



P.O. BOX 328 KĪLAUEA, KAUAʻI, HAWAII 96754

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**MEETING MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 7, 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:** 50+, including the Mayor and his team of 13, and Councilwoman Felicia Cowden.

**Call to Order:** President L'Hote called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM. There is a quorum.

**COMMITTEE / COMMUNITY REPORTS:**

**Finance Committee:** Gary "Mr. P" Pacheco reported we have \$6,116.74. No payments or contributions this month. PO Box 328 if anyone wants to contribute!

**Planning Committee:** No report.

**Beautification Committee:** No report.

**Communications Committee:** Please send any interest in signing up for the Kilauea Neighborhood Association announcements, questions or potential meeting topics to [joekilauea@gmail.com](mailto:joekilauea@gmail.com).

**Fundraising Committee:** No report.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**Victoria McDonald:** Victoria is interested in purchasing the Wai Koa property. Her family hails from the Big Island. She will make a formal presentation at next month's meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS / GUEST PRESENTATIONS:**

**Mayor Kawakami:** Derek is pleased to attend and answer community questions. He has brought a team of folks who can help answer questions including Adam Roversi, Ka'aina

Hull, Michael Dahilig, Mike Knoff, Nalani Brun, Patrick Porter, Troy Tanigawa, Boyd Gayagus, Ivy Garlynd, Kim Tamaoka, Polly Phillips, Sarah Blaine, and Wally Rezentos.

Question on COVID and recent issues with cases? Mayor Kawakami discussed planning and execution to handle emergencies such as this. The original plan when COVID emerged was to “build a fort” around the island and await resources and assistance as more information came to light over time. Kauai is a model for Hawaii and much of the US based on our case and resource management to-date throughout this emergency.

Question on County fiscal health and the intense gentrification going on in housing – any plans to address these issues? Mayor Kawakami said we are in a good position overall financially due to “rainy day” funds that were put away in the past and good management practices thus far.

- The TAT tax situation is challenging because the County must now institute only up to 3% in TAT AND must also set up their own collection processes (the existing State collection cannot be piggybacked on – although the administration is working with the State to determine if there is an efficient way to do this.
- The Housing situation is challenging because the County has a very limited toolbox to do anything about offshore investing and gentrification issues. The Mayor suggested that the State Legislature would be in the best position to do something about these issues. Follow up question about luxury tax on 2<sup>nd</sup> homes like on Maui or other measures? The Mayor reported that there are tax incentives and disincentives that can be utilized, but sometimes they have unintended consequences potentially so these types of changes move slowly but there are potential options being explored. The Mayor also believes that DHHL and OHA have a very large role to play in ensuring Native Hawaiians have opportunity to own and use their own land as people are now dying while still on waiting lists and the process needs to move faster.

Question on Kahili Quarry Road – which is the largest challenge given the various pots of money involved? The Mayor responded that this is a FEMA-funded project and that is the main driver of the road repair process. The County will not interfere to speed up their process as it requires environmental studies that take time, so the County can help out but FEMA is dictating the timeline.

Question on Kauapea Beach access now with the ownership changes? The Mayor reported that the Open Space Commission has the authority to look at existing open space and beach access areas to get them clearly on the maps and even find them if they haven’t been maintained. This is going through the judicial process so the Mayor can only say so much at this time, but he looks forward to working with everyone in the community to be good neighbors to provide ocean access and to share and coexist so we can all share Kauai’s amazing resources.

Question on the condemnation of the Bertsch property and status? The Mayor reported this is in its infancy. The condemnation process in general is important for managed retreat from climate change for example. It is funded by a Community Development Block Grant. It is very challenging to get an affordable housing project off the ground in the northern area of Kauai but this may eventually be a place for this type of activity. The KNA will be a key partner as this process unfolds.

- KNA would like to assist and can look into Rural Development grants to do for example the study to evaluate wastewater needs for any potential new housing developments. Is there any timeline on how the condemnation process would be expected to play out?

And how can we help think outside the box such as possibly setting up private utilities to provide water or a private roadway or setting up temporary housing until full development can occur if the land is owned by County. Perhaps on the Hayes subdivision to start if the Bertsch property is unavailable for quite some time?

- The Mayor responded that the timeline depends heavily on the cooperation of the landowner – for example in West Kauai the landowner basically gifted the land in prior administrations and now they are building vertical structures. There are ways the County can work with private developers to lower the costs such as a model described where the State gifted land near existing County facilities to help more rapidly expand housing.
- Adam Roversi reminded everyone that there will be a public hearing on September 15<sup>th</sup> for any and all input on the Bertsch property condemnation. There is no official update on the status of the Hayes property but discussions are ongoing.

Kaniela Matsushima and his wife spoke out in favor of NOT rezoning Agriculture land and NOT increasing development in the Kilauea area. The KNA was set up to be a community voice to oppose overdevelopment and special permits in Ag zoned lands.

- Mayor Kawakami thanked them very much for their heartfelt comments and shared his own challenges with government as a young man on island and why he wants to change the way things are done by participating, and we need the mana'o of kanaka maoli.
- Councilwoman Felicia Cowden acknowledged her conversations with Kaniela and wanted to reiterate that these housing concepts are designed with Kaniela's generation in mind and to provide opportunities for locals not further gentrification or densification for the sake of economics.

Question for Mayor on island density and climate change and County planning? Mayor Kawakami discussed decentralizing services like motor vehicle permitting in Princeville Foodland to help with traffic issues as development strains shared infrastructure. Another primary tactic to be used will be managed retreat that will need to be implemented over multiple administrations in a long timeframe. Both the Kilauea and the East Kauai areas are on-deck for another round of planning and the nationally-awarded Planning Department will make the call on which to tackle based in part on urgency issues. On other issues like striking a deal with AirBnB and VRBO to only advertise licensed rentals Kauai is leading the way on proactive planning to manage housing issues.

E Ola Kakou Hawaii spoke about how Kilauea is one of the most disconnected ahupua'a on island due to depletion of heiau's in the area. When do we start bringing back our tradition of culture when there is no area to do so due to privatization of historical lands. The EIS's in the area seem to be lacking in cultural practitioner input.

Lorraine Newman had a question about what shape our broadband connections and undersea cables to Oahu are in? Mayor Kawakami confirmed our broadband is vulnerable and concern is increasing about the vulnerability of all IT technology given how much more we are all reliant on it. The primary cable is owned by CenturyLink, there is another backup cable owned by Paniolo that the County looked into buying as but it is unaffordable so far. If one cable is severed the other could serve as backup, but if both were severed we could be cut off.

Comment from a resident who has been here 30 years and her only regret is not buying land or a home sooner and now is worried that it may never be affordable and she doesn't

want to compete with Native Hawaiians for such a scarce resource – when is it my time to have a place to be? Mayor responded that she didn't chart the course the island has taken the past 30 years and the County will not rest until opportunities for community members are provided so hang in there.

### **UPDATES:**

**Seniors:** No report.

**PTSA:** Sonrisa Stepath reported the PTSA has a new Board with new members today including new President Malia Frye who is in attendance.

**'Āina Ho'okupu O Kīlauea / Kīlauea Community Agricultural Center:** Yosh reported we received a very generous donation and should have our retail space completed in the next 6 months or so and have hired much needed staffing. We just poured the first concrete for a new off-site pig nursery foundation. There will be pictures of the various progress on activities available for the next meeting.

**Kīlauea Point National Wildlife Refuge / Friends of Kaua'i Wildlife Refuges:** Jen Waipa reported that Saturday, September 25<sup>th</sup> is National Lands Day, reservations required but it is fee-free day. They are hosting an event at the Kāhili Beach portion of the Refuge to remove invasive flea-bane and signs to keep dogs on leashes.

A Refuge Wildlife Specialist position has been re-announced and is a 7-9 position with full potential for GS-11 on the USAjobs website.

The Fence / Lookout presentation will be postponed until next month.

Thomas Daubert for Friends reported they are participating in Charity Walk to raise funds.

**Kaulana Kīlauea:** Yosh reported they planted a 3<sup>rd</sup> Kīlauea Christmas tree. Beryl reported the Dispensary Park stewardship has been approved.

**Anaina Hou:** Jill reported they are watching case counts which makes events challenging. They need to plan to have events but then aren't sure if they'll be able to hold them so it's lots of start and stops. Expect to hear more in November.

**Kia'i Kāhili:** Mehana reported they did a beach cleanup at Kahili this past weekend and planted a wiliwili tree in honor of a donor who contributed to staff salaries, and installed new signs that Kīlauea kids made over the summer.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Bill 2822:** Lorri Mull reported the Bill was deferred and will be up before the Planning Committee on September 14<sup>th</sup> – please submit testimony and support this bill.

**MOTION** by Ron Paul for the County to move forward with the procedure to acquire the Bertsch property, seconded by Gary Pacheco. Motion carries unanimously by voice vote. Yosh will draft the letter.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Stephanie Brown announced that the new Gather branch in Kīlauea will be breaking ground soon. They are hosting a golf outing with 100% proceeds going to the Wilcox Health center.

**Approval of Minutes:**

**The August 2021 Kīlauea Neighborhood Association meeting minutes were approved via email.**

**Adjournment of Meeting:**

**Upon motion duly made by Gary Pacheco, seconded by Charlie Martin and carried unanimously, it was resolved to adjourn the September 7, 2021 Kīlauea Neighborhood Association meeting at 9:23 pm.**