

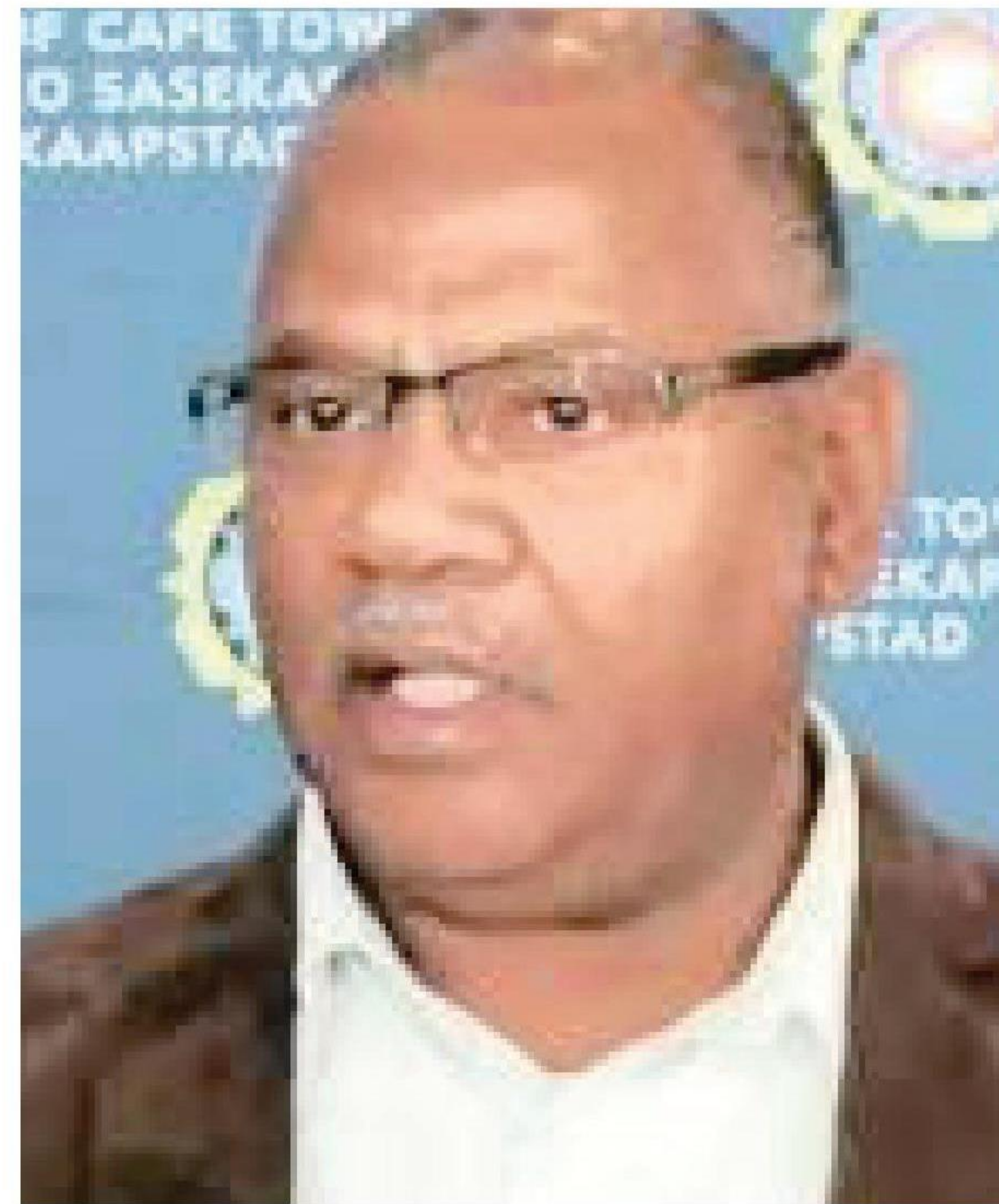
■ POLITICS



Patricia de Lille



Malusi Booi



Dan Plato

# Land spat: De Lille vs DA

*Former mayor throws sharp jabs over request to release public land for social housing*

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THE ugly spat between Minister of Public Works Patricia de Lille and the DA has reach a new low.

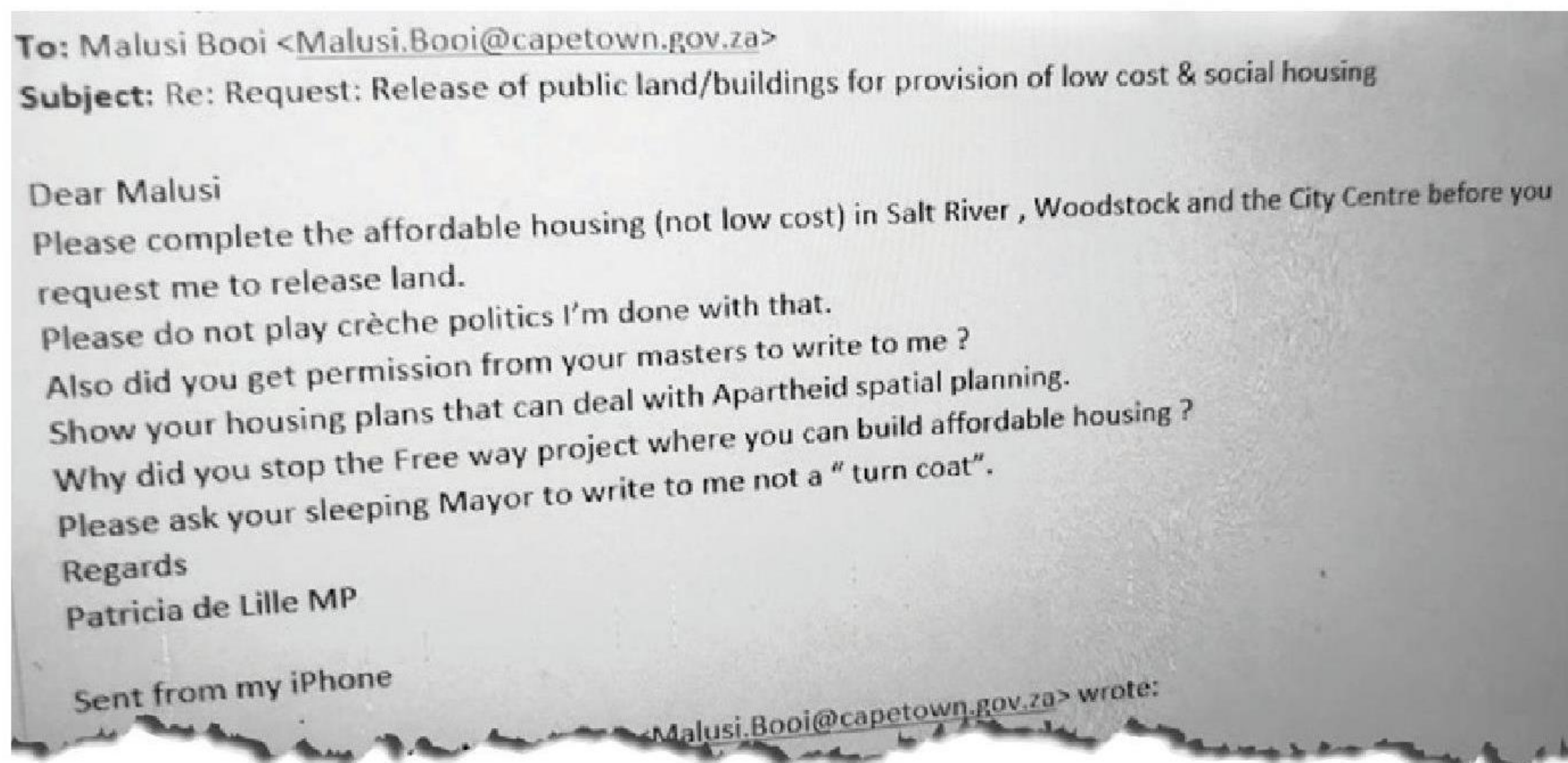
Mayco member for human settlements Malusi Booi, in a letter to De Lille, made an urgent appeal for the release of public land or buildings for the provision of low-cost or affordable housing purposes.

"The release by the government of the aforesaid two land parcels and or any other suitable land will hugely assist the City in addressing and eradicating spatial apartheid in the City.

"We accordingly request that you give urgent consideration to our request that national government release public land to the City of Cape Town for the purposes of housing provision," Booi stated in the letter.

His request was with a view to the SANDF releasing land at Wingfield (Erf 21204) and Youngsfield (Erfs 90477 and 90476) for housing.

In a scathing response, De Lille said: "Dear Malusi, please complete the affordable housing (not low cost) in Salt River, Woodstock, and the City Centre before you request me to release land. Please do not play crèche politics. I'm done with that. Also, did you get permission from your masters to write to me? Show me your housing plans



that can deal with apartheid spatial planning.

"Why did you stop the Freeway project where you can build affordable housing? Please ask your sleeping mayor to write to me not a 'turncoat'."

Speaking to the Cape Argus yesterday, Booi said he was "appalled" by De Lille's response. "She had taken a few glasses before responding to me because her response was so terrible.

"It was pathetic to say the least and I don't think it is a way for an adult and minister to respond in such a manner, it's unacceptable. I think she still has a hangover of the City that she needs to get over. She responded in a terrible way, but we will continue to do our work. The land parcels which

we are seeking will also be resuscitating our implementation strategy with the Housing Development Agency."

In response, De Lille said: "I was hardly in the post for a month when he continued to play crèche politics.

"They don't understand how the government works. When I became a minister, it was with a budget and a plan for the year which had been approved by the previous minister.

"And I stand by what I said, they must release City land for affordable housing projects. I still don't have time for crèche politics."

Last month, the Department of Public Works released more than 14 000 hectares of land for human settlements. About 167 portions of

state-owned land measuring 14 105ha held by the department was approved by the Cabinet to be released.

"These parcels of land are currently in the custodianship of public works and will be released for human settlements development purposes on a gratis basis subject to various administrative processes being concluded," De Lille said.

De Lille's friction with the DA over housing in the city reached boiling point last month when Emma Powell, DA spokesperson for water, sanitation and human settlements, wrote to De Lille in September requesting clarity on whether her department intended on releasing six large tracts of land under her department's custodianship for housing.

These land parcels, which include Ysterplaat, Denel, Culemborg, Youngsfield, Wingfield and Upper Darling Street, could yield in excess of 93 000 affordable housing opportunities for low-income Cape Town residents.

Kashiefa Achmat, a member of Housing Assembly, a social movement representing over 20 communities in the Western Cape said: "It's all about the greed. Our communities are struggling in the province and we need provision to be made for our communities. De Lille must prioritise the release of land, but also the City does not really care about our people."