

COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF KISUMU



COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF KISUMU

THE HANSARD

SECOND ASSEMBLY – FIFTH SESSION

Tuesday, 06th July, 2021

House met in the Main Chamber at 2:30 p.m.

(The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Seth Okumu) in the Chair)

PRAYERS

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Okumu): Hon. Members, pursuant to the provisions of County Assembly Standing Order No. 32 (2) which touches on the issue of quorum. I want to request that in reference to the above Standing Orders that the Serjeant-at-Arms rings the quorum bell for five minutes.

(Quorum bell rung for five minutes)

(Resumption of House session after attaining the requisite quorum)

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Muga): The Majority Whip, could you please confirm if we have quorum.

Majority Whip (Hon. Misachi): Mr. Speaker, we have quorum. Thank you.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Okumu): Thank you. Madam Clerk, kindly take us through the Order Paper of the day.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Okumu): Next order!!

MOTION**TOURISM, WILDLIFE AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE REPORT ON THE STATUS OF
TOURISM SITES IN KISUMU COUNTY****BY****HON. HABIL NYASUNA****CHAIRPERSON, TOURISM, WILDLIFE AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE****The Temporary Speaker** (Hon. Okumu): What is it Hon. Caren Muga.**Hon. Muga:** Thank you Mr. Speaker. Allow me to move this motion on behalf of the Chairperson for Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage, Hon. Nyasuna.**The Temporary Speaker** (Hon. Okumu): Please proceed.**Hon. Muga:** Mr. Speaker and Hon. Member, please allow me to move the following report;**Preamble**

Thank you Mr. Speaker and Hon. Members. Pursuant to Article 185 and Section 8 of the County Governments Act, 2012 read in tandem with Standing Order No. 193 of the Kisumu County Assembly Standing Orders, in the meeting of the Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage Committee on Thursday 3rd September, 2020 in the Minute No. CAK/TWH/08/06/2020, the members of the Committee resolved to undertake site visits to establish. The Committee resolved to carry out the said activity per Subcounty from the beginning of the month of December, 2020. The site visitation was aimed at establishing the status of the projects implemented by the department in the approved budgets for the FY 2017/2018, 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 and also to look into status of the sites for new development. It was also not limited to identifying challenges facing the sector and possible solutions to the challenges aimed to towards realization of the aims and goals of Kisumu County.

Mandate/Legal Framework

Mr. Speaker and Hon. Members, the Committee executes its mandates in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 193. (5) Of the second schedule of Kisumu County Assembly Standing Orders to:

- a) Investigate, inquire and report on all matters relating to the mandate, management, activities administration operation and estimates of the assigned department;
- b) Study the programmed and policy objectives of departments and the effectiveness of the implementation.
- c) Study and review all county legislation referred to it;

- d) Study, assess and analyse the relative success of the departments as measured by the results obtained as compared with their stated objectives;
- e) Investigate and inquire into all matters relating to the assigned departments as they may deem necessary and as may be referred to them by the County Assembly.
- f) To vet and report on all appointments where the Constitution or any law requires the County Assembly to approve, except those under Standing Order 187 (*Committee on Appointments*).
- g. Make reports and recommendations to the County Assembly as often as possible, including recommendation of proposed legislation. In executing its mandate, the Committee oversees the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Sports.

Members of the Committee

Mr. Speaker and Hon. Members, the committee on Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage as currently constituted, comprises of the following Members:-

1. Hon. Habil Nyasuna - Chairperson
2. Hon. Florence Olang'o - Vice Chairperson
3. Hon. Vincent Jagongo - Member
4. Hon. Jennipher Obonyo - Member
5. Hon. George Abaja - Member
6. Hon. Linnet Muga - Member
7. Hon. George Ogutu - Member
8. Hon. Consolata Ollows - Member
9. Hon. Gard Olima - Member
10. Hon. Maurice Ngeta - Member
11. Hon. Caleb Omoro - Member
12. Hon. Jacktone Ogendo - Member
13. Hon. Jane Manuche - Member
14. Hon. Victor Rodgers - Member
15. Hon. Caren Oguok - Member

Secretariat

1. Mr. Benard Abuodha - Committee clerk
2. Miss Maximilla Awuor - Secretariat
3. Mr. Dominic Muinde - Legal
4. Mr. Fanuel Okode - Hansard
5. Mr. Abraham Odegi - Sergeant-at-Arms

Acknowledgements

Mr. Speaker Sir and Hon. Members, it is my pleasure to inform the House that due to the emergence of COVID-19 pandemic which has actually changed our way of doing business, the Committee observed all the health regulations as required by the Ministry of Health such as; social distancing, wearing of masks, sanitization and washing of hands during the period we conducted the site Visits.

May I take this opportunity to applaud all Members of this Standing Committee and the secretariat for their valuable input and taking time to ensure the preparation and success of this report.

On behalf of the Committee on Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage and pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order No. 193 (5) (a), it is my duty and privilege to present to the County Assembly, the Committee's Report on status of tourism sites in Kisumu county.

Committee Findings - Site visit by the Committee

Mr. Speaker Sir and Hon. Members, after getting the approval from the office of the Speaker, the Committee embarked on the fact finding mission. During the said activity, we engaged with various stakeholders from site managers to local communities. The deliberations were very successful and we managed to get vital information which informed the making of this report. The stakeholders were willing and ready to give information pertaining the sites from opportunities around the places to challenges affecting the sites.

Mr. Speaker Sir and Hon. Members, the committee prepared a comprehensive itinerary covering all the seven Sub counties in the County; so far we have managed to visit Kisumu West, Seme and Nyakach Sub Counties due to unfolding events of official duties during the period the Committee planned to conduct the exercise.

a) Abindu Cave Heritage

Mr. Speaker Sir and Hon. Members, Got Abindu is located in North Kisumu Ward, Kisumu West Subcounty. The place has a rich history. Different faiths believe that the place is suited for worship and provides a holy place to connect with their gods. The place has ever since attracted visitors who are driven by the desires to explore more about it.

At Got Abindu cave, the Committee met with local Communities who are acting as the managers of the Cave. The management is currently under the Community Based Organization known as Got Abindu CBO.

The representatives of the C.B.O took the Committee around the Cave explaining thematic areas pertaining to the Cave. He informed the Committee that the size of the land where the Cave is located is not clear as some parts of the cave still sit on private lands.

The Committee was also informed that the cave frequently receives visitors from tourists (both local and foreign) to religious community. The frequent visitors at the place make the area good for Businesses where investors can explore. He added that there is no official guideline on the fees that should be charged from those who use the facility.

Committee findings at legendary Abindu Cave in Kisumu West Subcounty;

- County government of Kisumu allocated Kshs. 1,700, 000 in the FY 2019/2020 for fencing the site and construction of a two-door pit latrine at the site. The contractor who was awarded the tender abandoned the site after he did put up a two door toilet at the site up to the lintel.
- The place has frequent visitors from tourists to religious communities.
- The current management is under Got Abindu C.B.O.
- The parcel of land where the cave sits has no registered title deed.

b) Equator Maseno

Equator Maseno is located in North West Kisumu Ward, Kisumu West Subcounty. An equator is an imaginary line around the middle of planet Earth; the Equator was discovered and mapped out by a French geodesic expedition team that was led by an explorer named Charles-Marie de La Comdamine in the year 1736. Maseno Town is one of the places the line passes through in Kenya as it goes round the Globe. The line runs from East to West of the Globe across the Earth. It is the middle point of Northern and Southern Hemispheres.

At equator Maseno, Members of the committee were received by temporary site manager. He acknowledged the importance of the committee visiting the place to establish the status of the site. He encouraged members to always pay a visit at that place to know the progress of the site

The members were informed by Hon. Vincent Jagongo that the project was allocated Kshs. 3 million for establishment as Maseno Equator Tourists attraction site in the FY 2019/ /2020.

Members established that the phase one of the projects was well done by the Contractor who was contracted to the work. The County Government constructed a four door toilet at the site. The water tank was not erected to provide water used in the toilets, this has made the washrooms not to be used.

It was noted that the place is frequently visited by various learning institutions, which are eager to explore the Equator land mark, erected at Maseno Town along the imaginary line.

Members made conclusion that the place should be fenced for security purposes; this is to ensure that the already established structures at the site are not vandalized by the rogue community members. They also added that water tank should also be erected to make the washroom be put

into use. For the effective operation of the facility, members recommended that the County Government should employ Site manager to man the place.

c) Odino Natural Falls

It is located along River Sondu Miriu in Nyakach Subcounty. Odino Falls is positioned very well with numerous attractive sceneries like natural bridge stone across River Sondu Miriu, various species of indigenous trees, different types of birds and attractive valleys.

Members deliberated and identified the following during the tour at Odino Falls.

Odino Natural Falls is one of the Tourism attraction sites in Kisumu County. The Site provides good environment for Education tours and Picnic sites.

Members also noted that though the site is located along the boundary of Kisumu County and Homabay County, Kisumu County is better placed to benefit from the Site.

The site is strategically placed for business such as hotels.

The site has no good access road and not fenced hence make the place not safe.

It was noted that the site needed to have security. Proper fence and a gate were also needed to be erected.

d) Kit-Mikayi

Kit-Mikayi is situated in East Seme Ward, Seme Subcounty. This is a rock formation which is about 40metres high. From a long time, this stone has been a sacred place for the villagers to worship in times of trouble. It has also attracted religious communities from other regions who find solace to connect with God inside the Caves.

Committee engaged with site management. During very informative deliberations led by the site manager, the Committee made the following observations;

- i. There are charges payable to the site management for every visitor at the site. The charges are not clearly stipulated in the guideline.
- ii. The Workers at the site are engaged on casual basis and paid by the County Government of Kisumu.
- iii. The main sources of revenue for the site include the County Government of Kisumu, Donor funding and money collected as gate charges.
- iv. That Site has been giving back to the society by giving some small token to the elderly people yearly.

However, the following challenges were identified;

- i. Encroachment; residents have occupied some of the lands under the site and they have refused to surrender citing lack of compensation from the Government.
- ii. Lack of enough skilled personnel; there is only one tour guide.
- iii. Lack of proper access routes to the rock; there is no staircase up the rock and one has to rely on his/her rock climbing skills. This is an adventurous but risky affair. Slippery routes as a result of spilled candle wax occasioned by the numerous night vigils on the rocks especially by the Legion Maria sect. The site is not properly fenced making it an easy target for trespassers.
- iv. Lack of basic facilities such as toilets, tack shops, first aid center/ clinic.

General Finding,

From the visit and concrete deliberations, the Committee came out with the following observations.

- i. That most of the tourists' sites do not have good access roads. This makes the accessibility difficult hence discouraging tourists from visiting the places.
- ii. That the department has been allocating funds for the development of the sites. Some projects have been abandoned by the contractors some have been done as per the stipulations in the Bill of Quantity.
- iii. That the Tourism attraction sites in Kisumu are not being exploited fully by the County Government. Most of them do not have essential social amenities which could add value to the places.
- iv. That some sites do not have good security which is a threat to their development. That most sites do not have essential facilities such as washroom.
- v. That some sites do not have managers employed by the County Government of Kisumu. That most of the tourism sites do not have registered title deeds. They sit on private lands.
- vi. That the allocation for the development of the tourism sites in Kisumu County is not adequate.

Recommendations

From the forgoing findings, the Committee hereby recommends the following to the CEC in charge of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Sports:

- i. That the County Government of Kisumu should deploy site managers to various sites. This would allow proper management in the sector.
- ii. That the county Government should embark on infrastructural development to improve accessibility.

- iii. That adequate allocation should be done to the sector to enable full development of the sites. This would in return enable the County Government to generate income from the sites.
- iv. That the County Government to partner with Non-Governmental Organizations to develop social amenities such as Hotels and camp sites at various Tourism sites.
- v. That the department to get registered title deeds for the lands where the sites such as Abindu and Kit-Mikayi sit. This would enable the sites to be properly fenced.
- vi. That the Department should partner with the local and international news agencies in advertising Tourism sites in Kisumu County as good tourist destination, this shall put the facilities in the global map.

Conclusion

Mr. Speaker and Hon. Members, it is important to note that tourism sector is one of the lucrative sectors that should be exploited by the County Government of Kisumu in generating County revenues.

The Standing Committee wishes to inform the members of the house to adopt the report with the recommendations listed so that the department can be compelled in improving the Tourism sites in the County. May I call upon Hon. Florence Olang'o to second?

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Okumu): Proceed Hon. Olang'o.

Hon. Olang'o: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I stand to second the report as read by the Member.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Okumu): Honourable Members, a report from the Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage Committee report on the Status of Tourism Sites in Kisumu County has been moved by Hon. Muga on behalf of Hon. Nyasuna and seconded by Hon. Florence Olang'o. I want propose a question that we open the report for debate.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Okumu): Yes, Hon. George Ogutu.

Hon. Ogutu: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I stand to support the report. The Standing Committee did a commendable job and I can confirm as per this report that the Department of Tourism is doing a disservice to the people of this county. There is a place in Naivasha called Hells Gate. This place attracts tourist in Naivasha. We have a good place called Odino Falls. This falls is in West Nyakach and I have visited the place several times and it is not easily accessed.

Mr. Speaker, the Government is claiming to have pumped a lot of money in certain areas like Abindu but they are wanting. I want to urge Members to support it and the big question is, is the department going to implement recommendations contained in this report? We must improve our tourism sites.

Mr. Speaker, we have a huge hill on the opposite side from Odino falls and as stated here it is true that the people on the Homabay side cannot utilize the hill because it is extremely tall. It is therefore our responsibility to use it from our side as a tourist attraction site. Mr. Speaker, this place is also good for campsite because of the evergreen environment, streams around, unfortunately, these are mere stories we are narrating here because the implementation process on our end is often almost at zero. We need to be vigilant and improve the Tourism Sector in our County. We need to first ensure that our roads to these sites are well constructed for ease of access. Otherwise, there won't be any tourist getting to the intended places. Despite the issue of struggle to get title deeds for various lands harboring tourist attraction sites, Odino falls already has its own, which makes it easier to improve the course as it is one of the best tourist attraction sites in this county.

Mr. Speaker, when I get back to these other sites such as 'Abindu', 'Kit-mikayi' the system these people are using on them isn't the right one as well as the manner of revenue collection. When we interviewed the manager of that area, we found out that the revenue collected is shared by the locals of that area. It is alright to do so because the area belongs to these locals. However, how sure are we that this revenue is coming back to the County Government of Kisumu, yet the County government of Kisumu has really invested in the two areas? The issue of fencing was done by the County Government of Kisumu, so we should get proper management of the sites so that we account for revenue that comes back to the county. For instance, Narok County's only revenue is based on tourism, and we can also have a sense of direction where the revenue collection from tourism in these sites be managed to boost our overall revenue as County Government of Kisumu. I am quite disappointed as indicated in this report that some contractors were assigned duties to do projects but they left incomplete work yet if you dig deeper, you will realize that some of these projects have been paid.

We found out that some of these people have been paid. This House should look at way and means of promoting these Tourism Sites so that Kisumu County can also benefit from tourism revenue like Narok and Naivasha. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Okumu): Hon. Judith Ogaga.

Hon. Ogaga: Thank you Mr. Speaker. The report is good; I congratulate the Standing Committee. I urge the county government to pull up its socks in promoting the tourism sites we have. For example, we don't have many people visiting "Kit Mikayi" tourism site. We need to market these tourism centres so that people can get to know them so that we can generate the required revenue. Thank you.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Okumu): Hon. Prisca Misachi, the Majority Whip.

Chief Whip (Hon. Misachi): Thank you Mr. Speaker. The report is very good. There are however so many tourism sites that are being talked about but I have not seen them in the report. Like the

Luanda Magere, the “Okore Ogonda” among others. They are sites that people from various regions would want to visit. We first need to improve accessibility to the sites by improving the road networks leading to the sites then, do marketing so that people can get to know these areas. The report and the recommendations therein are good and the Implementation Committee needs to follow up to ensure full implementation by the executive. Thank you.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Okumu): Yes, Hon. Philemon Juma Ojuok.

Hon. Ojuok: Thank you Mr. Speaker. The recommendations in the report are good especially on accessibility. But I would also urge that we need to identify more tourism sites; let us not be limited to what we already have – so that we can expand revenue generation. One of the reason as to why we are not getting more revenue is that we are limited to what we have already; we are not expanding at all. For example, in West and Central Nyakach, through to North Nyakach along the shores of Lake Victoria, we have allowed the Hippopotamuses to be menace to the people. They are actually killing people every now and then and destroying their farms. They are so many such that I am wondering whether we can equate to the numbers I am seeing here. They have multiplied and become so many. Considering the encroachment the overflow of the lake has helped a bit because the water has driven people a bit far from the lake.

Mr. Speaker, we have shared a lot with them, that there are things which need to be done about those places. Moreso; identifying potential investors in those places, because, it is not a must that the County Government involves itself into such things. Sometimes the investors may be engaged to be able to take care of that. That is; by identifying more sites.

To some extent, let us not just talk about those sites because a lot has been spent. You get to see them every time but when you get there; those places do not look like we have spent there. It is so discouraging to say that for the last four years we have not gotten our actions right. The Governor can also not say that the Ministers have been affected by the changes. By the third year, you should have improved and get things right.

Mr. Speaker, I therefore urge the relevant House Committees to work together with the Implementation Committee in ensuring that these things are implemented. Thank you and I support.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Okumu): Yes Hon. Beatrice Pamela. May I call upon the mover to reply?

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Okumu): Yes, Hon. Muga, on behalf of the chairperson, Hon. Habil Nyasuna. Please reply.

Hon. Muga: Thank you very much Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all Members who have contributed to this. I am very happy because seemingly all they have been commenting was that it is a good report. What has come out of this are;

- i. There is need for creation of time to visit other sites such as Lwanda Magere and so on.
- ii. The other thing is that there is need for a follow up on the work of the contractors so that they do completion of their work which has not been completed.
- iii. There is also need for proper management. In this, we will ask for the input of the County Government so that we make sure that revenues can be generated from these tourists' sites. For example, Abindu Cave and Kit Mikayi need proper system that can only be made by the County Government.
- iv. All attractive sites which can generate good revenues are these mentioned sites. In actual sense, we have so many tourists' attraction sites. The only thing necessary for them is what needs to be done to them in addition to what already exist so that they can attract more people. We can also make them learning institutions so that our learners can decide to go there and discover more about those sites.

However, the most important in this is implementation. That is because when we do proper implementation, we will do the marketing and also ensuring the infrastructure issues are taken into consideration. This is because we don't have better roads which will be a problem and you can get those who are not strong enough but it is my belief that we build better roads so that we collect good revenues for our county.

Mr. Speaker, on the implementation aspect. We must engage the County Executive Committee Member in-charge of the Tourism Department because this is the department that we need to keep a keen eye on. We need to identify the needs of this residents on this side so that they are completed to enhance revenue collection. This is because, if you do well, it makes it much easier to improve on your revenue collection streams. So, we need to put to task the Committee concerned to ensure that we engage this line department for the betterment of our county. Thank you Hon. Speaker and the Hon. Members for concurring with this motion.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Okumu): Thank you Hon. Members. Hon. Members, a Report on the Status of Tourism Sites in Kisumu County by the Departmental Committee of Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage has been presented by Hon. Carren Muga on behalf of the Chairperson, Hon. Habil Nyasuna as a motion ably seconded by Hon. Florence Olang'o and exhaustively debated by Hon. Members. Now I want to put a question for adoption?

(Question put and agreed to)

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Okumu): Hon. Members, the report from the Standing Committee of Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage on the Status of Tourism Sites in Kisumu County has been adopted today Tuesday, 06th July, 2021 at 15:27 hours.

Hon. Members, I want to direct that, the recommendations made in this report be forwarded to the line Department of Tourism, Arts and Sports and any other relevant department for implementation

purposes with a follow-up to be undertaken by the Select Committee of Implementation. Thank you.

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Okumu): Next order!!

ADJOURNMENT

The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Okumu): Hon. Members, there being no any other business to transact, this House stands adjourned until Wednesday, 07th July, 2021 at 09:00 a.m.

(House arose at 15:35 hours)

Addendum

The Hansard Team

Zablon Otiende – Senior Hansard Reporter

Edward Odanga – Hansard Reporter

Fanuel Okode – Hansard Reporter

Patrick Okoyo – Hansard Reporter

Jacklyne Otieno – Hansard Reporter

Denis Onyango – Hansard Reporter

Jesca Otieno – Hansard Reporter

