

NONGOMA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

Minutes of Mpongo Access Road & Causeway Bridges Meeting

Date: 4 August 2015

Time: 10H00

Location: Ntungunye Hall- Ward 7 Nongoma

1. Attendance: See attached register

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION:

Councillor Sokhela welcomed and thanked the community members that were present at the meeting. He requested that Induna Nxumalo open the open the proceedings.

Induna Nxumalo then requested an opening prayer before the meeting commenced officially. After the prayer, Induna Nxumalo then stated the main reason for the meeting and requested that Councillor Sokhela take over.

3. Background

Councillor Sokhela began by stating that Ms Kuda Zhandire was an environmental consultant who had been assigned to conduct the Environmental Investigation before the proposed development could go ahead.

Ms. Kuda Zhandire then introduced herself and thanked the community for their warm reception. Ms. Zhandire explained that Nzingwe Consultancy was conducting the Basic Assessment (BA) which is a prerequisite before any construction can take place. She also stated that as part of the BA process, public meetings are held so as to involve those directly affected by the proposed project.

Ms Zhandire then stated the purpose of the meeting which was to establish the sentiment of the community regarding the need and desirability of the proposed construction of the Nkungwini Road and causeway bridges.

She then stated that there was an attendance register in circulation which everyone present had to fill in, as well as some comment sheets in which people were to provide their details and detail their interest in the proposed project.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORIZATION PROCESS

Ms. K Zhandire explained the proposed development in detail mentioning that the **proposed project** involves the construction of a 5m wide by 3km gravel wearing course access road. She mentioned that this meeting is part of the Public Participation Process according to the requirements of the EIA Regulations stating that the involvement of the affected community in any development is of great importance.

The BA process would also involve specialist studies including a wetland study to determine the sensitivities on the watercourses over which the causeways would be constructed as well as a heritage impact assessment to rule out the presence of graves and other features of cultural importance along the course of the proposed road.

Ms. Kuda Zhandire further explained that the feelings of the community about this development are important as it will display the need and desirability of the proposed project. She then invited the community members to raise their issues regarding the project.

5. Comments Questions and Concerns

Induna Nxumalo stated that the main issue was the bad condition of the roads in the area which limited access to the community.

Mr. Mchunu then stated that there have been a lot of promises regarding constructing and improving the roads especially the proposed project and therefore it was a highly anticipated development for the area. He added that the only mode of transport for the area was available as early as 6am and people have to walk long distances which makes it unsafe especially at the water crossings.

Induna Nxumalo then stated that a lot of instances people with luggage are dropped off far from their intended homes due to the road being bad. Those with a lot of luggage have to use wheelbarrows, wagons or make numerous trips

Mr. Mchunu then added that the Mpongo River is especially dangerous during periods of high rainfall and flow posing a threat to school children and other residents.

Mr Mthethwa then added that the road would be a very welcome development as he feels that the Ward 7 area is underdeveloped compared to the surrounding wards.

Councillor Sokhela added that he was aware of the slow development of the area however there were processes that had to be followed before any development can go ahead, such as consultations with the municipality and having budget allocations for certain projects. He added that while a development may be urgent it may delay due to budget limitations.

Induna Nxumalo then suggested that there are other roads in the area that need to be upgraded. There have been instances where the police and ambulances have failed to reach some of the homes due to the inaccessibility of the houses.

Councillor Sokhela then stated that there are many developments lined up for the area however due to different processes and timeframes it could take time before the community can see some real change therefore he requested the patience and understanding of the community members.

Ms. Zhandire then stated that there are noticeboards that will be placed in the area to inform the community of the BA process. If there was anyone not present at the meeting who'd be affected by the proposed development they could raise their issues and concerns by using the contact details on the noticeboards. If there were no other issues the meeting could be adjourned.

The Meeting was adjourned at 1230am.