

PRETORIA NEWS
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City honours former mayor and stalwart DA councillor

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METRO REPORTER

JAN VAN Zyl, the Tshwane DA councillor who died last Friday, should be honoured by having "something" named after him in the city.

Van Zyl, 78, is the fourth City of Tshwane councillor and the second from the DA to die in three months.

DA federal council member and MPL Solly Msimanga said naming a street or historically significant building after Van Zyl would be a perfect way to honour the councillor who served as mayor of Pretoria between 1988 and 1999.

Msimanga was speaking during a memorial service hosted by the municipality at the Sammy Marks council chamber in the city centre yesterday.

He appealed to executive mayor Kgosisentso Ramokgopa, who was present at the special council sitting, to consider this as an honour for "Oom Jan", as the late councillor was fondly known.

He said Van Zyl's contribution to the public in his time as mayor and later as a councillor was immense.

For this, he deserved a place in city in the form of a name of a street or historic building.

"He did a lot in terms of serving the public and guiding many of us.

"Van Zyl represented both the old and new dispensations with distinction," said Msimanga. "The history of South Africa should be told as it is without some parts being swept under the carpet. Van Zyl is an integral part of that history.

"He helped to bridge the gap between the past and present. He deserves to be honoured."

Msimanga said when Van Zyl's mayoral term was over in 1999, he did not take his pension and retire on a farm somewhere; he continued to serve the people of the city.

In his tribute, Ramokgopa urged all to celebrate the life of Van Zyl who had made a huge contribution.

Jabu Mabona, chief whip of the



Mayor Kgosisentso Ramokgopa pays tribute to the late DA councillor Jan van Zyl during a memorial service at the Sammy Marks council chamber yesterday.

PICTURE: THOBILE MATHONSI

council, said Van Zyl originally led a young DA caucus and would often discourage them when they threatened to walk out during heated debates.

Mabona praised the late councillor for often keeping his head in difficult circumstances.

Representatives of all political

parties in the council were united in expressing their condolences to his next of kin.

Van Zyl held various leadership positions, including Gauteng north regional chairman and leader of the Tshwane caucus of the DA.

The former town clerk was a diehard Blue Bulls supporter,

Rotarian and church leader.

The late councillor made headlines a few months ago when a member of the mayoral committee, Terence Mashego, told him in council: "As ek met jou klaar is ou man, sal jy daar dood lê (when I am finished with you old man, you will be lying dead)."

His party laid a complaint with the rules and ethics committee, and the statement was later withdrawn.

Van Zyl is survived by his wife, Marie, his daughter Carin, son-in-law Dr Faan van Vuuren and grandchildren Steann van Zyl, Lerine and Henno van Aswegen.

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