

# The Weekly

## METSIMAHOLO GIVES STANDS TO SQUATTER CAMP RESIDENTS

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Restoring people's dignity ... Metsimaholo Local Municipality executive mayor, Brutus Mahlaku

### **The mayor said the municipality offered the stands to restore the dignity of the residents of the area**

After years of living in the unhealthy and unhygienic squatter camps, the people of Zamdela who had illegally occupied the Walter Sisulu Phase 3 informal settlement will be given stands by Metsimaholo Local Municipality soon.

The decision was taken at the municipality's council at its last meeting on November 3 held at the Metsimaholo Castle chamber.

The executive mayor, Brutus Mahlaku, said the municipality took the decision to restore the dignity of the residents of the area who had been living in squalor conditions. They were also on the housing waiting list for many years.

"Many people have occupied the land and chose to live there in while waiting for stands allocations. We are aware that there are lot of people who have been in our waiting list and others who have not registered yet but wish to have place of their own.

"So early next year, we will be turning the farm into a place to stay. The rezoning has been approved and we hope our people will be proud of their municipality," said Mahlaku.

Mahlaku said the move was aimed at curbing the mushrooming of squatter camps in the municipality. "We avoided time where we will be using force to remove those people there while knowing that they need the place to stay and you can see that the town is growing. People are migrating to Sasolburg and that means our town is growing fast and development need to keep pace with the growth."

The squatter camp residents are going to be moved to the Bushbutch farm, which is located in Amelia, another informal settlement which does not electricity. The municipality does not have the budget to build a power station in the area council has agreed to make proposal to the office of the Minister of energy, Dipuo Peters, to fund the building of the power station.

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"We have managed to identify the contractor and logistics have been taken care of. However, due to financial constraints, the project has stalled. Upon completion of the power station, electricity supply to the area will be reliable," said the executive mayor.

Sasolburg has an estimated 150 000 residents and unemployment is high. A majority of residents are registered as indigents and free services. This has negatively affected the municipality's revenue base.

The affected informal settlement is used as a dumping site by other community members. Residents of the area have to content with pungent smell of human faeces, urine and strong chemicals gas and oil giant Sasol. They use bucket toilets and children are vulnerable to diseases.

Maserame Motsoaledi (27) said she is happy with the municipality's decision. "I have come here because other people who live here were given temporary numbers and put on a waiting list for stands. I believe it's better for me to join others so I can also get it when others do." Motsoaledi added that the area was unhygienic especially for young children.

"We are all in danger of being sick because the area stinks so badly and there is nothing we can do as we have nowhere we can go. The new place will be good for our children. Many people are getting sick. We are unemployed and cannot do much to improve our situation."

Tshwarelo Mokgatla supplemented Motsoaledi sentiments and said: "We hope the municipality receives fund to complete building the power station at Harry Gwala so we can receive electricity once we have been given our stands."

Another Zamdela resident, Serame Mothibantwa, stressed that: "It was high time for municipality to give the people stands because they are making the area a dump. It stinks and is so bad."

[Source: [www.theweekly.co.za](http://www.theweekly.co.za)]