



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

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**MEETING MINUTES**  
**OCTOBER 03, 2023**

**Time:** 7:00 PM

**Location:** Kilauea Neighborhood Center

**KNA Directors Present:** Yoshito L'Hote, Jake Bernard, Jeremy Burns, Gary Pacheco, Bill Chase, Stephenie Brown, Thomas Daubert, ~~Mike Latif~~, Jill Lowry, Mike Lyons, Nathan Myers, Kalena Pacheco, Sarah Wright

**Community Attendance:** 50+, including Mayor Kawakami and staff, and Councilmember Felicia Cowden

**Call to Order:** Yoshito L'Hote called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM. There is a quorum.

**Treasurer's Report:** Gary Pacheco reported September balance of \$5,716.13.

- Please consider donating to KNA at PO Box 328, Kilauea, HI 96754.

**Mayor Kawakami and Staff:** Mayor Kawakami introduced Managing Director Reiko Matsuyama who is attending her first community meeting tonight. Michelle Izama is the new Finance Director, Polly Phillips north shore representative, Todd Tomazaki public works, Deputy public works, Gary public works, Pat Porter Parks and Rec & emergency chief, Ka'aina Hull Planning, Michael Mole Public Works Engineering Troy Tanigawa Director Public Worsk, Adam Roversi Housing Director, Stacy KPD, Rob KPD, Tito Air Marshals.

**Kilauea Neighborhood Center area and Gym:** Porter reported that there are 2 projects put together, Park & Neighborhood Center and the Hardening of the Gym. Everything including dugouts, roofs, gutters, etc. will be renovated, and then the Gym will be hardened to a Cat 2 level shelter. Following COVID-19 the prices for infrastructure shot up so the funds allocated had to be reapportioned. The ballpark improvements will start first then the Gym, it should take around 9-12 months. It is still uncertain which areas or parking will be open during construction.

**Affordable Housing:** Mayor Kawakami noted that everyone notices a lack of readily available affordable housing in this area. Housing Director Roversi explained that we have more housing on track in 2023-24 than at any time in history, but not in Kilauea area (elsewhere on island mostly). The 2006 Kilauea town plan lays out 50 acres to the west of the Post Office, of which 25 acres is officially secured now (Hay property) and the remaining 23.5 acres is in court which should end tomorrow afternoon with a 45 day window for final ruling, so in November the County may own the rest of the required

acreage. There are aerial topographic studies and other preliminary work going on. The 2006 Kilauea town plan will be the starting point but there will be another round of community input to bring it up to date for today and for planning for these properties (feasibility study funding is in place). Eventually there will be a conceptual master plan for the entire 50 acres and the roadway through it. Following the visioning of the types and density of housing will be studies on EA, cultural, land use commission redistricting, planning, water and wastewater to plan for that infrastructure which may include some sewer expansion and treatment facilities.

**Kilauea Rd / Kolo Rd / Kahili Quarry Rd:** Michael Mole covered Kilauea Rd and Kolo Rd resurfacing. The State also has a project which is leading the way at Kuhio Hwy and Kolo Rd to build a roundabout which is now out to bid and could take 4-8 months and construction will likely start early 2024. The County project will tie right into this to continue the sidewalk down Kolo Rd and all the way down Kilauea Rd to the Lighthouse as well as sidewalk improvements and 2 mini-roundabouts. The project is funded in part by Federal Aid and Federal Land Access (to the Lighthouse) so that is a consideration as part of the process. The project is anticipated to start sometime mid-late next calendar year (summer 2024). Mayor Kawakami noted they have tackled 106 road and 120 lane miles since 2018. It has been a long process to get Kahili Rock Quarry Road refurbished. FEMA did damage assessment and determined this storm merited an environmental process which has been very long in order to provide federal funding for this project but nothing can be done until this assessment is completed. Because it is taking so long Public Works is working with the landowner to determine if a private process can be better and funded faster than waiting for the federal money and process. Both processes will continue to be explored.

Question, does Kauai still have every 2 miles beach access? Mayor is not certain if that is a criteria. Ka'aina noted that there are lot of access on paper but not demarcated at the site. Discussion on Kauapea 3<sup>rd</sup> beach access and attorneys are reviewing this case, which County is pursuing.

**Illegal Signage:** Troy stated that Public Works does serve notices on issues brought to light, but often the signs are taken down then put back up at a later date. They have hired a 2<sup>nd</sup> person to help with enforcement. They are developing electronic systems to record violations, track follow up, and repeat offenders. They are paying more attention to this issue, it is a work in progress.

**Island-wide resurfacing:** Todd reports to the Mayor but primarily works under Public Works. He reported that they have 2 major paving segments: Island-wide resurfacing and Infrastructure projects often in conjunction with other partners (e.g. Kilauea/Kolo with federal involvement). Manpower and supply chain issues are 2 key constraints. Their focus is on County roads (not State, road-in-limbo, etc.). Garrett Jape is the Public Works GIS manager and tracks what is being done where. Kauai.gov website, scroll to the bottom, look at Island Wide Road Resurfacing. ConnectKauai.gov site can report various issues and GPS tag it using your phone (animal on road, power lines, road issues, etc.).

Community member thanked the administration for doing a great job on the roads in general compared to what they used to be in the past.

**County Services:** Mayor stated they are working to decentralize government interaction points such as adding County DMV services in Kapaa instead of just Lihue. Michelle Izama

reported that they worked to integrate the staff to be able to do both Driver License and Motor Vehicle instead of 2 separate entities. Following that they are working to provide almost all such services in Kapa'a (except new driver road testing, taxi, fleet dealers) by late 2024. Mayor noted that DMV workers are constantly stressed and please give them some grace if you are there, also please make online appointments as this smooths things out for everyone. Don't let your safety check expire as that is a big challenge. The staff has to be cross-trained on 15-20 processes each of which has 15-20 steps it seems so training is also a challenge. The documentation requirements are all driven by federal regulations so they can't just bypass them because they know someone. There are vacancies so please apply to the County. Also there is still a kiosk in Kapaa and in Princeville. Especially the Princeville one is underutilized so please get the word out to use it.

Community member noted that more awareness of the kiosks could help increase usage.

Property tax is still in DMV, but can be paid online.

### **Open Questions from the Hui:**

Gary "Mr. P / The Mayor of Kilauea" Pacheco gave kudos to Ka'aina for doing a great job. Mayor noted the Hanalei Baseyard & Ocean Safety & Parks/Rec Playground got done due to great leadership. Mike Contrades was brought back into Public Works to help develop the Hanalei Baseyard.

Mr. P was concerned about the lack of maintenance of the generator at the Kilauea Neighborhood Center. The generator must be pulled out so it doesn't contaminate the Gym, and it needs electrical work and regular testing. The Neighborhood Center is not connected to the generator currently. Can this be addressed? Mayor and Public Works will look into the maintenance (Troy) and electrical hookup (Pat).

Jeremy Burns asked about Property Tax mechanisms to address long-term rental availability and incentives, in light of there were some challenges and unintended consequences with the recent attempted changes? Mayor reported that Residential Investor class has been done away with, there is a trend toward simplification and there is a difference between tax relief and tax reform. Reiko reported that the classifications are changing to be more easy to understand (Homestead was a nebulous term) and Owner-Occupants generally have the lowest taxes. There is a 3% cap on tax increases and you can appeal your tax classification but not the rates assigned. There is a tiered system so they can now tier every single tax class (9 of them) based on value during the budget process. There is a vacation-rental tax class to handle short-term rentals. Mayor discussed this in relation to the grocery business – it is far more complex to stock and run the store than to just go in as a customer and pick up some items and pay for it. The State is likely to reallocate resources towards Maui (as they should) so tax relief is challenging in general in today's environment and not likely to get better overall. The task requires a crystal ball and best estimates of risk and likelihood with good intentions / unintended consequences / operational feasibility all weighed in balance.

Yosh asked about the State Kuhio/Kolo roundabout, and will that happen first before Kilauea/Kolo repaving? Michael Mole said the State project will begin first, its likely the resurfacing will begin while the State project is still in progress, but it will be coordinated as it gets closer to implementation, and more unknowns become known. Mayor noted that getting asphalt is a big challenge now with supply and demand issues holding up delivery. Mayor said they are reinvesting in new equipment that does the job more efficiently.

Yosh asked about the reservoirs and Kalihiwai Reservoir for expanded uses incorporating ag, rural character, fire suppression, non-potable residential / commercial water uses, etc. Mayor commented on the millions of dollars put into upper Kapahi area, and then after Ka Loko tragedy the DLNR now wants to force addressing and likely decommissioning of reservoirs due to safety issues and lack of funding to rehabilitate them to current standards. Right now DLNR and Department of Ag are working to do a transfer of the reservoirs to Department of Ag to manage and maintain potentially-useful reservoirs.

Community member suggested moratoriums are a mechanism to manage overcapacity issues. There are over 100K registered vehicles on Kauai now. Infrastructure is lagging in many areas. Mayor noted that the constitution does not allow for preventing commerce or interstate mobility. Kaaina said a few years ago there was a charter amendment to do a moratorium which was overturned. The Visitor Destination Areas (Poipu, Princeville) were set up to accommodate visitors and 2<sup>nd</sup> homeowners, and are now entitlements from the 80's timeframe that continue to play out. The rest of the island (except for part of west Kauai where there was some debate about suitable additional visitor accommodations) stopped visitor accommodations except for some grandfathered properties.

Community member question on Affordable Housing (preschools who need teachers) are there any other incentives that can encourage local long-term housing? Mayor said yes there are private nonprofits like PAL (Permanently Affordable Living) and Habitat for Humanity who can work to increase supply and reserve housing for long-term use. Temporary housing is easier for private entities to implement due to regulations and restrictions on County leading these processes. Much of the red tape is due to past risk issues and more is to be expected from the recent Lahaina tragedy. Jill Lowry at Anaina Hou is working on domes to help solve part of these problems. The County can be better at helping builders navigate permitting labyrinth processes and unstick bottlenecks.

Community member mahalo'd KNA for asking for community questions in advance. There are many community members who have fallen between property tax categories and foreclosure issues with family lands can there be a stay on those while this gets worked out? Also is there any managed access / caretaking of lands? Reiko did their first non-judicial foreclosure in May of 2023 and the previous one was in 2015 so it has been a long time. The best thing to do is call the property tax office to work out a way to get off the foreclosure list and usually a payment plan will do that. Ka'aina said the Open Space Commission is going through the process to manage the 100's of public accesses to beaches (many of which exist on paper but are not demarcated on the land yet) and funding is being used to demarcate them, but they cannot be gated off if they are public access. So this needs to go access by access to determine which ones should be demarcated and why or why not. Mayor said from a maintenance standpoint there are commitments when public accesses are acquired by County, so he would like to see community stewardship agreements go hand-in-hand with these arrangements. The Parks team is already stretched so this would really help support such situations.

Community member questioned the Department of Health Ambulance service reassignment from incumbent AMR to another company and lack of transparency around the process. Mayor said this is not the first time State has moved on things without County / community input, and there is a protest in process regarding the situation. On other islands, emergency services generally fall under the fire department or another County department. The situation does not sit well with the Mayor and it is being investigated as the staff are local highly-trained family members who have supported the community for a

long time. The Council can pass a resolution which does not jeopardize the process but does officially take a position.

Community member question on Affordable Housing, is there any way to allocate or reserve some of the housing for local people as opposed to the national population? Adam Roversi said you need to be on a local homebuyer list which means you must be a resident of Kauai and take specific courses. It is unconstitutional to put a residency-duration requirement directly, but it can require being a resident and adjust preferences by many factors including length of residency, type of employment, geographic location, etc. that feed into an scoring rubric. As long as federal money is footing part of the bill that requires more openness in the criteria. There are affordable housing criteria charts on the website that delineate family structure and affordable pricing (roughly \$140K for a family of 4, and roughly \$400K housing). Mayor noted that there are many families stuck in the middle that don't qualify for affordable housing (making slightly too much as a household) but also can't afford \$1.3M market rate homes. They are working with private entities to try to bridge that "missing middle" working professionals gap.

Community member commented that many people want to buy a home to have a family and pets and stability and roots, instead of just renting. Mayor said Habitat for Humanity is one great solution for these folks.

Mayor said he is fortunate to work with a great Council and recognized Councilwomen Cowen and Councilman Bulosan for attending.

### **Committee Reports:**

**Planning Committee:** No report.

**Communications Committee:** Thomas Daubert provided the email sign up for regular communications, reach out to [joekilauea@gmail.com](mailto:joekilauea@gmail.com) to sign up, or for any inquiries.

**Fundraising Committee:** No report.

### **New Business:**

- Kapua Chandler said they raised the funds and have secured the 11-acre property from Mr. Hay! They are moving ahead with the special use permit which will go in for pre-review tomorrow. They are looking for a future letter of support for their permit. There is no date yet for the planning hearing, but ideally it will be for their January meeting.

Question on traffic flow. They are working to stagger start and end times with KCA so that there isn't a big glut of traffic. Also there will be a parking plan.

- Stephen Kohene presented on the Anini boat ramp. State DLNR is planning to issue 3 more boating permits (increasing it to 5) for Anini and cap it at that to match Hanalei. They believe it will provide good local jobs and has capacity. Anini boat ramp is part State owned/managed but also part County owned/managed. Stephen has been tracking usage for a year and it can get busy on weekends but during the week its generally very underutilized (1-2 trailers). The main complaint from

Hanalei boat times was parking issues (which has been resolved by shuttling visitors down) and loud/polluting engines (which most now use 4-stroke modern engines). He is looking for a future letter of support to increase the number of permits. Yosh asked for impacts to parking, restrooms, number of tours per day, and other impacts. Patrick Porter said the County Parks Department would apply to planning for a SMA special management permit to allow commercial activities at Anini. If it is community-led that has great weight with the County to consider such activities. The County would have to pass legislation for the fees to go to them, currently it would go to the State. Stephen said some portion of the fees could go toward maintenance of the infrastructure. Stephanie commented on how permits have been previously allocated to businesses that were not prioritized to born-and-raised Kauai locals to make a living. Question from Mr P. on how many support letters can be acquired from Kilauea / Kalihiwai residents and stakeholders as they will be among the most affected.

- Mike Lyons reported Kauapea beach has had an influx of squatters and people causing trouble, many newcomers and potential drug issues. There are fishhooks being put into tents to discourage their removal which could cause injury. Please report any concerns to authorities.

### **Old Business:**

- None.

### **Community Updates:**

#### **County Council Updates:**

- No report.

#### **Seniors**

- No report

#### **PTSA**

- No report.

#### **‘Āina Ho’okupu o Kīlauea (Kīlauea Ag Center)**

- Yosh said we are hoping for a grand opening of the community area at the end of November with nonprofit participation, food trucks, etc.

#### **Anaina Hou Community Park**

- No report.

#### **Kīlauea Point National Wildlife Refuge & Friends of Kaua’i Wildlife Refuges**

- Jen Waipa reported wildlife refuge week is coming up, check on Facebook for details.
- FRIENDS GROUP: Jen reported the next Princeville Mo’olelo on October 10<sup>th</sup> with Lee Evslin talking about Roundup-type weed killers and health issues.

#### **Kaulana Kīlauea**

- Mr. P reported they are putting the forms in for the walkway concrete in Dispensary Park, concrete will be poured later this month. Also a wall to prevent dirt on the sidewalk is coming.

### **Kia'i Kāhili**

- Yosh reported Troy sent initial culvert drawings, estimated cost \$970K. There is no update on the timeline yet, should know more next month.

### **Nā Kia'i Nihokū**

- Hoku reported there was a successful Kilo event for the equinox. The 2 year permit is coming up. For the Green home contested case they are still waiting for transcripts.

### **Namahana Public Charter School**

- Covered under New Business. There are flyers to post for businesses.

### **Rotary Club of Hanalei Bay**

- No report

### **Announcements:**

- Mr. P announced that December 2<sup>nd</sup> will be Christmas Concert in the Park. Entertainers are coming from O'ahu. Lions Club will have coffee, cocoa, tea, and Haraguchi lunch wagon with food. They are hoping to do Christmas house lighting competition again as well and will be looking for prize donations.
- Mr P announced January 13, 2024 will be the Lions scholarship golf tournament, and this year scholarships can go toward trade schools as well. Please consider contributing.

### **Approval of Minutes: Postponed**

**~~Upon motion duly made by Thomas Daubert seconded by Gary Pacheco and carried unanimously, it was resolved to approve the minutes of the September 2023 Kilauea Neighborhood Association meeting.~~**

### **Adjournment of Meeting:**

**Upon motion duly made by Gary Pacheco, seconded by Sarah Wright and carried unanimously, it was resolved to adjourn the October 3, 2023 Kilauea Neighborhood Association meeting at 9:53 pm.**