

**STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
HEEIA MEETING**

Wednesday, December 09, 2020

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The Hawaii Community Development Authority (“Authority” or “Board”), a body corporate and a public instrumentality of the State of Hawaii met virtually (utilizing the state-supported Zoom Meeting platform) for a regular meeting on December 09, 2020.

Board Chairperson, John Whalen, called the meeting to order at 10:03 am.
Those present were as follows:

Members Present:

John Whalen, Chairperson
Wei Fang
Amy Luersen
Lynn Araki-Regan, DOT (Ex-Officio)
Jo-Ann Leong
Craig Hirai, B&F (Ex-Officio)

Members Excused:

Kathy Sokugawa, DPP (non-voting)
Donna Camvel
Daniel Ikaika Ito
Chason Ishii

Legal Counsel:

Kelly Suzuka, Deputy Attorney General

Staff Present:

Deepak Neupane, Executive Director
Garet Sasaki, Administrative Services Officer
Lindsey Doi, Asset Manager
Francine Murray, HCDA Program Specialist
Tessa Malama, Kalaeloa Director of Planning
Tommilyn Soares, HCDA Secretary

A quorum was present

Acknowledgement that the Meeting is Being Convened Virtually

Chair Whalen reiterated the wording contained in the Meeting Agenda regarding the state’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the state’s efforts to slow the community spread of the virus and Governor David Y. Ige’s issuance of Supplementary Emergency Proclamations which suspended Chapter 92 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes to the extent necessary to enable public boards and commissions to conduct business without holding meetings open to the public.

With regard to the foregoing, Chair Whalen reiterated wording contained in the Meeting Agenda noting that HCDA welcomes public attendance via the Zoom link, HCDA's Facebook Page and its YouTube page contained in the meeting agenda, HCDA also welcomes public comment and public participation via submission of written and or verbal testimony (consistent with the social distancing guidelines and Emergency Proclamation directives in effect).

Chair Whalen stated that individuals from the public who have requested to provide testimony are on standby and will be permitted to speak during the public testimony session of the specific agenda item.

II. ACTION ITEM

1. Support the Commission on Water Resources Management's Consideration of Amending the Instream Flow Standard for Heeia Stream.

Executive Director (ED) Deepak Neupane introduced Dr. Kawika Winters, Reserve Manager of the Heeia National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) and Education Coordinator Fred Reppun presented testimony advocating for the restoration of the stream flow.

Dr. Winters stated that the reason for restoring the stream flow was based on four points.

1. Functional lo'i kalo and loko i'a depend on and are currently limited by the flow of fresh water.
2. Native species and ecosystems, important culturally and for economic and food security, would benefit directly by increased streamflow, and indirectly through the ecosystem services provided by lo'i and loko i'a.
3. Increased streamflow can help to control growth of invasive wetland vegetation.
4. More freshwater would help to offset the effects of climate change.

Mr. Reppun further added that cultural knowledge passed through generations were developed during a time when there was more water in the stream. Restoring its water resource is important to the education and culture of the residents in Heeia.

Chair Whalen opened up discussion and questions from board members.

Member Luersen commended NERR for the research they are doing regarding the impact to the native species. She noted that increasing the stream flow is important to the mission of Heeia. It contributes to the economic stability and sustainability of the region.

Member Leong asked if there has been documentation about the algae in the stream and if any research has been done.

Dr. Winters answered that NERR has brought in interns and graduate students to look at the diversity and distribution and abundance of native species. The research currently being done is to establish a baseline. This will allow NERR to monitor the native species going forward.

Member Leong asked where the water is currently going.

Dr. Winters explained there are two main issues: The Board of Water Supply (BWS) has one well and two to three pumping stations. NERR met with BWS and found that water in Heeia is going all the way to Waimanalo and beyond, feeding Kaneohe and Kailua. There seems to be periods of time where the BWS takes more water from Heeia and other periods where the water taken is from other sources. There is an opportunity for better management of water such as implementing a plan for water conservation. The other issue is storm water diversions that divert the water to Kaneohe.

Kako'o 'Oiwi Executive Director Kanekoa Shultz explained that they would like to divert the water back in the Haleiwa Joe's water system into Heeia by utilizing the storm drain system that already goes into the wetlands.

Member Luersen wanted to reiterate that the action item does not specify an amount of water that will be added. This is intentional as there are further conversations that need to be had with BWS and other stakeholders. This action item allows for the conversation to be had.

Chair Whalen clarified that a specific amount will ultimately be up to the Commission on Water Resources Management.

Chair Whalen noted there was no further discussion on the motion and called for public testimony. There was no written or verbal testimony received.

Member Luersen motioned for the board to support the Commission on Water Resources Management's Consideration of Amending the Instream Flow Standard for Heeia Stream.

Member Leong seconded the motion.

Mr. Neupane conducted the roll call vote. Motion passed with 6 yes votes and 3 excused.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Whalen thanked those who joined the meeting on Zoom and adjourned the meeting at 10:28 a.m.

John Whalen, Chairperson

Date