



HO'OKAHUA HAWAII STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING
HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY
Tuesday, April 25, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.
VIRTUAL MEETING

MINUTES OF HO'OKAHUA HAWAII STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Keone Downing (Chair), Mahina Duarte (Vice-Chair), Kimberly Agas, Stephanie Iona, Sig Zane
NON-VOTING MEMBERS:	George Kam
MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:	Mike White, Dylan Ching
HTA STAFF PRESENT:	Daniel Nāho'opi'i, Kalani Ka'anā'anā, Caroline Anderson, Maka Casson-Fisher, Ilihia Gionson, Carole Hagihara
GUESTS	Albie Miles, Paula Daniels, Malie Sanders, Noelani Shilling-Wheeler
LEGAL COUNSEL:	John Cole

1. Call to Order and Opening Protocol

Mr. Casson-Fisher called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Mr. Casson-Fisher did the opening protocol.

2. Roll Call to Announce Name of Participating Board Members and to Identify Who Else is Present with Board Member if Location is Non-public

Mr. Casson-Fisher did the roll call. All confirmed that they were in attendance and alone.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the February 16, 2023, Committee Meeting

Chair Downing asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Duarte made a motion, and Ms. Agas seconded. Mr. Casson-Fisher did the roll call, and the motion passed unanimously.

4. Presentation and Discussion on Hawai'i Food Systems

Ms. Duarte invited two subject matter experts regarding what is happening locally in Hawai'i with the shift towards regenerative agriculture and sustainable food systems, as the HTA is making its transformation to a more regenerative model. There is a shift and a redirection towards a newer, more regenerative-led movement for regenerative agriculture. She spoke about initiatives the HTA is already doing, like the O'ahu Good Food Pledge. Food systems are important as part of Hawaii's 'āina and ancestral systems, including everyone.

Ms. Duarte introduced Dr. Miles, an assistant professor of sustainable community food systems at the University of Hawai'i, West O'ahu. He earned his Ph.D. in Environmental Science, policy and management from UC Berkeley, and his research explores relationships between farming system biodiversity and ecosystem services from agriculture and looks at the structural obstacles and opportunities to sustainable food and farming systems. Ms. Duarte said she has worked with him for two years, and because of that work, she also met Ms. Daniels, a Maui native and Hawai'i daughter. Ms. Daniels spent time at LA County, helping the school district to restructure their policies and procedures and build collective will towards food systems that are healthier and more equitable. Ms. Daniels is also the co-founder of What's Next and the chair of the Board for the Center for Good Food Purchasing. Ms. Duarte gave the floor to Ms. Daniels and Dr. Miles to talk about the role that the HTA can play in their work.

Dr. Miles spoke about the context of food systems in Hawai'i. The food system encompasses all the drivers, activities, and resources that go into producing, distributing, consuming food, and waste disposal. The food system has a profound influence on public health, culture, society, economics, and the environment.

Dr. Miles explained why they need to transform elements of the food system. He said that increasingly there is a growing scientific literature pointing to the food and agriculture sector as a principal driver of adverse environmental and public health externalities or hidden costs. He spoke about a report in 2018, where 130 national academies of science and medicine across Africa, Asia, the Americas, and Europe pointed to the global and regional food systems as fundamentally underdelivering on public health and nutrition being a key driver of global ecological change. Importantly, greenhouse gas emissions contribute to climate change. Their high-level call is that food systems need to be fundamentally transformed to mitigate and adapt to climate change and promote public health and well-being.

Dr. Miles spoke about CDC data on some of the hidden costs of the cheap food policy. He said food is abundant in the marketplace. For low-income residents, the types of food available to them and that they regularly consume are causing a range of adverse public health outcomes. Money is being lost due to chronic illnesses associated with a poor food system and diet. Significant health inequities exist between the average citizen in the state of Hawai'i and the

Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders community, with premature mortality being three times that of the average Hawai'i resident. This is due to chronic illness related to diet and other behavioral risk factors. It is important to understand that diet and access to quality food are one of the key drivers of some significant health inequities in the state. He said they do import a lot of foods that they consume. 85% to 90% of key commodities are imported. They do produce fresh fruits, vegetables, and fish, but other than that, they are importing everything. They have a shortage of commercial household or emergency food storage in Hawai'i. At the same time, many residents have high food insecurity rates in the native Hawaiian community. This is a long-standing, problematic issue that they need to tackle systemically. Agriculture can play a role, but he said there is a need for food system transformation to address various systemic problems, including vulnerabilities. Because a lot of food is imported from the port of Honolulu, it is the bottleneck in the system. The Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency suggests they have five to seven days' food supply in Hawai'i if the port of Honolulu had to close. They do not have any comprehensive resilience strategy in place. All the critical infrastructures are on the south of the island, and they do not have a plan to help build greater resilience and equity in the food system.

Dr. Miles said there are a few critical vulnerabilities in the food system, including a high risk of future interruptions to the food supply given the changing climate. Hawai'i is geographically isolated, with fewer support systems at its disposal, as pointed out by the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency (HiEMA). If there were to be a category three hurricane in the port of Honolulu, all the critical food storage and import infrastructure would be within the inundation zone. Even though they may store some food at the port of Honolulu, it is a risk. The food system is an important nexus for so many social, ecological, and cultural issues. If they can design and execute a comprehensive sustainable food system development initiative, they can tackle all the issues simultaneously. There are global and regional food system development initiatives, including the EAT-Lancet Commission. Hawai'i could implement something like that to help them think about food system transformation. Across the continental United States, there are eighteen states, some multi-state regions, and municipalities with food system planning and implementation efforts, which they have been looking at. Based on what was happening around the continent, they wrote a grant to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Regional Food System Partnership Program about the initiative they are calling to transform Hawaii's food system. The intention is to help them think systematically about how to create a new food and agriculture economy in Hawai'i that integrates multiple issues they are all concerned about. Biocultural restoration, Hawaiian self-determination, climate change, resilience, public health, and nutrition are all things that they can solve simultaneously through food system change.

Dr. Miles said they have been working for the last couple of years on projects including an assessment of institutional purchasing. They are crafting an integrated state food policy framework to guide public policy and investment in Hawai'i toward realizing important ecological, cultural, and social public health goals. Recently, they had their first Hawai'i Food System Summit with several elected officials attending. The conversation was around the key public policies they need to put forward to make structural change happen in the Hawai'i food system. They went through a prioritization process of a range of public policy ideas. The number one policy idea from the conversations was a state-level food system planning process. He said the bill might pass. The bill will initiate this planning process through a working group that will be housed in the Department of Agriculture. He showed a slide with research related to institutional purchasing and the tourism industry.

Dr. Miles spoke about recent publications about consumers' and tourists' interests in local food products from Hawai'i. One study from earlier in the year looked at the willingness of the U.S. mainland visitors who want to support local food and agriculture in Hawai'i. The findings were:

1. 78% of respondents stated they were ready to pay a higher price to purchase locally grown food, indicating a willingness to aid local agriculture by increasing restaurant/hotel meal bills.
2. The majority of respondents indicated that they would pay up to 5% more for locally grown food.
3. The average respondents were willing to pay between 6%-10% more for local food.
4. Several respondents claimed willingness to pay 11%-50% more for locally produced meals in a restaurant or motel.
5. More than 70% of survey respondents would be willing to pay an additional charge to support sustainable tourism in Hawai'i

Another study focused on the local population. The summary was that 31% of Hawai'i resident respondents stated they are willing to spend 10-15% more on local food products.

Dr. Miles spoke about the \$40 million grant they received from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and it is intended to do a few things, including payment to growers for the production of climate-smart commodities. At the same time, there is money available to do a few things related to institutional purchasing and supporting local agriculture. There is money to assess the data needs of tourism industry actors to find out what is needed regarding institutional purchasing. At the same time, they will take the studies around willingness to pay and survey the Japanese tourism market, which is robust. He said there seems to be a significant amount of cumulated data suggesting that if some of the key tourist institutions

begin moving toward increased institutional purchasing, there is a market and a willingness to pay a premium for it. Dr. Miles turned the floor over to Ms. Daniels.

Ms. Daniels spoke about the O'ahu Good Food program. She has been part of it for the last couple of years. The program was developed as an initiative of the mayor's office. It is based on the work she has been doing with the Center for Good Food Purchasing. She said it is a step that an institution can take to start making a difference in the food systems. It is the solution set. The O'ahu Good Food program has two components. One is the municipal institutions within the city. The city and county of Honolulu has been enrolled in the program through the directive of Mayor Blangiardi. There was also the extension of the program to the tourism industry. They had hotel and restaurant representatives, all taking the pledge to support the program.

Ms. Daniels spoke about the program she developed. She said it is a big part of what the O'ahu Good Food Program is about. She said it is about ideas on what else could be done. The Good Food Purchasing Program is based on the knowledge that there are issues in the areas and the problems they want to support. It is meant to be positively framing and shifting the way that institutions work to positively address those issues in the food systems to support everyone. They got input from the community and farmers on all the issues. The theory of change is the five values embedded in the system. Because of some of their success in L.A., where they went from less than 10% local purchasing produce to an average of 60% after being engaged in the program, people around the country have shown interest. Over 65 institutions are doing the work in over 25 cities nationwide. In addition to institutions being involved in the program, there has been an elected body's executive order or official declaration to officially endorse and have the program be part of the regional institutions. What is significant for the Board is that the program may help get to the Aloha Plus Challenge of 30% local by 2030.

Ms. Daniels showed a slide of institutions enrolled in the program. The point of the program and the reason it was developed is that it is to help public institutions with large food services do more with public dollars. She explained how it works. They collect the data. At this stage, they have 5,000 supplier inputs in the database. There is over \$1 billion of purchasing data collected. They can provide a lot of good information to an institution with a feedback loop so they can see how they are doing to make necessary shifts.

Ms. Daniels spoke about the aggregate regional dashboard. The idea is to get a dashboard to get comparative data. She spoke about France's figures and the Egalim Law, which applies to the entire country's institutional food purchasing. They have their own certifications, as does the U.S. France, which has over 2,500 institutions in France that are reporting their information.

Ms. Daniels said the only airline that has information about food systems is Hawaiian Airlines. She said it would be great if all the tourism industries feeding into Hawai'i were giving tourists that kind of information, participating in the local farms, etc. The hotels could also have a lot more information displayed about Hawai'i.

Ms. Duarte asked Mr. Ka'anā'anā and Ms. Anderson if they could outline what the HTA was doing in terms of leading these kinds of efforts. Ms. Anderson thanked the presenters for their presentation. She said the HTA has been doing many things in Agri-tourism, trying to build that up, especially through the DMAPs. Each action plan talks about purchasing locally and supporting the agriculture industry. She said they have been working with CTAHR to develop Agri-tourism. The HTA partnered with them to develop a guide on developing Agri-tourism for those farms. The HTA has also partnered with enhancing the Hawai'i Trails app for visitors and kama'āina to know where the Agri-tourism business is, farmer's markets are, etc. The HTA has also been promoting that through its partners. Through DMAP efforts, she acknowledged Ms. Schilling-Wheeler and Ms. Orlans at the O'ahu Visitors Bureau who are actively working with the city and county for the O'ahu Good Food program. The HTA also sponsored OVB for the show a few months ago. She said the webinar is coming on May 5, where the HTA is partnering with Hawai'i Food Health hui to connect the visitor industry with Hawai'i food hubs.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā said other initiatives like the Kūkulu program often fund local community-based non-profit groups restoring fertile lands and bringing them back into production as part of cultural revitalization. Everything is interconnected. All of those programs help get fresh food into the community. He spoke about the Aloha Hawai'i website, the visitor portal, and the GoHawai'i app, which is on the marketing side of the HTA. He said it also gets communicated via the island chapters and the international GMTs.

Ms. Anderson mentioned that they are working to build the industry's capacity and will be conducting technical assistance programs to develop Agri-tourism in communities as well. Mr. Ka'anā'anā said another important metric is the \$98 million spent by visitors on Hawai'i agriculture products. As the HTA moves through their strategy on the branding and marketing side, they ensure the brand marketing plans have Made in Hawai'i products and all the value-added agricultural products. They encourage people to buy local and consume things locally.

Ms. Duarte said it is exciting that they have two subject matter experts with a good grasp of the research and data. Ms. Duarte asked if there were any questions. Mr. Ka'anā'anā noted the HTA's partnership with the BDSD in DBEDT and their work. They have the kuleana to revamp and rebrand the Made in Hawai'i logo and brand. They ensure alignment with the Hawaiian Islands brand and the Made in Hawai'i, and also work with Sharon at the Department of Agriculture on the quality seal and the Made in Hawai'i with Aloha.

Ms. Sanders asked Dr. Albie about his research study. She asked if he found there was a barrier for Hawai'i because it costs a lot to lease, and if so, are there any ideas that came out of the study to help break down the barrier, to encourage systematic change. Dr. Albie said those studies did not look at structural obstacles to local agriculture, but in pilot studies in the past, the number one challenge in contributing to the goal of doubling food production in Hawai'i is access to affordable land under secure lease terms, access to skilled labor, access to capital, access to food processing infrastructure, etc. He said the willingness to pay data might indicate that if institutions are willing to pass on some of the higher costs, then they can also compensate some of the growers, but there needs to be a range of policies put forward to make farming in Hawai'i competitive with other places.

Ms. Duarte asked if Ms. Iona had any comments. Ms. Iona said she worked with Ms. Daniels when they were engaged in the farm-to-state program in Kaua'i. She provided great guidance to them, and they are on track for everything Ms. Daniels proposed. She shared that they have large farms, and the commitment was to help small farms. The problem with letting land to a small farmer is that they gave up because it was hard work. They then did another pilot project with a farmer at Kekaha; they paid for the land and water, helped him with infrastructure, and now he is a successful taro grower. His commitment to them is to support the schools for a percentage, and he has done a great job. She said they had to give land that was absorbed into their companies to make it work. She said they would be producing more taro than anywhere in Hawai'i. She said it is a commitment of funding.

Ms. Duarte asked Ms. Daniels and Dr. Miles to highlight the important areas. Ms. Daniels said she is a big believer in data as a way to measure progress and make progress. She asked if the HTA would consider working with the institutions that serve food as part of the tourism industry, e.g., hotels, restaurants, etc. If they could voluntarily collect information on how much local purchasing they have from local producers and what crops they are purchasing and service, and then provide that information to a system, they would have a collective understanding of what is being done. Dr. Miles said that through the huge grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, they want to begin assessing key actors within the tourism industry and understand what data needs they have to start considering taking steps in the institutional purchasing pathway. They want to meet with people in the tourism industry and then collect the data. Ms. Duarte said the legislators are also tracking the data. Ms. Duarte gave the floor to Chair Downing. Chair Downing thanked everyone for the great presentation and said he sees a lot of work.

5. Status Update on the EDA Projects

Chair Downing gave the floor to Ms. Anderson. Ms. Anderson updated on the EDA grant. It was approved by the EDA on March 21. They are working on an agreement with DLNR for funding. The finance team is preparing the paperwork to draw the EDA fund. They met with the regional director of EDA on April 17, sharing about the HTA and the various projects for the EDA funds.

Chair Downing said they had robust discussions about the EDA. He said there were seven projects, but the Waikīkī snorkel trail did not resonate with him. They had a Zoom meeting a year ago in June, and he had told DLNR about his reservations about the trail. He wanted to hear more about it before putting in the money. He said he had not received any information to date. When the money was agreed upon in March, he still had reservations about the trail project, and at that time he did not think it was prudent to go forward, not knowing what the plan was. He would still like to hold back on that project. He asked Ms. Anderson and Mr. Nāho'opī'i to be mindful of his mindset. He wondered if Mr. Nāho'opī'i had any comments.

Mr. Nāho'opī'i said they should be more specific on the issues for the project. Chair Downing said his issues are that they do not have a plan. They had a generalization on what they could do, but there was no more information. They said they are working on it, but he has an issue with the timeline because of the regulatory groups they need to go through, etc. He said they should use the money to enhance programs already being done. He said if the money could help the trail be the best it could be, he would rather see that than the trail being average. For the amount of money they need for the trail, they should have all their paperwork in place. He said the HTA is responsible for the money. Mr. Choy said if there is a chance that the DLNR project does not come to fruition, then they have to return the money to DLNR. As the finance director of the HTA, Mr. Choy wanted to ensure the Board fully understands the exposure they have. Perhaps they could either work with the DLNR. If the project does not come to fruition, they will have to return the funds. Mr. Choy said maybe there is a better way of utilizing the money. Chair Downing said they would look at the agenda item again in the full Board meeting. There was no further discussion or comments. The members said they could discuss it at the Board meeting. They all concurred. Mr. Ka'anā'anā made a note to keep that in mind. He asked Ms. Anderson whether they had closed out the DLNR contract for brushing and clearing, which is several years old. He said that needs to be sorted out.

Chair Ching made a motion to bring the agenda item about the snorkel trail project, one of seven projects, to the full Board based on uncertainty on the funding, to be discussed there. Chair Downing made a motion, and Ms. Duarte seconded. Mr. Casson-Fisher did the roll call, and the motion passed unanimously. Ms. Anderson said for the other DLNR projects, there is state-wide trail capacity study, GO CARE equipment and educational materials, Ala Kahakai

interpretive plan, and the land stewardship program, to name a few. In addition, they have funding regarding the urban trail, and funding for branding programs.

6. Status Update on the Waikīkī Historic Trail Project

Chair Downing gave the floor to Ms. Anderson. Ms. Anderson updated on the program made on the Waikīkī historic trail. She thanked everyone for their hard work. The project is moving along and taking time because of approvals by different departments. They had a committee meeting with their advisory group to share what was happening with the project. Everyone in the advisory group was excited to move the project forward. She gave the floor to Ms. Sanders.

Ms. Sanders gave a brief overview of what the historic trail is. In late 1990, the co-founder of NaHHA, Mr. Kanahale, researched many of the Waipana culturally significant sites in and around the Waikīkī area. He came up with a recommendation of 144 items published in a 1993 publication called Restoring Hawaiianness to Waikīkī. Those items were all things that he felt needed addressing. By 1996, the city and county of Honolulu had adopted much of Dr. Kanahale's publication into the Waikīkī planning and program guide. The Waikīkī historic trail was one of the first major initiatives to come to fruition through a joint city and private sector effort to take on some of the action items included in the report. The project began construction in 1997, with the first marker installed in October 1998. By 1999 NaHHA had initiated walking toward the markers that were completed. In June 2002, the final marker was installed. Initially, 20 of 23 sites had an interpretive surfboard marker signage, and two of the remaining sites along the trail were included with new statues of historical figures. One marker is not a marker but a cultural site. The city sponsored seven markers, and NaHHA raised funds in the private sector for the remaining thirteen. They were expected to last twenty years. The markers are now 26 years old and are in dire need of refurbishment. The bronze encapsulating the marker needs attention, and the porcelain faces have long outlived their intended lifespan. Some markers are missing, some have been relocated during renovation, and others are in locations that are not conducive to a walking path or are out of place from where they could potentially or should be. Other sites that could use a marker of their own have not been previously included. Those are all opportunities to add content to those stories using 21st-century technology and allowing for translation into multiple languages, making the markers more interactive and appealing to a broader audience.

Dr. Kanahale had a quote where he talked about the greatest threat to Waikīkī being the two-headed monster, local cynicism, and ignorance. He also said the best remedy for ignorance is education. Ms. Sanders concurred with that.

Ms. Sanders spoke about the committee support team that had been working on the project, and the cultural Advisory committee members and their credentials. She said they had an update meeting with the cultural Advisory committee sharing with them the process they went through and the next steps for moving forward. She showed a few pictures of the markers. There is an opportunity to move the markers to where they will be better cared for and appreciated by the public.

Ms. Sanders showed a slide of a map of Waikīkī, where the markers are situated. She showed a slide with the suggested locations for the new trail and a slide with the estimated plan for the phases of the project. They are unsure how long it will take to extract the markers from the ground and then put them back in. They will do a test run to see how long it will take. There is an estimate of about three months for the pre-planning. They need to do a presentation in front of the Departmental Parks and Recreation as they also need to be involved in the permitting and permissions for the restoration project. They also have to do a presentation in front of the city council, which they do not have a date for, but it will be in May or June 2023. They have conducted the meeting in front of the Department of Parks and Recreation, and the next step is to go on a walking tour in May 2023 with DPR's representative to map out the sites to ensure the locations are good enough to house the markers.

Ms. Anderson said they are using O'ahu DMAP funds and EDA funds for the project. Chair Downing asked how much it would cost. Ms. Sanders said Ms. Anderson and Ms. Shilling-Wheeler had assessed the hardware's cost for the markers and how much it would cost to install. The difficulty is not knowing how much the excavator will cost to extract the marker.

Ms. Anderson asked Ms. Shilling-Wheeler about the O'ahu DMAP funds for the hardware portion. Ms. Shilling-Wheeler said they are looking at the cost in two ways: hardware and software costs. The hardware is everything to do with the physical part of the markers, the excavation, etc. They have set aside \$189,000 for that. The software cost is content and website costs. She gave the floor back to Ms. Anderson. Ms. Anderson said that amount is about \$75,000 for content, a website, and an app.

Chair Downing asked what it would look like so the Board could understand what it would entail. Ms. Sanders said they had conversations about using different materials, thinking about what is regenerative and sustainable and what is most socially responsible. Because the markers are made out of bronze, they do not want to put that in their landfill. They want to see if there is a way to save the metal part of the markers and restore them, using an expert that specializes in that. They have found an expert for that. They will also upgrade the technology of the porcelain faces. The city tends to like the marker shape, which has already been approved.

It speaks to the heritage of surfing and the cultural elements of Waikīkī, so they want to stick with that shape but refurbish the bronze.

Ms. Shilling-Wheeler said the vision is to be able to give Waikīkī a space culturally and historically in the realm they live, to highlight what Waikīkī is, and for the residents and visitors to see how special Waikīkī is. With technology, they can learn more about it. It is an opportunity to guide people in understanding history, culture, and a sense of place.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā added that the vision is to leverage technology in a way that makes the surfboard markers come alive physically. He said it is a mix of messaging, whether it is the Hawaiian name for that place or a surf break. He said it is also the Hawaiian language being presented accurately, the history of the place, etc. He also said they want to find a way to provide educational information about water safety or other tips that help the visitor learn the right thing to do, etc. In the virtual space, they can gamify it and start to earn badges, etc.

Ms. Sanders said they plan to build it into the infrastructure in the marker. They plan to use QR codes so that it can be more interactive. There were some concerns about AR from the Advisory Committee, so they want to ensure they respect their concerns and address all those things.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā said he also wants to make a case that it should be on GoHawai'i. They should leverage GoHawai'i and say all the microsites can live there. He said it is an incredible tool in six languages that they should leverage.

Mr. Nāho'opi'i said nobody doubts the necessity and significance of the trail sites and the stories that go along with it. He recommends focussing on the necessary targets. He said there had been no mention of the visitors in Waikīkī, with 40% being Japanese. He said they must focus on the areas that meet the needs of the visitors and the residents. Ms. Anderson said being in the digital space is very powerful.

Chair Downing said he wants everyone to dream big and keep it exciting to ensure it lasts for 30 years. He does not want to do something just average; he wants something that makes everyone proud. He said everyone must dream big.

Mr. Gionson spoke about one of his projects, Menehune Adventure Trail in Aulani, which is not different from what they were discussing. He asked Ms. Agas to share the Menehune Adventure Trail project, which can provide some inspiration and reference for this project. Ms. Agas said she liked the concept of setting up a marker that could be used not just in Waikīkī but throughout the island. Similarly, they use QR codes, which is easier than writing everything down. She said they need to do it more economically. It also gives them a sense of place where

it touches all the other senses. She said the markers are significant and beautiful and must continue evolving. Chair Downing said that is what they want to do: keep it exciting going forward.

7. Adjournment

Ms. Duarte made a motion to adjourn, and Mr. Kam seconded. Mr. Casson-Fisher did the roll call, and the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Casson-Fisher concluded the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 5:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Sheillane Reyes
Recorder