



Public Works Minister Thulas Nxesi.

PICTURE: NTSWE MOKOENA

Public works boss in legal battle with IDT

SIYABONGA MKHWANAZI

PUBLIC Works Minister Thulas Nxesi is locked in a legal battle with the Independent Development Trust (IDT) after he fired its board over allegations of corruption.

This is after its former chairperson and deputy chairperson gave themselves fee increases of 25%. The chairperson’s went up from R32 000 to R54 000 a month, a rise from R392 000 annually to R654 000. The deputy’s rose to R458 000 a year.

In the court papers, Nxesi lashed out at the former board and accused it of not acting on serious allegations of corruption.

The IDT was recently in the news for failing to rebuild the house of late struggle icon Winnie Madikizela-Mandela in Brandfort

after being given R3 million. The IDT said it spent R592 000 on it. It was also reported the IDT failed to act on a forensic report to recoup R100m on a corruption-rigged project in KwaZulu-Natal.

He fired the board last month but it has taken him to court to review the decision. The matter will be heard in the High Court this week.

Nxesi said forensic reports had indicated rampant corruption in the entity, but no action was taken since last year July.

“It is also correct that the IDT’s objective is to benefit the poor. Corruption, maladministration and the other concerns arising from inter alia forensic reports frustrate the important constitutional objectives of socio-economic development.

“Hence the importance of

reconstituting the board of trustees whose submissions to me confirmed that they have indeed not implemented the recommendations of the forensic reports that disciplinary steps be instituted against

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individuals implicated in serious allegations suggesting inter alia corruption. It is telling that the applicants should not have disclosed the forensic reports to the court,” stated Nxesi in the papers.

The minister said he had every right to fire chairperson Nhlanhla Ngubane, his deputy Alan Baloyi and other members. However, he retained others.

“It is denied that the applicants suffer harm of any kind against which a court would protect by way of the final interdict. What the applicants do not disclose... .

“When the fourth and fifth respondents (Ngubane and Baloyi) were appointed they rushed to make a submission to the then Minister (Nkosinathi Nhleko) for the increase of board fees by 25%. This

resulted in both substantially benefiting financially from being trustees. Despite the poor performance of the IDT, they increased their board fees,” stated Nxesi.

In the internal memo, attached to the papers, Nxesi said he removed the board because of corruption and disclaimers from the auditor-general.

The National Treasury also applied stringent conditions to grants allocated to the IDT.

In its application, the IDT denies the allegations and accuses Nxesi of launching a coup d’etat. It said the minister had no right and authority to remove the board.

They also accused Nxesi of removing Ngubane and Baloyi despite the two giving him substantial reasons they should not be axed.