

KULA AGRICULTURAL PARK COMMITTEE MEETING
Thursday, February 11, 2021
1:00pm – 2:00pm
Online via BlueJeans

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, protecting the health and welfare of the Committee Members and the community is a priority. The meeting was held remotely, with Committee members and staff participating via an online meeting venue.

Meeting Minutes

Committee Attendees:

Barbara Barry, General Public
Jamie Davidson, Agricultural Trade Organization
JoAnn Inamasu, OED Director, Office of the Mayor
Jimmy Jones, Kula Agricultural Park Tenant
Bryan Otani, Maui County Farm Bureau
Councilmember Yuki Lei Sugimura, Maui County Council
Curtis Tom, Bank Community
Isla Young, General Public

Staff:

Stephanie Chen, Deputy Corporation Counsel
Patrick Ka'eo Ornellas, OED-Agricultural Coordinator, Committee Staff
Doreen Buenconsejo, OED, Committee Staff

Guests:

Carrie Campos
Marta Greenleaf
Francine Maielua
Ipo Mossman
Autumn Ness, representing Councilmember Gabe Johnson
Tina Silva

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Deputy Corporation Counsel Stephanie Chen at 1:03 p.m.

B. Public Testimony:

- Call for public testimony. No testimony presented. Public testimony closed.

C. Introductions:

- JoAnn Inamasu – Director of the Office of Economic Development.
- Jimmy Jones – owner of Pukalani Plant Company; Leaseholder of Lots 4 and 5 in the KAP; 3rd year member on the Committee.
- Councilmember Yuki Lei Sugimura – reappointed to KAP Committee
- Isla Young – representative for Maui Economic Development Board STEMworks Program/Workforce Development
- Jamie Davidson – Pacific Biodiesel sunflower farm pilot project
- Curtis Tom – employee of Bank of Hawaii; former Chair for County of Kauai Board of Water Supply; current Chair for MEDB Education Committee
- Barbara Barry – farmer in Haiku district; organic farming advocate
- Patrick “Ka’eo” Ornellas – Agricultural Coordinator and staff to the Kula Agricultural Park Committee
- Bryan Otani – 4 generations vegetable farmer; tenant at the Kula Agricultural Park. Maui County Farm Bureau Board Member

D. Election of Committee Chair and Vice-Chair:

- a. Councilmember Yuki Lei Sugimura suggested that the person nominated should be an active tenant of the Kula Agricultural Park.
 - b. Councilmember Yuki Lei Sugimura nominated Bryan Otani and Jimmy Jones. Jimmy Jones declined seat.
 - c. Councilmember Yuki Lei Sugimura made a motion to nominate Bryan Otani as Chair. JoAnn Inamasu seconded the motion. There was no further discussion or questions. The motion was approved unanimously.
- **Nominations for Vice-Chair: ITEM DEFERRED**
Following discussion on consideration of waiting until the new Committee Member is approved, Director JoAnn Inamasu recommended to defer Item D – Elections for Vice-Chair to the next Committee meeting. Councilmember Yuki Lei Sugimura seconded the motion. There was no further discussion or questions. The motion was approved unanimously.

E. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes of December 12, 2019:

- Councilmember Yuki Lei Sugimura motioned to adopt the minutes of the December 12, 2019 committee meeting. JoAnn Inamasu seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, questions or amendments. The motion was approved unanimously.

F. New Business:

- **a.** Maui County Council updates given by Councilmember Yuki Lei Sugimura.
 1. Working to improve/replace general signage throughout the Kula Agricultural Park and replace damaged or missing lot numbers signs
 - Visited site with Ka'eo Ornellas and with the guidance of JoAnn Inamasu on ways to fix signs
 - Corporation Counsel is assisting with sign requirements
 2. Usage of district funds to refresh Kula Agricultural Park
 - Councilmember Yuki Lei Sugimura asked for information from OED to use remaining funds in pot to assist with signage funding
 3. Fencing at the existing Kula Agricultural Park due to axis deer and feral swine (pig) problems
 - Informed State Representative Kyle Yamashita to assist with requesting for funding for both Upcountry Maui Agricultural Park and Kula Agricultural Park, estimate \$2M. Pending further action
 4. Suggested boulders be placed on road sides due to theft in the area
 - For future discussion
 5. Cleanup of Pulehu Road
 - Resident Mark White cleans up road sides on his own since December, January, and February from 7 a.m. – 11 a.m.
 - Supplies and PPE provided from Community Workday. They call themselves the “Pulehu Posse” and work to remove trash, metals, dead animals, tires, etc. along Pulehu Road
 - Councilmember Yuki Lei Sugimura had asked Mahi Pono to pay for tipping fees and the County to assist with the removal of loads.
 6. Suggesting Jimmy Jones and Bryan Otani coordinate a cleanup of the Kula Agricultural Park
 7. Fire on Pulehu Road on Saturday, January 16, 2021
 - Acknowledging Warren Watanabe and Mae Nakahata for information due to abandoned vehicle on fire.

Member Barbara Barry asked if there are any grants available in the amount of \$300K allocated in the County's budget for address feral animals? Also, if Kula Agricultural Park had applied for the grant for fencing? Survey to all tenants regarding a compilation of issues at Kula Agricultural Park for committee members to discuss?

Councilmember Sugimura advised that the grant funds are with the County's Department of Housing and Human Concerns \$1M divided equally \$300K amongst Lanai, Molokai, and Maui. The remaining \$100K is for the establishment of a management and control plan. Councilmembers were informed that the intent is for each island to handle their means of controlling axis deer. The deadline for applications under the RFP is February 12, 2021.

Councilmember Sugimura shared that she is hosting a public meeting regarding the axis deer problem on February 24, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom/BlueJeans.

JoAnn Inamasu shared that the intention was for each area to develop their own management plan since each island would best know how to handle animal control for their respective area.

The Department of Housing and Human Concerns has their Review Committee members selected and is ready to review applications.

Kula Hunting Club currently has a Right of Entry Agreement with the County and DLNR for the Kula Agricultural Park. Tenants have the opportunity to decline access to their property.

- **b.** Kula Agricultural Park updates given by Patrick “Ka’eo” Ornellas. Overview: 31 lots, 247 acres, 19 tenants, 50 year leases, first leases to expire in 2025. County of Maui and OED have worked diligently with individual farm tenants that have been delinquent on their farm insurance, water payments, and lease/rent payments. Assisted with resolutions to encroachment issues with neighboring residents moving closer to the Kula Ag Park. Provided resource information such as Farm Service Assistance and communication reminders to meet payment deadlines. County of Maui and Hawaii Department of Agriculture provided communication and assistance for the COVID-19 Relief Support (CARES Act) to farm tenants such as Maui County Farm Bureau - Product Purchase Program, Feed My Sheep, and Maui Economic Opportunity partners. Working with DLNR's Wildlife Control Management on axis deer and feral pig management and control. Renewed Right of Entry for the Kula Hunting Club to manage this task. Farm tenants are pleased with the control process resulting in less damage to farm equipment and produce.

There is ongoing farm lot inspections and workshops for tenants of Kula Agriculture Park being offered and planned for the future.

Member Curtis Tom asked regarding vandalism how is the internet service and installing cameras in the area?

In response, Ka'eo Ornellas advised that he met with MPD's Community Police Officers to alert them of the ongoing situations and obtain their input and recommendations to curtail the activities.

Per Ka'eo Ornellas, over the past year surveys have been done with Kula Agricultural Park tenants. Internet service in the area is a challenge. Researched on cameras options for safety and security and currently gathering information on funding. In the meantime, advised tenants to purchase their own, which some did and learned that their own employees were involved.

Member Barbara Barry inquired as to the quantity of food being produced at the Kula Agricultural Park for the community? Are all lots being compliant and utilized? Is there a waitlist for farmers wanting to lease lots at the Kula Agricultural Park? How are people being notified about the waitlist? Reselling of lease?

Per Ka'eo Ornellas, a list of interested individuals has been noted and when a lot(s) becomes available, they will be notified. This is not a waitlist and by no means guarantees the lot assignment to any individual. All interested parties will have to complete an application when the announcement is made.

Quantity of food production of Kula Agricultural Park lots are not available, but a production summary is available that needs to be updated due to the impacts of COVID-19 on our economy. Ka'eo Ornellas will provide an update. There are a few lots that are not compliant due to a variety of reasons. OED is currently working with these tenants.

Director JoAnn Inamasu advised that there is an application process when a lot becomes available. Process includes: advertisement, application intake, review of applications, and awarding of the lease. The property belongs to the County, therefore, property sales are not allowed. Per Jimmy Jones, property cannot be sold, but the company can. Per Deputy Corp Counsel Stephanie Chen, this is governed by Title 22 of the Maui

County and Code to determine the lessee selection. The Committee does not have final approval and this remains with the OED Director.

- **c.** Upcountry Maui Agricultural Park updates given by JoAnn Inamasu
This 262-acre parcel was purchased by the County in 2018. Currently still in the planning stages and has not been subdivided. In the process of getting water in that site. Initial concept was for parcels that range from 10 to 20 acres. County also considering some smaller lots in this mix.

Member Barbara Barry inquired whether there could be soil testing done for the property?

Director JoAnn Inamasu responded that the County will take that into consideration.

G. Agenda Setting:

The next meeting agenda to include the following items:

1. Clean-up of Kula Agricultural Park
2. Axis deer issue
3. Security cameras
4. Survey for tenants (problems, concerns, comments)
5. Update on tenant crop production (e.g. types of crops, etc.)
6. Election of Committee Vice Chair
7. County's Department of Agriculture

H. Announcements:

By recommendation of staff, Committee agreed to scheduling the meeting dates for 2021. The following dates were confirmed for 1:00pm (unless otherwise advised):

- Thursday, May 13, 2021
- Thursday, August 12, 2021
- Thursday, November 11, 2021

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 13, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. via BlueJeans. Ka'eo Ornellas to send out meeting invites.

I. Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 2:12 p.m. by Deputy Corporation Counsel Stephanie Chen.