

COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF TAITA TAVETA

THIRD ASSEMBLY - THIRD SESSION

THE HANSARD

Sitting no. 055

Tuesday, July 30, 2024

The House met at 2:37 p.m. in the County Assembly Chamber

[The Acting Speaker (Hon. Anselm Mwadime) in the Chair]

PRAYER

QUORUM

The Acting Speaker: Honourable Members, I confirm that there is quorum to proceed with this Sitting. Clerks-at-the-Table, read the Orders of the day.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR

The Acting Speaker: Honourable Members, the Chair has the following communications to make:

PASSPORT PHOTO TAKING EXERCISE

Tomorrow, 31st July 2024, the Public Relations Department will take passport photos of interested Members that shall be used during the County Assemblies Sports Association (CASA) event.

SPEAKER'S KAMUKUNJI

There will be a Speaker's Kamukunji after the rise of the House.

I thank you. Next Order.

STATEMENT

STATUS OF AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION OFFICERS IN THE COUNTY

The Acting Speaker: Hon. Nzai.

Hon. Stephen Nzai (MCA, Marungu): Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker, Sir. I beg to give a response to the Statement sought by Hon. Lawrence Mzughu on the status of agricultural extension officers in the County.

Background information:

Standing Order no. 42(2)(c) states that a Member may request for a Statement from the Committee Chairperson relating to matters under the mandate of the Committee, and the Speaker may either appoint a day for the Statement or direct that the Statement be issued on the same day.

During the County Assembly Sitting held on Wednesday, 25th October 2023, Hon. Lawrence Mzughu, the Deputy Leader of Majority, rose pursuant to Standing Order no. 42(2)(c) to seek a Statement from the Sectoral Committee on Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries on the status of agricultural extension officers in the County.

In the Statement, the Honourable Member sought the following information:

1. How many agricultural extension officers does the Department have in every Ward?
2. Do the extension officers have offices where they can be easily accessed by farmers?
3. Do the extension officers visit farmers, and what agricultural programs do they sensitize them on, if any?
4. Do the extension officers receive a monthly salary from the County Government?
5. Do the extension officers charge farmers for services rendered? If so, what is the mode of payment, and is the same provided for in the Finance Act?

The Statement was committed to the Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Committee for inquiry and subsequent reporting to the House as provided under Standing Order no. 193(e). The Committee proceeded to hold Committee meetings for deliberations on the Statement.

The request for Statement was made by the Office of the Clerk vide a letter Referenced: TTCA/ADM/3/22/VOL.3/ (072) dated 25th October 2023, (Annex 1). The County Executive Committee Member (CECM) wrote back to the Committee responding to the Statement vide letter Referenced: AGRIC/TT/ASSEMBLY/VOL.2/96 dated 30th October 2023, (Annex 2).

The Committee held a sitting on 16th July 2024, at 1:15 p.m., at the Chambers and deliberated on the response from the CECM for Agriculture, Livestock, Irrigation and Blue Economy and resolved that the Chairperson would give this response to the Statement sought by the Honourable Member on Tuesday, 30th July 2024.

Upon scrutiny of the response provided, the Committee observed that the Statement sought was satisfactorily responded to.

Response to Statement sought;

The Committee wishes to respond as follows:

The Crops Directorate:

1. The Crops Directorate has 55 extension officers deployed in the Ward offices as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Gives a summary of the number of ward extension officers per ward in the Crop Directorate; see table 1 appended.

2. Do the extension officers visit farmers, and what agricultural programs do they

sensitize them on?

The officers do so individually, and also through a group approach. Other extension approaches used by the officers include; barazas, farmers' fields, schools, field days, demonstrations, workshops, and electronic media, that is; on texts and WhatsApp platforms.

3. Areas on which the farmers are sensitized:
 - i. Crop development and management for all crop value chains
 - ii. Good agricultural practices in crop production which covers the following areas:
 - a. Farm input acquisition which includes seed selection and mobilization of farm inputs
 - b. Land preparation
 - c. Crop management
 - d. Scouting and management of crop pests and diseases
 - e. Harvesting
 - f. Post-harvest management
 - g. Climate smart agriculture technologies
 - iii. Agribusiness and market development which entails the following:
 - a. Market sourcing
 - b. Development of farm business plans
 - c. Gross margin analysis
 - d. Value addition
 - e. Market information collection and sharing
 - f. Crop insurance services
 - iv. Environment and land management which includes:
 - a. Soil and water management
 - b. Climate smart agriculture technologies
 - c. Farm planning and layout
 - d. Agro-forestry

4. Do the officers receive a salary?

All the extension officers receive salary from the County Government. (The payroll data is attached)

5. Do the extension officers charge farmers for services rendered? If so, what is the mode of payment and is the same provided for in the Finance Act?

The extension officers offer the above-mentioned services to the farmers free of charge.

Livestock Production Directorate:

1. How many Livestock production extension officers does the department have in every

ward?

The Livestock Production Directorate has 21 Livestock Production Officers out of which, four are deployed to the County Headquarters and four in the sub-counties while 13 are deployed across the 20 wards as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 gives a summary of the number of ward extension officers per ward in the Livestock Production Directorate; see table 2 appended.

2. Do the extension officers have offices?

There are no offices at ward level for the livestock production officers. However, some of them pass-by the nearest Chief or Ward Administrators' Offices for consultation but they have not been allocated any space.

3. Do the extension officers visit farmers, and what programs do they sensitize them on?

Yes, they do visit farmers during individual farm visits but in most cases, they provide extension services through farmers' groups or fields, schools, trainings, seminars and workshops, chief's barazas, field days and educational tours. They also provide services through telephone calls, WhatsApp and Facebook platforms.

Sensitized Programs include:

- i. Beef and ranching development
- ii. Dairy Development for dairy cattle and goats
- iii. Poultry commercialization
- iv. Pasture commercialization
- v. Livestock products marketing, value addition and processing
- vi. Honey production and Processing
- vii. Drought preparedness, response and recovery

4. Do the extension officers receive salary from the County Government?

All the extension officers receive salary from the County Government. The payroll data is attached.

5. Do the extension officers charge farmers for services rendered?

The services are completely free of charge. However, occasionally during demonstration on new technologies, farmers are requested to contribute materials for use during demonstrations, for instance, when carrying out demonstrations on how to prepare silage, farmers may be requested to contribute fresh grass, molasses, water and silage bags.

Veterinary Services:

1. How many veterinary officers does the directorate have in every Ward?

The Veterinary Services Directorate has 31 ward veterinary officers deployed across the 20 wards as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 gives a summary of the number of ward extension officers per ward in the Livestock Production Directorate; see table 3 appended.

2. Do the extension officers have offices where they can be easily accessed by farmers?

The directorate does not have offices at the ward level. However, arrangements have been made in some of the wards for the officers to be hosted in the administration offices. For wards near the sub-County headquarters, the officers are accessed by farmers from the sub-County office.

3. Do the extension officers visit farmers and what agricultural programs do they sensitize them on, if any?

Veterinary Directorate has a wide range of functions which the extension staff provide to the farmers. To effectively deliver on the functions, the directorate requires at least three frontline extension officers per ward. However, this has not been achieved in all wards.

Among the services provided by the extension staff when they visit the farmers include:

- i. Livestock disease control and surveillance program including responding to disease reports at the farm level, providing of vaccination services and issuance of livestock movement permits;
 - ii. Advisory services to the livestock farmers on vector control and pest management;
 - iii. Training of farmers on breeding services including providing Artificial Insemination (AI) Services through the dairy cooperatives;
 - iv. Advisory services on veterinary extension including training of farmers on animal husbandry, animal housing and animal welfare services;
 - v. Training on leather and leather services and where applicable, leather officers visit the hide and skin bands to train on hide and skin flaying in slaughter facilities and value addition.
 - vi. The extension officer responsible for veterinary public health provides Meat Inspection, licensing of slaughter facilities and training of meat VC actors. The activities are done at the slaughter facility level and not to individual farms.
4. Do the extension officers receive a monthly salary from the County Government?

All the extension officers are on the County Government payroll.

5. Do the extension services charge farmers for services rendered? If so, what is the mode of payment and is the same provided for in the Finance Act?

All extension services including training of farmers are offered free of charge. Currently, the extension staff provide free vaccination services to the farmers but AI services are paid for. The Directorate supports dairy cooperatives in providing AI services to the dairy farmers.

Currently, Mwafugha, Tagho, Ngache, Ndisha, Dawida, Wumeri, and Mboghoni Dairy Cooperatives provide AI services and the money paid by the farmers is paid to the dairy Cooperative Bank Account through mobile money, pay bill or till number. Sagalla Dairy Cooperative is in the process of rolling out the AI services.

Extension officers providing meat inspection services at the slaughter facilities provide chargeable services. The fees payable is paid to the County Revenue Account through the pay bill number. The fees payable are provided for in the Finance Act.

The Committee further noted that, veterinary clinical services were privatized by the government during the Structural Adjustment Program (SAPs) period and the government ceased procuring of drugs and consumables for treatment of animals. The extension staff responsible for clinical services charges farmers for the antibiotics they use for treatment of animals.

The County Government of Taita Taveta does not procure and provide antibiotics and consumables such as needles/syringes to the extension staff and therefore, the extension staff request farmers to pay for the antibiotics bought from the agrovet shops at a cost.

The Committee noted that the extension officers have limited access to fuel and transport facilitation which hampers staff mobility thus affecting delivery of services in the County.

The Committee recommends to have an engagement with the County Department of Agriculture to work around helping the extension officers access facilitation in order to offer efficient services to the citizens of this County. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Honourable Statement seeker, is the response sufficient?

Hon. Lawrence Mzuga (MCA, Mbololo): Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker, Sir, for this opportunity. When a Member seeks a Statement from this House, the most important thing is not only the response but also the follow up on the response. I can assure you the response is very sufficient. Nevertheless, the services of these extension officers are not felt on the ground. We can have a flowery response on paper and yet we do not feel those guys on the ground. My request is that, the Committee on Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries led by the able Honourable Member for Marungu Ward, Hon. Stephen Nzai, should follow up on the response to ascertain if this is what is happening on the ground.

Again, if the extension officers do not have offices in wards, how accessible are they?

Secondly, if they do not have mobility, the motorbikes and the likes... I remember when I was young, these guys were so vibrant and yet agriculture was not a devolved function. Currently, it is a devolved function but when I go to Mbololo, I do not feel their impact. Our chickens are dying of *Kideri* every day and we do not have any curative or preventive measures against it. That is why I am saying that the Committee on Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries should follow up and ensure that, what is written here is truly what happens on the ground. Otherwise, the response is sufficient. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Honourable Members, I now give room for those who would like to give their remarks on the response. The limitation is three minutes per Member and a cumulative limitation of 20 minutes before we move to the next Order. Next Order.

SPECIAL MOTION

APPROVAL OF REPORT ON VETTING OF NOMINEE FOR APPOINTMENT TO OFFICE OF COUNTY SECRETARY

The Acting Speaker: Yes, Leader of Majority Party.

Hon. Anthony Warighe (MCA, Bura): Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker, Sir. I beg to move the following Special Motion:

That, this Third County Assembly approves the Report of the Committee on Appointments on the vetting of Mr. Jackson Friday Mwafuga for appointment to the Office of County Secretary, laid on the Table of this House on Tuesday, 30th July 2024, morning Sitting no. 054 and its recommendations thereof.

The Committees' observation on the suitability of the nominee;

The Committee having considered the nominee's filled questionnaires pursuant to the First Schedule of the Public Appointments (County Assemblies Approval) Act no. 5 of 2017, his Curriculum Vitae (CV), and having heard his oral submission during the approval hearing, made the following observation on his suitability for appointment as County Secretary:

1. That, in accordance with Article 78(1) and (2) of the Constitution of Kenya (CoK), 2010, the nominee is eligible for appointment to a State Office since he is a Kenyan citizen born on 24th June 1966, in Voi, Taita Taveta County and does not hold dual citizenship.
2. That, the nominee meets the requirements of Chapter 6 of the CoK, 2010 on leadership and integrity, having obtained clearance from Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC), the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA), The Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI), and Higher Education Loans Board (HELB).
3. That, the nominee has not been charged in a court of law in the past three years.
4. That, the nominee has never been dismissed from office under Article 75 of the CoK, 2010 for contravention of the provisions of Article 75(1), conflict of interest; Article 76, financial probity; Article 77, restriction on activities; and Article 78(2), Dual citizenship.

5. That, the nominee demonstrated knowledge of topical, administrative and technical issues touching on the position of County Secretary and has the requisite abilities, qualifications and experience to serve as County Secretary.
6. That, the nominee has proved to the Committee to be suitable for appointment to the position of County Secretary of Taita Taveta County.

Committee Recommendations:

Having conducted the approval hearing for the nominee pursuant to Section 44(2) of the County Governments Act no. 17 of 2012 and Sections 6 - 9 of the Public Appointments (County Assemblies Approval) Act no. 5 of 2017, the Committee recommends that this House approves the nomination of Mr. Jackson Friday Mwafuga for appointment as County Secretary by H.E. the County Governor of Taita Taveta.

I call upon Hon. Genard Mwandau to second.

Hon. Genard Mwandau (MCA, Werugha): Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker, Sir. I beg to second the Special Motion.

(Question proposed)

The Acting Speaker: Honourable Members, the Floor is open for debate.

(Silence)

The Acting Speaker: Honourable Members, I now invite the Motion mover to reply.

Hon. Anthony Warighe (MCA, Bura): Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker, Sir. Silence means concurrence. I beg to reply.

(Question put and agreed to)

The Acting Speaker: Next order.

MOTION

APPROVAL OF THE REPORT ON SLAUGHTERHOUSE SUPERVISORS

Hon. Peter Shambi (MCA, Nominated): Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker, Sir. I beg to move the following Motion:

That, this Third County Assembly approves the report on slaughterhouse supervisors laid on the Table of this House on Tuesday, 30th July 2024, morning Sitting no. 054 and its recommendations thereof.

I call upon Hon. Halifa Taraya to second.

Hon. Halifa Taraya (MCA, Mboghoi): Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker, Sir. I beg to second.

(Question proposed)

The Acting Speaker: Sorry, I think we are just rushing. Honourable Members, now that I have proposed the question, I now open the Floor for debate. It seems Members were in the mood of concurrence from the word go and that is why the Chair was in overdrive. That notwithstanding, Honourable Members, I invite you to debate on this Motion. The Floor is open.

Hon. Halifa Taraya (MCA, Mboghoni): Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker, Sir. First of all,
...

(Interruption)

The Acting Speaker: Hon. Halifa Taraya, you can proceed but I am not very certain if you are on record.

Hon. Halifa Taraya (MCA, Mboghoni): Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker, Sir. I am. Thank you, for giving me this opportunity. First of all, I want to thank my fellow Committee Members who worked on this Report. Actually, it was very vigorous; we held several meetings with several departments and we went to an extent of even summoning the Members. We also thank the First Assembly for the recommendations they had given before. We considered the report and did a proper follow up on the issue that was committed to us. We then concluded that all those members were absorbed except one who never reported to work and did not have a letter that recognized that he is at work.

With those many remarks, I urge my fellow Honourable Members of this House to support this Motion fully so that we can conclude this issue. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Honourable Member for Mwatate, if you want to give a contribution, you need to be upstanding or else you will not catch the Acting Speaker's eyes. Proceed.

Hon. Joseph Kennedy (MCA, Mwatate): Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker, Sir, for this opportunity. First of all, let me welcome my children and teachers from Sino Girls, which is located in Mwatate Ward. You are welcome and feel free. I believe by the end of this Sitting, you will have learnt a lot. Just be keen and follow the proceedings.

I beg to support the Motion on approval of the Report of the Select Committee on Implementation on slaughterhouse supervisors. I know this will help a lot in terms of the work being done in slaughterhouses. In Mwatate Ward, we have seen the effects of not having these supervisors and I believe this will really help. I beg to support this Motion. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Motion mover, reply.

Hon. Peter Shambi (MCA, Nominated): Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker, Sir. First and

foremost, I want to take this opportunity to apologize to the House because the Motion is as a result of a Statement that was sought earlier and it took more than the stipulated time. I want to pledge to this House today that this is not going to happen. We need to be giving out reports as soon as it is practically possible.

Given the prevailing circumstances, it happened that as we were following up on the matter, the issue that actually raised or triggered the Statement was sorted out in the process. This report also came up after some of the issues were reported. However, we also noted that there are quite a number of issues that we have with the Executive, specifically on matters regarding human resource.

We also noted that, one of the challenges that triggered the happenings of this particular Motion was that, workers were given appointment letters that requested them to join. In this particular case, they were recruited to serve as slaughterhouse supervisors but when they reported to work, they were sent to graze at Bachuma. This was a challenge as some of them said that they could not report to work because that was not the work they had applied for.

Secondly, we also noted that; during this process, the employing authority, was not open about the job description and terms of reference of those workers. As a member of the Committee on Administration, Security, Devolution, Public Participation, Community Services and Drugs Control, I also realized that this is a big weakness that we have as a County and that is why we have so many staff out there, who may not necessarily understand their job descriptions and terms of reference for their employment.

Therefore, as a recommendation, the Report sought to emphasize the fact that it is important for the employing agents to give clear and specific instructions in matters of reporting. It is important for people who have been given an opportunity to serve to follow the due procedure. We saw a situation whereby some of the workers did not report to their stations of work and then came back to complain. According to the Public Service Human Resource Manual, when you are employed, you have to report to work then come back to your senior and complain about the responsibilities that you have.

It is important for the employing entities to clarify these issues before they issue out the appointment letters, so that it is clear for Datuzens who are looking for jobs, what their responsibility is vis a vis the responsibility of the employing entity. With those many remarks, I beg to reply. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

(Question put and agreed to)

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR

ATTENDANCE AT THE GALLERY

The Acting Speaker: I would like to recognize the attendance at the gallery of Mr. Raymond Njumwa of Radio Rahma and a reporter at Sheki F.M., Mr. Renson Mnyamwezi of Standard

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Media Group, Mr. Owuor Duncan Nguka and Madam Sabina Mkandoe Mbogho who are teachers at Sino Girls and finally, students from Mwatate Sino Girls.

REMINDER ON THE UPCOMING SPEAKER'S KAMUKUNJI AND LIAISON COMMITTEE MEETING

Honourable Members, I am reminding you of the Speaker's Kamukunji coming up shortly after the rise of the Sitting and subsequently the Liaison Committee meeting.

REMINDER ON THE PREPARATIONS FOR CASA GAMES

I would also like to remind you of the preparations for the CASA games. It had been clarified in the morning by the Chair that facilitation shall only be done to those participating in the various disciplines. For those who would like to participate, there will be a passport photo taking exercise for processing of the requirements for participation. The practice exercise takes place every day in the evening from 3.00 p.m., onwards.

ADJOURNMENT

The Acting Speaker: Honourable Members, there being no other business, the House stands adjourned until Wednesday, 31st July 2024 at 9:30 a.m.

(House rose at 3:21 p.m.)