Together we must make this entity the pride of the people of GTM. We must interface with Our District as some of the best services to be delivered come from there. Water provision, sanitation, health services and environment. We must strengthen our intergovernmental relations through the District Development Model (DDM). We have to provide requisite human resource to mitigate staff shortages. E have to allocate people tools of trade in order to be able to carry out municipal work. We must seek solutions to the shortage of workspace/offices. We have to monitor our vehicles through the tracking devices installed into our vehicles. We have to monitor our Extended Public Works Programs optimally and extend it to better deal with municipal spaces that require services.

7. The Community

A municipality comprises of three entities: namely, The Community, Council and Employees. This is a three-legged pot. One without the two others is incomplete. We must respect our communities who ae essentially the most important component of this pot. Let us give them the best service' through licencing, billing of services, interfacing with them, continue to do report backs and imbizos, do public participation through budgets, IDP rep forums and enhanced stakeholder relations through created committees of Council.

I wish you fruitful, best, blessed 2023. Let your spirit be uplifted. Let God prevails. Let us join hands and be one. We need each other. We need one another. Let us protect this family by being one. United we stand, divided we shall fall

I thank you