

VIHIGA COUNTY RATING BILL, 2016

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A Bill for

AN ACT of the Vihiga County Assembly to provide for the imposition of rates on land and buildings in the County and for connected purposes

ENACTED by Vihiga County Assembly as follows—

Short title and commencement

1. This Act may be cited as Vihiga County Rating Act, 2016.

Application of Act

2. (1) This Act applies to all land in the county of including public land as defined and provided for in section 25 of the Valuation for Rating Act, Cap 266, Laws of Kenya.
- (2) Despite subsection (1), rates may be imposed only on rateable property.

Interpretation

3. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires—

“**agricultural rental value rate**” has the meaning assigned to it in accordance with paragraph 1 of Schedule 2;

“**area rate**” has the meaning assigned to it in accordance with paragraph 1 of Schedule 1;

“**county revenue collector**” has the meaning given by the County Revenue Administration Act, 2014;

“**financial year**” means a period of twelve months starting on 1 July;

“**improvement rate**” has the meaning assigned to it in paragraph 2 of Schedule 3;

“**land**” includes any improvements on, in or under the land;

“**prescribed**” means prescribed by the rules made under this Act;

“**rate**” means a rate imposed under this Act;

“**rateable owner**” has the meaning assigned to it by section 7 of the Valuation for Rating Act;

“**rateable property**” has the same meaning as in the Valuation for Rating Act;

“**rating area**” means:

- (a) an area for which a form or method of rating is or may be adopted; or
- (b) an area for which a rate is or may be imposed;

“**rating authority**” means the county government;

“**site value rate**” has the meaning assigned to it in clause 1 of Schedule 3;

“**supplementary valuation roll**” means any supplementary valuation roll prepared under the Valuation for Rating Act; and

“**valuation roll**” means any valuation roll prepared under the Valuation for Rating Act.

Forms of rating

4. (1) For the purpose of imposing rates, the county assembly may adopt one or more of the following forms of rating:
 - (a) an area rate in accordance with the First Schedule;
 - (b) an agricultural rental value rate in accordance with Second Schedule;
 - (c) a site value rate or an improvement rate in accordance with the Third Schedule.
- (2) The county assembly may adopt different forms of rating for different rating areas.

Imposition of rates

5. (1) Rates may be imposed by this Act providing for annual county finances or by such other Act as the county assembly determines.
- (2) Despite subsection (1), a rate may be imposed using the form of wording set out in Fourth Schedule.

Calendar year or financial year

6. (1) The county assembly may impose rates on rateable property in the county for any calendar year or financial year.
- (2) For the purpose of changing from a calendar year to a financial year for the imposition of rates, the county assembly may impose rates on rateable property in the county for a period starting on 1 January in a year and ending on 30 June in the same year.

Deemed amount of rates

7. (1) If rates are not imposed for a particular calendar year, then the amount of the rates for a particular rateable property for that calendar year are deemed to be the amount of the rates for that rateable property that were imposed for the immediately preceding calendar year.
- (2) If rates are not imposed for a particular financial year, then the amount of the rates for a particular rateable property for that financial year are deemed to be the amount of the rates for that rateable property that were imposed for the immediately preceding financial year.

Default of payment of rate

8. (1) A rate becomes due—
 - (a) if the rate is imposed for a calendar year, on 1 January of that calendar year; and
 - (b) if the rate is imposed for a financial year, on 1 July of that financial year; and
 - (c) if the rate is imposed for a six month period under section 7, on 1 January being the

first day of that six month period.

(2) The rating authority must by notice in the County Gazette specify the date on which a rate becomes payable and may publish that date in two newspapers of wide circulation in the county.

(3) For the purposes of the Act, the valuation roll or any supplementary valuation roll in force on the day on which any rate becomes payable is conclusive evidence of all matters included in such roll.

Liability for payment of rates

9. (1) The rateable owner of any land at the date when a rate imposed on that land becomes payable is liable for payment of the amount of the rate.

(2) If the owners of the land are joint registered owners or tenants in common, they are jointly and severally liable for the payment of the rate.

(3) If the rateable owner of the land is absent from Kenya, any person receiving the rent or being in charge or control of the land is liable for the payment of the rate.

Collection of rates

10.(1) Rates must be paid to the county revenue collector or any other person authorised by the rating authority to collect rates.

(2) Rates are payable—

(a) by electronic transfer of funds or such other ways as are approved by the county revenue collector; or

(b) at the offices of the rating authority or at any other place as is determined by county revenue collector.

(3) The county revenue collector must issue a receipt for the payment of any rates to the person who paid the rates.

Discount for early payment of rates

11.The rating authority may allow a discount as determined by the country assembly on any rate paid in full on or before the day on which the rate becomes payable.

Penalty payable on late payment of rates

12.The rating authority may charge interest at a rate determined by the country assembly on any amount of a rate remaining unpaid after the day on which the rate became payable.

Recovery of rates

13.(1) If any rate or any part of a rate remains unpaid after the day on which the rate became payable, the rate or part of the rate, as the case may be, and any interest on any such unpaid rate or part as provided for in section 12, is recoverable in a court of competent jurisdiction as a debt due and owing to the rating authority from the person liable for payment of the rate.

- (2) The county revenue collector is authorised to sue for and recover the debt for the rating authority.
- (3) A certificate signed by the county revenue collector and certifying that:
 - (a) an amount of rates is or was due and payable on or before a certain date; and
 - (b) the amount or a part of the amount has not been paid on or before that date

is admissible as evidence against the defendant in proceedings under this section, and is prima facie evidence as to the matters certified.

Recovery of rates from persons paying rent

14.(1) If any rate or any part of a rate remains unpaid after the day on which the rate became payable, the rating authority may serve a written notice under subsection (2) upon any person paying rent to the owner of the land in respect of which such rate was imposed.

- (2) The written notice—
 - (a) is to state the amount of such arrears, which may include interest calculated in accordance with section 12; and
 - (b) is to state that all future payments of rent (whether already accrued due or not) by the person paying the rent are to be made directly to the rating authority until such arrears and interest have been paid in full.
- (3) The notice operates for all purposes to transfer to the rating authority the right to recover, receive and give a discharge for such rent.

Rates chargeable on property

15.(1) Any rate due, together with interest calculated in accordance with section 12, is a charge against the land on which the rate was imposed.

- (2) If the title to such land is registered under any law relating to the registration of title to land, the rating authority may deliver a notification of such charge, in the prescribed form, to the registrar who must register it against the title to that land and the charge takes priority in accordance with such law.

Statement of payment of rates and other charges

16.The rating authority may, upon payment of the prescribed fee by any person, issue to that person a statement of the current status of the payment of rates for an area of land.

Publication and service of documents

17.Documents are to be published, sent or served for the purposes of this Act in accordance with the requirements of section 16 of the County Revenue Administration Act 2013.

Valuer

18.The county executive member responsible for lands may appoint one or more county public officers within the meaning of the County Governments Act 2012 or other persons to value land for the purposes of preparing a draft valuation roll or draft

supplementary valuation roll under the Valuation for Rating Act.

Power to make rules

19.(1) The county executive member responsible for finance may make rules generally for the better carrying out of the provisions and purposes of this Act, and different rules may be made in respect of different forms of rating or different rating areas.

- (2) Without limiting subsection (1), rules may be made for the following purposes—
- (a) the collecting of rates;
 - (b) prescribing cases in which rates may be reduced or remitted;
 - (c) exempting any person or class of persons from the payment of rates or with respect to specified classes or cases;
 - (d) prescribing the cases or circumstances in which the rating authority is to or may grant exemption from the payment of rates or of any rate or class of rates and the persons and classes of persons who may be exempted;
 - (e) prescribing the extent to which any land is to be exempted from the payment of area rates; or
 - (f) prescribing fees.

Savings

20.(1) If, immediately before the coming into operation of this Act, there is in force under any law a form or method of rating in respect of any area of the county which the county assembly is empowered to adopt under this Act, that form or method of rating continues to apply in respect of that area as if adopted by the county assembly, subject to such modifications (if any) as may be necessary to bring such form or method of rating into conformity with the provisions and requirements of this Act and any rules made under this Act.

(2) Any rules, in force immediately before the coming into operation of this Act, that apply to any form or method of rating which is continued under subsection (1) are deemed to have been made under section 19 and are, except to the extent of any inconsistency with the provisions or requirements of this Act, to continue in force in respect of such form or method of rating until rules are made under this Act to replace them.

(3) Any rules, in force immediately before the coming into operation of this Act, that exempt any charitable institution from the payment of rates in respect of any area in the county are deemed to have been made under section 19 and are, except to the extent of any inconsistency with the provisions or requirements of this Act, to continue in force until rules are made under this Act to replace them.

(4) A valuation roll or supplementary valuation roll that, but for the operation of the Valuation for Rating Act, would have been in force immediately before the coming into operation of this Act in respect of an area of the county, is deemed to be in force for the purposes of this Act.

First Schedule—Area Rate

Section 4(1) (a)

Area rate

1. An area rate is a rate imposed on an area of land, and the county assembly may for an area rate adopt one or more of the following methods of rating:
 - (a) a flat rate upon the area of land;
 - (b) a graduated rate upon the area of land;
 - (c) a differential flat rate or a differential graduated rate upon the area of land according to the use to which the land is put, or capable of being put, or for which it is reserved;
 - (d) an industrial rate upon the area of land used for other than agricultural or residential purposes;
 - (e) a residential rate upon the area of land used for residential purposes;
 - (f) such other method of rating upon the area of land or buildings or other immovable property as the county assembly may approve;

and the county assembly may adopt different forms of rating for different rating areas.

DRAFT BILL

Second Schedule—Agricultural rental value rate

Section 4(1) (b)

Agricultural rental value rate

1. An agricultural rental value rate is a rate imposed on the annual value of agricultural land.

Definitions

2. In this Schedule, “agricultural land” and “annual value” have the same meaning as in the Valuation for Rating Act (Cap 266)

DRAFT BILL

Third Schedule—A site value rate or an improvement rate

Section 4(1) (c)

Site value rate

1. A site value rate is a rate imposed on the value of unimproved land as appearing in a valuation roll or supplementary valuation roll.

Improvement rate

2. An improvement rate is a site value rate in combination with a rate on the assessment for improvement rate as appearing in a valuation roll or supplementary valuation roll.

Application of Valuation for Rating Act

3. If a site value rate or an improvement rate is adopted, the Valuation for Rating Act (Cap 266) including relevant definitions applies to the form of rating so adopted.

DRAFT BILL

Fourth Schedule—Wording to impose a rate

Section 5(2)

Imposition of rate

1. A rate is imposed on all rateable property in the county for the calendar year starting on 1 January 20 [] and the amount of the rate is [.....] per cent of the [unimproved] value of the rateable property.

DRAFT BILL

MEMORANDUM OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

This Bill provides for the imposition of rates on land and buildings in the City County and for connected purposes

The Bill provides for the following preliminary provisions; short title and commencement, application of Act and interpretation.

The substantive provisions of the Bill contains: forms of rating; imposition of rates; deemed amount of rates; default of payment of rates; liability for payment of rates; collection of rates; discount for early payment of rates; penalty payable on late payment of rates; recovery of rates; recovery of rates from persons paying rent; rates chargeable on property; statement of payment of rates and other charges; publication and service of documents; valuer; power to make rules and savings.

**HON. ZACHARIAH MUREFU
CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND PLANNING**

DRAFT BILL