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KŪKULU KE EA A KANALOA
KAHO'OLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
KŌMIKINA MĀLAMA KAHO'OLAWE

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PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, April 24, 2024

1:00 pm

In person at 1151 Punchbowl St, Room 132
Honolulu, HI

Meeting recording located at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PZDwr-SN7O4>

COMMISSION MEMBERS

PRESENT: Faith Kahale Saito, Vice-Chair; Dawn Chang; Justin Keoni Souza (attended remotely); Saumalu Mataafa (attended remotely)
EXCUSED: Michelle Pescaia, Chair; 'Ānela Evans; Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D
KIRC STAFF: Michael Nāho'opi'i, Executive Director (ED); Daniel Morris, Deputy Attorney General (DAG) (attended remotely); Terri Gavagan, Commission Coordinator (CC); Carmela Noneza, GIS/LAN Specialist (GIS); Matthew Hatakeyama, Administrative Officer (AO) (attended remotely); Dean Tokishi, Ocean Resources Program Manager (ORPM)(attended remotely); Paul Higashino, Restoration Program Manager (RPM) (attended remotely)

IN PERSON

GUESTS: Eric Brundage (attended remotely); Manuel Kuloloio (attended remotely)

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 pm. Roll call was conducted and quorum was established with four Commissioners.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Minutes of February 26, 2024 Regular Commission Meeting

MOTION: Commissioner Chang moved to approve the minutes of February 26, 2024. Commissioner Souza seconded the motion.

ACTION: The motion was approved unanimously via roll call: Vice Chair Saito-aye; Commissioner Chang-aye; Commissioner Mataafa-aye; Commissioner Souza-aye

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were made at this time.

Approved 6/26/2024

IV. ACTION ITEMS

A. Authorize the Executive Director to Award Kaho‘olawe Base Camp Improvement and Other Works Contract and to Solicit and Award the Balance of the CIP Funds to Support Additional Kaho‘olawe Base Camp Improvement Projects as Needed

ED Nāho‘opi‘i explained staff received only one qualified bid. He reviewed the list of projects included in this solicitation: 1) roof coating; 2) replace potable water distribution; 3) installation of air conditioning; 4) painting of building exteriors.

The Commission discussed dividing the original motion into two motions. The second part of the motion would address the need to encumber funds. ED Nāho‘opi‘i explained that the KIRC internal policy requires that the Commission approve expenditures greater than \$50,000. Commissioner Chang asked if this was documented anywhere. ED Nāho‘opi‘i responded that it was in the KIRC Executive Policy Manual. Commissioner Chang asked if DAG Morris had any issues with dividing the original motion into two separate motions. DAG Morris stated he had no problem with the separation.

Commissioner Mataafa stated he would have to oppose the second part of the original motion as written. He suggested listing specific projects to be addressed with the remainder of the CIP funding for clarity in a separate motion. This would include replacement of transformers for the base camp, the replacement of PEMS batteries, windows as well as purchase of additional materials. The additional projects would also include replacement of the boardwalk, installation of energy star efficient equipment at Base Camp, replacement of the LZ-1 shelter and repairs on the ‘Ōhua. Commissioner Mataafa asked if staff had thought about parceling out the projects into separate contracts. ED Nāho‘opi‘i responded that staff had found it easier to work with one vendor, especially with the limited amount of space at Base Camp. Commissioner Mataafa asked if the staff was able to negotiate the amount. ED Nāho‘opi‘i responded that the winning bid was actually lower than the staff’s estimate.

Mr. Brundage commented the \$345,000 for the entire project took into account the square footage to be painted and this area required a lot of repairs and patches.

MOTION: Commissioner Mataafa moved to authorize the Executive Director to award the Base Camp Improvement and Other Works contract to Dawson Solutions, LLC in the amount of \$342,800. Commissioner Souza seconded the motion.

ACTION: The motion was approved unanimously via roll call: Vice Chair Saito-aye; Commissioner Chang-aye; Commissioner Mataafa-aye; Commissioner Souza-aye.

Approved 6/26/2024

MOTION: Commissioner Souza moved to authorize the Executive Director the authority to solicit and award the balance of the CIP funds to support the following additional Kaho‘olawe Base Camp improvements: replacement of the transformers for Base Camp, replacement of PEMS batteries, replacement of windows, provision of materials to complete boardwalk replacement, purchase of energy star efficient equipment, purchase of materials for LZ1 shelter and funds to repair the ‘Ōhua in support of these projects. Commissioner Mataafa seconded the motion.

ACTION: The motion was approved unanimously via roll call: Vice Chair Saito-aye; Commissioner Chang-aye; Commissioner Mataafa-aye; Commissioner Souza-aye.

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

A. Review Legislation Related to the KIRC and Approve KIRC Legislative Positions for 2024 Session

ED Nāho‘opi‘i reported that House Bill (HB) 1800 Relating to the State Budget was finalized. The KIRC ended up where it started. Staff will make a bigger push next year to reintroduce the request for \$4.25 million for the Kihei property to include the final design construction drawings, \$900,000 for the boat house area to construct an educational pavilion which also be a staging area for the PKO.

ED Nāho‘opi‘i reported that HB1889 Relating to State Snails did pass and was signed into law as Act 4. This legislation included an official snail designated for Kaho‘olawe, Pupu kua mauna, (*Pleuropoma lacinoso kahoalawensis*). This snail was thought to be extinct, but RPM Higashino informed ED Nāho‘opi‘i that he has seen it. There were now discussions with the state entomologist. An expedition might be sent to Kaho‘olawe to look for it.

ED Nāho‘opi‘i reported that the nominees for the Commissioners passed their nomination hearings and were approved by the State Senate.

B. Executive Director’s Report

1. Status Update on Budget, Finance and Funding: Review Expenditure Report and Budget Variances

ED Nāho‘opi‘i referred the Commission to the expense report up to March 2024 included in the Commission packet and reported that there was no variance. He also reported that 51% of the KIRC budget had been spent were currently under budget, specifically with regard to non-personnel costs. This was because the KIRC had not received final contracts from the Department of Health (DOH) for the DOH 5 project so those funds have not been spent. There were delays in getting the new hires on payroll and staff was working on that which accounted for the lack of personnel expenditure.

2. Status Update on Plans, Policies and Procedures: Review Long Range Schedule

ED Nāho‘opi‘i referred the Commission to the long-range schedule included in the Commission packet. He stated that June was being kept open because staff was waiting to hear from the FestPAC (Festival of Pacific Arts & Culture) as there was a possibility that some wa‘a may want to part through Kaho‘olawe but staff had not heard from the festival coordinator, Bonnie Kahapea. The festival starts on June 5.

3. Status Update on Administration, Staffing and Personnel: Report on Status of Current Commissioner's Appointments; Report on Commissioner's Term expiring at end of FY2024; Report on New KIRC Staff hires and recruitments

ED Nāho‘opi‘i explained that the terms of Commissioner Evans and Pang will end on June 30, 2024 and both are eligible to serve another term.

ED Nāho‘opi‘i reported that Grant Thompson was promoted to Vessel Operator, the position recently vacated by Lopaka White. Kalei Guth was hired as Logistics Specialist, the position vacated by Grant Thompson. Staff made an offer to Hoku Cody to fill the Cultural Resources Project Coordinator (CRPC) and are working to get her on board. It was hoped to have her start by the end of this fiscal year.

4. Status Update on Public Information, Outreach and Government Relations: Report on Legislative Interactions – Possible Legislative Site Visit Planned for July 2024

ED Nāho‘opi‘i explained that when staff learned of the inclusion by the Ways and Means (WAM) committee of funding for the Kihei property in the budget numerous letters were sent to legislators to support Capital Improvement Project (CIP) funding for the Kihei property. Letters were sent to Senators Dela Cruz and Inouye to thank them for inserting the funding request. Although the funding was not approved, there was interest in building the KIRC Education and Operations Center in Kihei.

ED Nāho‘opi‘i reported that there was a legislative site visit to Kaho‘olawe tentatively scheduled for July 2024.

5. Status Update on Capital Improvements, Reserve operations and Logistics: Update on, KIRC vessel, ‘Ōhua, Repairs and Update on Base Camp Capital Improvement Project (CIP)

ED Nāho‘opi‘i reported that a turbo for the ‘Ōhua was purchased and installed. The boat is working fine but there is still a noise when running. The noise might be due to the intake valves.

ED Nāho‘opi‘i explained that staff submitted a CIP request for a new boat per Senator Inouye’s request.

Commissioner Chang was excused at 1:32 pm.

C. I Ola Kanaloa Strategic Plan Presentation: Summary and timeline KIRC activities relating to strategic objectives of “I Ola Kanaloa! A Strategic Plan for Kanaloa Kaho‘olawe Through 2026”

ED Nāho‘opi‘i explained that staff reviewed all projects completed and aligned them to I Ola Kanaloa’s goals. The Protect Kaho‘olawe ‘Ohana (PKO) would be asked to do a similar thing. A working group would be created with the PKO to examine all the completed projects, determine the progress made and what the next plan’s intention should be and create the next plan. Staff hoped that a new plan on would be published by the end of 2026.

ED Nāho‘opi‘i reviewed the project summaries from the Restoration, Ocean, and Administration Programs. He noted that project summaries from the Operations Programs would be provided at a later date.

Commissioner Mataafa asked if long range planning would include both KIRC and PKO projects with respect to the eventual goal of returning the island back to Native Hawaiian entities or if the current projects were eventually going to evolve into something different. ED Nāho‘opi‘i responded *I Ola Kanaloa!* provided the framework for grant projects, current KIRC funding was mostly for infrastructure which allows staff to go to Kaho‘olawe, house people and work on the island. Current grant projects target coastal restoration, planting on the hardpan, invasive removals or other goals/actions in *I Ola Kanaloa!*

ED Nāho‘opi‘i noted that some of the goals are outside of the KIRC’s statute, such as sovereignty (although the KIRC authored a sovereignty transfer action plan which was presented to WAM and OHA) and advocating for aloha ‘aina, and representing Kanaloa in governance discussions. These are within the PKO’s capability. He stated that the KIRC’s role in discussions about Native Hawaiian sovereignty issues was to respond to questions regarding the Reserve’s transfer statute. DAG Morris agreed.

Vice Chair Saito asked Commissioner Mataafa for clarification of his question—was he asking if some of these goals and actions were going to be continued beyond 2026?

Commissioner Mataafa responded that he thought they were based on ED Nāho‘opi‘i’s response. He added that he knew things would evolve in the future and wondered if the current long-range planning within the next two years will address how the KIRC evolves over time to meet its goals as a commission. He added that he thought it would be based on ED Nāho‘opi‘i’s explanation. ED Nāho‘opi‘i responded the goals would be dependent on funding.

VI. PROJECT STATUS UPDATES

A. Status Update on Current Commission/Administration Projects

1. KIRC Live-Stream and VR Expedition Project (IMLS4)

This project was completed. AO Hatakeyama reported staff expected that the appropriate fiscal codes would be updated by the next Commission meeting so that the funds can be properly placed.

2. Going Mobile: Upgrading the Technological Infrastructure of Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission (IMLS5)

GIS Noneza reported that the project updates technical resources for KIRC staff. All staff have migrated to their new systems on their laptops or their new personal computers (PCs). The KIRC’s in house public drive and internet have been shut down, its servers were completely mover to the DLNR servers. Files were now accessed through the cloud. The project was scheduled to end on June 30, 2024 and 80% of the grant amount was billed. The remainder of the grant will be billed by the next Commission meeting.

3. Sharing the Stories of Kahoolawe’s Past, Present and Future (HTA)

GIS Noneza reported that the topographic map of Kaho‘olawe was repaired by the Maui Ocean Center (MOC) electricians. Videos were recently completing depicting past and current environmental KIRC restoration and marine removal projects. ED Nāho‘opi‘i provided the voiceover for those videos. QR codes were now being offered for virtual tours of wahi pana areas documented in the MOC exhibit. Staff was waiting for a quote for production of video content to close out the rest of the grant.

B. Status Update on Current Restoration Projects

1. Coastal and Upland Wetland Restoration on Kaho‘olawe, HI (NAWCA-Wetlands)

RPM Higashino reported staff and volunteers were removing alien species and cutting alien grasses. Staff was planning to plant from September to November 2024. Staff was planning grow more food crops and would be planting 5-10 ‘ulu trees at higher elevations.

2. Ka Palupalu o Kanaloa Partnership Project (Kanaloa Plant Working Group)

RPM Higashino reported there were 20 plants in cultivation. One plant at Maui Nui Botanical Garden did die the other month. Staff found that the plants are more prone to insects and diseases at lower elevations and areas that populated by more humans and subsequently have more ornamentals. The next partnership meeting was scheduled for May 6, 2024 at which plant updates at the individual sites will be provided. Staff was looking for more partners to help in the cultivation of Ka Palupalu o Kanaloa.

3. Kamōhio Watershed Restoration Project 2023-2026 Phase I, Department of Health (DOH 6)

RPM Higashino reported a lot of DOH personnel have been pulled away to address recovery in Lahaina. He stated that a memorandum of agreement (MOA) was pending and staff hoped that it would be finalized in the next couple of weeks.

C. Status Update on Current Ocean Program Grant Projects:

1. Coastal Wetland Restoration of Kahoolawe, HI, National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program (CWC)

ORPM Tokishi reported that the goals of planting 20,000 plants was reached by staff and volunteers. The silt pond was excavated as well as the obligated road work to deter sedimentation runoff in the nearshore reef ecosystem. Staff deployed long-term ocean water quality devices. Work on .7 of an acre still needed to be done. Staff still needed to conduct a couple of monitoring programs and four more lectures to do. Staff spent about \$164,000; \$140,000 was billed but no funds were received. Staff would be billing more in the next upcoming months. Staff increased plantings to over 23,000. Two more lectures and outreach programs were conducted. The interim annual report for 2023 was submitted.

2. Developing a Digital Application for the Collection of Kilo 'Ike Pili (IMLS 6)

ORMP Tokishi explained the KIRC staff would be conducting aerial surveys of the Reserve and creating a database with the PKO. The grant provides funding for transportation and access fees for PKO accesses to Honokanai'a. The first aerial survey was already completed.

VIII. NEXT MEETING AND FOLLOW UPS

ED Nāho'opi'i explained that the next KIRC meeting needed to be at the end of June so that the Commission could review and approve the budget for fiscal year 2025.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:04 pm.