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GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

HAWAI'I HOUSING FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



DEAN MINAKAMI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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HHFDC Board appoints Dean Minakami as executive director

HONOLULU – Dean Minakami was unanimously appointed by the Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC) Board of Directors today to serve as HHFDC executive director.

Minakami, a lifelong planner, has been with HHFDC since 2019.

The board vote elevates Minakami from his interim executive director position, which began March 31 following the resignation of predecessor Denise Iseri-Matsubara, who stepped down to take a position with the City and County of Honolulu.

A Permitted Interaction Group (PIG) consisting of three of the nine board members was tasked with undertaking recruitment for a permanent executive director. Following extensive public advertising for the position, approximately 25 candidates submitted resumes. The PIG reviewed the resumes, prioritizing those best able to meet the major duties and responsibilities of the HHFDC executive director.

Following completion of the review of the resumes, the PIG determined that Minakami was the most qualified for the position.

“Mr. Minakami was the clear, standout candidate,” said HHFDC Chair Gary Mackler. “Dean is not only highly respected; his extensive public and private sector experience makes him uniquely qualified to lead HHFDC.”

James Kunane Tokioka, director of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, said he saw first-hand Minakami's effective leadership in August when HHFDC was able to quickly stand up the Hawai'i Fire Relief Housing Program, which to date has helped more than 500 displaced Maui families and individuals.

“Dean and his staff were instrumental in establishing the program,” Tokioka said. Organizers with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the American Red Cross were also impressed by the quick work, Tokioka said.

Minakami started with HHFDC as its Development Section chief in January 2019 and he became Development Branch chief in October 2020.

Minakami has worked with some of Hawai‘i’s largest development and planning firms and helped guide a number of major projects including Koa Ridge in Central O‘ahu. Prior to joining HHFDC, he was a senior planner for A&B Properties Hawai‘i.

He has also been a project manager with planning firm PBR Hawai‘i, Castle & Cooke Homes Hawai‘i and Wilson Okamoto, and he was a policy analyst for the City and County of Honolulu’s Office of Council Services.

Minakami received his master’s degree in urban and regional planning at the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa, where he also attained a Bachelor of Science degree in economics. He is a past president of the American Planning Association, Hawai‘i chapter.

The HHFDC executive director serves at the pleasure of the board.

Six board members are appointed by the governor of Hawai‘i to serve staggered, four-year terms, subject to confirmation by the Hawai‘i State Senate. The three remaining members are comprised of the director of business, economic development and tourism and the director of budget and finance, or their designated representatives, and a representative of the governor’s office.

HHFDC’s primary mission is to advance affordable housing opportunities for the people of Hawai‘i.

The corporation is attached to the state Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism for administrative purposes.

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