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DA councillor set to appear in court for alleged assault

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THE police have confirmed that DA ward 64 councillor, Gavin Hegter, has been charged with common assault following an alleged incident in November last year.

Hegter will appear in the Wentworth Magistrate's Court on February 20.

However, DA spokesperson, Dean Macpherson, said there is no evidence to substantiate the allegations. "We will wait to see what is presented in court before considering what, if any, action should be taken," Macpherson said.

According to the police, Hegter assaulted a 43-year-old man at 7 Hoopoe Lane in Yellowwood Park, a state-owned house that has been vacant for more than two years (SUN, January 31), who was part of a group hosting a party at the house.

KZN police spokesperson, Colonel Robert Netshiunda, confirmed the charges.

"Police in Montclair have charged the 59-year-old man for an alleged assault of a 43-year-old man in Montclair," said Netshiunda.

The alleged incident has prompted the ANC in eThekweni Region to call for Hegter's immediate suspension.

In a statement released by the ANC, the party condemned

the alleged incident and called on the Speaker of eThekweni Municipality, Thabani Nyawose, to suspend Hegter from his duties as the ward councillor pending the outcome of his court matter.

ANC regional spokesperson, Mlondi Mkhize, said in a statement, "It is deeply concerning that while government is working tirelessly to combat violent crime, a ward councillor is now accused of perpetrating such an act. As a public representative, he was expected to uphold the highest ethical standards and serve his community with integrity."

Macpherson said the DA will not interfere with the investigation.

"South Africa is a country governed by the rule of law and thus the presumption of innocence until proven guilty is a key tenant of our Constitution," he added.

According to an affidavit submitted to the DA by Hegter, he said on November 15, there was a group of people having a party at the house that night.

Hegter said he called a member of the crime prevention unit from the Montclair police station to investigate.

"At 19:56, I sent a message to a police officer from the Montclair

police Crime Prevention a *WhatsApp* message and requested that his members investigate. At about 20:30, two police vehicles attended and the noise stopped. However, the party started up again shortly after. I messaged Moodley again and advised him of this," the affidavit read.

According to the affidavit, upon seeing that the noise was continuing non-stop, Hegter walked across the road to talk to the security manning the building. "The gate was locked, but I noticed an unknown man urinating in the garden. There was noise emanating from the house. The man approached me and asked what I wanted. I said that I wanted to see security."

"The security guard, who I only know as Mr Dlamini, came out of the house and approached the gate. He was clearly intoxicated and was not in his uniform. I asked him what was going on and who all the people were. The unknown man became abusive and started swearing at me. He said that he was Dlamini's brother and he can visit if he wanted to."

"I informed him that I was not talking to him, but was addressing security. He continued being verbally abusive. I then informed both men that I would be addressing this with the Minister of Public Works. The unknown man said that if I want to make trouble, they can also make trouble for me. The party continued and police did not return," affidavit read.

Go to www.southlandssun.co.za to read the full affidavit.



Ward 64 councillor, Gavin Hegter.
PHOTO: Supplied.