
REPUBLIC OF KENYA
MURANG'A COUNTY ASSEMBLY

THE HANSARD

Tuesday, 21st February 2023.

The Assembly met at 9:55 a.m.

[The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Hanna Wairimu) in the Chair]

PRAYER

PAPERS

MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING ON ACADEMIC CO-OPERATION.

Hon. Kibe Wasary: Thank you Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the following Paper;- submission of memoranda of understanding signed with Canadian colleges and the universities, today, February 21, 2023.

(Hon. Kibe Wasary laid the Paper on the Table)

Hon. Kibe Wasary: Thank you.

STATE OF TOBACCO ABUSE AND INTERVENTION MEASURES.

Hon. John Mwangi: Thank you Madam Speaker, I beg to lay the following Paper on the Table of the Assembly today Tuesday, February 21, 2023; -

The Report by the Committee on Health Services on a workshop held at Nyeri organized by Tobacco Control Board on state of tobacco abuse and intervention measures.

(Hon. John Mwangi laid the Paper on the Table)

Hon. John Mwangi: Thank you.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Hanna Wairimu): Next order.

NOTICE OF MOTION

ADOPTION OF REPORT OF HEALTH SERVICES COMMITTEE ON STATE OF TOBACCO ABUSE AND INTERVENTION MEASURES.

Hon. John Mwangi: Thank you Madam Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following Motion;-

That, this Assembly adopts the Report by the Committee on Health Services on a workshop held at Nyeri organized by Tobacco Control Board on state of tobacco abuse and intervention measures, laid on the Table of the Assembly today, Tuesday, February 21, 2023. Thank you.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Hanna Wairimu): Next order.

MOTION

EXPOSITION OF PUBLIC POLICY CONTAINED IN THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS.

(Resumption of Debate)

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Hanna Wairimu): Honourable Members, pursuant to Standing Order 25 (4), the Motion on exposition of public policy contained in the Governor's address issued during a special sitting held on Tuesday, September 27, 2022, shall resume this morning. This shall be the third and the last allotted day for debate on this Motion. The Floor is open for debate. Hon. Kihumbu-ini ward.

Hon. Chiman Njoroge: Thank you Madam Speaker, I am from Kahumbu ward and not Kihumbu-ini Madam Speaker.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Hanna Wairimu): Okay

Hon. Chefman Njoroge: Let me take this opportunity Madam Speaker to congratulate all the members of the third Assembly from the nominated to elected Members of the County Assembly (MCAs) to this occasion of being part of the person of history making in this Third Assembly. May I also take this opportunity to request for myself to make my maiden speech to this House concerning the Governor's speech for Murang'a County.

It is my pleasure to stand here today to give my maiden speech in this Third Assembly of Murang'a County. My greatest honour however, is to represent my people of Kahumbu ward in the House and being their voice. Allow me then to communicate my views on the address by His Excellency the Governor of Murang'a.

As you know that the Governor has his own pillars that is health, may I also talk about the issue of health. While I support the Governor of this great County of Murang'a and his key pillars that he outlined in his address to this House, I would also like to add my voice and say that health is the key pillar in any nation. As the saying goes, a healthy nation is a wealthy nation. His Excellency the Governor's in his speech said that his government's key priority would be to offer free health care to the aged and vulnerable in the County. This he has assured and has already done by rolling out the free Kang'ata care giving 36 slots in 700 polling stations in the County.

This is a great first step, however, we still have to be aware that majority of the County's population can still not access quality and affordable healthcare. As I laud His Excellency the Governor's initiative, it would be even better if in the spirit of "the bottom up", the County ensures that all levels of health centres in the County are equipped with the necessary staffing and medicines. This will see to it that the people get services at the grass root, and the crowding at the level four hospitals will end as they will only be dealing with specialized and referral cases. What I mean is that in the spirit of the slogan that we had during the campaign about bottom up, for us to make the level four hospitals becomes accommodative, is to equip our dispensary there down at our ward level. That will make health care affordable and will make sure that our people do not travel far to get the medical care in the level four hospitals.

On the issue of water, most of the households in the County are not connected to clean water, despite the fact that Murang'a supplies bulk of its water to the capital city, Nairobi. In his development agenda, I would urge the Governor, to prioritize the issue of connection of clean water to the households. Water borne diseases are among the most frequently treated cases in our health facilities, because our people are forced to fetch water from the dirty streams and rivers, for domestic use. It is also a shame to see old women in this day and age going to the streams to fetch water for domestic use.

In his subsequent budgets, His Excellency the Governor should increase the allocation to the department of water and irrigation, as well as revamp the Water Service Providers (WSPs), to ensure that they connect a large number of households to water. In Murang'a municipality and the

other upcoming municipalities, these Water Service Providers, should also have a plan of how they will connect the residents to the sewerage systems.

If I talk about that, if we have water problems then our health becomes compromised. It is unfortunate today that some of our homesteads, our elderly women are dying because of water borne diseases. They are not able to get enough water for their consumption even to take their medicine. I will urge this House and also the Governor, in the future, we make sure that for good health, our elderly women and our people at home, they should drink clean water so that we avoid buying unnecessary medicine at our hospitals because of not getting clean water.

I will also talk about education whereby the Governor's pillar is about the Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) not also forgetting that we have polytechnic. The other issue, is that of revamping of our youth polytechnics. After the nation converted all polytechnics and technical institutes into universities, there was a gap in technical skills like carpenters, plumbers, in the workforce, because these institutions stopped offering the hands- on technology training. The Constitution 2010, transferred the role of training on technical skills to the polytechnics in the County. In our County, I would urge the Governor to equip our youth polytechnics with modern equipment and well remunerated trainers who will train the youth on the most marketable skills. As the County sets to revamp new employment volunteers around the globe, let us have the youth possessing modern skills that can be sold internationally. The County could also reach out to the other countries to find out what skills they require, train our youth in those skills and export them. That would be of great benefit to everyone. Creating Information Technology (IT) hubs at the Ward level, will also be a huge plus to our youth.

Madam Speaker, as we know, technical training institutions are devolved in the County Government. For us also to have a healthy youth, I think it is also a good time whereby we need to invest ward wise the issue of the polytechnics so that our youth should not be idle there but they will create the modern skills in terms of labour away from the norms of today, whereby they are doing unnecessary issues. If I may say about the issue of the polytechnics, we are still in the old age whereby we are using the, I may say in Spanish, the(*inaudible*)..... the normal one, but today, we have the normal ones which should be equipped to our polytechnics so that our youth, despite staying idle, they have the skills with them rather than just staying idle.

Finally, I will comment about the issue of alcoholism. Alcohol abuse has been an issue that has plagued, not only, this country but also our County. It is a topic of discussion in high levels

of government. We have seen a generation destroyed by alcoholism, especially in Mt. Kenya region, and especially in Murang'a County. I urge His Excellency the Governor to capture the bull by the horns and address this issue of alcohol abuse squarely in order to save a generation. Alcohol abuse is interlinked to drug abuse and these two are attributed to lack of employment among the youth and young people leading to hopelessness. The County should ensure that our youth in the villages are engaged in the polytechnics. Further, the government should create programs where the youth can benefit from labour-based works in County projects at the ward level. This will see to it that they are kept busy. The County could also think of having a replica of the youth service like that of Meru under the former Governor of Meru, Kiraitu Murungi, which also will train unemployed youth on discipline short courses as well as offering mentorship. In the long run ...

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Hanna Wairimu): Order Gitugi Member. Just continue. Continue.

Hon. Edwin Wairagu: Madam Speaker, I was just consulting because -----

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Hanna Wairimu): I said you just remain silent, not to talk.

Hon. Chefman Njoroge: Thank you very much Madam Speaker. In the long run, engagement with the religious leaders to set up rehabilitation centres in the County, where those who are addicted can get help and be offered some assistance to set up income generating activities in their recovery journey. I am hopeful of a brighter future for this County and our wards in Murang'a.

If you go to our hospital, you will find that majority of our youth, because of drug abuse, because of alcoholism, majority of the drugs which we are looking and we are getting in the hospital is rehabilitation because of frustration, depression and high blood pressure which are caused because our youth are engaged in alcoholism. So, I would prefer and I am requesting that in future and as we continue, and especially all the Committees, we engage and establish these polytechnics so our youth when they get the skilled labour, as much as they will be staying idle there, in terms of idleness, they will not be idle because they have the technology and the skills within them.

I am sorry to say that majority of our vehicles, we either take them to Nairobi where they are taken by other people, I mentioned that, and here, our youth are languishing in poverty. We also need to change the modern agricultural business so that when we talk about agri-business,

they are skilled through our polytechnics which are under Murang'a County Government. So, with those few remarks as my maiden speech, I thank all the Members for listening and I think this is a way forward. I congratulate this Third Assembly that we will move forward together. I also thank the leadership for so far so good and with unity, I see a bright future of Murang'a County with success and we shall leave a legacy which will continue. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Hanna Wairimu): Hon. Mirara.

Hon. Moses Musa: Thank you Madam Speaker, I wish to join my other Hon. Members in applauding the Governor's speech. But for us who have the propensity of advice---

(Loud consultations)

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Hanna Wairimu): Hon. Sharleen, remain silent.

Hon. Moses Musa: I think the Governor's speech serves as a mission and a vision statement, if it was done by a company Chief Executive Officer (CEO). And it actually articulates the objectives of the company and the framework to attaining those objectives. And so, I would not wish that the current regime that is serving, the approach that they have taken from our predecessor suffer the same trap because as I stand here, the Governor's speech talks of community projects and the theory and what was the mission was to promote the economic and social development and there is delay. A delay is observable here because for now, we were to do the community projects when the children were in vacation but save for Kiiru ward that was launched yesterday, we have not seen anything get into our places, to our ward level.

Madam Speaker, the other thing is, there is this conferment for Kangari and Kenol municipalities and I have seen nothing as a precursor for preparations for the towns to get to municipality status. The thing that we would be looking is to building capacity to deliver essential services within the municipalities, build or map public amenities or even a development plan within the municipalities. I have not seen that and I think the time is now running and we were to activate these municipalities within the shortest time possible because the municipalities were to be activated during this Financial Year (FY).

There is another issue of staff salaries; I see this regime now falling to the trap of the former regime because we have never received salaries. Unless somebody tell me where the problem is, the Governor had said that, and I quote "Many reasons have been given for this including

Exchequer delays. However, Exchequer delay is a universal problem and there are some Counties that pay workers on time. We have engaged various stakeholders on the ways of addressing the issue.” There is this still perennial delay of salaries for the staff because I admit and I am in agony with them that they have not received any salary yet and this is not a good precedence. The Governor is assuring us that if we work with these objectives these frameworks that he warned in his speech, then the delays continues like this, we kill the morale of our staff. I rest my case. Thank you.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Hanna Wairimu): I now call the mover to respond

Hon. Kibe Wasary: Madam Speaker, once again ----

(Hon. Moses Muchiri on a point of order)

Hon. Moses Muchiri: Point of order Madam Speaker, I was on record I had also raised my hand before you call the mover.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Hanna Wairimu): Okay.

Hon. Moses Muchiri: Thank you Madam Speaker, my hand was up before you called the mover. That is why I had to stand. Madam Speaker, I think you know me -----

(Hon. Clement Gichobe on a point of order)

Hon. Gichobe Clement: Madam Speaker, is it in order for the Hon. Member for Muguru who clearly did not catch the eye of the Speaker to stand and speak when he clearly did not catch the eye of the Speaker?

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Hanna Wairimu): Okay, my eyes did not see him but I may order him to continue.

Hon. Moses Muchiri: On September 27, 2022, His Excellency the Governor Dr. Irungu Kang'ata addressed this Honourable House and in his speech, he highlighted his vision for the great people of Murang'a County, much of which will form his development policy for the great people of Murang'a that is 2022 to 2027.

Hon. Speaker if you may allow me to state just a few agenda that he raised, one of them which we consider to be his great pillar is about health. On health, he highlighted about the

suffering of Murang'a people especially in seeking health services and in that he tried to address that through National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF) cards. Also things to do with medicine and renovation of hospital as well as staff.

Madam Speaker, as we speak, he had already walked his talk and as we speak Kangema dispensary, that is Kangema sub- County hospital which is in my ward. It has already been refurbished, upgraded and renovated and with that I applaud the Governor.

Also, on the health services it is good to, I think the NHIF card currently will cover 20 households. I think that if we do calculation that is about 100,000 persons and in Murang'a we have about 1.2 million, which is the population of Murang'a County. So, it is good to think about the other. That is 1,1 million Murang'a people, how they will be treated and that may be can only be achieved through maybe development of our hospitals, equipment and machineries so that may be they can also access all health services.

Or another thing, also if I may give an example of universal health care it happens in may be those developed countries like the United States of America, we know that has already been advocated by the Democrats and its currently working there and I think Murang'a County has taken very good step towards realizing a healthy nation.

About community projects, as we are aware we have heard about the same going on in Kiru ward. The community projects had already started, but it is good to request His Excellency the Governor to fast track the community projects which have been identified in other wards can start immediately so that we have a uniform development.

Also, on community project Hon. Speaker, if I may state, each ward has received about Kshs9 million and Kshs8million went to community projects and Kshs1million went to ward bursaries, which is a good start. But Hon. Speaker it is good if we request His Excellency the Governor to increase the ward project fund because as Honourable Members are aware, in other Counties, other County Assemblies, if I may give an example about Nyeri County, the ward projects are given a budget of about Kshs30 million. If you go to other Counties like Kiambu and Nairobi the same amount can go up to Kshs30million. So, as I stated during a meeting or discussing about the ward projects, I said we Murang'a County Assembly if we are Kshs8million for community projects we will become a laughing stock of this country. I think currently we are, majority of my friends who we studied with they are in other Counties where they received even over Kshs20million, so whenever you go to a meeting with them, they just laugh at you. They call

you *mtu wa* (someone of) 8million. So, it is good if the Governor can increase the ward project funding so that we improve on infrastructure like the Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) centres, roads, hospitals as well give bursaries to more students.

I think we only give bursaries to only 500 students. So, if we have ward bursary may be like of Kshs3 million we can be able to give bursary to over 1500 students. That is another request that we can ask the Governor. I think on bursary or about education he has been doing great because currently immediately after we were elected, we saw him giving university bursaries to all the university going students who studied in public schools. That was a great development. We need to acknowledge him for his good deed because we know after he was elected there was fear among many parents whose children were in high school, those who were under the former regime, who we call them *Nyota Zetu* but in his wisdom he decided to help the students so that they can study, those who are in form two, form three and in form four so that he continue sponsoring them until they are through until they are through with their secondary school, that is another thing we need to applaud the Governor for.

As well as other bursaries which he gave to all the students who are in primary schools, number one, two and three totalling to Kshs15000 each as well as sponsoring the needy, the orphan students in Murang'a County. That is another thing we need to applaud the Governor for keeping his talk.

Honourable Mirara has raised an issue about the municipalities, that is a great achievement because the Governor highlighted about the urban towns in his speech and he gave an example about may be some years coming where may be the majority of the populace in Murang'a County will be residing and investing in those urban centres. I want to thank the Delegated Legislation Committee because it is working overnight to see the Kenol town become a municipality, Kangari become a municipality and also to legitimize the operations of Murang'a municipality which has been operating illegally without the bylaws. They are working overnight to see that happen.

I think it is good to request the Governor also to acknowledge that we have Murang'a South, because we have Murang'a North and Murang'a South. In Murang'a North we already have two municipalities but if you go to Murang'a South, Kangema and Mathioya we have none. So we are also proposing to him that he can chose one town especially Kangema town to become a municipality, because I think Kangema town has the population required by the formation of a municipality. If I may highlight Kangema town, currently it has the Kenya Medical Training

Centre (KMTC), it has the law courts and the housing programme is coming to Kangema town as well as Michuki Technical which has over 5000 students. If he can choose Kangema town to become a municipality it can also extend to some parts of Gitugi and I can see Hon. Wairagu for Gitugi is here. It can also extend to Wangu and I can see the MCA is here and some parts of Kanyenya-ini and Rwathia. That way we can be able to offer better services to our people within that municipality and be able to receive development projects especially on infrastructure as well as some funds.

As I wind up Madam Speaker, there is another issue that the Governor ought to have addressed, that is about corruption in Murang'a County. This is a major reason why Murang'a has not been developing. We know some years back, Murang'a used to be ranked the topmost corrupt County in the whole country. I think he ought to have addressed that issue. In Murang'a County the corruption is high especially in Murang'a County Public Service Board and the procurement. Those are the two areas that needs to be checked and I think the Governor is a listening person. The reason why I am saying this Madam Speaker, is because yesterday we were in the newspaper, because a certain investor who had been contracted or maybe supplied computers and spent a whole week in the County Government headquarters before he was paid. I think that is something that ought to be investigated, so that we can know what is happening in that procurement office.

Right now, we do not know the reason why projects have not started in all the other wards yet they have started in one ward, that is a matter that needs to be addressed, because there is no way we can say that out of all those who tendered to construct projects in different wards, you cannot say all of them did not qualify and when they reapply for the same tender that they qualified, that is something that needs to be addressed Honourable Speaker.

There is also another thing that we need not to forget, about education, the ECDE and village polytechnics those are under County Government. We have invested a lot in high schools, we have invested a lot in university students, forgetting about our students in our village polytechnics. Currently our village polytechnics are in very bad condition and when you go there you will find that there are no students or they are only five or so students, because we do not invest in them. His Excellency the Governor should work closely with the Members of the County Assembly to develop village polytechnics so that our students can be going there to learn. Maybe we can introduce new courses like beauty and like computer courses, like driving courses, like

plumbing, if we do that, we help our youth to be equipped with the required skills that will help them secure employment not only within the county but even outside the county.

Another issue that we need to address is about firefighting and disaster management. Currently in my ward in the last week, already five houses have been burnt into ashes. If you go to Kanyenya-ini the same, if you go to Rwathia the same, because in those areas we do not have any firefighting station. That one need to be addressed. We have another problem about disaster management, whenever there is rainfall especially in my ward as well as other highland areas, there is always landslides that destroy peoples' property as well as kill them. So we need to come up with a better plan.

We need to have recreational facilities and invest mainly in our youth especially in sports, so that we can help our youth to come out of drugs so that they can engage in those social activities.

Thank you Honourable Speaker, I end my case there.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Hanna Wairimu): Okay Members, as we continue contributing to our Governor's address it is good to note that Standing Order number 101(1) "A Member shall be responsible for the accuracy of any facts which the Member alleges to be true and may be required to substantiate any such facts instantly." Any other Member who wants to contribute? Yes, Honourable Bernard Ruiru.

Hon. Ruiru Benard: Thank you Madam Speaker for this chance. I will be very brief on this matter and most likely I will only discuss one issue.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Hanna Wairimu): Ok, let us honour the communication from the Chair.

Hon. Ruiru Benard: Thank you Madam Speaker for protecting me. I will be very brief actually. First in general, I wish to appreciate His Excellency the Governor for making sure that a number of the issues that he highlighted in his speech have been achieved. In the interest of time, I would wish to mention one thing, that in his speech he also called upon us as a House in the matter of NHIF and Kang'ata care cards, to come up with a better and clear approach that will be used in selecting the beneficiaries. I think if you go through his speech that is a responsibility that he left to us.

Through the experiences that we have had as we hand out these cards, I am calling upon the House and also the Committee on Health to clearly come out and help us assist members of the society who might have collected the card through their own abilities or through a similar

programme that might have been rolled out by the previous government, but was never fully implemented. Whenever these members of the society apply for the current card no matter how needy they are, it is becoming a challenge because according to the NHIF, these members of the society are already in the system. And therefore, being in the system, it is not possible for them to get the card even though the card is not operating or maybe they were unable to continue paying for the required fees for the card to continue cover them. It is therefore my request to the Health Committee to advise the House and to engage with the executive to come up with a better way of assisting these people. One of the examples I can give, I have encountered a person who was in dire need and so the community decided to raise some funds to secure the card for this individual but after that treatment, this member of the society could not continue facilitating the card. At this time such a person is so needy, very sick, the condition came back and the community is no longer supporting that card and I am not in a position to give him the Kang'ata care card simply because, their name is in the system of NHIF and therefore we might need as the House to come up with an approach that will guide the executive in assisting these needy persons even if their names are in the systems of NHIF. Thank you Madam Speaker.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Hanna Wairimu): I now call the mover to respond.

Hon. Kibe Wasary: Thank you Madam Speaker, let me start by congratulating you as one of our own, and a member of the Speaker's panel and for making to the Speaker's seat this morning and doing it very well.

(Applause)

Hon. Kibe Wasary: I am looking forward to see Hon. Manucho, Hon. Grace City and Hon. Kamwaga making it up to the sit and making a good delivery. Members, let me take this opportunity to thank you for your good positive contribution to the Governor's address. You have contributed in numbers and of importance, what has come up clearly is that something is being done in Murang'a County. Things are being implemented despite a few challenges here and there. Most of the things that are contained in the Governor's address are being implemented starting with Kang'ata care. The NHIF card has already been given to our people. Number two, we have seen tenders for various hospitals that were in our supplementary budget; the tenders are being floated so something is being done.

In agriculture, the issue of subsidy has been handled by the Committee and this Assembly and implementation is coming very soon. The issue of bursaries in the education department has been handled despite the challenges that we encountered. The bursaries has been given to our students and we have noted that in our next budget as Members have said, that we need to increase this allocation so that we give bursaries to the boarding schools and also to the universities. The porridge program is going on, it started yesterday, today and tomorrow and going forward.

Honourable Speaker, from the contributions of Members, one thing that was raised by the first speaker of the Governor's address who was Hon. Gichobe, he noted that the Governor had said that expectant mothers will be catered by the County and the program has not started. Maybe for a very good reason Hon. Gichobe raised that issue. I have noted that in the tenders that have been floated in the wall, the maternal care tender has been floated so the issue will be implemented very soon.

The issue of the youth department from Hon. Kamunyua and the Chairperson is here, it was not captured in the Governor's address and I will really ask the Chairperson Youth Committee to take up the issue very seriously so that we can have recreational facilities as it has been raised by Hon. Moses, Hon. Kamunyua and other Members.

The issue of employing teachers on permanent basis was raised by Hon. Edwin and as an Assembly we need to see this thing being implemented.

Hon. Chefman has raised the issue of provision of clean water; a very good point and I know the chair Water will handle the matter.

On the polytechnics, yesterday I happened to have visited one polytechnic in my ward, Ithiru polytechnic. One of the challenges they have is lack of learning materials. We need to take up village polytechnics very seriously and I would urge the Committee on Education to make several visits to various polytechnics in our County, so that they can check on the challenges that they are having.

Hon. Mirara raised the issue on salary delay, but I need to assure the House that the salary is paid up to January, for this time the delay has been dealt with. Several weeks back, our Governor visited the COB (Controller of Budget) in Nairobi, the COB was adamant in releasing our funds due to pending bills but our Governor was able to handle the matter and the release was given and the salaries have been paid in time.

The municipality issue is being handled by the Lands Committee and also the Delegated Committee. Something is being done, it is good to note that.

The issue of corruption was addressed by our Governor. It was not direct but through automation and what he has assured is that all services in Murang'a County will be automated, that was one way of handling the corruption that has been in our County. We may say that the issue of corruption has been captured in the Governor's address.

Firefighting equipment, very good point; they need to be taken to our people and to our nearby towns.

Honourable Members, I thank you once more for your good contribution on the Governor's address and let us join hands all of us and support the Murang'a County Government in making delivery of the services as it assured our people.

Maybe as I finish Madam Speaker, ward-based projects, there was a delay or there has been a delay and we are going to check on the delay. Yesterday I was able to get the list of all the contractors and their telephone numbers and I shared to Members so that we can make a follow up on the same for implementation.

Thank you, Honourable Members. Let us join our hands together and work for our County.

(Question put and agreed to)

ADJOURNMENT

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Hanna Wairimu): Honourable Members, there being no other business, this House stands adjourned until afternoon at 2:30.

The Assembly rose at 10:45 a.m.