

Community fuming after scuffle with police



Members of 20th Avenue street committee next to DA PR councilor Shadrack Mkhonto

Pic: Jonk Wa Mashamba

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RECENTLY we published a story in which members of the street committee at 20th Roosevelt praised the DA's PR councilor, Shadrack Mkhonto for helping them fix the potholed road. In the article, they accused their councilor, Tefo Raphadu, of calling the JMPD when they protested over the potholed road, which has now fixed, apparently with the help of Mkhonto.

Raphadu, when responding to the allegation, said: "20th Avenue was fixed with my assistance, the committee is dead wrong. Nothing will happen in my ward without my consent. No DA has and will assist my residents while I'm here. With the JMPD, I don't know what they are talking about. I want Mkhonto to show you where and how he intervened."

Aubrey Mamabole (43) said Raphadu accused Raphadu of lying. "He is lying because we have got the proof that the Metro police shot at us with rubber bullets."

Thulani Dlamini (43) said he has now recovered from the wounds after the JMPD shot him with rubber bullets on the left hand.

Tebogo Makgobane, a member of the street committee which was formed in December last year, said: "all we wanted was service delivery because our road had many potholes. Nobody took us seriously hence we closed the road in December. Our challenge had been there for the past four years, and Raphadu never came to our meetings when we needed him. He forgot that he is on that chair because of us. He has dismally failed us for many times."

The chairwoman of the committee, Celinah Sethoga said they were not against their councilor, but decided to ask Mkhonto for intervention as their last resort. "We loved him and we wanted to work with him, but he hasn't landed his hand. Instead of assisting us last year during our service delivery protest, he called the JMPD who shot at us with rubber bullets. But I'm very happy that our road is new," said Sethoga. She added that Raphadu should have listened to their cries and helped them on their requests. "Mkhonto doesn't help us because he wants us to join his party, No! But because we requested him to help, and we will decide which party we go to." Makgobane added that he was happy that Mkhonto fixed a sewer system, street lights and

potholes.

Mkhonto said he was deployed by the DA to work at wards 105 and 116, but that doesn't deter him from assisting those who want his intervention out of his jurisdictions.

Raphadu said he clarified that issue with them that the JMPD deals with public order. "When people are toy-toying and become violent, the JMPD will deal with them. So the people had a misconception that I instructed the JMPD so that they could be shot. And as the councilor, I can't instruct officials, especially JMPD. If somebody died, what would the JMPD say, that they got an instruction from me/? I don't understand why they are putting the blame on me. I spoke to them and they showed me the bullets and I asked how I come in. I know that before the JMPD do something, they would give you 15 minutes to disperse.

He labeled Mkhonto as an opportunist who contested elections and lost. "And now he wants to come and be a shadow councilor in my ward. It's fine he can be a shadow councilor but he is still going to lose, because he is not genuine about community issues. He is just useless...but it is fine, as long as the community gets services."

GALXCOC against mob justice

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On the 15th of August, Greater Alex Today published an article headlined 'Tshitshi (Bowes) speaks out after cousin murder. Bowes works for Greater Alexandra Chamber of Commerce (GALXCOC) and is cousin sister to Jeff Mashiya (40) who was shot and killed at his home at number 110 – 2nd Avenues during the robbery on the 25 July this year.

Mashiya was buried on the 1st of August at the Waterfall cemetery. He left his wife Manana and a two year-old daughter, Pretty.

In the article, Bowes said she was angry at the criminals who seem to be walking freely and not arrested. She said police were slow in dealing with crime in the area and suggested that the community should deal with them. But Alex Today failed to indi-

cate that Bowes was not representing GALXCOC and that she was speaking in her personal capacity.

GALXCOC said in the statement that they were distancing themselves from those views.

"As a business support institution, we distance the institution from the article released on the 15 – 21 August 2018, regarding the murder of our valued community member (Jeff Mashiya) who happens to be related to one of our colleagues, Tshitshi Bowes. We deeply sympathize with the family on their loss and we wouldn't want such to happen to anyone. We further advice the family to work with the law enforcement agency to deal with the situation and allow the law to take its course rather than perpetuating the situation which will open space for lawlessness and anarchy in our community."

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