

RETIEF ODENDAAL

PR Councillor

Your ref:

Tel: +27 82 462 0668

Our ref:

E-mail:

retiefodendaal@telkomsa.net

Date: 12 August 2022

Who deals with this:

**NMBMM CITY MANAGER
DR N NQWAZI**

AND

**NMBMM CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
MR S THYS**

Dear CM / CFO

RE: GENERAL VALUATION PROCESS 2022

I refer to the aforementioned matter.

Kindly note that I have been inundated with requests from residents for assistance with the general valuation process.

Last night I addressed a non-political meeting with no less than 200 residents regarding the general valuation process. Although it became clear that many of our residents still have no idea as to how the general valuation process works, many of these residents expressed concern that they received no formal notification from the municipality insofar either the change in valuation or rating category are concerned.

Whilst there is very little that we can do in respect of the non-delivery of our notices, I do feel we have a duty to be responsive towards the needs of our rate payers.

Sadly, the general mood of the meeting last night was one of despair and desperation as many of the residents received rates increases of up to 400%. Emotions ran high as many residents painstakingly explained how they just cannot afford our rates anymore.

Adding insult to injury is the fact that the administration has this year introduced a new valuation query fee. Whilst I have no idea whether proper public participation has been done prior to the introduction of this new fee, it is a fact that I'm yet to meet either a single NMBMM Councillor or member of the public that have been aware of the intention of Council to introduce same.

I'm sure that you are well aware that there is already a massive rates burden on existing rate payers considering the fact that there are such a small base of rates payers in the metro. Our rating factor/s remains some of the highest of all metropolitan municipalities in the country and therefore we have to do everything in our ability to ensure that we assist those rate payers that elect to make use of their legislated right to object to our valuation processes.

It is against this backdrop that I wish to request and/or suggest the following from the administration:

- 1) The administration has indicated that they will not allow a DNC-hold (Do not cut hold) on accounts where individuals are awaiting the outcome of the objections / appeals process. I want to put on record that this decision will be immoral as there are bound to be anomalies and/or mistakes with the process for which we will then unduly expect our rate payers to pay.

It is my submission that we allow anyone whom have had an increase of more than 30% on their yearly rates, as a result of either a change in valuation or rating category, to place a DNC-hold on the account until such time as the objection and/or appeals process have been finalized. The aforesaid hold must be subject to the resident being able to prove that an objection/appeal has been lodged, there must be a due understanding that the resident must keep his account current and must also be aware that in the event he or she is unsuccessful with the process, he or she will be liable to pay the difference in rates that would have accumulated up to that point.

PR COUNCILLOR

In this regard I want to make it clear that the administration has allowed the aforesaid holds to be put in place in the past and therefore there will be a legitimate expectation from the public that such an arrangement will once again be facilitated.

- 2) Whilst I have my own personal opinion over the wisdom of the administration to introduce a valuation query fee during a General Valuation year, at the very least I want to suggest that we wave the fee in instances where rate payers have been successful in challenging the process, whether in respect of the valuation itself or change in category.
- 3) I want to urge us to request that the MEC establish at least two Valuation Appeals Boards in terms of Section 56 of the Municipal Property Rates Act in a bid to facilitate a quicker turnaround time for appeals.

I trust that my correspondence will be well received and await your kind but urgent response thereto.

Sincerely,



.....
Retief Odendaal L.LB (NMMU)