

Kāneʻohe Bay Regional Council Meeting

Minutes

June 24, 2025

6:00 PM-8:00 PM

Online or call-in via ZOOM

(Zoom info listed below)

or

In-person at:

Windward Community College

Hale Naʻauao Rm 125

45-720 Keaʻahala Rd., Kāneʻohe HI 96744

1. Call to Order (Non-Action Item)

Brian Neilson – DLNR DAR, Chairperson

Cedric Bertelmann – Kāneʻohe Bay Fishing Panel Representative (voting member)

Elena Bryant – Kāneʻohe Neighborhood Board Representative (voting member)

Joe Pickard – Commercial Boaters Representative (voting member)

Liko Kaluhiwa – Kāneʻohe Bay Recreational Boating Representative (voting member)

Fred Reppun – HIMB Representative (voting member)

Jarrett Machado – Kahaluʻu Neighborhood Board (will take Clifford Loo's seat as of 7/1/25)

Kimberly Fuller – DLNR DAR

Jesse Boord – DLNR DAR

Kendal Tucker – DLNR DAR

Nick Sinchek

Joshua Hekeia – Office of Planning

Brent Kakesako – Hawaiʻi Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development

Corin Thornburg – Hawaiʻi Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development

Merri Keliʻikuli - Hawaiʻi Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development

Makana – Senator Awa's Office

Rallen Caya – Captain Bob's

Rocky Kaluhiwa – Koʻolaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club

Kristi Kaluhiwa - MCBH

Casey Ching – Heʻeia NERR

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Meeting called to order at 6:10pm.

2. Approval of the June 24, 2025 Agenda (Action Item)

Member Kaluhiwa moved to approve the agenda. Member Reppun seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed.

3. Approval of Council minutes of the January 21, 2025 meeting (Action Item)

4. Approval of Council minutes of the December 10, 2024 meeting (Action Item)

5. Approval of Council minutes of the October 15, 2024 meeting (Action Item)

Member Reppun moved to approve all 3 council minutes. Member Kaluhiwa seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed.

6. Update on the Kāneʻohe Bay Master Plan (Non-Action Item)

Member Reppun shared that Hawaii Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development (HACBED) was contracted as a facilitation team with regard to the Kāneʻohe Bay Master Plan. The intent is to review the plan and look at what parts have been implemented. Casey Ching elaborated that this is a continuation of the process started by previous KBRC member, Mo Radke, to continue moving forward and building off of the work done by previously established workgroups.

The HACBED team, Brent Kakesako, Corin Thornburg, and Merri Keliʻikuli introduced themselves. Member Reppun shared that the HACBED team has facilitated for many communities around Hawaiʻi, helping with planning issues and strategies, and have a lot of ties with grassroots and community groups around the State. Because of their extensive work and relationships with members of the community, they are trusted to help guide us through this process.

Brent Kakesako reviewed the timeline for the process, including:

- Apr-Jun 2025: Initial planning meetings with Member Reppun and Casey Ching
- June 2025: Presenting at this current KBRC meeting to update KBRC on the process, identify Temporary Committee members, and confirm initial meeting dates
- Jul/Aug 2025: Convene the Temporary Committee 2x to review the plan and prioritize recommendations
- Sept/Oct 2025: Hold a community meeting to obtain broader feedback
- Jan/Feb 2026: Meetings with agencies mentioned in the KBMP OPSD, DOH, DLNR, OHA
- Mar/Apr 2026: Convene the Temporary Committee 2x to review agency sharing and discuss implications for plan and recommendations
- May 2026: Community meeting to provide updates and get additional feedback
- June 2026: Review community feedback and identify prioritized recommendations going forward
- Sept 2026: Grant period ends

Aunty Rocky Kaluhiwa asked who hired HACBED and why nobody else from KBRC was sitting in on meetings besides Member Reppun. Member Reppun replied that he and Casey Ching wrote a grant through Hawaiʻi Community Foundation to hire a facilitator to help with this process because KBRC members lacked the time to move this forward on their own. HACBED is contracted through Heʻeia NERR and University of Hawaiʻi. A couple meetings have been had with Member Reppun, Casey Ching, and the HACBED team to draft up this process, but the purpose of this presentation is to run it by KBRC to make sure it looks good to everybody.

Aunty Rocky Kaluhiwa shared that it would be good to have more people in the meetings besides Member Reppun and Casey Ching, and recommended including members of the neighborhood boards. Member Reppun responded that it is a good idea to have those organizations represented, and that if more than three KBRC members would like to join the Temporary Committee, they will publicly notice the meetings.

Chair Neilson inquired about drafting outputs from this process. Brent Kakesako replied that the process is not in-depth or robust enough for a major update of the plan and that other engagement would need to happen. It's a review of what's been done, what's outstanding, and what could be tackled next, mahaloing and celebrating that and pulling the agencies that should be here back to the table. Member Reppun added that we're moving away from an "update" and looking at this process as a review. There are 100+ recommendations in KBMP, some are solidly protected by the plan itself and codified in rules and statutes. The purpose is to look at the areas of the plan that have not been worked on as much, see what we should prioritize, and how to pull in the agencies that can prioritize that.

Jarrett Machado requested to view the plan linked here: <https://planning.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Kaneohe-Bay-Master-Plan-May-1992.pdf>

Casey Ching provided a brief overview of what might be reviewed during this process in regards to KBMP.

- Chapter 1: Introduction – Potentially include more descriptions of the wahi pana as well as incorporate stewardship organizations that are doing work within Kāneʻohe Bay
- Chapter 2: History of the Kāneʻohe Bay Region – Add any additional planning studies that have occurred since 1992
- Chapter 3: Description of the Planning Area – Incorporate new legislation, such as ACT 232 and amended language in HRS or HAR since 1992
- Chapter 4: Kāneʻohe Bay Master Plan – No edits to this section, but we plan to review the recommendations to see what's been done and celebrate those wins, or pull other folks in to help prioritize future action
- Chapter 5: Implementation – See which organizations need to be tapped to help us move recommendations forward

6. Designation of Temporary Committee members to update the Kāneʻohe Bay Master Plan (Non-Action item)

Member Bryant volunteered to serve and supported the recommendation to include more KBRC members moving forward.

Jarrett Machado volunteered to serve to represent Kahaluʻu Neighborhood Board and as a KBRC voting member as of July 1, 2025. In the event that he is unable to make a meeting, he would ask another Kahaluʻu Neighborhood Board member to step in.

Member Pickard volunteered to serve.

Kristi Kaluhiwa and Aunty Rocky Kaluhiwa volunteered to serve as non-voting members.

Member Bertelmann volunteered to serve.

Due to the interest of over 3 KBRC members in serving, the Temporary Committee meeting will shift to a general KBRC meeting and be publicly noticed.

Member Bryant supported publicly noticing the meetings, so that everyone who stepped up to be included could offer their different perspectives without needing to duplicate efforts. Member Reppun added that the meetings wouldn't require voting, but would entail a walk-through of the process to make recommendations and ultimately bring back these recommendations to the full council. Chair Neilson suggested publishing the meeting with one non-voting action item, having an in-person and/or zoom option.

Kristi Kaluhiwa requested a copy of the presentation to be emailed. Brent Kakesako shared the link to the presentation in the zoom chat.

For the first meeting of the Temporary Committee on July 15, 2025, Member Bryant, Member Pickard, and Member Machado preferred a virtual option. Chair Neilson shared that publicly noticed meetings are required to have an in person venue. The group did not oppose having WCC continue being the in person option.

For the second meeting of the Temporary Committee in August 26, 2025 was decided on for the group with a virtual and in person option.

The 6:00pm time frame will continue for these meetings.

8. Update on the invasive Majano anemone outbreak and control plan (Non-Action item)

Jesse Boord provided an update about the Invasive Majano Anemone Outbreak.

- Non-native corals were first detected and removed in 2020, but follow up surveys found additional coral colonies in 2023.
- After removal of the additional colonies in 2024, the anemone was sighted during follow up surveys of Reef 8.
- There is significant overlap between where the non-native corals were and where the infestation zone of the invasive anemone is found.
- DAR submitted permitting for reef signage and are working with the local community to further notify folks about it.
- DAR surveyed nearby reefs and moorings and have not found any additional detections.
- DAR partnered with USGS for lethality trials using heat, but heat trials were higher than expected and chlorine paste was effective post-treatment.
- Small-scale lethality trials indicated that smothering with chlorine was effective, but not smothering without.
- Funding for efforts are included in HB1220 including funds for eradication and mitigation. Proposals have been submitted for additional supplies.
- Outreach has included a Civil Beat article, interviews in collaboration with Mālama Learning Center and Paepae o He'eia for an Outside Hawai'i TV episode, presentations to Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, Kāne'ohe Neighborhood Board, and Makai Watch

- Last meeting, there was a budget request for expenditures linked to non-native coral removal over the past few years. The breakdown came to \$32,000 in field work, not considering time borrowed from other organizations or office time. The removal of these coral colonies was a much easier process than it will be for the anemone.

Jarrett Machado asked what proximity this reef is to recreational and tourist areas and if there is any action to make sure it is not trampled on and disturbed. Jesse Boord replied that it is a heavily trafficked area, close to HIMB, He'eia Pier, and MCBH. They have been making an effort to distribute pamphlets to dive companies, shops, MCBH, and community groups in the surrounding area. There has been a community request to put direct signage on the reef. DAR is also working with HIMB to make sure researchers are not actively collecting there. DAR hopes signage will be the most useful in deterring folks from the area, if they have not already been exposed to outreach efforts.

Jarrett Machado asked if there was a specific distance to stay away from the reef and suggested having a boat lane for barges rented at MCBH. Jesse Board shared that DAR doesn't have the authority to keep people out of the area, but they can request people to exert caution. DAR outlined a buffer zone that goes outside of the initial infestation and are looking to put up signs 15-20m outside the identified area, so that signs are seen from all sides as the reef is approached. It is a concern of many community groups. DAR wants to get out there and remove it as soon as possible, and will continue providing updates to KBRC.

9. Update on reef damage of Navy P-8A aircraft grounding in Kāne'ohe Bay (Non-Action Item)

Kimberly Fuller presented an update about the Navy Aircraft grounding.

- Upon the initial grounding, DLNR DAR and DOCARE responded with the Navy to prioritize uprighting coral colonies as part of emergency restoration.
- Throughout early 2024, DAR surveyed damage to be between 4000-7000 colonies.
- In August, a final assessment was released.
- DLNR met with the Navy to discuss mitigation actions at the response of the Navy wanting to take part remediated damage, despite having sovereign immunity.
- In March, April, and May, environmental staff from the Navy as well as DLNR DAR met to develop an action plan to offset the damage – they may proceed with invasive algae control using urchins, a proven successful tool in Kāne'ohe Bay
- Navy contracted staff to do a restoration site analysis – looking at the restoration site, how much coral there is, how much algae there is, and working with an MOA to establish baseline data
- DAR informed the Navy of the cost of the response effort, and the Navy is reviewing the reimbursement request and trying to return those costs.

10. Update from the Division of Aquatic Resources in pursuing Ch. 91 Rule Making to ban commercial aquarium harvest statewide (Non-Action Item)

Chair Neilson reviewed this standing agenda item where a petition was brought to BLNR to ban commercial aquarium harvest statewide. BLNR accepted the petition to pursue rulemaking,

under the condition that DAR does not do a ban. DLNR DAR is working on drafting aquarium fishing rules and will share those draft rules with petitioners before going before BLNR.

Member Bryant asked for clarification that petitioners will get to see the draft rules in advance. Chair Neilson responded that petitioners will get to review the rules once DAR has drafted them to a place where they are comfortable presenting them and that petitioners will receive them sooner than BLNR to get feedback. Member Bryant voiced her continued disagreement with the BLNR opinion that DAR cannot do an all out ban.

Jarrett Machado asked if the draft rules will protect other fishers who take fish for subsistence purposes. Chair Neilson responded that the rules for commercial aquarium fishing currently require fishers to be compliant with HEPA (HRS Chapter 343) and that no permits have been issued in the State of Hawai‘i, even though some have applied. Chair Bryant added that this rulemaking process has nothing to do with food fishers, subsistence fishers, and is purely applicable to commercial aquarium collection.

11. Community concerns (Non-Action Item)

Aunty Rocky Kaluhiwa shared that KBRC should have met sooner, with lots of things happening in the past 6 months. She voiced concerns over the Kāne‘ohe Canoe Club shower issue, stating that the pipe was put in by Governor Waihe‘e and the shower was put in by Governor Ariyoshi as a community need. She added that the shower was gifted from the Governors and there are discrepancies in what folks at DOBOR and DLNR are saying is legal or illegal. She further stated that excuses made for taking out the shower, such as the water bill and that Lisa Kitagawa put in money for improvements of He‘eia Pier, including sewage, and there needs to be a shower for people to rinse off themselves. Aunty Rocky Kaluhiwa shared that she will be taking this issue to the Governor, and it should be an action item on the next agenda so she can provide updates. The shower is located by the bathrooms.

Chair Neilson responded to the first concern that a KBRC meeting had not been held due to not holding quorum while several council members terms expired. He went over the list of renewed seats and Senate confirmations later on in this meeting.

Member Bertelmann shared that he has seen a lot of activity on the sandbar and is concerned about accidents. Illegal commercial activities are openly happening, with more people being shuttled out to the sandbar. He witnessed a big private charter boat that came from town to do a wedding event at the sandbar. Chair Neilson responded that with increased DOCARE officers and Makai Watch presence, he would expect it to be going the other way. Jarret Machado echoed Member Bertelmann’s thoughts.

Member Bryant replied that because this seems to be a consistent community concern and it is getting worse, that somebody from DOCARE should come to KBRC and speak about what can be done.

Member Pickard shared that he’s seen DOCARE officers standing at the He‘eia Pier launch ramps talking to boaters, but has not noticed an uptick in illegal activity. He asked if these boats

are coming from private residences or the Makani Kai Marina. Member Bertelmann replied that he's seen the activity mostly from He'eia Pier, with boats going back and forth many times picking up and dropping off people, and it's getting worse.

Member Pickard shared that he's heard of boats being seized and would be interested in exploring how to proceed with similar types of enforcement.

Jarrett Machado shared that DOCARE presence is evident during holidays, but you can see and hear about all the illegal activities on weekdays, especially in the summertime. There is a new atmosphere of partying out there, but everyone knows DOCARE is there on holidays.

Casey Ching shared that if suspected illegal commercial activity is happening, it would be helpful to send pictures and observations to kaneohebaymakaiwatch@gmail.com. Although Makai Watch folks are not encouraged to engage with illegal operators and do not have enforcement authority, these observations can be compiled to help DLNR and DOCARE to investigate further.

12. Announcements (Non-Action Item)

Kristi Kaluhiwa shared that the MCBH Director of Operations has been in contact with the He'eia Harbor Master, Tanya Borabora. She wants to bring Waterfront Operations Director to meet with Makai Watch and to meet KBRC to continue engaging with the community over the next few months.

Casey Ching announced the Keiki Fishing Tournament and Invasives Fishing tournaments planned for July 26, 2025.

Chair Neilson reviewed current KBRC seats:

Kahalu'u Neighborhood Board – Jarrett Machado will begin on July 1, 2025 when Clifford Loo's term has expired.

- Has submitted application, resume, etc. and received confirmation of receipt from Governor's office

Kāne'ohe Neighborhood Board – Elena Bryant

HIMB – Fred Reppun (confirmed)

Kāne'ohe Bay Fishers - Cedric Bertelmann (confirmed)

Kāne'ohe Bay Recreational Boaters - Liko Kaluhiwa (confirmed)

Kāneohe Bay Commercial Boaters - Joe Pickard (submitted)

Office of Hawaiian Affairs – Gov. Office waiting to receive application

Due to the Temporary Committee Meetings happening in July and August, KBRC decided on having the next meeting on September 16th.

13. Adjournment

Adjourned at 7:56pm.