



P.O. BOX 328 KĪLAUEA, KAUA'I, HAWAI'I 96754

**MEETING MINUTES
JULY 6, 2021
VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING (DUE TO COVID-19)**

Time: 7:00 PM

Location: Zoom Meeting

KNA Directors Present: Yoshito L'Hote, Beryl Blaich, Jeremy Burns, Gary Pacheco, Bill Chase, Stephenie Brown, Thomas Daubert, Emily Dunn, Mike Latif, Mike Lyons, Charlie Martin, Don McConnell, Ron Paul, Sonrisa Stepath

Community Attendance: 12+ including Councilwoman Felicia Cowden.

Call to Order: Vice President Blaich called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM. There is not a quorum.

COMMITTEE / COMMUNITY REPORTS:

Finance Committee: Jeremy Burns reported for Gary "Mr P" Pacheco conveyed via voicemail we have \$6,250.74 in our bank account.

Planning Committee: Ron Paul reported the Ahiumanu the property manager is checking on the permit for the community center in Ahiumanu – it had lapsed due to COVID but they are trying to reinstate it. They are also having difficulties with bathroom overusage and despite access control they are costing \$3K a month to maintain.

Beautification Committee: No report.

Communications Committee: Thomas Daubert reported that while we are unable to post images to our website we can still transmit information on upcoming events in other ways so please contact him at joekilauea@gmail.com with any events or announcements or ideas.

We typically provide 2 emails per month and post the upcoming meeting agenda a week in advance on Facebook and on the website.

There are new opportunities to include community events at the bottom of announcement emails.

If anyone is not receiving emails from the KNA please let him know at the email address listed above. A reminder to please sign up for the email list by emailing him. If any community members have any events they want to share please also email.

Fundraising Committee: No report.

NEW BUSINESS / GUEST PRESENTERS:

Hawaii State Parks – Curt Cottrell, Alan Carpenter, David Tsuchiya: Curt reported that generally speaking based on prior forecasts they were preparing for austerity and a slow return to normal - but numbers have ramped up faster than anyone expected and are meeting or exceeding pre-pandemic levels already in many places causing huge problems like at Hana Highway.

Kauai generates the largest amount of income for their special fund based on all the real estate (13,000 acres) and activities we have – from Haena to Kokee, Ahukini, Smith's, and others. Kauai also has some of the largest staffing challenges and there is still a hiring freeze in place!

David reported the current staffing is 16, with 13 people in the field in a 7 days a week operation. They are greatly affected by transfers and upcoming retirements and are shore 7-8 staff currently. Curt reported a key need is an East-side supervisor from Wailua to Haena.

Alan reported that Haena is held up as a model but it is a unique situation where there is a team there comprised of rangers, lifeguards, parking attendants, Hui Maka'ainana O Makana members and The Hanalei Initiative that acts like a team to provide multiple areas of support to the Park. On the other side of the coin Polihale for example has had very little in terms of staffing and surrounding support resources to help managing increasing traffic and challenging behaviors. Partners who can help surround a park with support services and volunteer hours are an excellent way to pitch in and help State Parks with natural resource management such as at Nualolo Kai and Port Allen.

David reported that Kokee also has substantial support services including Kokee Resource Conservation Program (KRCP), Huleia Maka the Kokee Museum and nature trail, Kokee Leaseholders Association helps manage trail signs. There are also camps like YMCA, Boy Scout Camp, and others. There are relationships with the military base and NASA that also provides support. There are 2 potable water wells they manage in Kokee and one in Polihale. The State Park system is often reacting to emergencies and have a hard time keeping up with preventative maintenance needs.

Curt reiterated that engagement with all constituents using a park and with the cultural practitioners and lineal descendants of these areas is a key long term support pillar that will help drive sustainable success.

Question on how are we doing on collecting money at Kokee? - Alan reported that we have attendants at Kokee to manage collections and pre-COVID the compliance rate was 80-90%. Staffing has been a challenge post-COVID but fees were increased and revenues are at records so there is an ability to staff up to support this. They have an excellent manager Maria who is sunsetting her duties with the Haena management transition to the Hui and so will be able to focus on Kokee full time.

Question on misbehaving and dangerous activities in the Park like leaning over guardrails?
- Curt reported the “selfie” trend is definitely contributing to increases in these risky behaviors over the past 10 years.

Question on the spillover effects of places like restricted access at Haena and Hanalei due to the road issues and a noted increase in traffic at neighborhood waterfalls like Hoopii, how to address? – Curt says yes this doesn’t reduce tourism it just redirects people’s activities to other locations as nowhere is secret anymore thanks to social media and knowledge sharing.

Question on recent sweeps being done to remove homeless encampments on State lands and shuffling people around is not a long-term solution, thoughts on addressing this? – Curt acknowledged they do a sweep but they do not prosecute, so after a cleanup effort eventually homeless return and the cycle repeats itself. Airbnb/VRBO helping to foster converting ohana units to short term visitor rentals instead of long-term rentals or actual family units has exacerbating the housing issue and disenfranchised the most vulnerable in our communities. Alan also noted that State Parks are a community and cultural resource not a housing solution or else they cease to be public resources and become public housing. As far as tourism goes we cannot limit flights into the island; while there has been success with increased parking fines even that only reaches so far and they have to focus within the lands they have kuleana for.

Curt touched on ocean resource management – there is a new bill that just passed that is an earmark for marine management.

David covered the Kauai priority park improvements list which included: Waimea canyon undermining of the lower lookout, Kokee water line improvements, Kee drainage improvements, sewage system submersible pump upgrades at Wailua Marina. Alan added standardization of camp sites across parks (including shade/rain shelters) including at Polihale. Curt mentioned the defunct restaurant at the Wailua Marina which is a longer term goal to get a highest and best use, and the other areas along Wailua.

Curt covered biggest obstacles to managing the parks – people and infrastructure as mentioned earlier, but also growing law enforcement issues related to disrespect like bad behavior, vandalism, illegal operations (people using technology to set up private businesses on public land), homeless encampments with related issues.

Curt discussed our question what National parks management could be brought to bear here? State Parks in a national meeting are everywhere being overrun with tourists and pent-up demand earlier than Kauai but we are seeing it now. Lack of management capacity to handle the unprecedented demand.

Any places on Kauai that may become parks? Curt said there are very preliminary talks to transfer Haena Beach Park to State Parks. State Parks currently pays the County for lifeguards at Kee Beach, but with two stations this arrangement could change.

What can KNA do to help State Parks? Curt noted that the money we are generating due to demand is going to exceed the legislative cap that is in place. They may have the biggest cash surplus in history but unable to reinvest it in the system – so they need a larger

spending ceiling. Conservatively they need a \$5-10M higher ceiling than what it is right now.

Question – does State Parks run the risk that excess revenues could be diverted back into the general fund? Alan responded yes this is a concern. Curt mentioned this could be used to pay back debt service – they have proactively donated \$1M out of special fund to help but it could become a policy call by the legislature / governor.

MOTION by Bill Chase to draft a letter supporting park revenue staying within the park system. There is not a quorum so motion withdrawn - this will be deferred to a future meeting. Curt suggested reconvening on this topic with State Parks when the legislature is going back into session and they can share a budget at that time.

Question on whether wealthy people are booking up all the reservations into Haena for example and excluding the general public? Alan reported that this is essentially not possible to do based on the system structure with timed releases of reservations.

Bill 2822 Camping - defining and regulating developed (i.e. Glamping such as proposed at Princeville) vs. undeveloped camping – Lorraine Mull: Lorraine reported that this new bill is in process to better manage the visitor industry and would prevent “developed” camping on open zoned land. Developed camping would mean more permanent-style structures with footings and restroom facilities and would include glamping-style structures.

There is a public hearing on July 13th. The Planning Department tentatively approved the bill but also want to defer it for up to 2 months which could potentially be problematic with the timing of the Starwood Princeville draft application to try to get it in before this bill becomes law.

There is a website soshui.org that has substantial information. Bill Chase will also share detailed materials that were sent to him.

Felicia reported she has followed this issue since its emergence and is concerned the deferral could be being proposed to enable the Starwood application to be received first. There is also an agriculture piece of the bill that could really impede how our agricultural organic farms work including farm-worker housing and homeless/housing related issues (Pu’u Honua concept) that could be part of our ag lands. She would not like to see ag land turned into glamping resorts which could artificially boost the ag land values and could be a back-door way to up-zone ag land. The idea would be to have improved ag-land housing sites with running water and septic, but this glamping issue throws another wrench into the works, and there are very stiff penalties for violators of illegal ag-worker housing. The ag piece and open space and residential need to be separated. Felicia supports the goals of SOS-Hui but there are nuances to this that need to be carefully considered. The Planning Department took out the Transient Vacation Rental language which would also have delineated the bill appropriately, but in its current form supporting it could have unintended negative consequences – it needs more tweaking.

Question – is there a mechanism to defer the Starwood application to allow time for bill modifications? Felicia believes this is a risk and the bill review date has been pushed out further than it needed to be to allow the application to get in under the wire and doesn’t know of a mechanism to allow this. She also suggests we look at the broader Starwood

application for things like the drainage issue and proposed underground parking and 9-bedroom house with swimming pool on the bluff and concrete removal near the Fu's place. She suggests KNA ask for a freeze on the application if there is a deferral on the bill in an official letter as one method.

Question on the Planning Commission – why don't they accept email? Felicia says they do to planningdepartment@kauai.gov or asegretti@kauai.gov and put at the subject line please submit this for Bill 2822 Qualified Support by Friday evening.

Felicia recommends email to Planning Department – say right at the top we are concerned that the Application isn't available for public viewing when we have a related bill for open space that is relevant to the entire island – there seems to be a race to completion, and we ask respectfully that the application is deferred until Bill 2822 is settled. There are various facets to this Bill and transient vacation rentals are not addressed.

Bill Chase recommends 2 letters – one on the process (regulatory capture) and then specific support of 2822 with caveats. Felicia also recommends 2 different voices presenting each argument. Lorraine also said there is a Teams meeting that people can attend and present their voice to the committee.

OLD BUSINESS:

Ui reported for Na Kia'i o Nihokū they are meeting with the Greens at 4:30 pm Friday at Seacliff to follow up on home site concerns raised.

UPDATES:

Seniors: No report.

PTSA: No report.

'Aina Ho'okupu O Kilauea / Kilauea Community Agricultural Center: Jeremy reported we have drafted 2 grants worth about \$400K total to the Native American Agriculture Fund.

We are performing County of Kauai Office of Economic Development Farm Tech (weather stations and drone crop assessment technology) and Off-site Pig Pens grants.

We have many products for sale including Pig Share (1/4 of a pig), chicken, eggs, CSA's, produce and more. Please visit our website at ainahookupuokilauea.org for more details.

Kilauea Point National Wildlife Refuge / Friends of Kauai Wildlife Refuges: Jen Waipa reported that reservations are needed to enter the refuge.

The commercial tour operations are back up and running, a couple of operators have received permits.

They had a recent call for positions that went along with the national GAO procurement for a backlog of maintenance projects. There were 3 hires for those positions, one is an

employee moving to those positions so there will be one or two wage-grade positions opening up in the future most likely.

A wildlife refuge specialist position will be opening up soon as an entry-level management position overseeing recreational and agricultural permits.

A great gray egret is spending time in Hanalei. A pair of Hawaiiin petrels are nesting in the predator-resistant fence at Nihokū.

For Friends of Kauai Wildlife Refuges, Thomas Daubert reported the team is very excited about the reopening of the visitor spaces inside the Visitor Center and Nature Store. They are seeking volunteers interested in providing guest interpretation and supporting store sales. Please contact thomas@kilaueapoint.org.

Kaulana Kilauea: No report.

Anaina Hou: Thomas reported the fire show is selling out so they are adding a Friday show beginning July 16th.

Kia'i Kāhili: No report.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

None

Approval of Minutes:

This will be done online due to quorum.

Adjournment of Meeting:

Kilauea Neighborhood Association meeting ended at 9:16 pm.