

KULA AGRICULTURAL PARK COMMITTEE MEETING  
Wednesday, November 10, 2021  
1:00pm – 2:00pm  
Online Virtual Meeting 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

**Record of Attendance Committee Members:**

Isla Young, General Public  
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  
Kyle Caires, UHMC-CTAHR

**Staff:**

Stephanie Chen, Deputy Corporation Counsel  
Daniel Kunkel, Deputy Corporation Counsel  
Ka'eo Ornellas, OED-Ag, Committee Staff

**Guests:**

Marcus Knox-Chinnery  
Janel Yamamoto  
Autumn Ness (joined 1:17pm)

*Opening: a welcome from Office of Economic Development Director, JoAnn Inamasu for Deputy Corporation Counsel, Stephanie Chen to introduce her replacement as advisor to the Committee; Deputy Corporation Counsel, Daniel Kunkel.*

**A. Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Kyle Caires at 1:05 p.m.

**B. Public Testimony:**

Call for public testimony. No public testimony presented. Motion made by Chair Otani to close public testimony. Seconded by Councilmember Sugimura. Motion approved unanimously. Public testimony closed.

**C. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes of August 12, 2021:**

Members given an opportunity to review the minutes from the August 12, 2021 meeting. Vice Chair Caires called for any further discussion, modifications of minutes. None heard. Motion made by Councilmember Sugimura to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Member Davidson. Motion approved unanimously.

*Deputy Corporation Counsel Chen requested a Board Member roll call and for each member to disclose if any other person is present in the same room as the member. As requested by Vice Chair Caires, Staff Ornellas conducted a roll call. All members present. No guests identified. Note: Member Barry signed on at 1:18pm and Member Jones at 1:19pm.*

**D. New Business:****1. Position of Chair and Vice Chair.**

Bryan Otani (Maui County Farm Bureau seat) and Kyle Caires (UH CTAHR seat) to switch Chair and Vice Chair position rolls. Vice Chair Caires called for any further discussion. None heard. Motion made by Member Tom. Seconded by Councilmember Sugimura. Motion approved unanimously.

**2. Maui County Council Update.**

**a.** Chair Caires advised that the Proposed Bill No. 72 (2021) for an Ordinance Establishing Chapter 2.50 Maui County Code, relating to Pesticide and Fertilizer Use on County Property passed.

Councilmember Sugimura confirmed that this does not apply to the Kula Ag Park.

**b.** Maui Axis Deer Task Force Project & Agricultural Working Group Deer Committee with Maui County Farm Bureau Update.

Councilmember Sugimura advised Maui Axis Deer Task Force Committee meetings and subcommittee meetings held recently in September and October, member-count (25-30). Subcommittees range from a variety of veterinarians from the Department of Agriculture, interested Hunters, Economic Development,

Ecology/Environment, Funding Legislators and Educators. An Emergency Proclamation was done by State Senator Lynn DeCoite to control manage deer on all 3 islands of Maui County, applicable November 9, 2021 through January 7, 2022. Council Services is looking into the Proclamation to advise and make it easy for everyone to understand what the document represents to determine the balance of deer management.

Chair Caires shared that there are a lot of people working on similar Deer Task Force projects such as the Maui County Farm Bureau (MCFB) Committee. They are looking at approaches for basically an integrated approach, planning multiple techniques and strategies, some of the best management practices associated with deer trapping, transport and humane harvest for volume. The back end of the deal is a no entry as an economic driver or cost recovery. MCFB was not ready to apply for the DHHC funding due to requirements of the grant. Working together with Maui County Farm Bureau Partners from the ground up will enable the Maui County Farm Bureau to do a better job in the future.

**c.** Update on House Bill 200 regarding DLNR Deer-Fence funding for Kula Agricultural Park.

Councilmember Sugimura advised \$2.8 million appropriation, effective July 1, 2022. Under DLNR and reported by Lance DeSilva, Forestry & Wildlife Manager; hire planning consultants, complete compliance requirements, project coordination of landowner discussions to create management units and design to and from the main road. Proposed fencing would be for both the current and new County of Maui Agricultural Parks. If any extra funding not used, it would go to watershed funding.

Member Barry inquired if the fencing costs of the two Agricultural Parks be split, so the Committee Members are able to see the different price-points.

Councilmember Sugimura said she could ask the Department of Land & Natural Resources for an update and House Bill 200 will be forward to Staff Ornellas for Committee distribution.

**d.** State of Hawai'i funding for infrastructure improvements to the Upcountry Maui Agricultural Park in the amount of \$3.5 million, including a booster pump to get water to the new Upcountry Maui Agricultural Park.

Director Inamasu advised that updates have been shared over past meetings. These funds allocated to a contract for the booster pump will get water to the new Upcountry Maui Agricultural Park and in addition, will be used for planning/design. Mahalo to Representative Kyle Yamashita for allocation of State funds. Thanks also to Councilmember Sugimura for her assistance.

Division of lot sizes are still being discussed. Unforeseen work to the entire project may see an increase in costs. Working with the Department of Water and the Department of Management to keep excess costs down.

Member Barry, shared that she testified as a panel member on the water situation of Mahi Pono; taking water from East Maui streams and ditches. She realized County of Maui is looking into doing future water usage needs and asked if the County would consider instead, digging water-wells. She suggested that this may be a cheaper way to get water to the new Upcountry Maui Agricultural Park.

Director Inamasu share that she was not aware of prior administrations plans mentioned by Member Barry, and added that it's a good idea and the idea would be considered.

Member Barry further added, in the event there may be a future drought and or not enough water, the new Upcountry Agricultural Park could be effected by water shortage. This idea might be worthwhile exploring.

**e.** County dump waiver of tipping & debris/trash bin roll-off fees request received from Kula Agricultural Park farm tenants.

Council Member Sugimura inquired with the Department of Environmental Management and was advised that this service request to waive fees for Kula Agricultural Park farm tenant lots is not possible due to the same service not applicable to the agricultural community outside of the County's Kula Agricultural Park.

### **3. Kula Agricultural Park Update.**

**a.** Kula Agricultural Park signage update project.

Agricultural Coordinator Ornellas reported and visually presented that new legal signs inclusive of verbiage, placement, and positioning (with Corporation Counsel approval) was installed

throughout the Kula Agricultural Park; at the main entrance, up and down Pulehu Road, Kulakula Road and all thirty-one farm parcel entrances. All old outdated signs and posts were removed and disposed. Updated signs included: Kula Agricultural Park hours (main entrance), Warning signs such as “No Trespassing”, “It’s a Crime...” and “Non-Potable Water Not for Drinking”. Cost of the project billed to County of Maui Office of Economic Development was just under \$17K (\$16,600.00+ materials and labor). Mahalo for support to Department of Public Works – Highways Division, Makawao. It was a three full day project over a three-week time frame (late October to early November).

**4. New Upcountry Maui Agricultural Park Inquiry Process.**

Chair Caires asked Member Barry if her questions have been answered and or does she have additional questions.

Member Barry advised that she had quite a few more questions and advised the Committee that should her time run out where her questions are not answered, she would like the remainder of her questions deferred to the next meeting in 2022.

Chair Caires agreed.

Member Barry inquired on the process of vendor selection and if a local company was selected.

Director Inamasu advised that the process was done prior to her position as Office of Economic Development Director. The Agency selected is Unemori Engineering, Inc. (a local company), selected by the County of Maui.

Member Barry asked for when will the design be ready for review.

Director Inamasu advised that it will be a while and will keep the Committee abreast. Update was mentioned previously on other past meetings and we are waiting on evaluations, topography and environmental studies of the new Upcountry Maui Agricultural Park property.

Member Barry asked if funding was established already for the new Upcountry Maui Agricultural Park.

Director Inamasu restated that \$3.5 million has been budgeted for the planning and design of the ag park.

Member Barry asked what's the estimated time of availability of the new Upcountry Maui Agricultural Park opening.

Director Inamasu shared that no opening date has been scheduled.

Member Barry went on to say, the TMK of the new Upcountry Maui Agricultural Park parcel was the old pasture and HCS-commercial cane lands. She asked how the County of Maui will make the land ready for farmers to start farming. Will the County do grubbing, remove plastic drip-tapes, spray Paraquat and herbicide to kill invasive weeds and pests? How will the County manage moving forward to accommodate Organic and or Regenerative Farmers?

Director Inamasu advised that answers not currently available, but will consider as plans progress with regards to organic and commercial farmers.

Member Barry voiced her concern that currently there is no organic farmer in the KAP.

Director Inamasu mentioned that there is currently an organic farmer in KAP. This was confirmed by Staff Ornellas.

Member Barry stated the need for her to advocate for the organic famer since the MCFB advocates for the commercial farmer.

Director Inamasu welcomed the input from Member Barry and continued to explain that we need to look at the broader perspective of the County, staying in the parameters of the law. Request was made to Member Barry to send remainder of questions to the Committee.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Chen stepped in to suggest that we stay in line with the Sunshine Law and not get into depth of the general discussions presented as agenda items in the meeting. New information will be forthcoming from the new Agricultural Department that is being created.

Member Barry shared a new topic of a past Kula Agricultural Park meeting in 2017, where a survey was done and mentioned/recorded in the October 12, 2017 minutes. Meeting was a Public meeting at Kula Community Center. There was survey done that highlighted the Organic farmers that were interested in the new upcountry Maui Agricultural Park. A request for another future Public meeting regarding the new Upcountry Maui Agricultural Park was mentioned

and for it to be on a future agenda item topic for Committee discussion.

Director Inamasu thought this was a good idea for a future Public meeting, but advised again that currently not enough information is available to share with regards to the new Upcountry Maui Agricultural Park with the community. A process must be followed and go through the Mayor's office and through County Council. Deputy Corporation Counsel Chen reiterated process.

Councilmember Sugimura intervened and requested that Member Barry send a written request to Chair Caires for any topic(s) to be added to next meeting agenda. By doing this, we can discuss, research and provide answers.

Member Barry added, on "New Business Items" in the past, she would get a list of Committee Members contact information. She has not received and or does not have a Committee contact list to send Committee members inquiries.

Councilmember Sugimura advised that this may not be possible due to Sunshine Laws and deferred to Corporation Counsel for advice.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Chen confirmed that this could be a violation of the Sunshine Law regarding open Public meetings and public participation. The community meeting idea is good, but some of the inquiries are pre-mature. Information will be advised soon. Chair Caires was asked to make a note of topics and to consider for future Public meeting. The meeting will need to be virtual due to Governors current COVID19 Public Gatherings Proclamation. Chair was advised that it is permissible to hold additional Committee meetings to discuss agenda item topics within the quarterly meetings scheduled for 2022.

Chair Caires and Director Inamasu agreed.

**5. Proposed Designation of a New Committee Seat (recommendations).**

Deputy Corporation Counsel Chen started off discussion with update that any Amendment change to the Maui County Code regarding number of seats (from nine-seats to eleven-seats) must go through County Council requirements per Committee request via the Office of Economic Development's Director for consideration and approval.

Member Barry advised that two Committee seats will be open in April 2022: Food Distribution (Agricultural Trade Organization) and Maui County Farm Bureau. Recommends Committee to expand back to eleven-seats that could include Hawaii Farmers Union United, Food Hub and other organizations.

Chair Caires addressed and shared his background update of his twenty-year diversified farming background (including family farming history; asparagus farmers) domestic USA & international experiences, networks with soil health and cropping, but not limited.

Council Member Sugimura clarified by quoting: Title 22 – Agricultural Parks, Chapter 22.04A.070 – Kula Agricultural Park Committee, having only nine-members. Member Barry was asked to forward date-year of the eleven-seats along with request of questions she has to be answered by the Committee.

Member Barry will send Council Member Sugimura her updates on the eleven-member Committee information and more other updates.

Chair Caires called if there were any further questions from the Committee. No further questions.

**E. Next Meeting Date:**

Chair Caires advised next Committee meeting is for Thursday, February 10, 2022 at 1:00p.m. Meeting notice/invite will be email by Staff Ornellas.

Chair may call a special meeting to address potential tenant application and other topics as needed. Chair will keep the Committee informed.

**F. Adjournment:**

Chair Caires called for a motion to adjourn. Motion made by Member Barry. Seconded by Council Member Sugimura. Motion to adjourn approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 2:06p.m.