Towards the state of the town's roads, Wolmarans said: “We are demonstrating a clear focus on sustainable development, as the expenditure on repairs and maintenance of our roads, to R35 million in the next financial year. The first two consumption tiers for the water tariff will increase by 7% with tariffs in subsequent tiers rising more as consumption increases. The free water allocation to residents will remain at 6 kilo-litres per month, while for non-resident residents the allocation will be lowered to 3 kilo-litres.

In terms of domestic assessment rates, the increase in the rate of the rand will be 7% for domestic and non-domestic properties. The assessment rate ratio for domestic owners will be reduced to 10%, with the Green Rate reduced to 5% and the Rural Rate scrapped in its entirety. The additional portion of domestic property value which is excluded will remain at R10 000.

‘Knysna is predominantly domestic in its true base and the downtown in the national economy means development has virtually ceased, which has necessitated council to fast track economic development,’ explained Wolmarans.

‘Thus there are three options which we must avoid at all cost. Firstly, aggressively grow the rural areas so we can attract more service-based companies to the town. Secondly, by increasing our water treatment capacity, our sewerage system and refuse operation we can create the footing for our children. Lastly, by attracting new service-based companies from the world, we allow the municipality to generate more revenue and jobs for the town.’

Wolmarans highlighted the role of the Youth Council and the creation of institutional support. ‘We say the youth are the leaders of the future, however I think that we need them to be involved in the present, to understand what our generation assumes the next generation desires and what the youth actually want for their future.’

However, let’s be honest. The Youth makes up 60% of our population, if we do not get their input and buy in, and their commitment to help create collective solutions for collective problems like poverty, crime, substance abuse, child abuse, the state of schools and lack of respect generally – we have a problem. That is why we recently established the Knysna Youth Council. This is an instrument to bridge a divide, in this instance between generations and most importantly between what our generation assumes the next generation desires and what the youth actually want for their future.

We say the youth are the leaders of the future, however I think that we need them to be involved in the present, to understand what our generation assumes the next generation desires and what the youth actually want for their future. One of the initiatives close to my heart was our continued support, equip, and facilitate development of opportunities.

From the Mayor’s Desk

The Municipal overview on the residents of Knysna are the changes in tariffs, rates and rebates which are as follows:

- The electricity revenue tariff will increase by 8.5% as approved by the National Energy Regulator.
- The free two consumption tiers for the water tariff will increase by 7% with tariffs in subsequent tiers rising more as consumption increases. The free water allocation to residents will remain at 6 kilo-litres per month, while for non-resident residents the allocation will be lowered to 3 kilo-litres.
- The sewerage tariff and refund tariff will increase by 7.5% and 8% respectively. The refund tariff will most likely be adjusted annually after the transport and operating cost of the new Eden Dam and the new Moss Bay became operational.
- Other minor tariffs will also increase by 9.5% which specifically relates to… differences in the tariff levels.

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