

# **Business Revitalization Task Force**

## **First Meeting Minutes**

Meeting was held virtually via Zoom and physical location at 250 South Hotel Street, Room 436,  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
December 10, 2024  
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

### **PRESENT:**

State Government:

James Kunane Tokioka, Dean I. Hazama, Dr. Seth Colby, David J. Rodriguez

Small Business Regulatory Review Board:

Garth Yamanaka

County Government:

Amy Asselbaye

Construction Industry:

Roseann Freitas

Agriculture Industry:

Brian Miyamoto

Visitors Industry:

Sue Kanoho

Food Industry:

Jimmy Chan

Retail Industry:

Tina Yamaki, Monty Pereira

High Technology Industry:

Dr. Patrick Sullivan, Su Shin

Regional and Ethnic Chambers of Commerce:

Constancio Paranal, Wendy Laros, Tonga Hopoi

Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i:

Sherry Menor- McNamara

Staff Members:

Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT): Dane K. Wicker, Dr Eugene Tian, Dr. Joeseeph Roos, Mustafa Shirzad, Dr. Oscar Carvallo Valencia

## **CALL TO ORDER:**

**Time lapse: 9:01 a.m. – 9:04 a.m.**

DBEDT Director James Kunane Takioka called the meeting to order. 18 members were present.

## **SUMMARY:**

### **1. Agenda Item 1: Opening by DBEDT Director**

**Time lapse: 9:04 a.m. – 9:06 a.m.**

DBEDT Director stated the objectives of Senate Bill 2974 (Act 142) to establish a task force to identify methods to improve the general economic competitiveness and business climate of Hawai'i, including mitigating regulatory and tax burdens. DBEDT Director designated Dennis Ling (Business Development and Support Division Administrator, DBEDT) as his designee for future meetings.

### **2. Agenda Item 2: Nomination and Selection of the Task Force Chairperson**

**Time lapse: 9:06 a.m. – 9:07 a.m.**

DBEDT Director called for nominations for chairperson candidates. Dennis Ling (Business Development and Support Division Administrator, DBEDT) was nominated. No other candidates were put forth for nomination. Dennis Ling was then elected by a unanimous vote to become chairperson of the task force.

### **3. Agenda Item 3: Nomination and Selection of the Task Force Vice Chairperson**

**Time lapse: 9:07 a.m. – 9:09 a.m.**

DBEDT Director called for nominations for the vice-chairperson; Sherry Menor-McNamara (CEO, Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i) was nominated. No other candidates were nominated. Sherry Menor-McNamara was elected by a unanimous vote.

**4. Agenda Item 4: Framework of the Task Force**

**Time lapse: 9:10 a.m. – 9:17 a.m.**

Dr. Eugene Tian (Administrator for the Research and Economic Analysis Division of DBEDT) summarized the duties and deliverables of this task force and DBEDT's role in supporting the task force.

Dr. Tian stated that the Research and Economic Analysis Division of DBEDT will be responsible for documentation, including meeting notices, recordings, meeting summaries, and compiling the task force report.

**5. Agenda Item 5: Suggestions on Future Meeting Subjects and Contents**

**Time lapse: 9:18 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.**

The DBEDT Director opened the floor for the members to share their ideas on future meeting content and ways to effectively recommend both regulatory and tax strategies to increase Hawai'i economic competitiveness. The major points discussed were:

- a. The task force should be pro-active and conduct efficient meetings focused on specific outcomes related to the Hawai'i general economic competitiveness and business climate.
- b. Private sector entities emphasized the importance of considering private sector concerns and suggestions in proposing recommendations on business climate. They called this task force an opportunity for the state to meaningfully hear from the private sector and further policies to reduce barriers affecting the business climate, reduce regulatory and tax burdens, and propose methods to promote workforce development as well as access to capital and innovation.

**6. Concluding Section: Members Introduction**

**Time lapse: 9:46 a.m. – 10:01 a.m.**

DBEDT Director Tokioka opened the floor for members to introduce themselves and the agency they represent.

## **DECISION POINTS AND ACTION ITEMS**

1. The date and time of the next meeting will be sent to all members and made public in accordance with the Sunshine Law. The task force next meeting is expected to be conducted in late January 2025.
2. DBEDT Deputy Director Dane K. Wicker will present DBEDT initiatives related to the business revitalization in Hawai'i at the next meeting.
3. Task force committees will be discussed and formed at the next meeting.
4. All members were asked to provide via email suggestions to the DBEDT supporting team about the task force's next meetings, strategies and.

## **AJOURNMENT:**

The meeting adjourned at 10:01 a.m.