



**REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY  
Thursday, April 28, 2022, 9:30 a.m.**

**Hybrid In-Person & Virtual Meeting**

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

George Kam (chair), David Arakawa (vice-chair), Fred Atkins, Dylan Ching, Keone Downing, Kyoko Kimura, Sherry Menor-McNamara, Kimi Yuen, Sig Zane

**MEMBER NOT PRESENT:**

Daniel Chun, Ben Rafter

**HTA STAFF PRESENT:**

John De Fries, Keith Regan, Kalani Ka'anā'anā, Marc Togashi, Ilihia Gionson, Caroline Anderson, Carole Hagihara, Maka Casson-Fisher, Iwalani Kaho'ohanohano, Bryant Yubui

**GUESTS:**

Jennifer Chun, Charlene Chan, Erin Khan, Nathan Kam, Jessica Rich, Allison Schaefer, L. Malia Sanders, Kylie Butts, John Monahan, Jay Talwar, Eric Takahata, Mitsue Varley

**LEGAL COUNSEL:**

Gregg Kinkley

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Kam called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m.

## **2. Roll Call**

Mr. Regan did a roll call, and everyone confirmed attendance, except Mr. Chun and Mr. Rafter were excused from the meeting. Mr. Alameda joined via Zoom and confirmed his son was in another room in the house. Mr. Regan said they had a quorum for the meeting.

## **3. Opening Cultural Protocol**

Mr. Casson-Fisher did the opening protocol.

## **4. Approval of Minutes of the March 31, 2022, Board Meeting**

Ms. Kimura said on page five, in the second paragraph from the bottom, Sen. Wakai should be Sen. Wakai. Mr. Atkins made a motion, and Mr. Ching seconded. Mr. Regan did a roll call, and the motion passed unanimously.

## **5. Report of Permitted Interactions at an Informational Meeting or Presentation Not Organized by the Board Under HRS section 92-2.5(C)**

Chair Kam asked if there were any permitted interactions. There were none.

## **6. Reports of the Chief Executive Officer/Chief Administrative Officer/Chief Brand Officer**

### **a. Relating to Update on HTA's Programs During March 2022**

### **b. Relating to Update on HTA's Implementation of Change Management Plan**

Mr. De Fries spoke about the CEO report on programs. He included a status on the change management plan, as item number one. He augmented the plan with a few comments relative to the meeting. At the State legislature, HTA's budget for the fiscal year (FY) 2023 is tied to two Bills which are active. Negotiations between the two House Bills are still pending - B1785 and B775. He said the future of those Bills would be determined in the next 48 hours.

Mr. De Fries highlighted activities in April 2022. On April 4, The Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA) president met with HTA and Rep. Saiki. They all learned a lot from everyone present. They later convened with Mayor Blangiardi, Mayor Roth, and Mayor Victorino, Mayor Kawakami was not able to meet. This allowed the delegation to have a more granular understanding of each county and how important the Japan market is to every island. That evening the Outrigger hosted their reception, which was well attended. They were hosted at Washington Place by the Governor and First Lady the following day. There were several Board members in attendance at that reception the night of April 5.

On the morning of April 6 WAM Chair Dela Cruz brought together the Chairs of the WAM Committee to go through House Bill 1785. Later that day, they met with Mr. Greenberg, a well-known travel journalist with CBS Radio Show. HTA was also included in that.

On April 11, HTA had an opportunity to convene an overview session for the five new Board nominees. It was attended by all five in preparation for their Senate confirmation process. HTA looks forward to them being in attendance and commencing on July 1. On the evening of April 11, Mr. De Fries had an opportunity to meet with Mr. Shin, the Board Chairman of Lotte. Mr. Kalama, head of Friends of Hawai'i Charities, also joined. He said the Lotte Chairman sees tremendous value and opportunity beyond tourism. Lotte is involved in everything from chemicals to retail, resorts, and finance.

A few days later, Mr. De Fries and Mr. Willkom went back to Lotte to be interviewed by the Golf Channel. They also had an opportunity to meet with Mr. Rolfig, a former HTA Board member and knowledgeable sports commentator in golf. Mr. Rolfig voluntarily stepped forward to offer HTA staff and Board any insights to help develop a more robust sports marketing package. Ms. Schaefer also joined them that day. She produced an article based on what her research had discovered from interviews with Mr. Rolfig.

On April 21, HTA had an opportunity to attend a meeting with the president of Big West for the Men's Volleyball Championship. He mentioned two strong stakeholder partners - Hawaiian Airlines and the Outrigger Group. On April 25, they met with the publisher of Travel Weekly, Mr. Carnevale. On April 26, Travel Weekly convened its annual leadership forum for the first time in two years. In attendance were the retailers and wholesalers and its airline partners. Governor Ige and Mr. Talwar from HVCB opened the Leadership Forum as part of the morning presentation. Mr. De Fries delivered a keynote at lunch. On April 27, of the 250 attendees, 15 people, including Mr. Mullen from HVCB, were invited to a roundtable to have a more in-depth discussion. Mr. De Fries said the discussion with the wholesalers and retailers was educational. There were some refinements to the Mālama Program that people requested, but in general, everyone at the table expressed their desire to collaborate with HTA and its contractors, in advancing the vision of the Mālama Hawai'i Program and mālama Ku'u Home.

Mr. Arakawa asked about the status of House Bill (HB) 1600, the State Budget Bill that was passed on April 27.

Mr. De Fries said the Budget Bill was passed and HTA's budget line item was not in that budget line item. He asked Dane Wicker of WAM what it would take to get the \$60 million ARPA funds into HB1600. His response was that it does not have to appear in HB1600 because it is a one-off in an exception with Federal Funds. The allocation could come in via another Bill.

Mr. Arakawa asked if that would be Senate Bill (SB) 775 or HB 1785. Mr. De Fries confirmed those two Bills have remained active. Mr. De Fries was told that the \$60 million had been set aside in ARPA dollars, and it is a matter of where it gets assigned and what vehicle will be used, but it is at \$60 million.

Mr. Arakawa reiterated his question about the Bill that the House and the Senate Conference Committee passed on April 27, HB1600. He asked if there was a line item or if it was zero.

Mr. De Fries said there is no line item for the HTA Budget at this time in HB1600. Mr. Arakawa asked what the plan was going forward. Mr. De Fries said that they would be back at the legislature after the meeting to find out about the status, and the two Bills' status would be determined in the next 24 hours.

Mr. Arakawa asked if there would be input from the Board on the discussions, and Mr. De Fries confirmed there would be. He said it is important that the legislative PIG engages as well. Mr. Arakawa said it could be at the Convention Center. He thanked Mr. De Fries for the update on JATA. He asked that they consider inviting the Legislative Tourism Chairs to some of those meetings with JATA next time. Mr. De Fries agreed. He said they should ask the Senate President and the Speaker if they would like to have a meeting at home and if they would prefer to bring the subject chairs to the meeting. He said the subject chairs should have an opportunity to meet with them.

Mr. Arakawa said some of the Board members of the meetings should also be included. Mr. De Fries said he would make a note of that. He said the Branding Committee could also participate. Mr. Arakawa mentioned that several local tour companies run tours from Hawai'i to Japan, which are not doing well because Japan is not open. He said they would also like to be included in JATA meetings and asked when the next meeting with JATA would be. Mr. De Fries confirmed it would be on May 9. HTA is going there to meet with them. Mr. Takahata said the next time JATA comes to Hawai'i is in 2023, and they would like to continue with that annually.

Mr. Arakawa said they must discuss the HTA delegation going to Japan on the May 9. Mr. De Fries said it is the Governor's Delegation and he asked Mr. De Fries to accompany him. Mr. De Fries said he is trying to get more details. Mr. Arakawa asked which budget those expenses come from. Mr. De Fries said it is from Hawai'i Tourism Japan's (HTJ) and HTA's budget.

Mr. Arakawa thanked Mr. De Fries and Chair Kam for putting on Agenda Items C, D, and E. They had comments from elected officials about reaching out and including them in HTA's meetings.

**c. Update by Representative Onishi, Chair of the House Committee on Labor and Tourism**

**d. Update by Senator Wakai, Chair of the Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism**

Mr. De Fries said he had an opportunity to meet with Sen. Wakai that morning to make sure that his statement about the two Bills pending was accurate. Sen. Wakai and Rep. Onishi both confirmed that it is the appropriate status.

Mr. Regan confirmed that Sen. Wakai was on the call. Mr. De Fries invited Sen. Wakai to offer any words.

Sen. Wakai said it was the last two most important days of the legislative session. In House Bill 1600, the State's \$17 billion budget, there was no sign of any money for HTA. The default position now had to be that HTA's budget lives in House Bill 1785. He gave a quick rundown on the Bill. The Bill creates a study that looks at what potential governance structures HTA might want to look at in the future. It puts into statute the DMAPs because the statute has a branding and marketing agency right now. With all the excellent work that Ms. Anderson had done over the past two years, he thought it appropriate, as HTA goes into mālama and kuleana, to have the other three pillars emphasized, the crux of the DMAPs.

The Bill also reorganized the HTA. Previously, HTA heavily weighted on branding and marketing, so they shifted, recalibrated, and reorganized things so that some of Mr. Ka'anā'anā's Branding team moved over. Sen. Wakai said they added one position, so HTA currently had 25 positions. With the reorganization, HTA would get 26 positions. The Bill also puts in \$60 million for HTA's operating budget. In addition, the Convention Center is not also in the HB1600, so the Bill also provides \$28.5 million for the Convention Center. HB1785 needs to pass, or else HTA will be defunded in the future. He said it is important for HTA to convey to Rep. Onishi the urgency of passage of the Bill. He said he would be there for the next two days working with HTA and Rep. Onishi. He hoped that they would have an update by the following evening.

Mr. Arakawa thanked Sen. Wakai and Mr. De Fries for their negotiations with the Senate on HB1785.

Mr. De Fries said that HTA is happy with how the amendments were made to the Senate draft of the Bill.

Ms. Kimura asked if the entire \$60 million is ARPA funds, and what would happen with the international market. She asked if ARPA funds could be used for international markets. Mr. De Fries said yes, for those that are domiciled in a foreign country, where they are headquartered.

Mr. Regan reiterated that it would be okay to utilize ARPA funds. He said they were a little hesitant because of it being tied to the original Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) monies which

were very restrictive in terms of how they could be utilized. He said the funds appear to be more flexible in nature.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā asked if they could RFP for international contractors, and Mr. Regan confirmed his understanding.

Mr. De Fries said if Rep. Onishi appeared online at any time, they would accommodate him addressing the Board as well.

Mr. Regan said they continue to focus their efforts on supporting their organization with finance-related needs. He said Mr. Togashi and his team continue to produce HTA's financial reports in a timely and efficient way to make sure they are available for the Budget Finance and Convention Center Committee Meetings. They also ensure they comply with GAAP, and other required accounting parameters and restrictions. In terms of procurement, HTA had been extremely busy over the last month and a half. He thanked Ms. Fermahin and her team for doing a great job with the different procurements and working on other RFPs. He reminded that HTA is constricted by 103D. They lost their procurement exemptions. He thanked Mr. Kinkley for helping with everything including the RFP contracts. He thanked HTA's planning team, with Ms. Anderson, who had been working diligently to move their DMAPs. He said she would give an update later.

Mr. Regan said HTA had an opportunity to give a very high-level overview briefing for their newest Board nominees before the Senate EET Committee. Mr. Regan said HTA intends to have a more in-depth Board overview in the next few weeks to get them up to speed on various things. As it relates to the EDA grants, the grant from the Governor assigned to HTA had not been submitted yet, but a lot of work is going on behind the scenes. He thanked Ms. Anderson for her help with that as well.

#### **e. Update by Visitor Industry Organizations**

Mr. Regan thanked Ms. Anderson for her help there as well. He welcomed and introduced HTA's newest member, Bryant Yubui, who was present in the meeting. He started on April 1 and is HTA's Contracts and Administrative Manager. Mr. Regan said Mr. Yubui has helped HTA with contracts, and helped on the procurement side. He has extensive experience, having worked at ETS and the Department of Health. Mr. Regan said HTA continues to work hard to support the team and different aspects of the administrative responsibilities, including finance, human resources, procurement, contracting, legislative and other issues.

Mr. De Fries asked Mr. Regan to introduce Item 6F.

**f. Presentation of the Phase 1 Reports for the Kaua'i, Maui Nui and Hawai'i Island Destination Management Action Plans and the Winter Progress Report for O'ahu Destination Management Action Plan**

Mr. Regan asked Ms. Anderson to give her presentation on HTA's Phase One report for Kaua'i, Maui Nui, and Hawai'i Island Destination Management Action Plans (DMAPs) and the Winter Progress Report for O'ahu DMAP.

Ms. Anderson said the DMAPs had been almost two years in the making. They started in July 2020 where they reached out to the mayors, and the Office of Economic Development in different counties to get their buy-in and support. They also reached out to HVCB, the island chapters, to ensure they were on board. She wanted to ensure it was a collective effort and had buy-in from the entities they needed as partnerships to move the DMAPs forward. She shared information on Phase 1 of the DMAPs. Phase 1 is not complete yet. She mentioned that in the meeting packet under 6F are the reports for each DMAP. She thanked Infology for their work in turning the report into infographics. She shared progress for each.

For Kaua'i DMAP, there were 34 sub-actions, of which all, except for one, are in progress. Some of them are moving into Phase 2. She thanked the county, the Kaua'i Visitor's Bureau, and all the industry partners, community organizations, and state agencies like DLNR for helping move the Kaua'i map forward. She highlighted some aspects of each. For the Kaua'i DMAP, the community RFPs helped move some of the actions forward. With the county of Kaua'i they developed a GetAroundKaua'i website, which helps provide information on alternative modes of transportation for visitors and residents. The Kaua'i Visitor's Bureau has been networking with DLNR. She said they also helped support Buy Local Kaua'i with the Alakoko store, which opened in January 2022.

She spoke about Maui's DMAP. For Maui, there were 18 sub-actions, and all, except for one were moved forward. Many partners were involved in the Maui DMAP that helped to push the DMAP forward. Many airlines are showing the Mālama Hawai'i video, not only in-flight but when visitors are making reservations, the videos are also pushed out. She said they also have the education and promotion of Hawai'i Sunscreen Law. HVCB has pushed out a campaign to address that. Ms. Anderson is also looking at putting sunscreen dispensers at beach parks. There are also airport advertisements to educate visitors about traveling responsibly throughout Maui. In 2021 they convened a meeting to address the impact at Hana to bring together state county agencies and nonprofits like the Maui Hotel and Lodging Association to get ahead of the summer peak.

She spoke about Moloka'i DMAP. Moloka'i is a very special island, and through the island, they are moving at the speed that the community wants to go. All are actions and sub-actions. All but three have been moving forward. The biggest one they formed was an advisory group for Moloka'i. The purpose of this group was to help in messaging to visitors and get involved in the implementation of the DMAP. She said they combined the advisory group with the Steering Committee, now a task force. They want to be involved in the actions.

For the Lāna'i DMAP, there are 23 sub-actions. All but two have moved forward. One of the actions is complete - Action C, which is the Lāna'i Culture and Heritage Center's Lāna'i Guide App. Funding from HTA has enhanced the app. The app's purpose is to showcase, share and educate visitors about the Lāna'i's cultural and natural resources. It also advises them of places not to go to and to travel responsibly throughout the island.

For Hawai'i Island there are 36 sub-actions, of which two were moved. The support of the county really helped to move the action. They issued several RFPs, where many nonprofit organizations were involved in helping to move the actions forward.

She spoke about the O'ahu DMAP. They are still in Phase 1. There are 37 sub-actions of which 84% are in progress, and four actions in Phase 2 have started to be worked on.

She showed some highlights of the HTA, OVB, and HTUSA rally testimony to address the short-term illegal vacation rentals with Bill 41. The City Council approved it, and it was signed by the mayor the previous Tuesday. HTUSA has been running a statewide post-arrival behavior messaging program through the WAZE driving app. OVB has put on messaging to address driving respectfully and parking in designated legal areas. Other partners helping to move this action are the Kahala Hotel and Resort. They have produced their own Mālama Hawai'i video and established The Kahala Initiative for Sustainability Culture and Arts. This program is marketed to its guests to take care of the place they are visiting.

Ko Olina Resort Association also features "Our Hawai'i is Our Home" video on their website. And O'ahu and the county are working on developing a GetAroundO'ahu website similar to Kaua'i's one, on encouraging different modes of transportation.

Mr. Atkins asked about county stewardship agreements. He asked Ms. Anderson to give an example of what they are.

Ms. Anderson said she did not have all the details, but they established agreements with nonprofit organizations to help stewards. Mr. Atkins said it was a great DMAP initiative and thanked Ms. Anderson for including it.



Mr. Arakawa asked Ms. Anderson for details on how Ko Olina uses HTA's video and the chances of other resorts using the videos across the state.

Ms. Anderson said in their Steering Committee meeting, Ko Olina is one of the members. The progress report, it is a sub-action, talking about things done. They mentioned making the mālama video for their hotel, and Ko Olina put the video on their website. HVCB was also part of a discussion with Kaua'i Visitor's Bureau, about tracking the number of hotels showing the videos. Brand managers are booking with airlines to determine how many airlines are putting their message on.

Mr. Ching asked if the HTA is defunded, does it mean DMAPs is also defunded. Mr. Regan said if HTA does not have funding for FY 2023, there will be no funds to support DMAPs or other HTA operations.

Ms. Kimura said one of the legislators went to the Maui Bureau's Board meeting and was unhappy that the shuttle bus had stopped. He thought HTA made that happen. He said HTA should charge visitors. HTA started the shuttle bus service from the airport, but the visitors did not want to wait an hour for the next bus, so it did not work out well.

Ms. Anderson said it was due to low ridership that the pilot program was discontinued. Mr. Atkins said the same thing happened in Kaua'i, but it took a lot of money to keep it sustainable.

Mr. De Fries acknowledged the Hawai'i Hotel Alliance Board Chair Gibson, and Hawai'i Lodging and Tourism Association President Hannemann. Both of them and their respective Board members have been very engaged with HTA with coordinating efforts toward supporting the passage of Bill 41 and maintaining support at the Legislature. He said it helps that Mr. Rafter is also on the Board of HHA. He mentioned that Jeff Wagner from the Outrigger Hotels and Resorts, and Tom Calame from Marriott were all supportive and engaged.

Mr. De Fries asked Mr. Ka'anā'anā to speak about his segment.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā said their Brand management team had been very busy in March. They had two major RFPs that were released. Agenda Item 10 today mentioned the US MMA RFP and the Sports Program RFP for 2022. In the community, HTA's CEP programs are engaging their kama'āina. He spoke about the various events and festivals. He spoke about the clean-ups at Sea Life Park. There was a big turnout of over 100 people cleaning the beach. He thanked everyone involved in this and everyone on the ground working for Destination Management and Regenerative Tourism. He mentioned upcoming opportunities for HTA to engage with and spoke about May Day. He said on Sunday, they have their event at Kapi'olani Park as they have done for over 90 years. He said the events will be covered in different agenda items.

Chair Kam asked if there were any questions from the Board or the public, but there were none.

## **7. Ho'okahua Hawai'i Standing Committee Report and Update**

Ms. Yuen said there was a meeting on Wednesday, April 20. Ms. Anderson had provided an update on the steps of the DMAPs. They also had an update from Ms. Morikawa on the Lei Program and what they are doing with the schools and educating the youth and helping with job placement, training programs, networking, and mentoring.

Mr. Apo did a presentation about restoring Hawaiianness to resort areas, and the report was done and inspired by Mr. Kanahale. He had also shared with HTA the 2016 update of the report, going over Mr. Kanahale's initial recommendations to restore Hawaiianness to Waikiki, and checking what still needed to be done. She said it provided an excellent roadmap for restoring Hawaiianness to the other resort areas.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā recognized Hālau Ka Lei Mokihana O Leinā'ala for its overall winning in this year's Merrie Monarch Festival. Mr. Atkins said the island of Kauai is extremely proud of Kumu Hula Leinā'ala Pavao Jardin.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā mentioned that HTA has been able to partner with Kumu Hula Jardin and has been on the road with her. She has been interacting with HTA's clients, and it is a great partnership. He commended Ms. Kanaho from the Kauai Visitors Bureau on her viral post with over 100,000 views and 1,200 shares.

Ms. Kimura asked about Mr. Apo's comments.

Ms. Yuen said it had to do with corporate training programs centered around something that is not based in Hawai'i. It is important for resorts, whether they are corporate or local. She said Mr. Apo was trying to encourage what tourism in Hawai'i is about.

Chair Kam thanked Mr. Downing for sharing the information about Mr. Apo, as there was such wisdom and knowledge in it. The report was done in 1993, almost 30 years ago, and there are so many treasured jewels.

Mr. Ching said he felt like Mr. Apo's view was jaded for good reasons.

Ms. Yuen mentioned what Mr. Apo said about the torch being passed, and that there is an opportunity to change the way they manage tourism, how they welcome guests, and to reconnect back to what is so special about Hawai'i.

## **8. Report and Update by the Budget, Finance, and Convention Center Standing Committee**

**a. Discussion and Action on the Recommendation by the Budget, Finance, and Convention Center Standing Committee on the HTA’s Financial Report for March 2022 as Presented at the April 26, 2022, Meeting**

Mr. Atkins said the Committee received an overview of the financials from HTA staff. The Committee recommended approval of the HTA's financials as presented and provided. He said Mr. Togashi did a great job. There were no questions from anyone. Chair Atkins asked for a motion. Ms. Kimura made a motion to approve the financial report as provided. Chair Kam seconded. Mr. Regan did a roll call, and the motion passed unanimously.

**b. Discussion and Action on the Recommendation by the Budget, Finance, and Convention Center Standing Committee on the Hawai’i Convention Center’s March 2022 Financial Report and Update on the Hawai’i Convention Center’s 6-Year CIP Plan as Presented at the April 26, 2022, Meeting**

Mr. Atkins said the Committee received an overview of financials from the HCC Management team, and an update on the prior maintenance activities at the Center. The Committee recommended approval for HCC's financials as presented. Mr. Atkins asked if there were any questions, but there were none. Mr. Atkins asked for a motion. Chair Kam made a motion and Ms. Kimura seconded. Mr. Regan did a roll call, and the motion passed unanimously.

**c. Discussion and Action on the Recommendation by the Budget, Finance, and Convention Center Standing Committee to Reallocate FY22 Convention Center American Rescue Plan Act Funds from Major Repair and Maintenance to Insurance in the Amount of \$419,345 to Support Convention Center Insurance for Property Coverage of the Convention Center**

Mr. Atkins said that the Committee recommended approval of the request to reallocate these funds for this item. This is an insurance policy on the physical plan, and what is inside the Convention Center. It is mandated by the State. It used to be a lot less, but in 2022 it went up to \$419,000. Mr. Atkins asked for a motion to approve the reallocation of funds. Chair Kam made a motion and Ms. Yuen seconded. Mr. Regan did a roll call, and the motion passed unanimously.

**9. Presentation and Discussion of Current Market Insights and Conditions in Hawai’i and Key Major Hawai’i Tourism Markets**

Ms. Chun provided the market insights dashboard and a copy of her presentation. She said Ms. Hagihara will load it onto the Board site and include it in the public Board meeting packet.

Ms. Chun spoke about the total expenditure for the month of March 2022. This expenditure did exceed prior years. The Bill expenditures are primarily driven by the U.S. market. U.S. west and east have increased. Looking at per person per day spend, it is higher as well. Canada's statistics are also higher. Visitor arrivals was dominated by the U.S. market, and were similar to the average daily census.

Ms. Chun moved onto the islands. Looking at O'ahu, it is the same as 2019, but per person per day spent is higher, which is encouraging. The visitor arrivals were down compared to 2019. This means people are spending more while they are here.

Ms. Chun spoke about TAT collections for March 2022. It was \$58.2 million. The preliminary year to date is \$526.8 million, which is 438.8% or \$429.1 million higher than the previous year.

Reasons for people visiting Hawai'i, are mainly for vacations. This is true for all the markets. She spoke about where people are staying, primarily in hotels and condominiums. Some people stay in a timeshare or rental houses. Looking at the hotel performance, overall occupancy for Hawai'i was 75.2%, a little lower than 2019, but it is at a much higher ADR. The RevPAR is higher than 2019. Vacation rental performance has lower occupancy than hotels. ADR is significantly lower. TAT is tied to ADR. She showed the slide with March 2022 hotel demand and how it compared to previous years. The hotel demand was much higher than vacation rentals.

Ms. Chun spoke about unemployment rates. Hawai'i has a 3.5% unemployment overall. The highest is in Kaua'i county at 4.6%, which is more than in prior months. She showed the graph with a downward trend for unemployment.

She spoke about the various industries. There was an increase in accommodation and food service/drinking places. She mentioned air seats. For the month of March 2022, there were fewer air seats than they had in 2019. Looking at domestic air seats, Hawai'i is strong on the domestic air seats for all the islands. April 2022 was similar but slightly ahead of April 2019. She spoke about air seats for May 2022. Domestic air seats were strong. There is some recovery coming back internationally. She spoke about the Skift Travel Index for March 2022. They are trending slightly higher globally. In March 2022, the U.S. had increased to 96.9% for travel.

Ms. Chun spoke about travel agency booking trends. There was less volume in bookings for the U.S. market in the last week, but looking at the trend for 2022 when people are coming, the trend is following historical trends for 2019. She showed the booking trend for Japan. It has increased slightly in the last week since announcing travel packages are allowed. She spoke about Canada following similar trends to prior years. For Korea, there has been an uplift in bookings. There are no sharp peaks as in 2019, but it is increasing slightly. She spoke about Australia, with a lower volume but similar trends as in 2019.

Ms. Chun shared a report they have been doing since the beginning of the pandemic. She showed the destination index trends. She showed the consideration for coming to Hawai'i. The percentage of people in the U.S. who plan to come to Hawai'i is around 25%. That is indexing higher compared to January 2020. Looking at the Japan charts, the number of people considering coming to Hawai'i is lower than in the U.S., but there was an increase in recent weeks. She said there are partners that are looking at the reports.

Mr. Atkins asked if there is a way to measure Japanese visitors' travel to golf is in response to the promotion that Mr. Takahata is planning this summer. Ms. Chun said she would work with Mr. Takahata to add a trigger question to the Japan YouGov survey.

Mr. Yuen asked about the data that Ms. Chun has and the projections. Ms. Yuen addressed the correlation of how much HTA is spending on Branding and Marketing based on projections of visitors. Ms. Yuen said there would be a peak in summer, so they have to gear up a few months before. She said there should be some way they could educate people and let the community know that HTA is preparing for the influx with the messaging they are doing.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā spoke about the marketing allocation platform. HTA has had its kickoff meeting for the development of the tool. They are working through the 6-week process to get it developed and finalized. He said they would test it and bring it back to the Board. He said it is a tool, and another input to help HTA make a holistic decision. He said these are very complex tools, with macroeconomic levers, decision levers, etc. Those are things HTA is trying to address in the DMAPs, or programs, on how they can demonstrate the benefits of tourism to kama'āina. He spoke to Ms. Yuen's question about how they make decisions about allocations and said there are many inputs, but they rely heavily on Ms. Chun's reports from her research team to inform the decision-making. He said they take all the input and try to make sense of it to give good recommendations to the HTA Board.

Ms. Kimura asked if the 3% of the TAT collection to county is included. Ms. Chun said it was not clarified in the previous meeting.

Mr. Regan said there were no questions from the public.

## **10. Report and Update by the Branding Standing Committee of their Meeting held on April 27, 2022**

### **a. Discussion and Action on Recommendation by the Branding Standing Committee on Approving Hawai'i Tourism Japan to Fully Implement its 2022 Brand Marketing & Management Plan Effective May 1, 2022**

**b. Update on RFP 22-01 HTA Hawai'i Destination Brand Marketing & Management Services for the United State Major Market Area as Discussed in the April 27, 2022, Branding Standing Committee**

Mr. Atkins went through a few things that did not require a motion. The first one is an update from Chief Brand Officer, Mr. Ka'anā'anā on recent industry partnership group meetings. This is something that Mr. Ka'anā'anā wanted to reinstate. Mr. Atkins asked Mr. Ka'anā'anā to give an update.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā mentioned one of the programs they wanted to reinstate, hearing some of the feedback that they had, from both Mr. Arakawa and others, was how to deepen collaboration with the industry and how to open the channels of communications. They recently reinstated their industry partner meetings. The purpose of those meetings is to provide an added opportunity for industry partners, GMTs, and HTA to stay connected, have an ongoing open dialogue, and address market challenges and opportunities, as they bring that tourism in a safe, responsible, and regenerative manner. He said they held their initial meetings in April 2022, with Canada, Oceania, China, Korea. They intend to have those meetings on a quarterly cycle. On the global MCI side, Oahu, those meetings are monthly. For Kaua'i, Maui, and Hawai'i, it will be every other month for the MCI. In setting up the industry partner groups, they tried to ensure they had diverse stakeholders with all the segments of the industries from ground transportation, activities and attractions, hotels, airlines, retail, restaurants, etc., and how to communicate with them. Those industry partner groups are active now, and they are back in action.

Mr. Atkins spoke about HTUSA, senior Director of Advertising and Marketing programs, Ms. Chun, who shared with HTA a Pono Travel Education Program that started last week. It was included in the meeting packet. He asked to show one sample of the banner that is at airports throughout the state.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā reiterated that it is a program they are administering via Pono Tourism USA. The intention is to reach the traveler and send the message throughout the entire traveler's journey with inspiration and awareness. They included confirmation emails with their partner hotels and airlines and will continue that messaging in-flight with most carriers to Hawai'i. He said they would continue the messaging at airports. This message is an invitation to live Aloha, and to respect and mālama Hawai'i. The HTA staff is working to increase the work. The HTUSA contract ends in June. Therefore, their sub-contracts will end in June. Mr. Ka'anā'anā said they have worked with airport advertising concessionaires that DOT has a contract with to secure the future of this messaging, especially during the summer season going forward.

Ms. Yuen asked if the messaging was up now, and Mr. Ka'anā'anā confirmed it was. She asked if it was difficult to get them up.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā said there were complexities, as with anything. He said it also depends on the concessionaires that control the advertising space, who have long term commitments with other advertisers in the airports. He said it is also about securing the right inventory to get a good mix and placements and then ensuring they have statewide coverage.

Ms. Kimura asked about the strategy. Mr. Ka'anā'anā said there is a strategy, which is the holistic approach to the entire traveler's journey. He mentioned the WAZE program and messaging visitors through the app. When using the app there are banner advertisements that serve the mālama Hawai'i message, how to share Aloha, and how to travel Pono when in the destination. They are also using paid social media to target visitors.

Mr. Atkins said that the airlines have started to help HTA with ticket purchases. He said they were going to have a busy summer. If they are working towards having a better Pono traveler, HTA is headed in the right direction.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā said the messaging is digital for the most part. He said there will also be some tension fabric displays that are more permanent for the more evergreen messaging.

Ms. Yuen thanked Mr. Ka'anā'anā for getting that done before the rush.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā said he would address the Board in May 2022 with his comprehensive plan to pick up the messaging from June 2022 onward. The placements run from April 18 to June 26. From June 27 onwards, HTA will keep up with the program. He said the Board had approved the separate budget line item for ocean safety messaging. They partnered with the Department of Health and Ocean Safety, and county-level departments statewide. He said there is messaging about how to be safe at the beach. The committee has approved all the messages. In partnership with HTUSA, they have been looking at innovative ways to put messaging in the airports that are non-traditional placements, such as curbside stickers while visitors wait for transportation. Mr. Ka'anā'anā said they would be meeting again with Mr. Davis from DOT. They met the previous week and discussed various topics such as restoring Hawaiianness to airports and creating a Hawaiian sense of place at airports.

Mr. Atkins said HVCB senior Vice President Chief MCI Sales Officer Mr. Reyes and Hawaiian Convention Center General Manager Ms. Orton gave their presentations and updates on the progress of upcoming global MCI initiatives. They covered recent events held at the Hawai'i Convention Center (HCC) like Hawai'i Hotels restaurants show, Association Asian Studies, and Kawaii Kon. They also discussed the short-term priorities of booking city-wide business for 2023

to 2026. He said more information could be found in the meeting packet. He mentioned that Ms. Orton reported that she had almost reached 2019 booking levels in small, short term and local business. He said it is important that HTA gets short-term business to keep their staff. He commended Ms. Orton on her excellent work. He spoke about Mr. Reyes and his dream team that will deliver in the future for city-wide events and individual hotels. He said HTA needs to support Ms. Orton and Mr. Reyes in their efforts.

Mr. Arakawa said the Kawaii Kon event stood out, and Mr. Atkins also wanted to highlight that event.

Mr. Regan could not reach Ms. Orton online to speak on Kawaii Kon.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā spoke about Kawaii Kon and said it was an incredibly successful turnout with more people than the organizers anticipated. He spoke about the Hawai'i Hotels, and Restaurants show from March 30 to 31, which had 2,000 or more attendees. The Association for Asian Studies, held from March 24 to 27, had 3,200 attendees. UH College of Engineering banquet was on April 14, with 800 attendees. He said their teams are all working hand in hand, and business is coming back. He reiterated that Ms. Orton mentioned a lot of the short-term opportunities and definite local bookings in April of 2022. There were also many graduations coming up that Ms. Orton said at the previous meeting.

Mr. Atkins spoke about Brand Manager Mr. Willkom's initial update on the global marketing efforts, related to HTA's recent sponsorship of the 2022 Ladies Professional Golf Association Lotte Championship. It was a powerful presentation, and Mr. Willkom's presentation was very positive. Mr. Willkom had mentioned the Korean, Japanese, Canadian, and USA market. Mr. Atkins suggested having Mr. Willkom show his presentation at the Branding Standing meeting in May 2022. He said that Mr. De Fries had interaction with the CEO, Mr. McCartney, with this event. This will help HTA address things beyond golf. The LPGA was very pleased with everything. Mr. Atkins said HTA is trying to solidify the same golf course for a multi-year contract. This is something that the Branding Committee will be taking up in 2023. He commended everyone at HTA for their hard work, as it was a last-minute booking. Mr. Atkins said Mr. Willkom also updated them on the 2022 Sports Program RFP 22/06, which was released on April 26, with a deadline for the proposal, May 26. HTA encouraged any interested parties. He spoke about what is in the RFP and who can apply for it.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā shared that the RFP was released and said there was a briefing on April 29. He encouraged interested parties to attend the pre-bidders conference.

Mr. Atkins added that for the RFP, there is no minimum, and it is open. Mr. Ka'anā'anā confirmed that to be correct. He said the procurement was drafted with direction from the



Board. HTA set up the three pillars of the sport strategy, including brand alignment and extension of the Hawaiian Islands Brand, the community benefits generated, and economic benefits generated. As a result of those guidelines, Mr. Ka'anā'anā and his team decided to write the RFP in such a way as to maximize the three pillars.

Mr. Atkins said it recently went out for RFP and a presentation from Hawai'i Tourism, containing their current activities proposed for future activities of the Brand marketing and management plans. He asked if there were questions about the RFP that went out for North America, but there were none.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā showed a slide for Agenda Item 10 A. He said they released the RFP 22-01, the Hawai'i destination Brand Marketing and Management Services for the USMMA, Major Market Areas, in alignment with tourism. He showed information on the next slide as to where to find the RFP. The main points of contact for the procurement are Mr. Regan and Ms. Fermahin, from the procurement team.

He showed a slide with important dates and the procurement timeline. The procurement was released on April 15. They did a pre-proposal conference on Friday, April 20, with a good turnout. They required intent to apply, which was due on April 22. They received over eight submissions for intent to apply. He said they have a written deadline question that just passed recently, on April 27. The team is busy compiling those, and HTA needs to respond on May 3. The most important deadline is the proposals due on May 17 at 4:30 p.m. Hawai'i Standard Time. He said they would notify finalists the week of May 23. They are targeting oral presentations the week of May 30, and then the final on Notice of Award Selection or non-selection, the week of June 6. The start of the contract is anticipated for June 30, 2022, and will end December 31, 2024. If an exercise option were to occur, it is a two-year option, and one of those will extend the contract through December 31, 2026.

There were no questions from anyone.

Mr. Atkins spoke about the discussion and action on recommendation by the Branding Standing Committee on approving Hawai'i Tourism Japan to Fully Implement its 2022 Brand Marketing & Management Plan effective May 1, 2022. He said this has to do with Japan being in the red light. Japan has started to open up. He said they had a very robust conversation about this the previous day. There were many questions from the Committee members, Board members, and Sen. Wakai. At the end, there was a motion from the Committee that HTA recommends to the Board that they should green light Japan moving forward. There was a lot of discussion around it. He opened it up to Board members and Sen. Wakai for any comments.

Mr. Arakawa highlighted a few key messages, and asked Mr. Takahata to speak about it as to why they are going forward with this and the main reasons.

Mr. Atkins asked that the whole slide deck be available today. As they went through the discussion on it, he said they had asked Mr. Takahata to bring up certain slides for a total review. He asked if any Board members had questions about those slides.

Mr. Atkins asked if Sen. Wakai could comment.

Sen. Wakai said his concern was what had been budgeted for HTJ - \$9 million. He said Mr. Takahata had conveyed to the Committee members that they expect to reach 40% of the arrivals they had experienced in 2019. His question to Mr. Takahata at the time was that in 2019, they were given \$9 million, and brought in 1.6 million visitors. If they are only going to bring in 40% of that 1.6 million visitors in 2022, is it a prudent investment to continue to give \$9 million. He said it should not be a lump sum payment every month. He mentioned the Japanese yen, which is at 127 yens per dollar.

Sen. Wakai also spoke about the fuel surcharge globally, which will increase the price of oil, and flights. He mentioned the Go To campaign in Japan that is focused on creating domestic travel. He mentioned the COVID issues that are still lingering. He said four things are working against the influx of Japanese tourists coming to Hawai'i. He is not sure they must buy into the idea that glory is right around the corner, paying \$9 million. He said the Board should take a more concerted look at managing their spending. If things come back to the way they were in 2019, it will be a great \$9 million investment, but considering the track record over the past two years, with 25,000 visitors in 2021, the spend was \$4.5 million on the Japan market. He said he is not sure it is a wise investment for the public. He said they should wait until they see the flow coming in before unleashing \$9 million into the market.

Mr. Atkins said he had direct discussions with Mr. Takahata before our Branding meeting, and then he listened the previous day to all the conversations. He agreed with Sen. Wakai's comments. He said if Japan is green-lighted, it does not mean they must go out and spend the money. He said there was a detailed plan of where the segments are and where the money should be spent, whether social media, travel agents, airlines, etc. Mr. Atkins said as Branding Chair, he would like Mr. Takahata to come back with a plan of where they can best utilize the money moving forward and where to put money out to get contracts.

Mr. Atkins said he does not want a blank check to be split per month. He said Mr. Ka'anā'anā had been the strongest Brand Manager so far. Mr. Atkins said he attended the JATA reception, and what he saw from that, is that the people want to reopen. They saw the partnership still exists, there is support, and they are willing to funnel millions of dollars to get everything back

up and running. Mr. Atkins said there would be some pent-up demand, but he would like to look further from pent-up demand to where HTA needs to have that growth that Mr. Takahata projected to get back to pre-pandemic levels sometime in 2023.

Mr. Atkins said the MMA is going out for the RFP in 2023, and because it goes out to RFP, there could be other bidders. He said HTA's relationship with Japan is key, not just the dollar amount. He said they have the Governor, Mr. De Fries, Chair Kam, and other key people, heading to Japan. It will be good for HTA to go there to give the green light to Japan, as it will send out a good message. He said accountability will be up to Mr. Ka'anā'anā and Mr. Takahata.

Mr. Takahata addressed several of Sen. Wakai's concerns. He mentioned the yen to the dollar exchange rate, which he covered in his presentation to the Branding Standing Committee. Historically, the yen had gone up and down, and they have seen the yen at a higher, or lower rate to the U.S. dollar, weaker than it is now. He said that historically 1997, they had 2.2 million Japanese visitors. That was their high-water market in 1997. The average yen to the dollar exchange rate for 1997 for the whole year was about 121 yen per dollar. He said the travel industry, airlines, and tour companies, are telling them that the yen exchange rate is not a big concern, only a slight concern. He mentioned the fuel surcharge, which is the effect of what is happening in Ukraine. He said that is more of a concern to the travel industry in Japan. The reason being is that they do not know how long the conflict will go on. He pointed out that the two biggest Japanese carriers, ANA and JAL, said the surcharge in 2011 went up to over \$300 for all-round trips, yet they still had a significant amount of Japanese visitors. He mentioned another challenge in 2011 when they had the Great Eastern Japan earthquake, which affected visitors from Japan.

Mr. Takahata spoke about the pent-up demand they have seen from the domestic market, which will override a lot of the concerns for the Japanese market. He mentioned that bringing back the international market is very different from bringing back the domestic market. He said bringing back the international market after two years takes time and care.

Mr. Arakawa asked Mr. Takahata if they would be charging the same amount, or getting the same amount every month, divided by eight. He asked if their program is focused on the marketing as it relates to certain roles or if it deviates

Mr. Ka'anā'anā said the contract is written and drafted so that it has a specific payment and compensation schedule. He said the staff monitors it on a monthly basis, and they are invoiced for actuals on a month-to-month basis. This is in consultation and constant communication with Mr. Goo, the specific contract manager, and brand manager for this contract, together with Mr. Ka'anā'anā. They evaluate at the mid-year point and the final year. They are asking for the

board's permission to greenlight the Japan market, effective May 1, 2022. This allows HTA to take the \$7.6 million that is still available in the contract to position Hawai'i in a way to get started. Some of that Bill is also making sure that HTA continually educates travelers before they come to Hawai'i. He called it an Edu-invitation, educating visitors while inviting them. Some of the branding is focused on that. Some of them are co-op partnerships that HTA needs to maintain its relationships with the Japanese market.

Ms. Kimura said her thoughts were that Japanese addiction to Hawai'i is a lot higher than the U.S. Once the government lifts the restrictions, she said the influx would be better than the U.S. market. She said they should set a numerical goal for the next three months, then re-examine it. Mr. Takahata said that would be fine.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā said that it sounded like Japan would still be in the red. He said they have been doing that in three-month quarterly increments where they ask the Board for permission to spend a specific amount in a given quarter. They have been managing this under red light. He said they would be mindful about what and how they spend money on a monthly basis. Their GMTs are building on an actual basis.

Mr. Atkins mentioned Mr. Downing's comment from earlier. He said almost all of HTA's business comes from the West Coast.

The visitors they will be getting from Japan for summer will be traveling with a tour package. They will be traveling to places that are included in the package, and will not be hiring cars, etc. He said he would rather see that the hotels in Waikīkī get the 30% back. He said the Japanese are pono travelers and very respectful travelers. He said they must try get the Japanese business back. He said all the businesses are doing better and the hotels are full. Waikīkī is doing much better than they did six months ago.

He spoke to Mr. Downing's comment on wanting 100% coming from West Coast. He said it would be a more upscale traveler but said they would still have people renting cars and visiting everywhere. He said this is the traveler they need for balance.

Mr. Downing said he is new to HTA and asked the other members if they had had any problems with HTJ in the past. He also asked if they believed in the HTA team with their capabilities. He said HTA should not stand in HTJ's way but trust them to go ahead. He said there is no need to micromanage them but to have faith in HTJ and HTA.

Mr. Arakawa agreed with what Mr. Downing said. As per what Ms. Kimura said, he said they have faith in HTJ and their staff. He said they also have faith in the HTA staff. He said if they

green light Japan, they have faith in the contractor, HTA staff, and the Board to proceed prudently.

Sen. Wakai commented on Mr. Downing's comment. He said they must keep in mind what the track record was. In 2021, HTJ brought in 25,000 Japanese visitors. This Board spent \$4.5 million for those 25,000 visitors. That is \$180 per visitor. Back in 2019 the average visitor per cost arrival was about \$6. It went up from \$6 per visitor expenditure for HTA, to \$180 last year. He could not say that everything was going so well and that they should continue spending on Japan. He was not against the idea of budgeting \$9 million for Japan, but said they should unleash the money when the time was right. He agreed that Japanese are the most coveted visitors Hawai'i can ask for it. He agreed with Mr. Takahata and Ms. Kimura that there is substantial pent-up demand. He said these are not positive, as the yen is high, there is a fuel surcharge, and a Go to Campaign is trying to cultivate domestic travel to not have people travel outside of Japan. COVID still has a 10,000 per day foreign arrival restriction. He said that all of these things would work themselves out in the future, but it is not now. He conveyed to the Board that they should spend money wisely.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā clarified that the actual spend in 2021 was \$3.6 million against the \$4.5 million that was budgeted. They did not spend the entire budgeted amount. The actual spend was \$3.6 million. He noted that the cost per arrival metric is not the only metric in the toolbox that they use to assess the investment HTA is making. He said the Board gives him and his team direction about how they should educate visitors. They hear it from communities through the DMAP process. His team focuses its branding message on the Evergreen awareness, inspiration, and education. He knows they will have to manage pent-up demand from Japan. He said they are currently managing U.S. pent-up demand. There are several challenges, and everything is more expensive. Inflation is the highest at the moment. He said month to date, there were 7,200 arrivals from Japan so far, April through April 26. For the year, they are at 19,157 arrivals 2022 through April 26. The Japanese government moved Hawai'i to level two, which allowed package travel sales to begin. He said they are seeing Golden Week arrivals coming back in, but it will be slow. He said that as per JATA's information, they are moving forward.

He said Hawai'i's relationship with Japan is very important. HTA will be able to reaffirm that relationship through the delegation visit they have at the beginning of May 2022. He said he is also mindful of carrying the kuleana of spending taxpayer money. The investment from last year generated \$9.76 million in tax revenue for the State against the \$3.6 million that was spent.

Mr. Regan had a question from a Zoom audience member. The question was: how are the dollars used? They asked the justification for \$9 million budgeted for the Japan market. They asked if it was to overcome past messaging or to stimulate interest.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā answered the questions. He reiterated what he said about the Branding messaging, the education, and the invitation that they put out, encouraging visitors globally to behave appropriately while in destination - taking a trip that gives back. It is not necessarily about overcoming past messaging in the Japan market, where you get to stimulate the interest, but it is about maintaining awareness and Pono travel. How to keep Japanese travelers educated about the changes that have taken place since the pandemic, etc. HTA has to facilitate deep networking. They ensure their agents who sell packages to Hawai'i have the latest information about what is happening in the destination. HTJ, HTUSA, Korea, China, Oceania, etc., are all giving that messaging. A lot of work happens beyond the paid media they put out.

Mr. Atkins asked Mr. Talwar about how many months does it take to see arrivals from the marketing efforts from the time a marketing program is launched.

Mr. Talwar said every market is different. He said a lead time is needed, and it also depends on what the objective is. If the marketing program objective is sales, it is one lead time. If it is to add another dimension to an existing brand, then the lead time is a bit longer. It is a unique situation in Japan, that none of them have faced before. They have had similar situations, but not for this extended period of time, so for the market to restart from a sales perspective is a few months out. The branding, which is the overarching initiative, will be even longer. For a lot of the Japanese market, Hawai'i is their happy place. He said they need to frame that with additional messaging about Mālama Ku'u Home and mindful travelers.

Mr. Atkins asked again about the lead time.

Mr. Talwar said it is in the four to six-month timeframe, depending on where they reside.

Mr. Takahata reiterated what Mr. Talwar said with the two layers. Doing certain activities and initiatives to drive sales. He said about Japan, they have those two runnings concurrently. They want the branding together as fast as possible and want to drive sales.

Ms. Kimura asked what their plan is for the next three months, from May 2022 to July 2022, and how much it would cost.

Mr. Takahata said they have a proposed budget coming together to submit to HTA for review before the next Board meeting. Mr. Takahata said if they go from May 2022 or June 2022, it is a gradual ramp-up to September, or October. There will be a slight drop-off in December or

November because they will be trying to drive business. The reason being is that the industry is moving that way. The bulk of their resources to drive business for Q3, Q4, and Q1 of next year by the industry is being extended now in the market.

Ms. Kimura asked if they thought of spending more in the first three months or later in the year, meaning they would spend less in the following three months.

Mr. Takahata said they would spend less in the first three months versus the back three months.

Mr. Atkins asked if Mr. Takahata would have the chart in the following marketing meeting, and Mr. Takahata confirmed he would.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā mentioned that on the contract management side, everything is reported to him and his team on a weekly basis. It is a constant conversation that he and Mr. Goo track closely.

Mr. Atkins asked for a motion from the Board to vote on the green light for Japan approving Hawai'i Tourism Japan to fully implement its 2022 Brand Marketing & Management Plan effective May 1, 2022.

Chair Kam made a motion, and Mr. Ching seconded. Mr. Regan did a roll call, and the motion passed unanimously.

## **11. Legislative Update on the 2022 Legislative Session and Related Bills Relevant to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority**

### **a. Overview and Update on HB1600**

### **b. Overview and Update on HB1785**

### **c. Overview and Update on SB775**

Mr. Regan said a lot of these items were covered by Mr. De Fries previously. Mr. Regan reiterated they are all working hard through the process, trying to support where they can, and it is fluid. Mr. Regan deferred to the Board and the legislative PIG for updates. Mr. Arakawa said what Mr. De Fries said was efficient. HTA has to work hard in the next two days to bring resources and information to the House and the Senate so they can decide to help fund HTA.

## **12. Closing Cultural Protocol**

Mr. Ka'anā'anā said he continues to be inspired by people's willingness to share Aloha. He said they spend a lot of time explaining how they educate visitors, but they must also remember to

conduct themselves appropriately in their island community. He said they must remind themselves of the beauty of Hawai'i, and they all have responsibilities to take care of each other, their families, and Hawai'i, as a whole.

Mr. Casson-Fisher did the closing protocol.

Chair Kam said Mr. De Fries did an amazing presentation at the Travel Weekly, with 350 people giving a standing ovation. Mr. Ka'anā'anā said at the Travel Weekly there are not often standing ovations. He said what Mr. De Fries spoke about moved the people in the room. Mr. Arakawa asked if the presentation was online. Mr. Ka'anā'anā says he does not think it was recorded.

### **13. Adjournment**

Ms. Kimura made a motion to adjourn, and Mr. Ching seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Regan concluded the meeting at 12:32 p.m.



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Sheillane Reyes  
Recorder