

**2023 Legacy Land Conservation Commission Draft Minutes, Meeting 81
State of Hawai'i Department of Land & Natural Resources
Division of Forestry & Wildlife**

DATE: September 18, 2023
PLACE: Kalanimoku Building Boardroom, Room 132
1151 Punchbowl Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

And remote by interactive conference technology (online via ZOOM and by telephone)

PARTICIPANTS

COMMISSIONERS:

In Person

Ms. Christiane "Kauai" Lucas

Via Zoom

Mr. William "Butch" Haase
Mr. John Sinton
Ms. Beryl Blaich
Mr. Jacob Tavares

STAFF:

In Person

Van Matsushige Project Development Specialist, Land Division

Via Zoom

David Penn Program Specialist, Legacy Land Conservation Program, Division of Forestry & Wildlife

PUBLIC:

Via Zoom

Reyna Ramolete Hayashi (Trust for Public Land)
Kamuela Ka'apana (Trust for Public Land)

ITEM 1. Call to order

Chair Haase called Meeting 81 to order at 1:02 PM. Chair Haase started the meeting by explaining the in-person and remote meeting procedures. David Penn further explained the procedures should the connectivity go down and scheduling of the next meeting if connectivity cannot be re-established. Chair Haase started the roll call with each commissioner stating their location. Five (5) commissioners were present for Meeting 81 (four via Zoom and one at the boardroom). The Chair moved on to Item 2.

ITEM 2. Fiscal Year 2024 applications for grants from the Land Conservation Fund (Land Acquisition) – Consultation About Forms and Timeline

Chair Haase handed over the discussion regarding the fiscal year 2024 application for grants forms and timeline to David Penn. Draft forms and timelines for fiscal year 2024 were distributed in advance to the commissioners for review. Staff considered revisions to the forms and possibly a different platform for receiving the applications, but due to time constraints no changes were made from the previous year's forms.

Chair Haase inquired about the status of the maintenance grants. David Penn responded that management grants is a separate process handled under procurement code which is different from acquisition grants. Exemption from the procurement code could be requested. There are plans to discuss the maintenance grants further at the organizational meeting tentatively scheduled for December 7, 2023. Commissioner Blaich asked about whether the \$6.8M for the acquisition grants was separate from the maintenance grants. David confirmed that the maintenance grants were separate from the acquisition grants. Commissioner Blaich wanted to know more about specific changes staff was seeking to make to the application forms. David explained about automating some of the forms and reducing redundancy by eliminating questions on the online application or forms altogether. Commissioner Sinton asked about when the applications would be made available for the commissioners to review. David commented that all applications would be available as applications are uploaded on the Wizehive platform.

David continued with the review of the draft timeline, application forms and budget. Upon completion of the Meeting 81 staff will request the Chair to approve the forms and timeline. Agency review (forms 5 and 5a,b,c) will be submitted to the respective departments heads at one time versus submitting each form for review as they come in. This will allow for a more efficient and timely process.

Chair Haase opened the floor for questions from the public. Reyna Ramolete Hayashi from the Trust for Public Land commented that changes to the application are needed and will submit specific suggestions for revisions to the form. Hard copy and online forms are repetitive and makes for added work to complete. Commissioner Sinton commented that they are ways to automate the form but requires time and resources which the program doesn't currently have. To make it simpler, all forms for the current cycle will be submitted online through the Wizehive portal. Chair Haase suggested to gather feedback about the forms and the application process from the applicants after the December 1st due date since it's everything is still relevant and fresh. Reyna added that the site visits were challenging to schedule last year and was looking to make it easier for all. David suggested to extend the field visit period. Commissioner Lucas commented that as a legislative staff member it gets very busy from January during legislative session. Commissioner Sinton also posed the possibility of a large number of applicants which would make it difficult to complete field visits within one month. Commissioner Blaich agreed about extending the field visit period. It was decided that the field visits would be extended by one month with decision making scheduled for February 14-16, 2024.

There were no other comments from the commissioners or the public.

ITEM 3. PROGRAM UPDATES

David Penn began the updates with the budget breakdown for FY2024 explaining the program budget and the variances made in the House, Senate and Conference versions. There was a 10.8% increase from FY2023 budget but still lower than previous versions of the bills. The \$1.8M is still allocated for the Turtle Bay bond payment with little interest from the legislature to change it.

David reviewed the projects that were discontinued (Ulupō Buffer and Kaluanono), other recent awards that were closed and projects that are in the process of closing. Commissioner Tavares asked about the reason the two projects were discontinued. David explained that the appraisal came in higher than the award amount for Ulupō and the seller was not amiable to negotiate with State Parks on a lower price. Waipā Foundation is working out a different agreement for Kaluanono, so they decided to discontinue that award.

David reviewed the bills introduced during the FY2023 legislative session. The bills related to Legacy Land did not move forward but could be revived in the FY2024 session.

ITEM 4. OPEN DISCUSSION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

David Penn started by explaining that the Department has indicated that they will be more active in supporting LLCP and develop strong networks with past and present partners to increase the profile of the program. To secure more traction there are plans to schedule a Legacy Land week that would include the public and legislators. It was encouraged for commissioners on those islands also participate if available.

Van Matsushige updated the commission on site monitoring for Kuamo'o and Amy Greenwell Ethnobotanical Garden on Hawai'i Island and plans for future site monitoring this fiscal year.

Chair Haase opened the floor for comments from the commissioners and the public.

Commissioner Blaich emphasized the need for an open meeting to include the applicant and the public for maintenance grants. Request for an exemption to allow for an open meeting is a possibility and would be reviewed by staff.

Reyna updated the status of Makali'i and Pālāwai which were FY2023 awards. Option Agreements were signed for both parcels with the landowner. The landowner also allowed access to the property prior to closing so the non-profit groups are starting to clear the land. Halulu Fishpond is expected to close by the end of the year.

ITEM 5. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Haase adjourned Meeting 81 at 2:32 PM.