

Mangaung residents welcome name changes

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Debating name changes ... Residents of Mangaung, Bloemfontein during public hearings about proposed name changes within the metro

Residents of Mangaung have welcomed the name changes proposed within the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality (MMM), calling the move “long overdue”.

Officials from the metro and committee members of the Public Places and Street Naming Committee met with community members regarding the renaming and naming of 11 public places and streets at the Mangaung Regional Office recently. Amongst the proposed names to be changed is Andries Pretorius Street, which is likely to be called Raymond Mhlaba Street.

Mhlaba was the secretary of the Port Elizabeth branch of the SACP, a member of the ANC, Rivonia Trialist, ANC National Executive Committee member, premier of the Eastern Cape, South African High Commissioner to Uganda, and recipient of the ANC’s Isithwalandwe Medal before his death in 2005.

Residents said they support the proposed names. “At least after this we can be able to connect with the names we know and some we heard so much about. Some of these people are the ones that made it possible that we have the freedom that we live today. However, I would like to see other names like that of the late Albert Nzula,” said Sithole James from Ward 45. Nzula’s life was cut short when he died at the age of 29 in Moscow in 1934.

Although his period of activity in the movement was limited to only six years, he made a vital contribution to the Africanisation of the party which took place at that time. He was born in Rouxville in the Free State in 1905.

Other proposed names include Kaizer Sebothelo for the Botshabelo Stadium, Charlotte Maxeke for Maitland Street, Govan Mbeki for Curie Avenue, and Gabriel Dichabe for the Chris De Wet Building. It

is proposed that the Mangaung Metro Regional Office will be renamed the Leslie Monnanyane Building.

Public Places and Street Naming Committee chairperson Manneheng Tsomela said the process is a joint venture between MMM and the Free State Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation. "We cannot tell as to when the process will end, but that will be after we meet as a committee, stakeholders and council."

Public hearings were also held in Thaba Nchu and Botshabelo.