

The meeting was opened at 2:15 pm online using Zoom Meeting

- I. PRESENT: Directors: EAST:** Arryl Kaneshiro; Ed Kawamura Jr. (Presiding); **WEST:** Howard Greene (Presiding); Umi Martin; Richard Lorero **Online:** **EAST:** Eric Hansen; Emilie Kirk; **WEST:** David Smith  
**Associate Directors: Online:** **EAST:** Darren Tamekazu  
**Others:** Jenni Scotti, Conservation Specialist; JB Martin, NRCS PIA Acting Director; **Online:** Paul Togioka, County of Kauai; Jenna Dunn, NRCS Lihue District Conservationist; Tiffany Parker
- II. REVIEW OF AGENDA (ADDITIONS/DELETIONS/CHANGES):** No changes
- III. MINUTES: East Kauai SWCD Motion:** Ed made a motion to accept the minutes for 10/17/2022. Arryl seconded. Motion was accepted unanimously. **West Kauai SWCD Motion:** Howard made a motion to accept the minutes for 11/22/2022. Umi seconded. Motion was accepted unanimously
- IV. TREASURER’S REPORT: East Kauai:** Arryl shared report for 12/12/2022, two months for reports, noted expense around NACD conference and picnic and the usual payroll **Motion:** Ed made a motion to accept the Treasurer’s report for 12/12/2022. Emilie seconded. Motion was accepted unanimously. **West Kauai:** David shared report for 12/12/2022. Noted expense reimburse for NACD to East Kauai. **Motion:** Howard made a motion to accept the treasurer’s report for 12/12/2022. Umi seconded. Motion was accepted unanimously.
- V. CORRESPONDENCE:** Information and flyers were e-mailed as well as provided at the meeting.  
**Discussion:** Jenni shared to follow up the word document as she pastes information from e-mails on that shared document. There are grant opportunities and a few surveys to look into.
- VI. NEW BUSINESS:**
- A. NRCS REPORT: Jenna Dunn** NRCS District Conservationist gave her report for 12/12/2022
1. **General**
    - i. NRCS position hires, acting, leaving, vacancies information and announcements, see correspondence
  2. **Farm Bill Programs**
    - i. EQIP, AMA, ACEP ~25 applications
  3. **Office space update Office Space Update**
    - i. If FSA has reserved conference room we will not come in
    - ii. Schedule 2-3 weeks out
    - iii. Air quality test results pending
    - iv. Looking into cleaning furniture to take to the conference room- Will be taking bids on this
    - v. Looking at if any records can be saved- Digitization, scan everything and dispose afterwards
    - vi. GSA Market research for long term lease (2025 lease Watumull ends)
    - vii. Sold the ford
  4. **NRCS acronym Sheet- See attached. Will be e-mailed**

**Discussion:** JB shared that NRCS is working with both short term and long term lease and hopefully the same location for both. He noted that there was an identified location, but the challenge is that they are working

towards verification through SAMS. Long term the long-term lease will be located with FSA and RD. But further follow up will continue to take place.

## **B. CONSERVATION SPECIALISTS' REPORTS:**

### **1. Jenni Scotti** gave her report for 12/12/2022:

#### **a. Trainings / Meetings / Learning**

- i. Comprehensive Nutrient Management Training
- ii. HACD – NRCS District Director Grant meeting & 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary meeting
- iii. NRCS PIA New Employees meeting
- iv. NRCS Programs meetings
- v. NACD Regional Meeting
- vi. NRCS PIA Technology Annual Rollout meeting
- vii. NRCS PIA Programs Annual Rollout meeting

#### **b. Plans / field visits**

- i. NRCS specialists on island for annual spot check site visits
- ii. Planning
  1. Planning and follow-up with 24 clients
  2. Worked on 7 practice check-outs
  3. Completed 1 plan
  4. 12 Site visits/online meetings

#### **c. Outreach/Education**

- i. CAP CONTEST
  1. Plan to work with Teachers for interest in spring

#### **d. Misc/News/upcoming events/future projects/goals**

- i. Level III planner certification
- ii. NRCS Grant submission
- iii. New Position Postings
- iv. CTA Planning
- v. EQIP Planning
- vi. New Clients
- vii. Annual Dinner
- viii. Hawaii wide SWCD employee meeting

**Discussion:** Richard asked about the site visits with the specialists and what those were. Jenni shared that they were for practices that were certified last year (FY 2022). Ensuring that documentation was accurate, practices were installed as noted in the documentation and that the practices are still in place. Richard asks if this happens regularly, Jenni shared that this is routine though not every office every year. This is just a process to make sure things are working and if there are any changes/fixes that need to take place.

## **C. NRCS PIA Acting Director – JB Martin**

**Discussion:** JB reintroduced himself and learned director's for each district. JB shared that he likes to meet in person and interact with district and local farms before decisions for policies and procedures takes place. JB shared that he was on island interacting with several farmers part of the farmer's union. JB shared that he has

been acting in PIA for 8 ½ months. His experience is around 6 states and has seen different ag especially corn and soybean as well as ranching but has seen other types of ag as well. He has noted that PIA is different, but he felt he can relate to northern Arizona with the small farm and way of life on the reservations. He is continuing to learn how things work and how things are taking place in order to figure out how best to assist agriculture here. He has noted a few issues which includes misconceptions of smaller areas and how ag takes place. He noted that certifications taking place ensures that farmers receive the resources that they should be receiving. He wants to ensure that agriculture has the resources they need and that it makes sense. He noted the State technical advisory committee (STAC) is important for decision and addressing challenges in Hawaii. This is what headquarters (national) will listen to and use for consideration for Hawaii. One topic he noted is axis deer in the state is something he would like to address, bringing in resources from West Tech center to review. He hopes to work toward addressing feral animals. Inflation reduction act is one of the topics being discussed in how that will be used and how it will look like for NRCS. HE will be doing further research in how this will work in PIA. Especially looking at CSP and RCPP. Strategic planning process to evaluate priorities, this may be by island as each island has different challenges. He would like to better establish partnerships around the state. JB shared that he hopes that with the office space that there will be a space available soon and has noted that there are several location around PIA that needs to be addressed in the coming years. JB wants to ensure that the Districts look at the capacity building proposal. The districts directors shared that

#### **D. Update on Open Positions**

- i. HACD Conservation Specialist (FT)
- ii. HACD Programs Assistant (FT)
- iii. SWCD District Assistant (PT)

**Discussion:** Jenni reminded the board that John has resigned so his position will be posted. She also shared that HACD has a programs assistant funding for a year that the office has been covering for year and was offered to Kauai. Both positions are full time with benefits. Jenni shared that SWCD district assistant position should be discussed as we discuss the district manager position. This committee meeting invitation should be forthcoming. Umi asked when the program assistant position will start and essentially, she noted that it will start once someone is hired. Jenni shared that NRCS has been hiring programs assistants in office around the state and hopes that this position will be a position that once and if NRCS has this then the hired individual could potentially move into that. Umi asked about the grant writer, Jenni shared that this discussion could take place with the district manager position. Jenni shared that she found someone who has done this for many years but may have some information for other grant writers. Howard asked about how the positions would be posted. Jenni shared that they will be posted in three different locations to help improve the candidate pool. Directors also shared that there may be different locations and networks to help with sharing the information to their networks. Directors asked to have the information shared and they can share in their networks.

#### **VII. REVIEW & APPROVAL OF CONSERVATION PLANS & COOPERATOR AGREEMENTS:**

**New Kauai Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Cooperators:** Jenni gave cooperator agreements, one for each district. Umi asked if they were new, Jenni shared that one was new and one the old form couldn't be found but has been an existing cooperator.

**Conservation Plans:** None

#### **VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- A. **Garden Island RC&D:** Umi shared that there was the annual meeting. Each committee shared that reports, one being Kauai Invasive Species Committee with three established fire ant populations.
- B. **Grading Ordinance:** No Report

#### IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

##### A. **HACD – NRCS grant for Board training/information**

- i. Provide feedback

**Discussion:** Jenni shared that she sent this information over the last few months, but that through meetings with HACD Mae had provided several comments. Jenni reminded the directors that the handbooks are outdated and that there needs to be new training for directors especially as there is a big knowledge gap that is taking place as people retire from boards. A new handbook would help guide directors about their roles and how to do grants and other information with their positions. JB shared that he requested what districts would like to see especially in district employee retention. JB shared that districts have opportunities to elevate their operation and funding to build their own capacity in order to operate. He would like to change the dynamic especially the perception that NRCS will take employees away, he would like to have an overarching agreement, but individual districts operation differently. So the capacity building goal is the next step in working towards helping the districts.

##### B. **HACD – celebrate 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary – Year of Conservation**

- i. Discuss options for outreach events
- ii. Discuss partnership with State/County
- iii. Review potential material
- iv. Lei – cultural and agriculture

**Discussion:** Jenni shared that HACD is using the first Hawaii Conservation district anniversary to celebrate HACD in Hawaii's 75 years. Jenni shared that there was discussion to work with the state or county. She has talked to HACD if there is any information that can be shared to interact and discuss with the county. There was discussion of a display at their airport or county building. Jenni shared that Mae wanted to use Lei as a focus for the discussion as it is important culturally and within agriculture. Jenni wasn't sure when it will start, but suspects it may be June. Kauai Museum lei contest. A few names were offered for contact.

##### C. **West Kauai Annual Dinner – Updates**

**Discussion:** Jenni will be e-mail the invitation list. Discussed food options.

#### X. OTHER BUSINESS:

- A. **General updates from around the island:** Discussion around the parrot issue for farmers and how it has been addressed thus far.
- A. **Office Space Update:** Shared in NRCS report.

#### XI. ANNOUNCEMENTS / EVENTS:

- A. Annual Dinner – January 27<sup>th</sup> 2023
  - i. E-mail invitations

**NEXT MEETING DATE: East Kauai:** Monday January 9, 2023 at 2 pm at Kauai Community College: Learning Resource Center room 130. **West Kauai:** Tuesday January 17, 2023 at 3 pm at National Tropical Botanical Garden. ***See online schedule for changes in location or date information:***  
<https://calendar.ehawaii.gov/calendar/>

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:19 pm, written by Jenni Scotti, Conservation Specialist