

THARAKA NITHI COUNTY ASSEMBLY

THE HANSARD

9th June 2021

*The County Assembly met at the
County Assembly chambers in Kathwana at 9.30 a.m.
[The Speaker (Hon. D.J. Mbaya) in the Chair]*

PRAYERS

Hon. Speaker: Honourable members let's get seated. Next Order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

Hon. Speaker: Honourable members, good morning. I wish you all the best as you carry on with your constitutional mandate. Thank you. Next order.

PAPERS

REPORT OF THE FINANCE, BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
ON THE BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE AND
THE COUNTY ASSEMBLY FOR THE FY 2021/2022

Hon. Speaker: Yes, honourable member for Karingani and the budget chair.

Hon. Muchiri: Thank you honourable Speaker. I lay on the table of the House the report of the finance, budget and appropriations committee on the budget estimates for the County Executive and The County Assembly for the FY 2021/2022.

Thank you Mr. Speaker.

(The paper was accordingly laid on the table)

Hon. Speaker: Thank you, honourable member for Karingani.

NOTICES OF MOTION

MOTION ON THE APPROVAL OF THE THARAKA NITHI COUNTY EXECUTIVE
AND COUNTY ASSEMBLY BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR THE FY 2021/2022

Hon. Speaker: Yes, honourable Godfrey Murithi, member for Karingani and the budget chair.

Hon. Muchiri: Thank you honourable Speaker. I give notice of the Motion on the approval of the Tharaka Nithi County Executive and County Assembly budget estimates for the FY 2021/2022. That this County Assembly approves the budget estimates for the county executive and the County Assembly for the FY 2021/2022 tabled in the County Assembly on 4th May 2021 without amendments.

Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you. Honourable members, the notice of the Motion on the approval of the Tharaka Nithi County Executive and County Assembly budget estimates for the FY 2021/2022 is hereby acknowledged pursuant to Standing Order 67.

PROCEDURAL MOTION

REDUCTION OF THE PUBLICATION PERIOD OF THE THARAKA NITHI COUNTY FINANCE BILL (NO. 5 OF 2021)

Hon. Speaker: Yes, honourable Godfrey Murithi, member for Karingani.

Hon. Muchiri: Thank you honourable Speaker. I stand to move the Motion on the That, pursuant to the reduction of the publication period of the Tharaka Nithi County Finance Bill (No. 5 of 2021).

Honourable Speaker looking at the times that we are in and also considering that the publication period for this Bill is seven days allow me to request the honourable House that we have a reduction of days from seven days to 2 days.

That, pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 149(5), this County Assembly resolves to reduce the publication period of the Tharaka Nithi County Finance Bill, 2021 from 14 days to 2 days.

I move and request honourable Gataya to second. Thank you honourable Speaker.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you. Yes, honourable Mwenda Gataya.

(Hon. Gataya stood in his place and bowed to second)

Hon. Speaker: Honourable members, I now propose the question. That, pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 149(5), this County Assembly resolves to reduce the publication period of the Tharaka Nithi County Finance Bill, 2021 from 14 days to 2 days. The floor is now open for debate.

Honourable members, regard being taken to the mood in the House, allow me to put the question.

(Question put and agreed to)

Next Order.

BILLS

FIRST READING

THE THARAKA NITHI COUNTY FINANCE BILL, 2021

(Orders for the first reading read for the first time)

Hon. Speaker: Thank you. Honourable members, pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 152(1), The Tharaka Nithi County Finance Bill, 2021 having been read a first time stands committed to the committee on Finance, Budget and Appropriations.

PROCEDURAL MOTION

REDUCTION OF THE PUBLICATION PERIOD OF THE THARAKA NITHI COUNTY
ROAD ASSET MANAGEMENT BILL (NO.4 OF 2021)

Hon. Speaker: Yes, honourable Peterson Mwirigi, member for Ganga.

Hon. Kathenya: Honourable Speaker, I rise to move that, pursuant to the provisions of the Standing Order 149(5), this County Assembly resolves to reduce the publication period of The Tharaka Nithi County Roads Assets Management Bill, 2021 from 14 days to 12 days.

Honourable Speaker I move and request honourable Denis to second.

Hon. Speaker: Yes, honourable Denis.

(Hon. Denis stood in his place and bowed to second)

Hon. Speaker: Honourable Members allow me now to propose the question that, pursuant to the provisions of the Standing Order 149(5), this County Assembly resolves to reduce the publication period of The Tharaka Nithi County Roads Assets Management Bill, 2021 from 14 days to 12 days. The floor is now open for debate.

Yes, honourable member for Karingani.

Hon. Muchiri: Thank you honourable Speaker. I rise to request the Speaker to read the mood of the House that we are in agreement that the days be reduced from 14 to 12. Thank you.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you. Honourable members, allow me now to put the question.

(Question put and agreed to)

Next Order.

BILLS

FIRST READING

THE THARAKA NITHI COUNTY ROADS ASSETS MANAGEMENT BILL, 2021

(Orders for the first reading read for the first time)

Hon. Speaker: Honourable members, pursuant to the provisions of the Standing Order 152(1), The Tharaka Nithi County Roads Assets Management Bill, 2021 stands having been read a first time stands committed to the committee on Transport, Roads and Public Works.

Thank you. Next Order.

MOTION

APPROVAL OF THE THARAKA NITHI COUNTY EXECUTIVE AND COUNTY
ASSEMBLY BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR THE FY 2021/2022

Hon. Speaker: Yes, honourable Godfrey Murithi, the chairperson of the committee on Finance, Budget and Appropriations.

Hon. Muchiri: Thank you honourable Speaker. I rise to seek the leave of the House to move the Motion on the Approval of the Tharaka Nithi County Executive and County Assembly Budget Estimates for the FY 2021/2022.

Mr. Speaker I have honourable Kinegeni and honourable Kathenya to support. Thank you.

Hon. Speaker: Yes, honourable Peterson.

(Hon. Kathenya stood in place and bowed to indicate support)

Hon. Speaker: Yes, honourable Jones Kinegeni.

(Hon. Kathenya stood in place and bowed to indicate support)

Hon. Speaker: Honourable members, pursuant to Standing Order 3 and their being no objections and having two honourable members in support the leave of the Assembly is hereby granted.

Kindly proceed honourable Godfrey Murithi.

Hon. Muchiri: Thank you honourable Speaker. Mr. Speaker allow me to go through the report of the committee on Finance, Budget and Appropriations on the Tharaka Nithi County Executive and County Assembly Budget Estimates for the FY 2021/2022.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Members of the Committee on Finance, Budget and Appropriations and pursuant to the provisions of Section 131 of the Public Finance Management Act 2012, and Section 37 of the Public Finance Management regulations 2015 it is my pleasure and duty to present to the House, the Committee's Report on the County Executive and County Assembly Budget Estimates for the Financial Year 2021/2022.

Mr. Speaker before I even go to the report allow me to thank the honourable members for their participation during the time of scrutinizing the budget. They brought their input on time. I also thank the Clerk's Office and the Speaker's office and especially our committee clerk who took a lot of time during this period.

With that allow me Mr. Speaker to skip the committee membership and the committee's mandate since we are all aware of that.

Hon. Speaker: Permission granted, kindly proceed.

Hon. Muchiri: Thank you honourable Speaker. The Public Finance Management Act, 2012 Section 131 provides that the County Assembly shall consider the County Government Budget Estimates with a view to approving them, with or without amendments, in time for

the relevant appropriation law and any other laws required to implement for the budget to be passed by the 30th June in each year.

The Budget Estimates for the County Assembly and the Executive for the Financial Year 2021/2022 were tabled in the House on 4th May 2021 and committed to the Committee on Finance, Budget and Appropriations pursuant to Section 131(2) of the Public Finance Management Act, 2012 and Standing Order 243 for consideration.

Mr. Speaker allow me to say that when a document goes to a committee what we start to look at is the legal basis for the document. The Public Finance Management Act, 2012 provides guidelines on the budgeting process. Section 131 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2012 provides that:

- (1) The County Assembly shall consider the County Government budget estimates with a view to approving them, with or without amendments, in time for the relevant appropriation law and any other laws required to implement the budget to be passed by the 30th June in each year.
- (2) Before the County Assembly considers the estimates of revenue and expenditure, the relevant committee of the county assembly shall discuss and review the estimates and make recommendations to the county assembly, and in finalizing the recommendations to County Assembly, the committee shall take into account the views of the County Executive Committee member for finance and the public on the proposed recommendations.
- (3) An amendment to the budget estimates may be made by the County Assembly only if it is in accordance with the resolutions adopted regarding the County Fiscal Strategy Paper and if—
 - (a) any increase in expenditure in a proposed appropriation, is balanced by a reduction in expenditure in another proposed appropriation; and
 - (b) any proposed reduction in expenditure is used to reduce the deficit.
- (4) Where a Bill originating from a member of a County Assembly proposes amendments after the passing of budget estimates and the Appropriations Bill by the County Assembly, the County Assembly may proceed in accordance with the resolutions adopted regarding the County Fiscal Strategy Paper and ensure—
 - (a) an increase in expenditure in a proposed appropriation is balanced by a reduction in expenditure in another proposed appropriation; or

- (b) a proposed reduction in expenditure is used to reduce the deficit.
- (5) Not later than twenty-one days after the county assembly has approved the budget estimates, the County Treasury shall consolidate the estimates and publish and publicize them.
- (6) The County Executive Committee member for finance shall take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure that the approved budget estimates are prepared and published in a form that is clear and easily understood by, and readily accessible to, members of the public.

Public Finance Management Act Regulations, 2015;

Section 37 of the Public Finance Management Act regulations, 2015 provides that:

- (1) Where a county assembly approves any changes in the annual estimates of budget under section 131 of the Act, any increase or reduction in expenditure of a Vote, shall not exceed one (1%) percent of the Vote's ceilings'.
- (2) The County Executive Committee member shall submit a copy of the budget estimates approved under paragraph (1) to the National Treasury within 14 days of its approval.

Honourable Speaker the same applies to the Tharaka Nithi County Assembly Standing orders and because we have the Standing Orders I don't think there is need to read through them.

Honourable Speaker allow me to go to the overview of the budget estimates for the financial year 2020/2021.

The budget estimates for the two arms of government namely, the County Executive and the County Assembly were tabled in the County Assembly on 4th May 2021 having been submitted to the County Assembly in line with the provisions of Section 129 of the Public Finance Management Act 2012. Having been submitted and in line with the provisions of Standing Order 243 the Estimates of Revenues and Expenditures stood committed to the Sectoral Committees and the Finance, Budget and Appropriations Committee for consideration and reporting. The provisions of Regulation 37(1) of the PFM (County Government) Regulations 2015 dictate that "Where the County Assembly approves any changes in the annual estimates of the budget under Section 131 of the Act, any increase or reduction in expenditure shall not exceed 1% of the Vote's ceilings."

The committee looked at the extent to which the submitted budget conforms to the Constitution provisions, the Public Finance Management Act, previous resolutions of the County Assembly on various budget documents and the County Assembly Standing Orders.

Section 130 (1) details the key documents that should accompany the budget estimates. These include the following:

- i. A summary of budget policies including revenue, expenditure, debt and deficit financing;
- ii. An explanation on how the budget relates to fiscal responsibility principles and the financial objectives; and
- iii. Memorandum by the County Executive Committee Member for Finance explaining how the resolutions adopted by the County Assembly on the County Fiscal Strategy Paper have been taken into account.

With regard to the format of the Budget, the budget estimates should include:

- i. A list of all County government entities that receive funds appropriated from the budget of county government;
- ii. Estimates of revenue projected from the equalization fund over the medium term;
- iii. All revenue allocations from the national government over the medium term, including conditional and unconditional grants;
- iv. All estimated revenue estimated by broad economic category;
- v. All estimated expenditure by vote and by programme, identifying both recurrent and development expenditure;
- vi. Loans made to the government including an estimate of principal, interest, and other charges to be received by the county government in the financial year in respect to this loans;
- vii. Information regarding payments to be made by the Government that does not require national legislation authority; and
- viii. Statement by the County Executive Committee Member for Finance specifying the measures taken by the county government to implement recommendations made by the County Assembly with respect to the budget for previous year or years.

We considered if the budget complied with all that and we confirm they complied with all that.

Mr. Speaker the of the overall budget estimates for the financial year 2021/2022:

For overall expenditure it is as follows;

The total County budget is proposed to equal Kshs. 5.53 billion out of which Kshs. 3.53 billion is meant for recurrent while Kshs. 1.99 billion has been earmarked for development initiatives. With these allocations, the development budget represents about 36.1% of the overall budget. Compared to the revised budget for FY 2020-21 there is a proposed downward revision of the recurrent budget by Kshs. 348 million with the development budget receiving an insignificant increase.

Section 107 (2 c) of the PFM Act read together with regulation requires the County wage bill should be maintained below 35 percent of the total budget. The proposed budget indicates that 37.4 percent of the budget has been allocated to wages and salaries. This is a reduction from the previous year when we were at 41 percent. We believe we are going to attain 35 percent.

The allocation for compensation of employees for FY 2021/22 his Kshs 2.068billion which indicate a reduction from FY 2020/21. Available data indicate that the County revised its budget for compensation of employees upwards by Kshs. 264 million from Kshs 2.162 billion to Kshs. 2.426billion during the financial year 2020/21, this therefore could indicate that the amount allocated for compensation of employees is likely not to be adequate. That was our observation.

Section 107 (2) of the PFM Act requires that over the medium term a minimum of thirty percent of the county governments budget shall be allocated to the development expenditure. For FY 2021-22, the allocation for development expenditure stands at 36.1% of the total budget. It is an improvement and the committee commends that. It is important to note that over the last two financial years, supplementary budgets have been used to drastically lower the development votes. The provisions of Regulation 25 (g) require that Counties do not only allocate funds for development but also utilize the amounts for development.

Section 108 (1) of the PFM Act provides that a County Government may, with the approval of its County Assembly, deviate from the financial objectives in the relevant County Fiscal Strategy Paper, but only on a temporary basis and only if the deviation is required because of a major natural disaster or some other significant unforeseen event. Section 108 (3) requires

that the County Treasury provide a report to the County Assembly regarding the deviation from the fiscal responsibility objectives.

The Medical Sector has the highest number of devolved staff and is the largest consumer of the recurrent budget at Kshs. 1.647 billion or 48.19% of the total recurrent budget.

Agriculture, Cooperative and Industry leads in development allocation at Kshs 449.167 million in FY 2020-21 the Agriculture and Cooperatives sector has a total budget of Kshs 617.1 million out of which Kshs 152.14 million is for recurrent expenditure and Kshs 464.96 million for development expenditure. For FY 2021-22 the sector estimates a downward review of Kshs 29.9 million for recurrent and a decrease review of Kshs 15.8 million for development expenditures, showing a total budget allocation of Kshs 571.4 million.

The allocations are in tandem with ceilings approved in the County Fiscal Strategy Paper for FY 2021-22.

In FY 2020-21, the County Assembly had a total budget of Kshs. 463 million of which Kshs. 423 million was allocated to recurrent expenditure and Kshs. 40 million to development expenditure. For the financial year 2021-22, the County Assembly budget estimates for recurrent expenditures are proposed at Kshs. 423 million and development expenditures at Kshs. 50 million. This is a total budget of Kshs. 473 million, which also comprises staff emoluments, cost of operations and acquisition of assets. Out of the total budget Kshs. 236.9 million is meant for personnel emoluments, Kshs. 186.1 million for Operations and Maintenance.

The allocations are in tandem with the ceilings approved in the County Fiscal Strategy Paper for the FY 2021-22.

The draft County Allocation of Revenue Bill 2021 has set the recurrent ceilings for the County Assembly at Kshs. 423 million.

In FY 2020-21 the County Public Service Board has a total budget of Kshs 18.04 million for recurrent expenditure. For FY 2021-22 the sector estimates an upward review of Kshs 0.7 million, showing a total budget allocation of Kshs 18.74 million.

The allocations are in tandem with ceilings approved in the County Fiscal Strategy Paper for FY 2021-22.

In FY 2020-21 the Education, Gender, Culture and Social Services sector has a total budget of Kshs 336.21 million out of which Kshs 267.56 million is for recurrent expenditure and Kshs 68.64 million for development expenditure. For FY 2021-22 the sector estimates a downward review of Kshs 61.63 million for recurrent and also a downward review of Kshs 13.57 million for development expenditures, showing a total budget allocation of Kshs 278.22 million.

The allocations are in tandem with ceilings approved in the County Fiscal Strategy Paper for FY 2021-22.

In FY 2020-21 the Energy and housing sector has a total budget of Kshs 2.7 million out of which Kshs 2.7 million is for recurrent expenditure and there was no allocation for development expenditure. For FY 2021-22 has a proposed budget of Kshs 146.36 million comprising of Kshs 35.36 million for recurrent expenditure and Kshs. 111 million for development.

The allocations are in tandem with ceilings approved in the County Fiscal Strategy Paper for FY 2021-22.

In FY 2020-21 the Finance and Economic Planning sector has a total budget of Kshs 565.04 million out of which Kshs 316.69 million is for recurrent expenditure and Kshs 248.36 million for development expenditure. For FY 2021-22 the sector estimates a downward review of Kshs 55.57 million for recurrent and also an upward review of Kshs 2.18 million for development expenditures, showing a total budget allocation of Kshs 511.67 million.

The allocations are not in line with ceilings approved in the County Fiscal Strategy Paper for FY 2021-22. The sector has a deviation of 43.8 percent.

In FY 2020-21 the Lands, Physical Planning, Urban Development and Natural Resources sector has a total budget of Kshs 348.95 million out of which Kshs 140.76 million is for recurrent expenditure and Kshs 208.17 million for development expenditure. For FY 2021-22 the sector estimates a downward review of Kshs 18.17 million for recurrent and also a

downward review of Kshs 38.17 million for development expenditures, showing a total budget allocation of Kshs 293.45 million.

The allocations show a deviation of 11.05 percent compared to ceilings approved in the County Fiscal Strategy Paper for FY 2021-22.

In FY 2020-21 the Livestock, Veterinary and Fisheries Development sector has a total budget of Kshs 109.33 million out of which Kshs 75.05 million is for recurrent expenditure and Kshs 34.28 million for development expenditure. For FY 2021-22 the sector estimates an upward review of Kshs 16.39 million for recurrent and also an upward review of Kshs 18.72 million for development expenditures, showing a total budget allocation of Kshs 144.44 million.

The allocations are not in line with ceilings approved in the County Fiscal Strategy Paper for FY 2021-22. The sector has a deviation of 12.46 percent.

In FY 2020-21 the Medical Services sector has a total budget of Kshs 1.59 billion out of which Kshs 1.45 billion is for recurrent expenditure and Kshs 140.57 million for development expenditure. For FY 2021-22 the sector estimates a downward review of Kshs 73.14 million for recurrent and an upward review of Kshs 28.88 million for development expenditures, showing a total budget allocation of Kshs 1.55 billion.

The allocations show a deviation of -2.96 percent compared to ceilings approved in the County Fiscal Strategy Paper for FY 2021-22.

In FY 2020-21 Office of the Governor and Deputy Governor has a total budget of Kshs 152.17 million for recurrent expenditure. For FY 2021-22 the sector estimates a downward review of Kshs 7.89 million, showing a total budget allocation of Kshs 144.28 million.

The allocations are in tandem with ceilings approved in the County Fiscal Strategy Paper for FY 2021-22.

In FY 2020-21 Public Service, Urban Development and Disaster Management sector has a total budget of Kshs 289.17 million for recurrent expenditure. For FY 2021-22 the sector estimates a downward review of Kshs 151.22 million, showing a total budget allocation of Kshs 137.95 million.

The allocations are in tandem with ceilings approved in the County Fiscal Strategy Paper for FY 2021-22.

In FY 2020-21 the Roads, Infrastructure, Public Works and ICT sector has a total budget of Kshs 656.60 million out of which Kshs 100.06 million is for recurrent expenditure and Kshs 556.54 million for development expenditure. For FY 2021-22 the sector estimates an upward review of Kshs 6.36 million for recurrent and a downward review of Kshs 162.15 million for development expenditures, showing a total budget allocation of Kshs 482.03 million.

The allocations are in line with ceilings approved in the County Fiscal Strategy Paper for FY 2021-22.

In FY 2020-21 Trade and Revenue sector has a total budget of Kshs 104.3 million for recurrent expenditure. For FY 2021-22 the sector estimates a downward review of Kshs 5.3 million, showing a total budget allocation of Kshs 99.0 million.

The allocations are not in line with ceilings approved in the County Fiscal Strategy Paper for FY 2021-22. The sector has a deviation of 7.3 percent.

In FY 2020-21 the Water Services and Irrigation sector has a total budget of Kshs 201.36 million out of which Kshs 44.12 million is for recurrent expenditure and Kshs 153.34 million for development expenditure. For FY 2021-22 the sector estimates an upward review of Kshs 8.08 million for recurrent and a downward review of Kshs 42.8 million for development expenditures, showing a total budget allocation of Kshs 162.4 million.

The allocations are in line with ceilings approved in the County Fiscal Strategy Paper for FY 2021-22.

In FY 2020-21 the Youth, Sports, Culture and Tourism sector has a total budget of Kshs 86.0 million out of which Kshs 29.5 million is for recurrent expenditure and Kshs 56.5 million for development expenditure. For FY 2021-22 the sector estimates an upward review of Kshs 27.3 million for recurrent and a downward review of Kshs 28.3 million for development expenditures, showing a total budget allocation of Kshs 85.02 million.

The allocations are not in line with ceilings approved in the County Fiscal Strategy Paper for FY 2021-22. The sector has a deviation of 13.33 percent.

Comparison of the overall budget figures with the ceilings approved in the County Fiscal Strategy Paper indicates that some departments have deviated from the ceilings approved in the CFSP.

Mr. Speaker, on the Financing of the Budget FY 2021-2022;

The tabled budget estimates have envisaged that in the FY 2021-22 the total County Revenues shall comprise of Kshs.5.18 billion from the National Government transfers and Kshs. 350 million from internal sources making the total revenue to the County Revenue Fund equal Kshs. 5.53 billion.

With the aforementioned resource outlay, the following issues remain:

- A review of the revenue performance in the financial year 2020-21 indicates that the internal revenue figures for the current financial year are still overambitious. It is conclusive to assert that the major technological reforms that have been initiated in various revenue heads are yet to deliver an upward surge on revenue growth and expansion of the revenue basket.
- As at end of March 2021, the total internal revenues stood at Kshs. 174.18 million against the revised revenue target for the FY 2020-21 at Kshs. 350 million, representing an overall performance of 50%. This was a decline from FY 2019-20 of Kshs. 19.39 million in the same period. To achieve this target, therefore, the County should collect about Kshs. 175.82 million in the fourth quarter of the current financial year.

Mr. Speaker, we had submissions by the County Executive Committee Member in charge of finance on the budget estimates for the financial year 2020/2021. And since I had gone through several areas that I have said that they deviated from the CFSP I think it is in order to go through the submissions by the County Executive Committee Member.

Pursuant to Section 130 of the Public Finance Management Act 2012, the County Executive Committee Member in charge of Finance and Economic Planning made the submission below:

Key Budget Policies;

The County's Post-COVID 19 Socio-economic Reengineering and Recovery Strategy together with the County Fiscal Strategy Paper (CFSP) 2021 has laid down the outline for the preparation of the County's Budget estimates. It highlights the Policies, Programmes and Plans (PPIs) for the County Government for implementation in the Financial Year 2021/22 and over the Medium Term. The priorities therein are anchored in the County Integrated Development Plan (2018-2022), and the Annual Development Plan for 2021/22 Financial Year. The priorities are in line with the government's Socio-economic Transformative Agenda and other policy guidelines. This is aimed at creating sound enablers towards the county's development and prosperity in the long run. As a result, the proposed budget estimates are aligned to the Post-COVID-19 Socio-economic Reengineering and Recovery Strategy dully approved by this County Assembly. The recovery strategy broadly outlined financial objectives which included addressing the perennial problem of accumulated pending bills, expenditure consolidation to create fiscal space for priority objectives and funding of priority infrastructure projects which have clearly defined outputs and outcomes as adopted in the approved County Annual Development Plan for FY 2021-22. The strategy adopted involve prioritization of key sectors and functions to:

- Maintain a balanced budget where total expenditure is equal to total expected revenues hence no need to deficit financing measures.
- Ensure that development priorities give attention to supporting economic recovery considering the COVID 19 shocks with emphasis on completing ongoing projects and strengthening the health services sector.
- Ensure funding goes to the most critical needs and achieve maximum impact on the beneficiaries through prudent utilization of resources.
- Ensure the cash flows and procurement and implementation plans are harmonized to ensure coherence and consider resource constraints.
- Ensure strategic policy direction: there will be proper prioritization taking into consideration of the Governor's agenda, the national agenda, social equity and environmental conservation.
- Ensure strict prioritization of projects: only high impact projects will be undertaken in FY 2021/2022 budget in strict compliance with Public Investments Management guidelines (PIM) to increase efficiency and effectiveness of public spending.

- Ensure priority to complete all ongoing projects by the departments and its agencies.
- Recognize the dwindling resources under equitable share from the national government, to curtail growth of recurrent budgets especially use of goods and services.
- Ensure allocation based on realistic outcomes and achievable results.
- Prioritize the reduction of pending bills costs on the medium term.

On the issue of Fiscal Responsibility Principles;

As I was going through this report I highlighted I highlighted the development spending versus the recurrent spending percentages. That was what the CECM submitted also and thus there is no need to repeat that.

On the budget framework;

Revenue projections;

As I was going through the report what I highlighted was the same thing the CECM highlighted so there is no need to repeat it.

There are some areas that I reported to have some deviations that we noticed as a committee when we went through the budget and the CFSP.

Variance from County Fiscal Strategy Paper Projections;

The County Treasury had estimated revenues of Ksh.5,393,785,007 in February 2021 as presented in the County Fiscal Strategy Paper. The increase of Ksh.116,291,997 to Ksh.5,510,077,004 in the Final budget estimates is a result of the changes in loans and grants expected to be received in the next FY. There is a reduction in the transforming health system grant from Kshs.102M to Kshs.52,426,873, inclusion of a provision for level II Kenya Devolution Support Programme grant and Ksh.15Million grant to the fisheries aquaculture project. The KDSP level II grant will comprise the allocation for the FY 2020/21 which will not disbursed by the end of this year.

In conclusion;

In summary, the fiscal policy adopted in developing the budget estimates gives priority to the following financial objectives:

- Ensure that development priorities give attention to ongoing and stalled projects, county flagship projects and operationalization of completed projects. This will ensure that the planned socio-economic benefits are realized by the county citizenry.
- The refocus general expenditure towards measures alleviating and responding to the vagaries of the Covid-19 pandemic through strengthening operations of our healthcare system, fast-tracking upgrading of priority projects in various health facilities and enhancing the capacity of our health workers by expanding the current skills inventory.
- Investing in socio-economic empowerment through:
 - ✓ Offering subsidized high-quality inputs to the farmers.
 - ✓ Increasing livestock productivity through strengthening the County AI Programme.
 - ✓ Increasing allocation for essential medicines and medical supplies and supply them on time.
 - ✓ Empowerment of PWDs and vulnerable groups.
 - ✓ Youth empowerment program.
 - ✓ Market infrastructure development.
 - ✓ Improvement and maintenance of access roads.
- Ensure that the voice of the County Citizens is incorporated in the governance process including projects identification and implementation.

Mr. Speaker, we also have the submissions by the County Assembly Service Board on the County Assembly budget estimates for the financial year 2021/2022; and in this we are the main stakeholders.

The County Assembly Service Board submitted as follows:

The proposed budget has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Public Management (PFM) Act, 2012 and the County Government Act, 2012. Section 12(7)(c) of the County Government Acts puts the responsibility of preparing annual financial estimates for the County Assembly on the County Assembly Service Board (CASB). This

responsibility has further been delegated to the Clerk of the Assembly under Section 129 (3) of the Public Management Act, 2012.

Budget Highlights;

The Proposed estimates have been prepared in consideration of County Assembly Strategic Plan, the expenditure ceilings provided under the County Fiscal Strategy Paper (CFSP) for the financial year 2021/2022, County Annual development plan for financial year 2021-22 and County Allocation Revenue bill 2020 as the County Allocation of Revenue Bill 2021 is yet to be approved.

The County Assembly Service Board will continue to support the honourable members during financial year 2021-22 to achieve their core mandates. In the implementation of the budget for financial year 2021-22 the following objectives have provided the priorities activities the Service Board intends to carry out;

Enhancement of Legislative process in County Assembly;

- Production and publication of bills and the subsequent laws enacted by the County Assembly.
- Continuous Capacity building for Members on methodology for Legislative scrutiny and legal practices.
- Development and revision of standing orders to enhance legislation.

Improvement of Oversight function of the County Assembly;

- Facilitate participation of stakeholders in the oversight processes at the committee stage.
- Conduct quarterly trainings and workshops on the oversight function and areas of oversight under the mandate of individual sectoral committees.
- Development of work plans for each Committee of the Assembly.
- Provide competent, timely, and adequate technical and secretarial support to both the Assembly Committees and the Plenary at all times.

Enhance the presentation role of the Members of the County Assembly;

- Continuous capacity building for the ward office staffs.

- Capacity building for Members on their representative role as Members of the County Assembly.
- Promote Members' welfare in terms of medical insurance and gratuity benefits.

Enhancement of management structures, systems, policies, and procedures;

- Development, implementation, and monitoring of departmental annual work plans and budgets.
- Management of the budget for County Assembly to ensure that core services continue to be delivered.
- Implementation of an effective organizational structure.

Human resource development;

- Development and implementation of the staff training plan based on training need assessment report.
- Continuous capacity building of County Assembly Service Board on corporate governance.
- Promote staff welfare, medical insurance cover, mortgages, and retirement benefits.

Infrastructure and facilities;

- Construction of the multipurpose hall.
- Construction of Speaker's official residence.
- Construction of a gatehouse.
- Expansion of the Assembly parking space.

The Service Board notes that the construction of County Assembly chambers will not commence during the next financial year due to unresolved disputes on the tendering process of the project. The board and the budget committee formed a joint committee which is looking into this. I believe the issue is going to be resolved soon.

Budget Framework;

Expenditure projections;

The County Assembly Service Board intends to spend Kshs 473 million during the financial year 2021/22. The expenditure comprises of Kshs 423 million for recurrent activities and Kshs 50 million for development projects.

Expenditure by Economic Classification;

In terms of the Classification compensation of employees will receive Kshs 235,395,746, use of goods and services Kshs 168,083,712, acquisition of non-financial assets Kshs 14,520,542 and development projects Kshs 50,000,000. County Assembly Service Board as also set aside Kshs 5,000,000 in anticipation of paying Kenya Revenue Authority any arrears that may arise following the recent audit conducted by the KRA on the Assembly finances since financial year 2016-17 to financial year 2019-20.

Financing of the Budget;

County Assembly expects to receive Kshs 473 million from the Exchequer to finance both recurrent and development expenditure anticipated to be incurred during the financial year 2021/2022.

As I started I said that I congratulate the honourable members for the work that they did. The members brought their submissions. They did their part and there is no need to go through their reports because they are the ones who submitted them.

Standing Order 243 (5) provides that upon being laid before the Assembly, the Estimates shall be deemed to have been committed to each Sectoral Committee without question put, for each such committee to deliberate upon according to their respective mandates.

Mr. Speaker we had public participation on the Tharaka Nithi County government budget estimates for the financial year 2021/2022;

Due to the Corona virus pandemic members of the public are not coming out for public participation and we had to improvise and go live on radio.

Oral Submissions (Live on Radio)

On Thursday 27th May, 2021 the Chairperson Committee on Finance, Budget and Appropriations was live on Mwendantu FM radio from 8. 00p.m to 9.00 p.m. (a vernacular

local radio station) to discuss and hear views from the public on the County Government Budget Estimates for the Financial year 2021/2022. Members of the public do listen to local radios because I was live on radio for almost 2 hours and they brought their views forth. They also commended the work of the Assembly especially when it comes to public participation.

Submission of Memoranda/ Public Hearing;

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 131 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2012 and 243 of the Tharaka Nithi County Assembly Standing Orders, the County Assembly of Tharaka Nithi, through newspaper advert, informed the general public of the public participation of the following:

- i. Tharaka Nithi County Assembly Budget estimates for the financial year 2021/2022;
- ii. The Tharaka Nithi County Executive Budget estimates for the financial Year 2021/2022;

Pursuant to the provisions of Article 196 (1)(a) and (b) of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010 read together with Section 87 of the County Governments Act, 2012 the committee conducted public hearings as here under shown:

	DATE		VENUE	TIME
1	24th May 2021	Chuka/Igambangombe	Chuka- Transnation Hall	10.00a.m
2	25th May 2021	Tharaka	Tharaka CDF Hall Marimanti	10.00a.m
3	26th May 2021	Maara	Chogoria Sub-County hall	10.00a.m

Members of the Public, Civil Society Organizations, Community Based Organizations, Faith Based Organizations were encouraged to participate in this process by making their submissions in the venues above or through written memoranda.

Written views or memoranda on the Budget estimates were to be hand delivered to the Office of the Clerk or emailed to tharakanithicountyassembly@gmail.com or clerk@tharakanithica.go.ke on or before 28th May, 2021.

Copies of the Budget estimates were to be obtained from the Office of the Clerk, County Assembly Offices or the County Assembly website <http://tharakanithica.go.ke>.

There were no issues raised during the public participation on the Budget Estimates. The committee had also not received any written memoranda on the Budget Estimates at the time it compiled its report.

Committee observations on the county executive and county assembly budget estimates;

The presentation of the budget estimates for the FY 2021-22 marks the culmination of the budget cycle that commenced with the consideration and approval of the Annual Development Plan for the financial year 2021-22. Budgets implement Government annual agendas by giving life and fiscal health to approved plans and policies. The Committee considered the tabled estimates with an aim of the County Assembly approving them with or without amendments.

In consideration of the Budget Estimates the Committee was required to be faithful in verifying that the budget has been aligned to approved plans and policies, it has lived within the tenets of the underpinning law, the resources being requested have been accounted for in the Programme Based Budget and it has observed the principles of equality and equity. Before making any recommendations on the annual financial estimates the Committee was required to take into account the views of the Sectoral Committees, the public and the County Executive Committee Member for Finance of which it complied.

The Committee observed that the above requirements and other legal requirements had been met and the relevant submissions had been made.

In light of the above, the Committee recommended that the County Assembly approves the County Assembly and the County Executive Budget Estimates for the Financial Year 2021/2020 as tabled in the House on 4th May, 2021 without amendments.

Recommendations;

The Committee on Finance Budget and appropriations recommends that the County Assembly approves the Budget Estimates for the County Executive and Assembly for the Financial year 2021/2022 Tabled in the Assembly on 4th May, 2021 without amendments.

It's the Committee's humble submission that the County Assembly adopts its report on the Budget Estimates for the County Executive and Assembly for the Financial year 2021/2022 tabled in the Assembly on 4th May, 2021.

Mr. Speaker, this being almost the last budget that we are going to oversight its implementation as the second Assembly it is important to note that now it is upon the sectoral committees to follow up on the implementation of the same.

I sincerely thank the members for having time to listen and go through the budget amendments.

I now move that this County Assembly approves the budget estimates for the county executive and the County Assembly for the FY 2021/2022 tabled in the County Assembly on 4th May 2021 without amendments.

I request honourable Gataya to second the Motion.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you honourable Godfrey Murithi, member for Karingani. Yes, honourable Mwenda Gataya, member for Mukothima.

(Hon. Gataya stood in his place and bowed to second)

Hon. Speaker: Honourable members, allow me now to propose the question that this County Assembly approves the budget estimates for the county executive and the County Assembly for the FY 2021/2022 tabled in the County Assembly on 4th May 2021 without amendments.

The floor is now open for debate. yes, honourable Mwenda Gataya.

Hon. Gataya: Thank you Chair. I am happy that God has given us another day. Honourable speaker I want to thank my chairman who has been very elaborate and very eloquent. In fact, I was thinking that next time when we come back to this House that is after the BBI passes we may consider him to be the CECM finance.

(Laughter)

I am a member of the budget committee and this is a very rigorous and tedious exercise that has to bind by all regulations. In this aspect allow me to thank all members of this House, because I positively participated in every aspect in every stage of the entire process, other than them being in sectoral and select committees, we carried out this exercise collectively as

a House. For the very first time we had a harmonious debate on the way to handle the entire process. Anybody would agree with me that the strides that have been posted on this budget are quite positive in all sectors adhering to all requirements. This budget has borrowed and anchored its relevance to the County Fiscal Strategy Paper which is quite important.

If you look at the main sectors especially health, which is the backbone of any society or community, it has been catered for very well. I want to be very brief honourable Speaker because I don't have to interrogate what the chairman has already said.

Look at the youth which is also very critical aspect; it has been quite addressed. If you look at the Assembly, the entire budget 90% of the recurrent is sharpening and enriching skills necessary for oversight through the honourable members and the members of staff. Of course honourable Speaker we have some pending issues within the County Assembly i.e. the Speaker residence. We have also guarded ourselves against any fraud of the Kenya revenue authority that is why we have reserves of money for that exercise.

As a member for the budget committee and an elected member for Mukothima ward I strongly support the budget and am very sure Tharaka Nithi people will be very comfortable with its implementation once it's implemented. I support.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you honourable Mwenda Gataya, member for Mukothima. Honourable members the floor is still open for debate. Yes, honourable Justin Kithinji, member for Magumoni.

Hon. Kithinji: Thank you Mr. Speaker for giving me an opportunity to contribute. May I start by congratulating the committee and especially the chair because they have really interrogated this document. Mr. Speaker you may realise today, Kenya people have known how things should be done and any other time that you go short of that... they are always important and we are happy with what our courts are doing because they are really awakening all institutions. Of course all institutions should be doing things the right way. They have interrogated the budget and from what he has read and from what we know or rather what I know is that due process has been followed at the same time the considerations of the makers of the budget has been considered.

I am also happy for what they have considered. I want particularly to go to page 24 where they have talked of their areas of interest and what they have given priority. They have talked of uncompleted projects. This morning as I was dressing up to come to this Assembly there

was a debate in the local radios where they were repeating what we politicians said prior to the elections. They were making fun of some of the statements that we said but I am happy a remedy is here in the first one where the Executive has said that they will ensure that all the development projects which are hanging or rather that have not been completed but shall be completed.

They have also talked of giving subsidised seeds to our farmers. We know that our country or our county is an agricultural based one, so any time we are able to do that we touch the very nerves of our people and when they get good yields from their farms we are assured that they will have money in their pockets.

What has been lacking is a law to empower both PWDs and youths. I belong to that committee on youth. The law now is in place its now for the executive to take action and make sure that they don't leave the PWDs and the youth behind because for the last four years we cannot look back and say this is what we have achieved for those particular groups. In this particular budget they have laid emphasis on that and at the same time the law is now there to govern that. It's my sincere hope that the national government shall release money in good time. We have realised the local revenue compared to what we will get from National government... it is not even comparable.

We are unprivileged unlike the national parliament that said unless they release money their monies to the CDF they will not pass the national budget. I wish also we had an opportunity to go towards that direction towards to the national government because the county government just relies on what has been given by the national government. It is important they release that money. I am afraid very soon they will start talking of how the county has been unable to absorb monies they did not even released in the first place.

I have absolutely no reason to object the executive budget because from what I see it looks like they are on it. What is remaining is what the chair said that this House looks unto the oversight properly so that we make sure what they have said is done.

Mr. Speaker worth noting is that the KRB roads are no longer there. I was very happy because I knew every year at least we will have a road done by KRB. This time round they have decided to take it away. I have waited to hear or see whether the national parliament will say something about it. Unfortunately, they so quite about it I don't know why yet it is a fund that has been denied to the county government and this are funds that have always helped the

county government. We hope what has been provided for shall be implemented to make sure we are somewhere.

Mr. Speaker, I have seen the budget of this Assembly and I have seen we are putting up a multi-purpose hall and of course there is a disclaimer somewhere that we are not going to start constructing our chambers because there is an unsolved dispute concerning the tendering process. Initially we were being told there is a court case, issues to deal with Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission now we are being told there are issues to do with the tendering process. In this country we have tribunals, we have courts and this is the earliest time this issue should be resolved so that we embark on constructing our chambers.

(Interjection)

Hon. Speaker: Honourable member for Magumoni, I am not gagging debates. But kindly note it is a matter pending before the tribunal regarding that chamber for arbitration.

Hon. Kithinji: Thank you Mr. Speaker maybe that what could have been captured. It is good that I have brought it up and it has been captured that the matter is somewhere with the tribunal. We wish that it shall be done fast enough so that we get decent places to carry out our businesses.

One thing that I have noted is on public participation. The citizens of Tharaka Nithi do criticise the elected leader's a lot. But whenever they are given an opportunity to air their grievances and to comment on issues that touch them they don't. People are encouraged to bring memoranda others are encouraged to participate and it's unfortunate because none was received yet you will hear people say this honourable House does not know what it is doing yet they also had an opportunity to do it. It's unfortunate that they don't blame themselves they keep on blaming us yet when they are also given an opportunity they don't do that.

Mr. Speaker one thing that has caught my attention it is where in the report it is written that the chair went to a vernacular radio and he carried a public participation there. I thought they work as a committee. When it is written that the chair went to a vernacular radio and did a public participation I don't know how it was done. I think this is the right time we came up with a law governing how public participation should be done because it may be a subject of ridicule and it is not good for us to be ridiculed on issues which maybe are not guided properly by our constitution.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to support thank you.

Hon. Speaker: Honourable Justin Kithinji before you set down is it not within our Standing Orders that the chair can represent the whole committee. And that's why on the same none he can sign the report.

Hon. Kithinji: Mr. Speaker, I was leaving that one to the chair to respond as he will be replying but now that you want to hear my view in that regard I don't really think it meets the threshold because we are talking of public participation. The chair went to a vernacular radio to do public participation; public participation should not be done by an individual but I am just leaving that one to him he will elaborate further and it's always good to take the word of one retired chief justice yesterday he told Mr. President it's not good to be choosing what is comfortable with you and leaving the other; follow the law as it is.

Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you, honourable member for Magumoni. Yes, Honourable Wilson Nyaga. The honourable minority leader and member for Muthambi ward

Hon. Derebia: Thank you Mr. Speaker for the opportunity. First I want to thank the committee guided by their able chair for presenting this for budget for approval. I know we went through the whole process; we were invited to deliberate on the budget. That is why today I am rising to support this budget because I digested it and I went through it.

I remember very well when the second Assembly came we had problems because people were not able to understand what budget meant at that time. But as we are approaching the end of our tenure things are becoming better and better day in day out.

In this budget where I am so impressed is where they have done the deductions which we were complaining about, the bloated wage bill. They have allocated monies to development remembering yesterday it was highlighted by the executive member per department and where the department is represented in this House by a sectoral committee.

As it is stated and well elaborated by the honourable chair that the committees are the ones to follow through the mandate of over sighting what the executive is doing. Also I want to thank the Board for considering the interest of honourable members and also ensuring that there is development is within our premises. To me because I have seen roads, agriculture, livestock and fisheries and health those are the things that are touching our residents directly. When the

government is considering and touching the lives of the electorate also the people will embrace the budget.

My humble prayer before God is for him to clear away with this pandemic because we might be having a very good budget but we cannot get anywhere to implement it. As one of the members of Magumoni has said we also have a challenge from national government. They are not releasing monies to the counties. Also I am worried because before the end of this month saying that the counties were not able to absorb the budget of the previous year. Which is a lie and I know it will happen that way they bring the monies overnight and also close immediately.

I am supporting this budget of 2021/2022 maybe it is our last budget. It is not maybe, it's our last budget, unless things change, because you know what went on with the BBI in the court. We are prepared honourable members this is our last budget this is what we can say "*kaiguru ntethia*" in our own local language. I am urging honourable members to ensure that it is implemented to the letter.

I support honourable speaker.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you, honourable member for Muthambi and the minority leader. Yes, honourable Leonard Gitonga.

Hon. Gitonga Leonard: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Allow me first to thank the committee on Finance and Budget, led by the able chair, who have come up with this report. The report is well thought about, well researched and anchored on facts and they have done a good job.

Allow me also to take an issue with honourable Wilson Nyaga aka Muisraeli for alluding that the people who had issues at the initial time, I am speaking of the initial time as the start of the second Assembly, were not knowledgeable about the budget. I want to confirm to him that, having been one of those people at that time, I was knowledgeable. I had the capabilities to read and understand. I also had the expertise to do that having done that at some other places. It is not fair and it was not well intentioned. But let us leave it at that.

A budget is made through assessment of the things and I believe the budget estimate that we are talking about here were formulated or came about through the assessment of needs. And we know our constituents have various needs that are to be solve or addressed. Some of the needs are about water, health, agriculture and roads. Those are the basic needs that our

residents have and I believe this budget estimate has gone a long way in addressing some of these issues. It may not be possible for a one-year cycle budget to address everything but we acknowledge the efforts that have been put for the last three or so years, in addressing the aspirations of the need of the people of Tharaka Nithi in terms of what service provision of what we are supposed to do once we pass this budget and what has been done so far. Well, from this estimates read by the able chair budget we can see a lot of emphases has been laid on projects or programs that were started, which at the end of the day if they are completed and commissioned they will go a long way in addressing the needs of the people. I went through the budget and as I can see as the chair said, in this budget that is what has taken huge amount of development budget. So we expect probably little of new projects during the coming year.

But what is available for us to address is the roads network which we can see from the estimates every ward has been allocated some amounts to try and open up the new roads. We also have some funds to ensure that those roads that were opened a while ago probably were done by county machines, which were not able to put the culverts, or the drainage was not done, in this budget we can see it has been addressed. This will go a long way in ensuring that our people get the services that they so require and are pressing to us.

On water I can see also other uncompleted and ongoing projects we are having the estimates also providing for others funds to ensure that draining of boreholes in these dry areas where people go for long distances to get water even to drink will be addressed in this coming financial year. We hope as we move on this budget or the budget estimates will be followed or implemented to the letter so that people can have the services that are so much require.

We have population national wide and Tharaka Nithi is not excluded, generally, the youth have been left out but from this program of the estimates I can see some efforts being made toward addressing the youths and they have allocations to ensure that they are incorporate in this county so that we can feel part and parcel of this great county of ours of Tharaka Nithi the great county of Tharaka Nithi. This also includes people living with the disabilities. I can see they have also been addressed.

On trade from these estimates I can see that there is a deliberate effort that has been made for the last three years to ensure that each one gets an improvement of the market. A certain market is probably allocated funds for the services that are required. And I can see this is a continuation because even in this year's budget estimates the same has been done. Our people

who operate the bodaboda have been crying out because of lack of shades, lack of place to keep motorbikes when it's raining, when it is too hot or sunny. In this estimate you can see this one has been addressed through the budget estimates because we can see there is some funds that have been set aside to ensure that this people also get the services and they feel appreciated for the work that they are doing. Noting that the bodabodas do most of the public transport nowadays.

So what is left for us is to ensure that there is prudent use of the resources available. We know the resources cannot be sufficient but if we put what we have allocated and what we are able to raise as a county into good use we expect to have good returns or good investments for our people. There is always room for budget to be adjusted. We have done supplementary budgets occasionally when need arises and I believe some of the issues that have not been addressed will be addressed in the subsequent supplementary budgets that are supposed to come.

We have heard information out there that the budget probably so much skewed towards one region. The fact is that information is out there. But you note some of our regions host what we would call county projects or county institutions that are supposed to serve us all in Tharaka Nithi. I will give an example of Chuka Referral Hospital which I happened to visit and enjoyed the services in that hospital sometime back. You see in this budget so much emphasis has been laid on that hospital and of funds has been set for that referral hospital. The referral hospital hosts the host it is situated in honourable Godfrey place. It is not by fault that so much funds have been out there that is what is required so that this referral hospital at the end of the day also enjoys the funds that comes from the donors and the national government once it is done and completed to a level V hospital. Looking at the budget wholesomely, you will feel that so, much funds have been put in a certain place without realizing the funds that have been out in place are going to an institution that is supposed to serve us all. To serve the people of Tharaka, Maara, Chuka Igambang'ombe. That is where people look at discrepancies but they should go further and internalize and interrogate what is there, what are this funds meant for that has been allocated to those places. So I believe generally looking at the budgets estimates wholesomely, save for those areas that host those institutions, the budget is balanced. If you delete or remove the funds, let's say Marimanti ward which hosts our level IV hospital in Tharaka. You find that Marimanti ward it has so much allocation but if you go down to Marimanti ward you realize that those funds are going to some certain specific institutions within the areas that covers the whole populace.

Mr. Speaker I want to rest my case at that and support the budget and look forward for a favourable implementation. Thank you.

Hon. Speaker: Thank honourable Gitonga Leonard. Yes, honourable John Njagi Mucee, member for Ciakariga.

Hon. Mucee: Thank you Mr. Speaker sir for the opportunity you have given to me. First of all, allow me to thank the committee. They have done very good work for having all of us involved during the overview.

The other thing is in the line of public participation. They have tried their best now that we are in the period of Covid-19 pandemic. That is why the chair of the budget committee had to go an extra mile and go to the vernacular radio just to get the members of the public to participate. And it is still the same medium where the members of the public make noise when the entire County or this County Assembly goes wrong. So to me the chair of that committee having done that represented the entire committee.

The other thing, they have allocated a lot of money in the department of health. Today still we are in the period of Covid-19 which we know is going to affect all of us. That department requires a lot of resources as long as finances are concerned. Secondly, the members of the public, if they fall sick and they don't get anyone concern to pay, the economy of our county will go down any alteration from normal in a person that person falls short of best in his or her normal duties.

The other thing is that they have factored the department of agriculture in the resource distribution. This will help a lot because we are still in the period of the Covid-19 pandemic. If our farmers are affected, their economy has gone down. But with the subsidy we will give them will create some recovery process for them. I feel that the budget is well done.

Also the resources taken to the roads. You have heard the chair of the committee on roads bring a Bill, the Roads Asset Management Bill, 2021. These funds, once we pass the Bill, will be used in the management of these road assets.

I support the Motion and Thank you Mr. Speaker sir.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you Honourable member for Nkondi. Yes, Honourable John Njagi Mucee.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you, honourable member for Ciakariga. Yes, honourable Anita Karimi. Honourable Jones, I will come back to you. I am only being gender sensitive.

Hon. Anita: Thank you Mr Speaker. I am happy that I am the first lady to contribute in this debate. I believe it is for the betterment of this House. We are all doing this regardless of the gender, but for the benefit of the people of Tharaka Nithi County. First, I want to thank the committee on budget and especially the Chairman who has spent sleepless nights working on this budget and brought a very comprehensive report in this House.

I have heard this is our last budget, but I believe we have another budget for 2022/2023, and I believe that we will be here to implement it. That is our prayer. Today I want to stick to the committees that I am a member of, that is, the Agriculture committee and the public service committee. I know that you cannot alter the public service budget because it is a recurrent expenditure therefore I will not dwell so much on that. I want to applaud the Agriculture committee because we do not ask so many questions because like you see, we proposed and recommended that our budget be passed without any amendment. The department wholly engaged the honourable members at the sectoral committee and also all the honourable members. Whatever is passed in this budget, it is utilized by the members. We have gone round the County distributing seeds, and at least we had an opportunity for oversight and representation and I believe that is a good job.

There is a notion and a paper that has been going round in the social media that in the budget we are passing, we only have Ksh 400 million for development. As honourable Kithinji said that honourable Godfrey Murithi went to a radio station alone, we are getting insults on Facebook and I would like it to be taken categorically that we have a development budget of Ksh 1.975 billion so the people insulting the MCAs that we only have Ksh 400 million, and we are in people's pockets, kindly let them go and clarify that we have Ksh 1.9 billion for development in the budget.

As the second Assembly prepares for exit, I believe that we need to encourage our residents that in Agriculture, we have projects that are ongoing. You will find that most people on Facebook insulting the elected leaders, from the Governor to the MCAs, I do not know why the insults are only directed to two elected positions yet we elected six. We have a project by KSAP and ASDSP where we normally have people sending proposals to get funds for development in various wards. You will find that very few youths who applied for these funds because they are always online trying to insult a certain MCA may be because he/she is

not doing very well in his/her manifesto. I believe if the youth works extra harder, we would not have most of them being idle. I am not saying that our youth are idle, but there are a few who instead of applying for these funds at least to assist themselves.... And one should know that you will not be a youth forever. There comes a time when you have to come out of the youth shoes and move ahead.

On the Agriculture budget, I am happy that the CEC captured the ATC in the budget. When it comes to trainings for our farmers, they have to go all the way to Kaguru and Embu for trainings. I believe with the completion and equipping of the ATC at Itugururu. It will also bring revenue to our County because for one to be trained, at least he/she will have to pay some cash. I believe also that the cereal boards are doing well for the people willing to utilize them and I believe their uplifting and rehabilitation and renovations will also go a long way.

I have seen an increase in the recurrent expenditure in the department of youth and education. This will go a long way. You will find that most of our vocational training centres, which previously used to be called youth polytechnics, they have been facelifted and they look very beautiful but they do not have tutors. I believe the increase in the recurrent expenditure for these departments it has taken care of tutors and managers so that our youth in those vocational training centres will find people with capability to make them better in the community.

On the issue of ECDE, I believe the increase of the recurrent expenditure in that department will give the centres without enough ECDE teachers more teachers since that forms the basis of our children upbringing so that we can have good quality of our ECDE education. The County Government has a budget for construction of ECDE classes although most of the classes are not yet completed and also some wards do not have enough classes. I believe this increase in the recurrent expenditure will go a long way in getting us more ECDE teachers and managers for the vocational training centres.

On the youth, I remember there is a time I said here that the youth have become an AOB, but I am now happy that now we have an increment in budget for the youth. I urge the youthful members in this House and in general all the members, because we all come from families whereby we have youths... I believe with the youth empowerment, our youth will be more enlightened so that at least when the fund is available, the youth can apply for the same. Someone told us that Government money is not like *Njugu karanga* where you share from

your pocket and give to the people selectively. The youth needs to go out and follow the necessary process to access the funds.

On our PWDs who have been feeling neglected, since 2017, we have seen the County Government trying to do something for them. I have seen an increment in the funds that has been allocated for that department and I believe it will go a long way in uplifting their living standards by at least giving them not only tools of trade and not only the basic requirements. We need to empower them so that they can stop coming requesting for funds from the Government.

I want to support this budget and I am requesting the honourable members that we improve on our oversight role so that when we come back and we get another supplementary budget, we will not be complaining that we do not know what has been done in our wards. We should do a follow-up on the implementation of the budget. It is one of the best budget and I believe it will benefit the people of Tharaka Nithi County.

With that, I support. Thank you.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you Honourable Anita. Yes, Honourable member for Mwimbi.

Hon. Kinegeni: Asante Sana bwana Spika. Kwanza, nachukua fursa hii kuwashukuru wanakamati wa kamati ya bajeti kwa kazi nzuri ambayo wamefanya. Bajeti ya mwaka huu, inaonekana kwamba imeguza sehemu zote za kaunti hii ingawa wadi haziwezi kutoshana. Kwa hivyo, ni vizuri sisi kama wanakamati tufuatilie hii bajeti kuhakikisha kazi imefanyika mashinani.

Wiki iliopita, tulikuwa na mambo mingi sana haswa eneo wadi la Mwimbi pale Magutuni. Ile kazi ilifanyika pale, haikufurahisha mtu yeyote. Nawashukuru waheshimiwa wenzangi wakiongozwa na Mheshimiwa Anita na wanakamati wenzake pamoja na Mheshimiwa Derebia. Waliweza kutembelea ile Hospitali siku moja wiki iliopita. Ningeomba kamati ya utenda kazi pamoja na kamati ya afya ikiwezekana waweze kufika pale waone ile shida ambayo iko Magutuni. Ingawa nimeona kwa bajeti, Hospitali ya Magutuni imeshugulikiwa vizuri. Tumewekewa pesa mingi, na kwa hivyo maneno mingi ambayo ilikuwa inatokea, naona kuna suluhisho hivi karibuni.

Kuna maneno ambayo Mheshimiwa Anita ametaja, ambayo ni maneno ya mitandao, ambayo ni ya matusi, hio iko tena kwa wingi. Hata siku ya leo, niko na furaha kwa sababu naona kwa

hii kikao tuko na watu wengine ambao huwa na matusi kwa mitandao. Hii ni kumaanisha siku ya leo wataweza kutoka hapa na ripoti mzuri.

(Laughter)

Kwa hivyo, nawakaribisha na ninamwaambia ni shukrani kwa sababu wamejileta na wakitoka kwa hii kikao, watakuwa na ripoti mzuri. Ile ripoti ambayo walikuwa wanasema maneno ya bajeti ya utenda kazi ya milioni mia nne, leo wataweza kujua ukweli ya kwamba sio milioni mia nne, hali ni bilioni moja nukta tisa.

Nashukuru mwenye kiti kamati ya bajeti kwa kazi mzuri ambayo amefanya na pia ofisi yako bwana Spika kwa kutuunga mkono vizuri. Kwa hivyo mimi naunga mkono hii bajeti nikiwa namba moja wa Mwimbi. Shukrani.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you honourable Jones Kinegeni. Honourable members, the floor is still open for debate.

(Loud Consultations)

Honourable members, regard being taken to the mood in the House, and pursuant to Standing Order 106(4), allow me now to call upon the mover honourable Godfrey Murithi to reply.

Hon. Muchiri: Thank you Honourable Speaker. Allow me to most sincerely thank the honourable members for, from the mood in the House, I have seen that they are supporting the budget. Since there are some issues that have been raised by honourable members, it is important that I just go through some of them.

Allow me to most sincerely thank one honourable Kithinji who felt that the Chair went to the media alone. This House is governed by the Constitution of Kenya and also the Standing Orders and also the precedence of whatever ever happened and especially in the commonwealth countries. In our Standing Orders 192, it states the duties of a Chairperson in the committee. With your permission, allow me to go through that Standing Order.

Hon. Speaker: Kindly proceed and take time to clarify that because that accusation extends to the integrity of this House.

Hon. Muchiri: Thank you honourable Speaker for that. Honourable Speaker, the Standing Order 192,

(Interjection)

Hon. Speaker: Yes, Honourable Justin Kithinji.

Hon. Kithinji: Thank you Mr Speaker. Allow me to address the Chair...

(Interjection)

Hon. Speaker: You cannot address the Chair. Let me clarify honourable Justin Kithinji.

Under Article 196 of the constitution, public participation is critical and it goes to the root of the entire process. I am therefore saying, let him clarify that and respond to the issue that you raised since it goes to the integrity and the root of the entire process that is before this House. That is what I said. I never talked about your integrity.

Hon. Kithinji: Thank you Mr Speaker but next time, I do wish that you be giving directions because when that issue came, you responded and I respected that.

(Loud Consultations)

I never insinuated that. I just mentioned it and left it for the chair to respond. That is what he was doing but the kind of wording that is being put, I am very sure that it was not going to go towards that direction.

Hon. Speaker: Honourable Justin Kithinji, the Chair is not part of this debate. My work is just to guide this Assembly. Kindly proceed honourable Godfrey Muchiri.

Hon. Muchiri: Honourable Speaker, allow me to say that I have no ill motive by saying that. I just want to go through the Standing Order so that honourable Kithinji, since he is also a Chair in one of the committees, and a committee can delegate duties to him. Allow me to read:

“192. (1) Subject to the provisions of these Standing Orders and the directions of the committee, a chairperson of a committee shall-

(a) preside at meetings of the committee;

(b) perform the functions and exercise the powers assigned to office of the Chairperson by the committee, resolutions of the Assembly or legislation;

(c) be the spokesperson of the committee.”

Honourable Speaker, those are the powers that was given to me by the committee and that is why I had to represent them in the local media.

Number two, honourable Speaker, a studio is a very small room and considering that we are in the period of Corona virus pandemic, that is why I had to go to the studio alone. I believe I have clarified that well to honourable Kithinji and I am happy for his noting that.

Allow me to say that as the honourable members have said, when it comes to budgeting, it is partly a dream. When someone is dreaming to raise Ksh 5 billion, I think it is a good dream. Honourable members felt that as we are in this House, we are expecting even the National Parliament since they represent us, they should debate about the money that has not been released to the County Governments. For example, in our County, we are yet to receive almost Ksh 1 billion yet we have very few days to end this financial year. I think that issue needs to be raised in the National Assembly and the Senate so that we can avoid a lot of pending bills.

Allow me to say that when the public fails to get information, whatever the information they get, they term it as the truth. That is why I had to go to the radio so that I could discuss the budget with the public. Honourable members, when people discuss what is in the budget in the social media, it is not their will, only that they do not know the truth. That is why this House considered mostly the order that is supposed to be followed when it comes to implementation of this budget. I want to applaud a statement by honourable Nkondi (referring to Honourable member for Nkondi). When it comes to some of the projects. When I wake up one day,

(Interjection)

Hon. Speaker: Honourable Godfrey Murithi, kindly withdraw that. There is no honourable member by the name Nkondi in this House.

(Laughter)

Hon. Muchiri: Honourable Speaker, I withdraw but I believe honourable Gitonga is Nkondi number one.

(Laughter)

If we go to take census at Nkondi, we are supposed to start with him. He is the president for Nkondi.

Hon. Speaker: Kindly proceed.

Hon. Muchiri: Thank you honourable Speaker. I was saying that when I will wake up one day and find Chuka general Hospital as a level five Hospital, I will be the happiest man in this world. Some of the funds that we are allocating there, they will just be catered for by National Government. We are very unlucky that our County is one of the Counties that have no level five Hospital. I know one of these days, we are going to get one and if we get one, the 1.6 billion for health that we are talking about, it will reduce to at least a billion. I know that is a dream that will come true one day.

Allow me to say that we are talking about the youth, PWDs, as much as we are putting money to these departments, they are also part of other departments. I feel that when we talk about Bodaboda projects, it is the same youth who are in Bodaboda industry. We have a lot for them to enjoy from the basket of our County.

Last but not the least, let me say that when it comes to KRB that was raised by one honourable Kithinji, I am happy that he has gone through the budget but truly, we do not have that money which was part of the conditional grants but in the budget, every ward has received seven million to replace that so that we can have that money so that every ward can have at least one road graded, murramed and even done by the dozer in case there is need.

Honourable Speaker allow me to thank the honourable members and I believe as we say this is our last budget to implement, it is not the last. We will be having another budget that is 2022/2023 and also for those who believe in themselves like me, we are going to implement all budgets until 2027. Thank you very much and may God be with you.

Thank you honourable Speaker.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you, honourable member for Karingani. Honourable members, allow me now to put the question.

(Question put and agreed to)

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Speaker: Honourable members, there being no other business on the Order Paper, the House stands adjourned until our next sitting.

****The House rose at 11.20 a.m.****