

Communications and Community Outreach PIG Final Report  
Members: Paul Horner, Laura Kaakua, Pomai Bertelmann, Lanakila Mangauil

Findings

The MKSOA Communications and Community Outreach Permitted Interaction Group (PIG) finds that, as indicated in its name, its purpose is twofold. These dual purposes of communications and community outreach are considered addressed individually herein.

Findings: Communications

This PIG further finds that at the present time, MKSOA as an agency lacks the staff to meet future communications needs. Although positions are being created to address various needs of the agency which may involve degrees of interaction with the public, the purpose and responsibilities of those positions do not explicitly encompass communications insofar as public relations or social media. The PIG herein refers specifically to the Project Director Position Description, which states in section A.2.a.iii.5:

“ A. MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2. Review, develop, and provide best practice recommendations to establish the following:

a. An effective and efficient organization structure and resources required to fulfill the operational and statutory requirements in Act 255, SLH 2022 which include, but is not limited to, the following:

iii. Oversee the consultants' development of the business plan that serves a road map for accomplishing the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan and should include the following:

5. Communications Plan that includes internal and external government agencies, stakeholders, private organizations, and other interested parties.”

The PIG finds that due consideration must be given as to whether the development of such a plan necessarily constitutes execution of said plan by the Project Director in handling day-to-day external communications, public relations, to include social media. The PIG finds that MKSOA will likely need to establish a Communications Director position, and other supporting communications positions to be determined as part of MKSOA's strategic planning process. Support positions could have expertise in social media creation, journalism and mo'olelo, and community outreach and facilitation.

With that in mind, this PIG acknowledges that although time is of the essence in all matters related to the construction of MKSOA as an agency and its component structures, due diligence and a degree of patience are required insofar as proper adherence to applicable laws, administrative rules and procedures are concerned. As such, this PIG finds that the most expedient avenue of meeting communications needs, to include website creation, public relations, and social media, would be via consultant or contractor. It should be stated that acquiring such a firm or individual to carry out this work on behalf of MKSOA would necessarily take place via the Request for Proposal (RFP) process in accordance with State of Hawai'i State Procurement Office (SPO) procedures. This process would include

creation of a Scope of Work, Request for Proposals, and other aspects of the procurement process governed by SPO.

However, the retention of a contractor or consultant to handle communications cannot and would not be a permanent condition and would likely serve as an intermediary measure. This PIG therefore finds that the work of communications would be transferred from the hired communications contractor to either to a dedicated staff position created within MKSOA, or potentially to a position that exists within the Center for Maunakea Stewardship (CMS) to be transferred to MKSOA at the appropriate time and in the appropriate manner, which themselves are to be determined. If a MKSOA staff position were to be created, it would have to undergo the same process as all other established or pending positions, including but not limited to approval by the legislature, budget request to fund the position, the creation of a position description and supplement, final approval by the governor, and internal and external posting. It should be reiterated that the process of creating a staff position requires time, and MKSOA has immediate communications needs that require contracting communications work in the interim. MKSOA could take on the preliminary steps of creating a communications staff position at the same time or any time after contracting for communications work.

#### Findings: Community Outreach

This PIG finds that direct engagement with the public is an immediate necessity, due in part to the broader lack of knowledge or understanding as to the existence, purpose, and intent of MKSOA. In addition, the PIG finds that current engagement efforts with the astronomy community have been more than sufficient relative to the disproportionate lack of engagement with the Hawaiian and local resident community. This disparity, if not remedied, has the potential to perpetuate preexisting dissatisfaction with the management of Mauna Kea, as well as the potential to undermine future attempts by MKSOA to cultivate public confidence and trust.

To that end, this PIG finds that there are two primary options available which would meet MKSOA's community outreach goals, which are not mutually exclusive:

- 1) community "talk-story" sessions, separate from MKSOA's regular monthly meetings, aimed at communicating basic need-to-know information and background about MKSOA which incorporate an opportunity for community members to ask questions and voice their concerns, and
- 2) 2) holding some of the monthly MKSOA Board meetings in person and out in the community in locations and at times of day where community members are more likely to be able to attend.

Both options envision holding the outreach meetings in various communities throughout Hawaii Island, and on different islands. Both options also envision an extended meeting format and agenda that meets Sunshine Law requirements and is culturally grounded. The meetings could include opening and closing protocol, ceremony, public education on MKSOA's work, and community Q&A. If the meetings were held as MKSOA's regular monthly meetings, they would also include regular business such as PIG reports and operational discussion.

#### Recommendations: Communications

Acknowledging the time-limited nature of this Communications and Community Outreach PIG, this PIG recommends the creation of a PIG to draft a Scope of Work and Request for Proposals to put out to bid

for a communications contractor or consultant that would handle all short-term communications needs of MKSOA, including but not limited to website creation, public relations, and social media platform creation and management, as well as to investigate potential contractors/consultants who may be suitable for MKSOA's somewhat unique needs.

The PIG further recommends that the Board determine the most appropriate course of action regarding the creation of a communications officer-type position if it determines such a position is needed, specifically whether the task of creating positions should be undertaken by the Board or left to the Executive Director or other staff pending hire.

In addition, the PIG also recommends that the Board consider the future transfer of CMS staff positions and determine whether its preference is to create a MKSOA communications officer-type position as above, or whether there is a comparable position which already exists within CMS that MKSOA should plan to transfer to MKSOA at the appropriate time.

#### Recommendations: Community Outreach

This PIG recommends the creation of a PIG to:

- 1) investigate contracted facilitator options to plan and handle the logistical needs of holding a series of community "talk-story" sessions, to facilitate those sessions as needed, take notes at those sessions, and create minutes from those sessions, plus other associated needs; and
- 2) construct a brief introductory informational presentation on the MKSOA for the purpose of facilitating public understanding, which covers the following topics:
  1. Origin of MKSOA- Mauna Kea movement; Creation of Mauna Kea Working Group; Working Group Report
  2. Act 255- Board seats/members; MKSOA's mandate & requirements; Lands & powers to be transferred; 5-year transition period; Limitations- Sunshine law, State procurement, staffing and hiring, time
  3. Progress, status, trajectory- Accomplishments to date; Current undertakings; What is to be done

These "talk-story" sessions would incorporate a significant portion of time for the community to voice its questions, input and concerns directly and in an open format that is not bound by the constraints of specific discussion topics.

The PIG therefore recommends that the Board come to a decision as to its preference of how to go further progress on said community outreach sessions, whether by creating a PIG or some other form of committee, or by direct assignment to a Board member, or by other means which may be available.

The PIG also recommends that the Board plan for four in-community meetings across Hawaii Island in 2024, and six in-community meetings in 2025 with two on Hawaii Island and one meeting per island on the following islands: Oahu, Molokai, Kauai and Maui. All in-community meetings would be in compliance with Sunshine Law, and all in-community meetings would be after regular work hours (such as 5-8pm) or on the weekends (such as Saturday 1-4pm) where the public is more likely to be available to attend.. To hold in-community meetings in 2024, the PIG recommends that the Board decide as soon as possible whether it wants to hold 4 in-community MKSOA meetings in 2024 in addition to its 12 monthly meetings for a total of 16 meetings, or whether it wants to use 4 of its 12 monthly meetings to do the in-community meetings. Either way, the PIG recommends that all four in-community meetings be held in

the months of the solstices and equinoxes (March, June, September and December 2024). The PIG also recommends that the Board schedule all 2024 meetings as soon as possible.

Proposed MKSOA 2024 In-Community Meetings on Hawaii Island. Locations (Hilo, Kona, Ka'u, and Kohala or Waimea) can be swapped for different months.

- 1) March 2024 – Hilo?, Hawaii Island – Ke Ala'ula a Kāne — the flaming (red) path of Kāne - Spring Equinox. Equinox occurs March 19, 2024 (Tues).
- 2) June 2024 – Kona?, Hawaii Island – Ke Ala Polohiwa a Kāne — the black glistening path of Kāne - Summer Solstice. Solstice occurs June 20, 2024 (Thurs).
- 3) September 2024 - Ka'u?, Hawaii Island – Ke Ala Ma'awe'ula a Kanaloa — the red track or tentacle of Kanaloa - Fall Equinox. Equinox occurs September 22, 2024 (Sun).
- 4) December 2024 - Kohala or Waimea?, Hawaii Island – Ke Ala Polohiwa a Kanaloa — the black glistening path of Kanaloa - Winter Solstice. Solstice occurs December 20, 2024 (Fri).

Proposed MKSOA 2025 In-Community Meetings Across Hawaii. Locations (Oahu, Maui, 2 on Hawaii Island, Kauai, Molokai) can be swapped for different months.

- 1) March 2024 – Oahu, Spring Equinox
- 2) June 2024 – Hawaii Island, Summer Solstice
- 3) July 2024 – Kauai
- 4) September 2024 – Molokai, Fall Equinox
- 5) October 2024 - Maui
- 6) December 2024 – Hawaii Island, Winter Solstice