

MINUTES: Ordinary Meeting of the Urban Bantu Council : 7 December 1976

WES-RANDSE BANTOSAKE-ADMINISTRASIERAAD
WEST RAND BANTU AFFAIRS ADMINISTRATION BOARD

DIE STEDELIKE BANTOERAAD VAN JOHANNESBURG
URBAN BANTU COUNCIL OF JOHANNESBURG

MINUTES OF THE 104TH ORDINARY MEETING OF THE URBAN BANTU COUNCIL
OF JOHANNESBURG HELD IN THE URBAN BANTU COUNCIL CHAMBER, JAMUNA
ON TUESDAY 7 DECEMBER 1976 AT 2.30P.M.

PRESENT:

COUNCILLORS : Thebehali, D. (Chairman)
Makhaya, T.J. (Deputy Chairman)
Chuonyane, F.M.
Hlungwane, R.
Jiyane, J.
Leepo, J.M.
Lengene, F.M.
Machaba, B.C.
Makhanya, A.
Mahlangu, F.
Mahlangu, S.S.
Kanthata, S.M.
Kokoena, D.
Motha, S.
Mothibenyane, E.
Nepfumbada, F.
Nevhulandzi, J.
Ngubane, Z.
Nkge, E.
Ntloko, M.K.
Pelotona, A.
Pooe, D.
Rakgomo, J.
Tjeeke, M.
Tshabangu, L.
Vilakazi, E.
Xulu, M.B.

OFFICIALS: Mr. H. Mulder (Chairman, West Rand Administration Board)
Mr. E.P. Wilsnack (Director, Housing)
Mr. N.M. Duguid (Chief Townships Manager)
Mr. E.A. Walters (Chief Townships Manager)
Mr. A.M. Conn (Senior Townships Manager)
Mr. D.M. Kubayi (Acting Secretary)
Mr. A. Mfete.

VISITOR: Brigadier J. Visser (Divisional Commander South African
Police, Soweto)

Councillor Makhaya opened proceedings with a prayer.

The Chairman then introduced Mr. Mulder the Chairman of the West Rand Administration Board, Officials Messrs. Walters, Duguid, Conn, Wilsnach as well as Brigadier Visser.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Leave of absence was granted to Councillors J. Manyane and R.J.P. Mponya in terms of Regulation 29(2).

The Chairman said this was the last meeting of the Year and extended an invitation to Mr. Mulder to say a word or two on what might happen next year. He then requested the Director, Housing to address the Chamber.

Mr. Wilsnach expressed his sincere gratitude for the co-operation the Township Staff received from Councillors after saying that regrettably the Chief Director was unable to attend the meeting owing to pressure of work.

He also thanked Brigadier Visser for the calm that has prevailed in Soweto ever since he took over and also wished the Councillors and Mr. and Mrs. Mulder a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

The Chairman then called on Brigadier Visser to address the Chamber.

Brigadier Visser said he was grateful to have been given the chance to say a few words. He also said he prayed that the calm that prevailed in Soweto would continue. He wished all Councillors and their families and residents of Soweto, as well as those who would be on the roads during Christmas a Happy and safe Christmas and added that he looked forward to the New Year. He also hoped that the community would make the Police feel they belong to Soweto.

The Chairman then called on Mr. Mulder to say a few words. He added that Mr. Mulder had been with the Board for three to four years. There had been differences between them, but; Mr. Mulder's attitude had been "let us agree to differ."

The Chairman further said that this Urban Bantu Council had been the only one that had made innumerable visits to Pretoria and added that memoranda had been issued on various issues such as higher Rent. The Urban Bantu Council had differed with the Board, but Mr. Mulder had ultimately taken the matter to Pretoria for a final decision.

Mr. Mulder then took the floor. He started by saying each person had a duty to perform and as long as people stuck to their duties, there would be no time for quarreling.

He said it was a pleasure for him to be at the last meeting of the Urban Bantu Council and added that because of certain happenings, he had been unable to attend more meetings of the Urban Bantu Council.

He stated that he had always been proud of the fact that Councillors had expressed themselves and also spoke at several meetings between the Government and Councillors. He also said that there had been arguments during the year on plimpricks such as the housing issue and added that there would be increased privileges in 1977 for traders.

In 1961 Mr. Mulder said, legislation had been passed, through which the Urban Bantu Council could receive and accept responsibilities. But, responsibility, he added, had to be given to mature people. Five years ago neither he nor the Councillors were mature enough. But, today, they were in regard to administration of the townships.

He further stated that he looked forward to the day when responsible people would come forward to take their places. He also said he spoke to legally elected representatives, elected by the people of Soweto to represent them and not people who stood at street corners and gossiped.

He said he respected the Councillors and stated that he had often sat next to the phone until the early hours of the morning waiting for a call from Pretoria on issues that affected the people of Soweto.

Councillors had been belittled, but they had kept on and he stated further that there were three people who had been Chairmen of the Urban Bantu Council at one time or another viz: Councillors Lengene, Makhaya and Thebeali, the present Chairman who he knew well, and was proud of them and paid the highest tribute to the Urban Bantu Council for what it had done. He also paid tribute to the officials at the West Rand Administration Board, from the highest official to the humblest labourer.

Continuing, he said nothing serious awaited Councillors but added that very important work was in store for them. He said Councillors must accept responsibility, but must not do a task because they wanted a good name. South Africa, he said, was a great country for everybody, and he had travelled widely and said no country was better than South Africa.

He wished everyone a Happy Christmas and hoped that the spirit of goodwill should continue. Everything would be done with the protecting hand of God, and wished everybody well especially Brigadier Visser, for his co-operation.

The Chairman of the Urban Bantu Council said people should vote because there was something that had to be done. He added that he was now in a position to respond to what had been said.

In his review of 1976 he said he had taken over the position of Chairman, when things had quietened down and added that his predecessor had found himself in a position no other person had ever faced. It was a dangerous situation, a situation where his life was in danger as well as the lives of his family. It was a situation, he added where one felt frustrated, depressed and where one regarded all that one had done as a thankless task. But, he added, things had changed.

He also said that Brigadier Visser had been back in Soweto only a week when the situation changed. He thanked Mr. Mulder (Chairman of the West Rand Administration Board) and the Chief Director, who had done their best to create a new situation in Soweto.

He then thanked the Director Housing, and added that Mr. Wilanach had started with them but that he now held a very senior position. He also thanked the two Chief Townships Managers, the Senior Townships Manager as well as Messrs Kubayi and Mfete.

He added that he had certain observations to make.

Firstly, he said, leaders had mushroomed overnight at the height of the riots in June. There were people, he added, who said they were the only leaders and these people said the real leaders were on Robben Island. But, the Chairman remarked that these people forgot that the Urban Bantu Councillors were civic leaders and not political leaders.

The second observation he wanted to make concerned the Press. He said the Press had adopted a negative attitude towards the Council and added that Councillor Makhaya's house would not have been burned down had the Press not turned against them.

The Press sensationalized matters, he added, but they did not know what the Urban Bantu Council could and could not do. He said the Council was in charge of roads, housing but not political matters and added that he would not take part in politics unless he was completely out of the Urban Bantu Council.

He further stated that immediately after he had taken over as Chairman, the Urban Bantu Council decided to suspend the election of Committees and after that meeting Councillors Mlonzi and Mosala had tried to suspend the Council.

The Chairman added that it is a legal and constitutional fact that a Councillor automatically loses his position when he fails to attend three consecutive meetings.

Mr. Mlonzi, the Chairman said, had issued a statement saying that Mr. Mulder was the only person who could sack them; but he said even Mr. Mulder could not do that.

The Chairman continued and said Committees had been suspended but added that the Urban Bantu Council had held two full Council meetings in 2 months to discuss business affecting it.

He added that he could not have done what he had done without the co-operation of the Councillors. 1977, he said, would be a crucial year, a challenge as to whether the Council would run Soweto in a responsible manner or whether they were going to misuse their powers.

He wished everybody a very Happy Christmas.

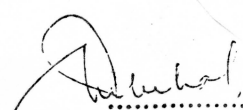
Councillors Poole and Motha addressed the Chamber.

The meeting closed at 3,30p.m.

CONFIRMED

CHAIRMAN

DATE


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