

COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF TAITA TAVETA

THIRD ASSEMBLY - THIRD SESSION

THE HANSARD

Sitting no. 061

Wednesday, August 7, 2024

The House met at 2:30 p.m. in the County Assembly Chamber

[The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Brayson Mwambi) in the Chair]

PRAYER

QUORUM

The Temporary Speaker: Honourable Members, I confirm that we have quorum to proceed with the Sitting. Clerks, read the Orders of the day.

STATEMENTS

STATUS OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE STAFF MEDICAL COVER

The Temporary Speaker: Hon. Anisa Mwakio, take charge.

Hon. Anisa Mwakio (MCA, Nominated): Thank you, Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir. I beg to seek the following Statement:

In line with the parliamentary best practices, precedents and conventions, and pursuant to the provisions of the Third Taita Taveta County Assembly Standing Order no. 42(2)(c) relating to the Sitting's Order no. 7 (Statements), a Member of the House can seek a Statement requiring availability of information, clarification or appearance on any substantive issue, circumstances, situations and matters appertaining to the attention of County Governments, the National Government, or any public entity where such mandates related to the management of service and leadership to the citizens and institutions, as per the Constitution of Kenya (CoK), 2010, and our current laws are concerned.

In view of the foregoing, I beg to seek a Statement regarding the status of County Executive staff medical cover.

Medical cover to County Government officials helps to ensure that the employees serve and work with peace of mind, and that their medical needs are taken care of, and at the same time

helps to retain such employees. However, the Executive staff do not have a medical cover at the moment, thus exposing them to unknown risks should any of them fall ill.

I would like the Chairperson of Administration, Security, Devolution, Public Participation, Community Services and Drugs Control Committee to furnish this House with the following information:

1. The reasons behind lack of a medical cover for County Employees for over a month now.
2. The actual date when the medical cover will be available.
3. The initiatives taken to ensure that the current situation does not recur.

Thank you, Mr. Temporary Speaker.

The Temporary Speaker: Chairperson of the Committee, Hon. Isaac Matolo. If he is not around, any Member from that Committee can respond.

Hon. Rose Shingira (MCA, Nominated): Thank you, Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir. We will find out within seven working days and bring the response to the House. Thank you, Mr. Temporary Speaker.

The Temporary Speaker: Honourable Members, if anyone has a contribution to make, the Floor is open. Honourable Member for Mbololo Ward.

Hon. Lawrence Mzugha (MCA, Mbololo): Thank you, Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, for offering me an opportunity to contribute on the Statement sought. It is crucial and I thank Hon. Anisa for pointing this out.

Medical cover is crucial not only for the county staff, but also for every human being living on this earth. I remember, we formerly had National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF), and being a teacher, we had what was called AoN-Minet cover.

Medical expenses are extremely high, especially for terminal and chronic diseases. I am surprised by what Hon. Anisa has raised in this House; that, we have staff in this County who have not had medical cover for over a month.

With the salary we get from the County Government, no one can afford to treat themselves with it. Therefore, it is important that this Statement is treated with a lot of seriousness. I thought of having all my family members under a medical cover because I know when they become sick, I cannot treat them using my salary.

It is very unfortunate that this is happening in our County. I know they will be required to make a contribution on the same but compared to the amount of money to be paid in the hospital, it is small.

I am therefore requesting the Chairperson from whom this Statement has been sought, Hon. Matolo, to take it with a lot of seriousness so that we know why our County staff and workers

are not covered. It is not only dangerous but also unfortunate and cannot be allowed to continue. With those few remarks, I beg to support the Statement sought. Thank you.

[The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Brayson Mwambi) left the Chair]

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

The Acting Speaker: Hon. Mzugha, resume your seat. For purposes of the Hansard, the Standing Orders are very clear; when you are addressing or contributing on any matter, it should be in either Swahili, English or the Sign language. It is not proper to interchange in any way even a single word. Again, when giving remarks pertaining a Statement, it is not a contribution nor a matter of supporting.

So, Honourable Members take note and give your remarks. Let us also remember, we are limited to three minutes and in total 20 minutes. The most we allow is six or a maximum of seven minutes for Members to make remarks towards a Statement. Member for Mahoo ward.

Hon. Kimuyu Daniel (MCA, Mahoo): Ahsante sana, Mhe. Kaimu Spika, kwa kunipa fursa hii ili nichangie Kauli iliyombwa na Mhe. Anisa kuhusu bima ya matibabu ambayo waajiriwa wanastahili kulipiwa. Mfanyikazi anapoajiriwa, mwajiri wake anafaa amlipie bima kwa wakati unaostahili ili anapokuwa mgonjwa ahudumiwe.

Siyo kawaida pesa ya bima ya wafanyikazi kutolipwa kwa wakati unaostahili. Naelewa kwamba, kuna changamoto ya ugawaji wa pesa zinazotoka kwa serikali kuu. Ni vizuri kuwa na mpango wa bima kwani ugonjwa hutokea wakati mtu hatarajii.

Ninaomba tunapoletewa majibu ya Kauli hii, tuelezewe ni nini kinasababisha bima isiweze kulipwa kwa wakati unaotakikana na pia ni kwa muda gani haijalipwa. Ukiona jambo kama hili limefikia viongozi, basi kuna vitu fiche na uwezekano wafanyikazi wetu wamekaa kwa muda mrefu bila kulipiwa bima. Ninasisitiza ya kwamba, Mwenyekiti anapotuletea majibu katika Bunge hili, tujue ni kwa muda gani hizi bima hazijalipwa na ni kwa sababu gani. Hii itatupa nafasi ya kuamua tutakachofanya . Kwa hayo machache, Ahsante Mhe. Kaimu Spika.

The Acting Speaker: Next Statement.

Hon. Stephen Nzai (MCA, Marungu): Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker, Sir. I beg to give a progress report on the Statement sought by Hon. Brayson Mwambi.

The Acting Speaker: Resume your seat, Hon. Nzai. Statement seeker, does the response and the remarks suffice?

Hon. Anisa Mwakio (MCA, Nominated): Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker, Sir. The response suffices. I want to reiterate that this is an urgent matter and as I sit, it is good to note that medical cover is a requirement that every employee should be provided with by the employer. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Hon. Stephen Nzai.

STATUS OF KIRUMBI SLAUGHTERHOUSE

Hon. Stephen Nzai: Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker, Sir, for giving me a second chance. I thought I went wrong somewhere. I beg to give a progress report on the Statement sought by Hon. Brayson Mwambi, on the status of Kirumbi slaughterhouse.

The Statement was sought on Tuesday, 30th April 2024, Afternoon Sitting no. 033 by Hon. Brayson Mwambi, MCA, Chairperson, Water and Irrigation Services Committee. The Committee through the office of the Clerk wrote to the Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, Irrigation and Blue Economy on the subject matter vide a letter dated 24th April 2024, Ref: TTCA/ADM/3/22/VOL.3 (97).

The CECM, in charge of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, Irrigation and Blue Economy responded vide a letter dated 30th April, 2024 Ref: AGRIC/TT/ASSEMBLY/VOL.2/120.

The mentioned utility has been lying idle for more than 10 years now while the infrastructure is rapidly getting dilapidated to the disadvantage of the County Government of Taita Taveta on account of loss of revenue.

Committee progress report;

The Committee having analyzed the response from the Department hereby submits its response as follows:

1. On what caused the utility to remain unutilized for many years:

Kirumbi slaughterhouse was conceptualized on implementation by the Municipal Council of Voi in partnership with Decentralized Agriculture Support Structures (DASS) project in FY 2008/2009. The project was co-funded by DASS project to a tune of Ksh. 2million and Municipal Council of Voi at Ksh. 2 million. Phase 1 was funded by DASS project and phase 2 which was to be funded by the Municipal Council of Voi, delayed due to unavailability of funds.

The Kirumbi slaughterhouse project was conceived following the closure of Kariokor slaughterhouse within Voi town, to provide meat within Voi town. The closure of the slaughterhouse was advised by the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) and the Public Health Officers, due to its proximity to human settlements.

The overall cost of the project rose above the Ksh. 4 million Budget, as few critical infrastructures were not part of the bill of quantities for example perimeter fence, holding yards, offloading and loading ramps, sentry /security house. The delays in release of the funds resulted in stalling of the project.

The department undertook an assessment on 19th February, 2021 and identified the minimum improvements that need to be undertaken before the slaughter facility can be operationalized including internal water reticulation, construction of new blood tank, repair of the stunning box, repair of the pit latrine, reconnection of the slaughter facility to power, fly-proofing the slaughter hall etc.

Another contributing factor to the stalling of the project was lack of water connection within the locality of the slaughterhouse.

2. On what the department is doing to ensure that the resource does not go to further waste:

The department partnered with the Water, Environment, Sanitation, Climate Change and Natural Resources Department in the financial year 2020/2021 to connect the slaughterhouse with water supply from the KIMWA extension water project and also installation of a water tank of 10,000 litres storage capacity.

In the Financial Year 2020/2021, the department undertook an assessment of the facility in a view to complete it. A bill of quantities was prepared. During the financial year 2020/2021, the department requested the support of the Special Program under the Office of the Governor to implement and complete the project. The Special Programs Department undertook to support the completion of the project. All priority pending works on the slaughter facility were identified and the works were contracted to a contractor. The contractor undertook the project and the project stalled due to non-payment for the works done and he deserted the site before completing the project.

The department had proposed the leasing of the facility to private sector actors. However, the lack of wildlife-proof holding areas and fences has been a constraint and meat trade actors are hesitant to use the facility. The facility location is near the park and fears of the slaughter animals being attacked by wildlife has been a constant concern.

The department has identified the facility as one of the stalled projects and included the project in the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) III, as one that needs to be completed within the next five years.

3. On when services will be offered from the facility:

Due to lack of budgetary allocation, the department is not in a position to operationalize the facility at the moment, as it is still incomplete.

4. On whether there are staff deployed to provide security against theft of vital items in the slaughterhouse:

There are no staff deployed to provide security services. However, the department has ensured all the doors are locked to secure the facility and the department constantly monitors its status through the Voi sub-County.

Committee's way forward;

In light of the above submissions, the Committee on Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries has scheduled a visit to Kirumbi slaughterhouse during the upcoming long recess which will

inform a thorough and satisfactory response to the Statement sought. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

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

Hon. Brayson Mwambi: Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker. The response is not sufficient because the department has not shown any serious commitment in completing the project. I urge our able Chairperson to continue working hand in hand with the County Executive Committee Member (CECM) and commit it to the CIDP III so that we see a serious commitment towards its completion. It is good that they have earmarked it to be one of the sole projects in the CIDP III but they should give a concrete commitment. Thank you, Mr. Acting, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Honourable Members, any remarks on that response and remember it is a maximum of three minutes and cumulatively, 20 minutes.

Hon. Anisa Mwakio (MCA, Nominated): Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker, Sir, for giving me another chance. I want to partly agree with the report as given, but I have a concern.

The report has highlighted the deficiencies that rendered the facility unusable. The best thing the department could have done, is to put a commitment to address them. I was part of the initiators of moving the slaughterhouse during the then Voi Municipal Council, and the major deficiency was water. NEMA insisted on having running water, but we could not get that because the Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA) did not allow us to pass a tunnel under the main road to allow connection from the other side of the road towards Kirumbi but now we have plenty of water there and so it should not be a deficiency anymore.

If it is money, there is private and public partnership initiative. The department should move out of their comfort zone and look for partners so that the facility becomes operational. I want to believe we have slaughterhouses that are operational; where is the harm in collecting part of the funds being paid by the users of the existing slaughterhouses to refurbish another? They are still under the same department. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Next Statement.

BUSINESS OF THE WEEK COMMENCING TUESDAY, AUGUST 13, 2024

Hon. Anthony Warighe (MCA, Bura): Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker, Sir. I would like to brief Members on the Business before us.

Pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order no. 42(2)(a), I hereby present the business of the County Assembly for the week commencing Tuesday, 13th August 2024. The County Assembly House Business Committee during its meeting on Tuesday, 6th August 2024 approved the following tentative business for the coming week.

On Tuesday at 9:30 a.m., sitting no. 062, we shall have:

1. A Report by the Procedure and Rules Committee on the Proposed Amendments to the County Assembly Standing Orders.

2. A Notice of Motion on the Adoption and Approval of the Report by the Procedure and Rules Committee on the proposed amendments to the County Assembly Standing Orders.
3. A Notice of Motion on establishment of a Taita Taveta County Annual Cultural Festival.
4. A response to a Statement sought by Hon. Brayson Mwambi on the status of major roads connecting lower and upper zones in Sagalla.
5. A progress report on the Statement sought by Hon. Azhar Din on the status of operations of Ward Climate Change Planning Committee across the County.

On Tuesday, 13th August 2024, Afternoon Sitting no. 063, we shall have:

1. A progress report by the Sectoral Committee on Public Works, Roads, Transport, Housing and Infrastructure on the Statement sought by Hon. Duncan Wangama on status of Landi-Mdindinyi road.
2. A Motion on the approval of the Report by the Procedure and Rules Committee on the proposed amendments to the County Assembly Standing Orders.
3. A Motion on establishment of a Taita Taveta County Annual Cultural Festival.

On Wednesday, 14th August 2024, Morning Sitting no. 064, we shall have:

1. A Notice of Motion on the approval of County Assembly Bunge Mashinani Initiative.
2. A progress Report on the Statement sought by Hon. Dorcas Mlughu on the status of Mvita - Shelemba Road.
3. A Committee of the Whole House on County Assembly of Taita Taveta Standing Orders proposed amendments.

On Wednesday, 14th August 2024, Afternoon Sitting No. 065 we shall have:

1. A Motion on Approval of County Assembly Bunge Mashinani Initiative

The County Assembly Business Committee will hold its weekly meeting on Tuesday, 13th August 2024, prior to the Plenary Sittings and pursuant to the decisions of that meeting, additional business may be scheduled to be transacted by the County Assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker, Sir.

The Acting Speaker: Honourable Members, the Leader of Majority has tabled next week's program as well as what will be in our Order Papers each day and we will have the Notice Paper attached to it to prepare Members for the forthcoming business for the coming week from the program and also the Notice Paper that is attached on the Order Papers for the coming Sitting day.

Honourable Members, we are all required to prepare accordingly particularly those Members who have sought Statements whose responses are coming. It will be very unfortunate that you seek a Statement and you are not there to receive the response. It will mean that you have made the Committee of the Assembly waste resources doing a response and yet you are not

here to receive the feedback which will lead to abuse of the immunities and obligations that we have under the County Assemblies Powers and Privileges Act, 2017.

We are all urged to keep an eye on the Notice Paper and the weekly program so that we don't find ourselves in an awkward situation particularly when we are expected to be in the Chambers and we are not. All this is about being proactive and even working within the provisions of what we have in the Standing Order nos. 36 (1) and 42 that talk about the program and the Notice Paper. Thank you.

Next Order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

HONOURABLE MEMBERS TO REMAIN BEHIND AFTER THE RISE OF THE SITTING

The Acting Speaker: Honourable Members, we are all urged to remain behind after the rise of the Sitting for some communication to be made and for short deliberations before we proceed to other committee sittings. Please, remain behind after the rise of the Sitting.

ADJOURNMENT

The Acting Speaker: Honourable Members, there being no other business in the Order Paper, this Assembly Stands adjourned until Tuesday, 13th August 2024 at 9:30 a.m.

(House rose at 3:03 p.m.)