



KŪKULU KE EA A KANALOA
KAHO‘OLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION

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COMMISSION MEMBERS

JOSHUA KAAKUA, Ed.D
Chairperson
CARMEN HULU LINDSEY
Vice-Chair

SUZANNE CASE
HÖKŪLANI HOLT
SAUMALU MATAAFA
MICHELLE PESCAIA

Michael K. Nāho‘opi‘i
Executive Director

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

Monday, September 21, 2020

1:30 pm

Online via ZOOM

Due to unforeseen technical difficulties, the KIRC was not able to live stream the Commission Meeting that occurred on Monday, September 21, 2020 at 1:30 pm. The KIRC posted a recording of the meeting on the [KIRC YouTube Channel](#).

COMMISSION MEMBERS

PRESENT: Joshua Kaakua, E.D., Chairperson; Suzanne Case; Hōkūlani Holt; Carmen Hulu Lindsey; Saumalu Mataafa; Michelle Pescaia

KIRC STAFF: Michael Nāho‘opi‘i, Executive Director (ED), Matthew Hatakeyama, Administrative Officer (AO); Daniel Morris, Deputy Attorney General (DAG); Terri Gavagan, Commission Coordinator (CC); Margaret Pulver, Public Information Specialist (PIS)

GUESTS: Kylee Mar, Protect Kaho‘olawe ‘Ohana (PKO); Manuel Kuloloio

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:32 pm. Roll call was conducted and quorum was established with six Commissioners.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Minutes of November 21, 2019 Regular Commission Meeting

MOTION: Commissioner Pescaia moved to approve the minutes of November 19, 2019 regular Commission meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mataafa.

ACTION: The motion was approved via roll call: Commissioner Case-aye; Commissioner Holt-aye; Commissioner Lindsey-aye; Commissioner Mataafa-aye; Commissioner Pescaia-aye; Chair Kaakua-aye.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were made.

IV. ACTION ITEMS

A. Review and Approve FY 2021 KIRC Operating Budget

ED Nāho‘opi‘i provided the Commission with a summary of the FY21 budget including its sources of funding—General Funds, reimbursable Trust Funds and non-reimbursable Trust Funds as well as projected program spending for each source category. The balance of the KIRC Trust Fund at the beginning of FY21 was \$1,512,687.

With the economic impact of COVID-19 staff anticipates very little, if any, increase in the availability of General Funds for the next several years. Therefore, staff plans to utilize operation cost reductions and increases in grant revenue focusing on reimbursements for operating expenses in order to continue on-island operations for the foreseeable future. The staff’s goals are to reduce operating expenses by 25%-30% and raising \$280,000-\$300,000 in grants to help offset the cost of on-island operations. The recent settlement funds from Monsanto could also help to meet potential shortfalls.

The projected balance at the end of FY21 is expected to be \$1,489,210. Most of the trust fund spending will be for continuation of Base Camp operations. These services have been funded through the Capital Improvement Project—Native Dryland Forest CIP Project. These funds will be depleted by April 30, 2021.

MOTION: Commissioner Lindsey moved to accept \$983,178.99 general appropriation budget, as detailed, to fund KIRC staff positions and Program expenses as approved in the State Administration’s budget. Commissioner Mataafa seconded the motion.

ACTION: The motion was approved via roll call: Commissioner Case-aye; Commissioner Holt-aye; Commissioner Lindsey-aye; Commissioner Mataafa-aye; Commissioner Pescaia-aye; Chair Kaakua-aye.

MOTION: Commissioner Lindsey moved to approve the expenditure of \$226,748.78 from the Kaho‘olawe Rehabilitation Trust Fund to fund reimbursable grants projects and non-reimbursable operations. Commissioner Holt seconded the motion.

Discussion: Commissioner Mataafa asked for a breakdown of expenses ED Nāho‘opi‘i provided the spreadsheet onscreen detailing the expenditures of each program which was included with the budget memo.

Commissioner Case noted that this plan can work only because of the Monsanto settlement funding. ED Nāho‘opi‘i agreed. It was his own opinion that the KIRC would need to survive the two biennium cycles before the state might see an economic improvement.

Chair Kaakua expressed concern about spending trust funds since the amount of funding that will be returned to the Trust Fund was unclear. He understood that the request was for approximately \$26,000 and staff anticipated approximately \$200,000 in funding through grants. ED Nāho‘opi‘i that \$132,000 was reimbursable. Chair Kaakua stated it was the last \$68,000 that staff would be looking for before May 2021. ED Nāho‘opi‘i responded that the bulk of that amount would come from permitted trolling fees, access fees, donations as well as interested from the Trust Fund.

ACTION: The motion was approved via roll call: Commissioner Case-aye; Commissioner Holt-aye; Commissioner Lindsey-aye; Commissioner Mataafa-aye; Commissioner Pescaia-aye; Chair Kaakua-aye.

B. Authorize the Executive Director to solicit, select and award Base Camp Operations Management Contract

ED Nāho‘opi‘i explained the Base Camp operations was currently being funded through the Native Dryland Forest CIP Project. The current contract will expire on May 15, 2021 and cannot be extended. The staff will be rewriting the scope of work. It will include facility management, meal service and meals. Staff determined it was easier to keep meal service and meals with the contractor, given current mandatory COVID-19 rules. There will also be a small contingency fund for vessel repair.

The reduced scope of work is in anticipation of the reduced need of base camp operations. There has already been a reduction of the number of staff and volunteers going to Kaho‘olawe due to COVID-19. The first group of volunteers since the pandemic started went out to island over the weekend. Staff would continue to reevaluate appropriate the size and schedule of on-island accesses based upon COVID-19 trends and funding.

ED Nāho‘opi‘i requested one commissioner work on the bid and serve on the selection committee. Chair Kaakua stated he would be willing to help if no one else was interested.

MOTION: Commissioner Lindsey moved authorize the Executive Director to solicit, select and award a Base Camp Management contract for the period May 16, 2021 through May 15, 2022 and to appoint Chair Kaakua to the contract review and selection board. Commissioner Holt seconded the motion.

Discussion: Commissioner Holt inquired about the maintenance of the restoration projects given the reduction of staff and volunteers and possible reduction of accesses. ED Nāho‘opi‘i responded that staff was already developing plans to address this issue. Possible solutions included making quick boat runs and overnight stays.

Staff has already modified planting techniques which include planting in gullies without irrigation.

ACTION: The motion was approved via roll call: Commissioner Case-aye; Commissioner Holt-aye; Commissioner Lindsey-aye; Commissioner Mataafa-aye; Commissioner Pescaia-aye; Chair Kaakua-aye.

C. Election of Vice Chair

Chair Kaakua explained that the Vice Chair position had been vacant since the spring of 2019 when he became Chair after former Chair McLean's term ended. He also stated that he would appreciate to have someone to work with. The position was not subject to governor appointment or legislative confirmation.

Commissioner Lindsey volunteered to serve as Vice Chair.

MOTION: Commissioner Mataafa moved Commissioner Lindsey be elected as Vice Chair of the KIRC. Commissioner Pescaia seconded the motion.

ACTION: The motion was approved unanimously via roll call: Commissioner Case-aye; Commissioner Holt-aye; Commissioner Lindsey-aye; Commissioner Mataafa-aye; Commissioner Pescaia-aye; Chair Kaakua-aye.

D. Review and Approve Legislative Positions for 2021 Session

ED Nāho'opi'i reviewed the results of the 2020 legislative session.

He acknowledged the low odds of receiving additional funding to restore funding for the Cultural Resources Project Coordinator's (CRPC's) position which was eliminated in the current state budget. Staff was unable to fill the position prior to the elimination as many of the viable candidates were involved elsewhere during the interview process. This funding request would probably need to be introduced by a legislator.

If there were CIP funds available, the KIRC would request funding to continue the Kaho'olawe Dryland Forest Restoration Project and for Phase II of the KIRC Kihei Education/Operation Center in anticipation of the post-COVID-19 environment. Visitor data analysis suggests that when visitors do return to Hawaii, they will be younger and more interested in information about the places they are visiting and in social justice.

Chair Kaakua clarified that staff was seeking the Commission's permission to say yes to funding for the position if it was offered.

Commissioner Case asked if these requests would be outside of the administration's budget? ED Nāho'opi'i responded that the request for funding of the CRPC position would be outside of the administration's budget. If there were any openings in the administration's budget for CIP projects the KIRC would like to request funding for the Dryland Forest Project. Commissioner Case stated she would be following her past

practices and abstaining from this action item and supporting the Commission's recommendations through the administration's budget.

Commissioner Mataafa asked if there was an urgent need for the CRPC position, given the state's dire economic position or could it wait until the following fiscal year? He was hesitant to request funding for new positions unless it was urgently needed, given the current economic situation. ED Nāho'opi'i explained that staff has stepped in and performed many of the duties that the CRPC would normally be responsible there are many duties they are unable to perform such as cultural site monitoring and annual review of 'iwi. Commissioner Holt stated that she would support the request because it has not been filled for quite some time and when the KIRC was originally established the Culture Program was intended with the Restoration Program and the Ocean Program as the main core of the agency. The KIRC has been fortunate to have staff who could step in for some of the CRPC's duties.

Commissioner Pescaia asked if there was a portion of the CRPC's kuleana to support an outreach education and translating the cultural resources to the classroom because of the high demand for content and connection between on-line classrooms and teachers who normally bring their students on service learning trips on both sides of the island with limited access. We are constantly looking for ways to bring Kaho'olawe to the people. ED Nāho'opi'i responded staff anticipated making the CRPC the education lead. Currently PIS Pulver was handling education, outreach, publications as well as grant writing. Staff was hopeful that the position would be a revenue generator with the educational component, particularly with the on-line education DOE functions for which the KIRC could receive funding.

Commissioner Case commented that she was sure that this was an important position, but this was not the year to expect to add positions and that the state was in a very serious financial situation. She agreed that the KIRC should not be requesting new positions this year.

Chair Kaakua asked if the KIRC would be in a stronger position to omit the position request and promote the CIP requests. Commissioner Mataafa asked if the request for position funding would hurt the KIRC's relationship with the legislators. ED Nāho'opi'i replied that he did not think so and that it would not hurt to ask.

Commissioner Lindsey stated the CRPC position was not new and that she thought that ED Nāho'opi'i's strategy was helpful; it was worth a try.

The Commission agreed to consider each request separately.

Mr. Kuloloio asked via Zoom chat who the people were who did follow through with the interview process. ED Nāho'opi'i responded that the names could not be disclosed because no offers were made.

Chair Kaakua suggested that the ED could say yes if the funding was offered.

MOTION: Commissioner Lindsey moved to support the request to restore funding for the previously vacant Cultural Resource Project Coordinator position. Commissioner Holt seconded the motion.

ACTION: The motion was approved 4-1-1 via roll call: Commissioner Case-abstain; Commissioner Holt-support; Commissioner Lindsey-support; Commissioner Mataafa-oppose; Commissioner Pescaia-support; Chair Kaakua-support.

MOTION: Commissioner Lindsey moved to request for \$1,500,000 in CIP Funding for FY22 and FY23 for continuation of the Kaho'olawe Dryland Native Forest Restoration Project. Commissioner Pescaia seconded the motion.

ACTION: The motion was approved via roll call 5-0-1: Commissioner Case-abstain; Commissioner Holt-support; Commissioner Lindsey-support; Commissioner Mataafa-support; Commissioner Pescaia-support; Chair Kaakua-support.

MOTION: Commissioner Holt moved to request \$3,500,000 in general obligation bond funds to compete final designs and planning for KIRC Education and Operations Center. Commissioner Lindsey seconded the motion.

ACTION: The motion was approved via roll call 5-0-1: Commissioner Case-abstain; Commissioner Holt-support; Commissioner Lindsey-support; Commissioner Mataafa-support; Commissioner Pescaia-support; Chair Kaakua-support.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

A. Executive Director's Report

ED Nāho'opi'i reported that the KIRC was currently running 11% under budget. He pointed out the new format of the budget which shows expenditures for each funding source. It was hoped that it will help staff to keep better track of expenditures. Staff was spending the first allotment of General Funds conservatively as it was unsure of when the second allotment would be released.

ED Nāho'opi'i stated that the long-range schedule was included in the Commission packet. He noted that the rain ceremony would be conducted next month and that KIRC staff would be hosting the island portion in Honokanai'a. Makahiki would be opened on Thanksgiving Day and that KIRC staff would be willing to provide support although staff would not be on island at that time. He also noted that there were no access dates on the long-range schedule past March. Staff has requested dates from the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana so that the KIRC can try to schedule staff to be there at the same time.

ED Nāho'opi'i reported that the legislature did confirm Commissioners Pescaia who is serving her first term, Mataafa who is also serving his first term and Commissioner Lindsey who is serving her second term as KIRC Commissioners.

The KIRC has requested the name of a replacement for former Commissioner Ching who opted not to serve another term. Boards and Commissions has requested that the name be submitted this month.

ED Nāho‘opi‘i explained that Commissioner Holt has agreed to continue as a holdover until the end of the legislative session. Staff was in process of finding her replacement.

ED Nāho‘opi‘i introduced the KIRC’s new Administrative Officer (AO), Matthew Hatakeyama, who replaced Kao‘onohi Lee who retired in December 2019.

ED Nāho‘opi‘i reviewed COVID-19 procedures which have been instituted at both the KIRC office and the Boat House.

ED Nāho‘opi‘i reported there were no new updates regarding the biosecurity nursery.

PIS Pulver provided an update on the status of grants—awarded, under review and those denied. The update was also provided in the Commission packet. Current grant-funded projects included:

- Reducing Excessive Sedimentation and Habitat Restoration in the Hakioawa Watershed of Kaho‘olawe-Operations and Maintenance (DOH)
- KIRC Virtual Museum Stage 3: Collaborations and Special Collections (IMLS)
- Marine Science Education and Training from a Hawaiian Perspective on Kaho‘olawe: A Pilot Program for Maui Youth (NOAA)
- Marine Debris Removal from Kanapou on Kaho‘olawe (NOAA & NFWF)

PIS Pulver reported the KIRC recently partnered with Maui Huliau Foundation for the past several months. They set up a virtual classroom for students on Maui to support teachers by giving the teachers resources to be able to make the distance learning process a little bit more enjoyable and interactive. Over 100 children to date have participated in a virtual field trip to Kaho‘olawe. It was the first unit offered in their aloha ‘aina classroom. It was currently opened to more teachers so hopefully more students will participate.

Commissioner Case commented the staff was doing great work in pursuing grants.

VI. PROJECT STATUS UPDATES

A. Status Update on Current and Planned Restoration Projects: Capital Improvement Project (CIP) Dry Forest Project; Post Fire Vegetation Monitoring; *Kanaloa kahoalawensis* seedlings

Restoration Program Manager (RPM) Paul Higashino provided his presentation via video which was played during the meeting. He reported that approximately 12,000 plants had been planted on Kaho‘olawe since from November 2019 to August 2020. This was a difficult task since volunteers were not allowed to go to Kaho‘olawe since March 2020. He reported a survival rate of 80%. Staff implemented a new planting technique without irrigation. Plants are placed in niches with may give them a better chance of survival. This eliminates augering and other steps that require volunteers.

RPM Higashino reported that the fire in the spring on Kaho‘olawe burned approximately 10,000 acres over a period of 1 ½ weeks. The fire started in Kealaikahiki ‘Ili and moved northward. Most of the burned areas were uncleared. Plants which are fire-adapted have already started to come back. The native plant population was particularly hit hard. Staff was monitoring six fire plots for vegetative recovery. Plants installed included ma‘o at Kaukukapapa and Kealaikahiki. The survival rate for these plants were 61% with 69 plants surveyed.

The staff’s goal was to plant more strategically with pockets of native plants such as ohai, naio, a‘ali‘i, mao and kewelu placed where seeds can be distributed by the wind.

RPM Higashino reported that the yearly mouse bloom on Kaho‘olawe was greatly reduced in Honokanai‘a, probably due to the fire but that the population remained high in the upland area where the fire did not spread.

Volunteers returned to Kaho‘olawe this month and completed the plantings for the CIP Dry Forest project as well as worked on water catchment. Staff planned to place more plantings in the Tier I area in the hard hardpan without irrigation.

Commissioner Case asked if there were issues with naio thrips on Kaho‘olawe. RPM Higashino conveyed via radio from Kaho‘olawe that they were not an issue on island at this time.

B. Status Update on Current Ocean Program Projects: NOAA PIRO Marine Educational Training (MET) Grant; NOAA NFWF Nets to Energy Marine Debris Removal Grant; Coastal Restoration; Monk Seal Training and Certification with NOAA Personnel

Ocean Resources Program Manager (ORPM) Dean Tokishi provided the update via video played at the meeting. The Ocean Program currently has two grant projects. The first is the NOAA PIRO mini grant of \$15,000. It is a marine educational training grant. The KIRC has partnered with Maui High School to work with their marine science program in providing curriculum for their marine science students. The curriculum includes Hawaiian culture, Hawaiian studies, influences and the uniqueness of Kaho‘olawe’s environment for marine studies. The grant project originally ran from November 2019 to October 2020. The project has been extended to October 2021 due to COVID-19. Three-quarters of the grant accomplishments—5 in class lectures and workshops which covered traditional economic knowledge, marine survey techniques and history of Kaho‘olawe. One workshop was cancelled due to the DOE’s closure of public schools due to the pandemic; this workshop will be rescheduled. Sixteen students are to go to Kaho‘olawe to implement what was learned. Staff will be working with Maui High Staff to finalize the student selection process.

The second grant of \$76,000 from NOAA/NFWF for marine debris removal. The grant obligation was the removal of a minimum of five tons of marine debris to be

removed from Kanapou Bay through three accesses. An extension was granted until September 2022. The unique aspect of this marine debris removal from previous removals is that the debris will either be sent to O‘ahu’s H-Power Plant, recycled or repurposed on Kaho‘olawe for sediment reduction, thereby avoiding landfill deposits.

Ocean Program staff planted 6,365 native plants along the shoreline in Honokanai‘a and Honokanaenae, including ‘aki‘aki, milo, naio and pohuehue. The goal is to reduce runoff sediment into the ocean and to solidify and harden the coastline to reduce erosion due to high surf and tidal changes. Staff conducted invasive grass removal to help the survival of the native plants.

In November 2019 a sailing vessel washed up on Ahupu Beach. ORMP Tokishi went on shore with a EOD escort to inspect environmental conditions to ensure there was no bleaching of chemicals. None was found. The vessel remains at that location. No visible damage to surrounding coral reefs was found. NOAA’s Monk Seal Research Program staff provided refresher training to Ocean Program staff in January 2020 on how to approach, identify, catalog and collect data on monk seals. This included on how to tag and bleach them. The staff’s certifications have been renewed.

C. Status Update on Current Commission Projects: Kahoolawe Virtual Museum Stage 3: Collaborations & Special Collections

CC Gavagan reported that with the advent of COVID-19 some of the activities for this project were being done at home while others continue to be done at the KIRC office. The rehousing of the Navy Collection has started. It was currently being done outside of the office with over 700 object having been rehoused so far. Staff continue to link images and additional data to the over 1200 images imported into the PastPerfect database. A no-cost extension for this project was granted by IMLS. The new end date is July 31, 2021.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS/FYI

There were no announcements from the Commissioners.

VIII. NEXT MEETINGS AND FOLLOW UPS

There was no discussion as to when the next meeting should be. There were no follow ups requested by the Commission.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:29 pm.