



REGULAR BOARD MEETING
HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY
Thursday, February 27, 2014
Kaua'i Beach Resort
4331 Kaua'i Beach Drive
Lihue, Kaua'i, Hawaii 96766

MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Ron Williams (Chair), Patricia Ewing (Vice Chair), Kelvin Bloom, Michael Kobayashi, Craig Nakamura, Aaron Salā, David Rae
MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:	Jack Corteway, Victor Kimura, Patrick Fitzgerald, Rick Fried, Lorrie Stone
HTA STAFF PRESENT:	Caroline Anderson, Mike McCartney, Jadie Goo, Doug Murdock, Daniel Nahoopii, Roann Rakta, Marc Togashi, David Uchiyama
DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL:	
GUESTS:	Ray Blouin, Keolu Burgess, James Burgess, Mayor Bernard Carvalho, Dr. Monte Downs, Pat Durkin, Sharon Edwards, Sandi Quinsaas, Sue Kanoho, Robert Westerman

1. Call to Order

Presiding Officer Ron Williams called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and requested Mr. McCartney to assist with the presentation of a pule. Mr. McCartney noted the recent passing of "Aunty" Stella Burgess, who was a cultural advisor at the Hyatt on Kaua'i and made countless contributions in the community. She helped organize a number of festivals and events, including the Aloha Festivals. More importantly, she has been instrumental in bridging the Hawaiian community with the visitor industry on Kaua'i. Mr. McCartney also recognized Sue Kanoho and Ms. Ewing for the assistance they have provided to HTA on Kaua'i.

At the conclusion of Mr. McCartney's acknowledgement of "Aunty" Stella Burgess, Ms. Sandi Quinsaas was accompanied by James Burgess, Keolu Burgess and Carla Thomas into the meeting room and proceeded to offer a pule. They represented the family of "Aunty" Stella Burgess. At the conclusion of the pule, Mr. McCartney presented a wooden Koa paddle to the family with the following inscription: "Resting peacefully near the serene and calm waters."

2. Approval of Minutes of Prior Board Meetings

Mr. Salā moved to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting conducted on January 30, 2014. Ms. Ewing seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by all the board members present and without any revisions or reservations.

3. Report of the Chief Executive Officer Relating to the Implementation of the State Tourism Strategic Plan Initiatives and/or Staffs' Current Assessments of the Major Market Areas

Upon Mr. McCartney's request, Mr. Murdock discussed the status of the HTA's efforts to implement the recommendations of the Legislative Auditor by referring to a matrix entitled "State Audit Report 13-9 Tracking," which can be found on the HTA's intranet website and tracked Staff's actions in reference to the Auditor's recommendations. He noted that more training needs to be provided to the administrative assistants on scanning the numerous reports developed and received by HTA.

Mr. McCartney initiated a discussion of the current legislative session and initially noted that there has been substantial discussion this year on the allocation of Transient Accommodation Tax ("TAT") revenues. He referred to a legislative measure that would allocate a greater share of the TAT revenues to the counties and that there has been a "lively discussion" between the various mayors and legislators. The discussion focused on "who had a harder time to balance the budget-the county or state." He noted a need to focus on the "three Rs: Roles, Responsibilities and Resources." Finally, Mr. McCartney concluded by noting that the HTA bills are moving, especially the extension allowing HTA to have financial independence without DAGS prior approval.

Mr. McCartney distributed the following charts for the Directors' edification and in response to a previous request for information in a pie-chart format: an "ROI" analysis of tax revenue generated and of visitor expenditures per HTA expenditures; TAT revenues for fiscal years 2000 to 2014; TAT historical and projected allocations to the counties utilizing various hypothetical scenarios; convention center fund FY 2014 budget allocation totaling

\$36,922,000 (pie-chart); “TAT Funding to HCC (\$403M FY 2014 Estimated)” (pie-chart); “Hawai‘i Convention Center-Economic Impact”; “Hawai‘i Convention Center-FY 2014 Budget”; “TSF FY 2014 Budget-\$85,700,353” (pie-chart). Mr. Rae expressed his appreciation for the pie-charts. In response to Mr. Bloom’s request for a “soft copy” of the charts, Mr. McCartney stated that the charts would be posted on HTA’s intranet website. In response to a question from Mr. Bloom, it was clarified that the ROI analysis was based on a calendar year and not on a fiscal year.

In response to Mr. Williams request for clarification, Mr. McCartney stated that the TAT monies collected and used to pay the “convention center bond” goes into the general fund on an “unrestricted basis” and “could be spent of any purpose” by the State. Mr. Rae asked what would be HTA’s future obligation to make payments to the State once the bond “is paid off.” Mr. McCartney stated that there would be a need to discuss this situation with the Department of Budget & Finance and the Governor. He noted that the convention center would need substantial renovations by 2027.

Mr. Rae asked whether the current legislative discussion on TAT revenues related to the allocation of the counties share of the TAT revenues or the state’s share of the TAT revenues. Mr. McCartney responded that the discussion focused on the counties share. He added that the TAT revenues “should be viewed as an investment into the visitor industry” and that while HTA would support the counties to have a share in the TAT revenues, HTA has “no position” on the amount of the revenues being allocated to the counties. Mr. McCartney views the amount of allocation is a “policy decision” to be made by the Legislature.

Mr. Williams acknowledged the presence of Ms. Sue Kanoho, Executive Director of the Kaua‘i Visitors Bureau, who expressed appreciation to HTA for conducting a Board meeting on Kaua‘i. She introduced Mr. Ray Blouin as the current Chair of the Board of Directors for the Kaua‘i Visitors Bureau. Mr. Blouin noted the frequent discussions being conducted between the Kaua‘i Visitors Bureau and the Kaua‘i County regarding the need to maintain the parks and to provide for public safety of visitors and residents. He also expressed appreciation for the HTA Board coming to Kaua‘i to conduct a meeting.

4. Review of Recent and Upcoming Permitted Interactions

Mr. Salā reported that he and Mr. Nakamura visited Japan for meetings with tourism representatives regarding various matters to enhance government relations, including the development of student exchanges between Japan and Hawai‘i. Mr. Nakamura added that

it was a short trip and expressed appreciation for the assistance provided by Hawai'i Tourism Japan.

5. Presentation and Discussion on Visitor Statistics

Mr. Nahoopii referred to the "HTA Key Performance Indicators Dashboards" as of January 2014 that were included in a Board folder containing documents related to the various agenda items being discussed at this meeting and were previously distributed to the Board members. He noted that the dashboards reflect proposed targets that will be the subject for Board approval at this meeting. He proceeded with a discussion of a handout, which was also included in the Board folder, entitled "Current Visitor Data January 2014," dated February 27, 2014. He provided the following "Overview" for the month of January 2014: that "visitors contributed \$44.1 million per day to Hawai'i's economy but that this was down from an average of \$46.3 million per day in January 2013"; that visitors spent \$11.37 billion, which was down 4.7% and was reflected in a drop in spending levels in all markets; that January reflected the fifth consecutive month of declines for visitor expenditures; that arrivals remained stable at 682,6334 visitors; that daily spending was down 5.2% at \$191 per person; and, that the occupancy rate in December was 72.3%.

Mr. Nahoopii discussed the key performance indicators by comparing the preliminary data for January with the HTA targets. He stated that visitor spending and daily spend were "slightly lower" than targeted. In regards to the key performance indicators as applied to each island, Mr. Nahoopii noted that although O'ahu had more visitor arrivals, the neighbor islands had more growth because longer staying visitors visited the neighbor islands. This resulted in the actual key performance indicators for neighbor islands reaching their respective targets. In regards to air seats capacity, Mr. Nahoopii stated that January air seats was up 3.4% with an 11% growth coming from the international routes. Air seat capacity for 2014 was forecasted to be up 1.8% over 2013 and was based on an assumption that there would be a 5% gain in international routes; that the domestic routes would be flat; and, that there would be 2% growth in charter flights. In regards to air seat capacity for each island, Mr. Nahoopii noted the following: that Kaua'i started losing air seats in September 2013 but expected to improve in May 2014; that O'ahu experienced restricted air seats in the fourth quarter of 2013 and will continue all through 2014 due to cutbacks by Alaska Air, Hawaiian Air and Allegiant Airlines; that Maui also experienced cutbacks in the fourth quarter and into 2014; that air seats to Kona will improve in 2014 over 2013 but not over 2012 levels; and, that air seats to Hilo will remain at minimal levels through 2014 and will reflect a drop in the frequency of flights to Hilo.

Mr. Uchiyama noted that cut backs in air seats by Allegiant Airlines, American Airlines and Hawaiian Airlines may be due to recent consolidation of airlines and the adjustment of seat inventory to address demand. He especially noted the rising hotel costs with the corresponding drop in air seat capacity. He offered the following scenario: as hotel costs rise, the airlines would engage in promotional initiatives to promote its flights; when the promotional initiatives fail, the airlines would cut seat capacity and causing less supply; with less supply there is a greater demand for air seats; with a greater demand, there is a higher price for the limited air seats; with the high hotel costs and the higher price for limited air seats, this would result in the rising costs for travel to Hawai'i. Mr. Uchiyama noted a projected increase in charter flights from different locations because of greater demand.

In response to Mr. Williams observation of "higher load factors" for the airlines, Mr. Uchiyama stated that flights from Oakland, San Jose and San Francisco reflected "poor load factors," and that international air seat capacity "looks good." He discussed the current status of Hawaiian Airline flights from Japan and will be awaiting further information from Hawaiian Airlines. In regards to the "decertification of Kona Airport," Mr. Uchiyama initially noted that there is no record of a "federal decertification" and that the "manpower" needs at Kona Airport would be addressed by "manpower" being flown from O'ahu to Kona.

Mr. Bloom offered his observation that any increase in international visitor arrivals would not make up for the decrease in the domestic market arrivals. In response to Mr. Williams inquiry whether staff would be making a presentation on efforts by the Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau ("HVCB") to address the "drop in the domestic market," Mr. McCartney stated that HVCB intends to meet individually with each Board member. He added that it has been HVCB's position that visitors are interested in coming to Hawai'i, but the costs of a Hawai'i visit are "prohibitive." Mr. Uchiyama referred to a hotel operator who stated that the average daily rate might be increased 7%.

The meeting was recessed at 10:15 a.m.

The meeting was reconvened at 10:25 a.m.

Mr. Nahoopii continued with his presentation of visitor data for January 2014 by again referring to his handouts. He discussed the following regarding the daily visitor census for January: that total average daily census (visitors per day) remained at the same level as last year; that Kaua'i did better than 2007; that Maui "just barely" did better than 2007 despite seat capacity being restricted during the summer; that O'ahu started 2013 strong but slowed down in September; and, that Hawai'i Island started at a record pace in 2013 but "was slower" in the summer and into the 4th quarter.

In regards to visitor expenditures, Mr. Nahoopii stated that “all major markets showed a decline in visitor expenditures.” Expenditures for January 2014 were down 5% because of a decrease in domestic market spending. Although Japan visitor arrivals were up, spending was down. In response to a question from Mr. Williams, Mr. Uchiyama responded that the highest spending year on an “overall basis” was 2013. In regards to the various categories within total personal daily spending, Mr. Nahoopii stated that expenditures for all categories were down but that expenditures for lodging decreased by 6%, transportation decreased by 14%, and shopping decreased by 4.6%. Mr. Bloom inquired why the expenditure category for “Miscellaneous” reflected a large increase. Mr. Uchiyama responded that the “Miscellaneous” category included spending for cruise ship and for wedding and honeymoon, such as flowers and bridal services.

Mr. Nahoopii continued his presentation with a discussion of visitor arrivals from each market by noting the following: that U.S. West has declined since August 2013 and U.S. East since October; that Japan posted growth in 12 out of 13 months; that Canada grew 4% but per person per day spending was down 9%; that Korea and Oceania posted strong growth in January; and, that China, Europe and Oceania were below target. Mr. Nahoopii made a special of note that arrivals from Taiwan almost doubled in January. He also noted that although Latin America decreased by 3% in January, it is expected that there would be greater growth from this market. Mr. Uchiyama added that Brazil and Argentina are showing growth and potential air carriers may fly direct to Hawai‘i. He noted that visitors from these countries are “big spenders.”

Mr. Nahoopii concluded his presentation by referring to a chart showing the historical average daily room rates since 2011 and stated that the room rate at the end of 2013 was a “record high for hotel room rates.” He noted “only Kaua‘i will end the year with a positive occupancy rate.”

6. Presentation, Discussion on Major Market Area Contractors for the Fourth Quarter and End of Contract Year

Mr. Uchiyama stated that he would be presenting an evaluation of the marketing contractors for the fourth quarter. The evaluations were based on comparing the preliminary results during the fourth quarter with the established targets for the key performance indicators of arrivals, visitor spending and air seat capacity within each major market area (“MMA”). The preliminary results on year-over-year basis in comparison with the targets and travel to the neighbor islands by a MMA visitor were also considered.

Mr. Uchiyama began with an evaluation of HVCB as the marketing contractor in the North America MMA. After presenting the preliminary results in comparison with the targets and travel to the neighbor islands, Mr. Uchiyama stated that HVCB executed its annual tourism marketing plan (“ATMP”) and had a “productive” 2013. However, Mr. Uchiyama noted there are many challenges for 2014 and he will be discussing new initiatives with HVCB.

In regards to the Japan MMA, Mr. Uchiyama presented the preliminary results in comparison with the targets and travel to the neighbor islands. He noted that “distribution to the neighbor islands is still a problem.” He expressed a concern related to the unfavorable currency exchange rate and an increase in the Japan consumption tax. Mr. Uchiyama stated that we would be working with Japan Airlines to allow better use of mileage redemption to offset costs. Mr. Salā asked whether a Japan visitor would be able to redeem miles if travel were booked through a travel agent. Mr. Uchiyama responded that booking for air travel must be made directly with the airline to redeem miles and the visitor would be using a travel agent to book other non-air components of the travel. Finally, Mr. Uchiyama noted that work has begun to get more charter flights from Japan.

In regards to the Oceania MMA, Mr. Uchiyama also discussed the preliminary results in comparison with the targets and travel to the neighbor islands. He noted that the contractor exceeded all targets for the year and Oceania continues to be a strong market. Although the destination training provided by the contractor has helped this market, it has fallen short in the Meetings, Conventions and Incentive (“MCI”) market.

In regards to the Korea MMA, Mr. Uchiyama again discussed the preliminary results in comparison with the targets and travel to the neighbor islands. He noted that the contractor had executed all aspects of its ATMP except for the social media component because HTA had reduced its plan. The contractor did more seminars and implemented additional efforts to promote mid-week departures. Finally, Mr. Uchiyama stated that the MCI market “was down and needs to grow.”

In regards to the China MMA, Mr. Uchiyama discussed the preliminary results in comparison with the targets and travel to the neighbor islands. He stated that the actuals were below target and could be due to new “travel laws” that were in place in October 2013. A “middle man mark up” caused prices to be increased. The contract with the current contractor ended in December 2013. Mr. Uchiyama noted that air seats would be increased under the new contractor. Finally, he noted that the MCI market was down in the China MMA.

In regards to the Taiwan market, Mr. Uchiyama also discussed the preliminary results in comparison with the targets. He noted that the contractor had exceeded targets because of an increase in air service. Since the current contractor's term ended in December 2013, there was no face-to-face meeting.

In regards to the Europe MMA, Mr. Uchiyama discussed the preliminary results in comparison with the targets. He stated that the contractor had exceeded targets under a "general sales agreement" and "sees good growth" in Europe. However, he expressed concern with the "untimeliness" of the contractor's reports to HTA.

Finally, Mr. Uchiyama discussed the MCI initiatives related to "Meet Hawai'i." He stated that preliminary results indicated that only 51% of the goal was achieved and that "we are trailing where we need to be."

(At this time, this agenda item was deferred for further discussion.)

10. Presentation and Discussion on Visitor Initiatives on Kaua'i

(There were no objections to this agenda item being taken out of order to accommodate the presence of Mayor Bernard Carvalho, County of Kaua'i.)

After being introduced and welcomed by Mr. Williams, Mayor Carvalho distributed a document to the Board entitled "County of Kaua'i, HTA-Visitor Industry Priorities." He discussed the need for HTA to continue its funding of the "Annual CPEP Contract." As a result of HTA funding, 30 out of the 40 events or projects were funded in 2014. He highlighted HTA's assistance for the Kukuluola/Hawaiian Culture and Natural Resources Grant Programs and for HTA's lobbying efforts to bring direct flights to Kaua'i. Mayor Carvalho requested HTA's assistance for legislative support to extend the county's tort liability protection for Ke'e Beach and to lift the cap on TAT revenues for the counties.

Mayor Carvalho continued his presentation by expressing an opportunity for the Kaua'i County and the HTA to enhance its partnership by strengthening and growing funding for the County Product Enrichment Program, which has received less funding from the HTA over the past years. He noted that HTA funding have helped the event organizers to grow. He also expressed concern with an "arbitrary cap" of four years for an event to be funded. He noted that in 2015, many of the events on Kaua'i would not be receiving funding under the "cap." Mayor Carvalho referred to the three major festivals (Waimea Town Celebration, Coconut Festival, Mokihana Festival) currently on Kaua'i and requested HTA's funding

support for an addition major festival. He also requested the reinstatement of HTA funding for the “Other Product Development Projects,” which was discontinued by HTA in 2008 and included projects such as the water safety projects, Kaua’i Made programs, and historical walking tours. Mayor Carvalho further requested HTA’s funding support for Kaua’i’s sporting events, such as the Kaua’i Marathon, which brings visitors from all over the world. He noted the need for consistent funding for the Kaua’i Marathon, which has received spot funding since it was started in 2009.

Mayor Carvalho discussed Kaua’i’s Hawaiian Culture and Natural Resource projects. He elaborated on the “Kaua’i Nui Kuapapa” project and stated that signage being created under the project will “identify who we are as an island.” Mayor Carvalho expressed the need to improve the County and State parks infrastructure. After indentifying the various state parks on Kaua’i, he referred to the most popular county parks (Poipu Regional Beach Park, Lydgate Regional Park, Black Pot Beach Park) that are in constant need of having its restrooms cleaned and the need to make the parks more accommodating for visitors and residents.

Mayor Carvalho discussed the current status of Coco Palms. He noted the development of a new relationship between the owners and community stakeholders. He stated that there is a “need to bring it back to how it was in the old days” and that the Coco Palms is “the pico of Kaua’i.” He expressed a desire for the Coco Palms to be a “cultural experience” and he envisions it to include an agricultural park and a cultural center.

Finally, Mayor Carvalho presented a “plea to HTA to be open by continuing its current support and supportive of new initiatives” and that we need to develop and support the relationship between the visitor industry, community and agriculture industry.

Mr. Williams expressed appreciation for Mayor Carvalho’s presentation. He also stated that HTA desires to continue its support of Kaua’i initiatives because the “customer experience” is important and that it also helps the “local experience.”

Mr. Williams acknowledged Mr. Robert Westerman, Treasurer of the West Kaua’i Business & Professional Association. Mr. Westerman discussed the pleasant experiences of visitors attending the Waimea Town Celebration. Many of the visitors attending the event were from the domestic and international market.

(This agenda item was deferred for further discussion.)

The meeting was recessed at 12:30 p.m.

The meeting was reconvened at 12:38 p.m.

6. Presentation, Discussion on Major Market Area Contractors for the Fourth Quarter and End of Contract Year (continued discussion)

(After being deferred to accommodate the presence of Mayor Carvalho, the Board continued its discussion of this agenda item.)

In response to a request for clarification from Mr. Bloom regarding the “China travel law,” Mr. Uchiyama explained that the law would not allow optional tours to be sold to Chinese visitors upon arrival at the destination. Instead, all activities and tours must be sold as part of the original travel. Mr. Uchiyama expressed a concern that ground tour operators would not be able to sell activities or tours once the Chinese visitor arrives in Hawai‘i. Ms. Goo added this law also applies to domestic travel in China. Mr. Williams expressed how difficult it would be for local activities to get business, especially when many visitors may not know the activities that are in Hawai‘i until they arrive.

Mr. Bloom also inquired as to the status of visa processing in China. Mr. Uchiyama responded that the number of “interview processing stations have been expanded” and that there would be an additional consulate in 2015. The approval time has been reduced from six months to one week.

Mr. Williams inquired as to the future of the China market. Mr. Uchiyama responded that he projects 50,000 visitors from China. However, unlike Japan, the Chinese visitors would not likely return and would be one-time visitors.

Mr. Salā noted a great demand for ukulele lessons from Asia. He stated that we need to be more prepared to adjust to a greater demand from a “cultural perspective.”

In response to a belief expressed by Mr. Bloom that the Chinese visitors want to see a clean environment, Ms. Goo stated that Hawai‘i’s “clean air and water” is always being promoted to the Chinese visitor.

7. Presentation, Discussion and Approval of Updated 2014 Major Market Area (MMA) Targets

Mr. Uchiyama referred to the Staff Report dated February 11, 2014 and describing staff’s recommendation to approve revised HTA goals and targets for calendar year 2014. A copy

of the Staff Report was included in the Board folder for this meeting and previously distributed to the Board. The Staff Report included a discussion of the target assumptions for U.S. East, U.S. West, Canada, Japan, Korea, China, Taiwan, Oceania, Europe, Latin America, and Cruise. A "Proposed HTA 2014 Updated Target Scenario," dated February 27, 2014 was also attached to the Staff Report. The Staff Report noted that the target percentages for the Island Distributions remain the same.

Mr. Bloom made a motion to approve the revised HTA goals and targets for calendar year 2014 as reflected in the Staff Report and the Proposed HTA 2014 Updated Target Scenario dated February 27, 2014. Mr. Rae seconded the motion.

Mr. Rae expressed a concern with an adjustment of targets in reference to goals. Mr. Uchiyama noted that various current conditions and trends impact targets. Mr. Bloom added that initially the targets were developed in August 2013 and were based on conditions at that time. However, with more current information an assessment may be necessary to review the previously established targets. Mr. McCartney stated that the "targets are performance measures for contractors."

Mr. Rae stated that once goals are set, they should not be changed. He acknowledged that conditions may impact the achievement of goals. He expressed a desire for definitions to be provided. Mr. Nahoopii responded that definitions for "forecast" and "targets" would be discussed at the next Strategic Planning Investigative Committee meeting. Mr. Uchiyama noted that targets for a calendar year are adjusted two times-once prior to the beginning of the calendar year and again after obtaining six months of actual year end data. Mr. McCartney added that there needs to be better communication or a notation of what are "targets."

The motion was unanimously approved by a quorum of the Board and without any reservations or objection.

8. Approval of HTA's Financial Reports

Mr. Togashi referred to the Financial Statements for fiscal year 2014 as of the month ended December 31, 2013 that were included in the Board folder previously distributed to the Board. Mr. Togashi reported that there were no anomalies to report.

Mr. Salā moved to approve the HTA financial statements as of the month ended December 31, 2013. Ms. Ewing seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved without any reservation or objection.

9. Update on the Tourism Strategic Plan

Ms. Ewing reported that there have been many meetings of the Strategic Planning Investigative Committee. She referred to a document entitled “HTA Strategic Planning Investigative Committee Draft Charter Update” that was distributed to the Board. It was noted that one of the goals for the committee is to obtain information and research to assess and evaluate any necessary revision and update of the Hawai‘i Tourism Strategic Plan, which will currently end in 2015.

Ms. Anderson reported on a timeline for the presentation and approval of a Hawai‘i Tourism Strategic Plan: 2015-2020. A “draft” of the plan will be developed in September/October 2014. The plan would then be presented to the Board in January 2015 for discussion and subsequent approval in February 2015.

The meeting was recessed at 1:15 p.m.

The meeting was reconvened at 1:23 p.m.

10. Presentation and Discussion on Visitor Initiatives on Kaua‘i (continued)

(This agenda item was previously deferred. The Board continued its discussion of this agenda item.)

Mr. Williams acknowledged Ms. Sue Kanoho, who stated that “the most challenging situation on Kaua‘i is water safety.” She introduced the following individuals who have significantly roles in responding to this situation: Pat Durkin, Chair of the Water Safety Task Force; Dr. Monte Downs, President of the Kaua‘i Lifeguard Association; Ms. Sharon Edwards of Life Bridges Hawai‘i; and, Robert Westerman, Fire Chief for the County of Kaua‘i.

Dr. Downs discussed the difficult experiences he encountered as a doctor who had to respond to drowning victims. He noted the difficulty of having to warn people of the dangers but not to tell them not to come.

Mr. Durkin discussed the Wave Project, which is a water awareness and visitor education program funded by the Kaua‘i Visitor Bureau and the County of Kaua‘i. He noted that seven out of ten drowning victims are visitors. The leading cause of drownings is the failure to

recognize dangers, such as rip currents, shore breaks and changing water conditions. The chances of drowning on beaches with a lifeguard are 1 in 18 million. Mr. Durkin noted that of the 58 beaches on Kaua'i, only 10 beaches have lifeguards present. He also noted the following drowning prevention strategies: the presence of life guards, which is considered the best practice; education initiatives, such as the Kaua'i Ocean Report, which is updated and distributed every day by life guards by 9:00 a.m.; and warning signs.

Mr. Durkin discussed a pilot program on Kaua'i that is now being used on Hawai'i Island. The program involves the placement of "rescue tubes" on the beach and made readily available at a beach. He distributed a survey conducted by the Wave Project and noted a finding that 48% of the visitors get beach information after arriving on Kaua'i from guidebooks followed by internet and resort staff at 21%.

Mr. Westerman discussed the current efforts to warn visitors through videos at the airports and hotels. He expressed the need to have more lifeguards on beaches. He also expressed the concern arising from the liability of the County when there have been a drowning in an area where they provide warnings.

Ms. Edwards provided background information on Life Bridges Hawai'i, which is a "grass roots non-profit" organization consisting of "volunteers working 24-7." She stated that they "respond to drownings at the site to support the family and love ones until they leave." They also provide all necessary services, including mortuary, so that the safety personnel can do their work. She believes they are the only entity that provides this service in the entire nation. Ms. Kanoho added that VASH Kaua'i was able to focus on crime victims because of the service provided by Life Bridges Hawai'i. She also acknowledged the County and DLNR for working together on a proactive basis.

Mr. Williams expressed appreciation for the service they have provided and for sharing their experiences with the Board. He also thanked them for coming.

11. Site Inspection: Grove Farm, 4050 Nawiliwili Road, Lihue, Kaua'i

(It was announced that the meeting would be recessed and reconvened at Grove Farm at 2:30 p.m.)

The meeting was recessed at 2:10 p.m.

12. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:38 p.m. upon arrival at Grove Farm for lack of quorum. (Upon arrival at Grove Farm, the Board members were separated into various groups consisting of less than a quorum and each group separately toured the facilities at Grove Farm. The groups were lead by guides provided by Grove Farm. The tours are made available to the public by Grove Farm.)

Recorded:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Pong', is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Winfred Pong
Recorder