

MINUTES  
BOARD OF WATER SUPPLY  
**Friday May 19, 2023**

The Board of Water Supply, County of Kaua'i, met in a regular meeting in Līhu'e on Friday, May 19, 2023. Chair Kurt Akamine called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m. The following Board members were present:

**BOARD:**

Mr. Kurt Akamine, *Chair*  
Ms. Julie Simonton, *Vice Chair*  
Mr. Tom Shigemoto  
Ms. Micah Finnila  
Mr. Ka'aina Hull  
Mr. Troy Tanigawa

**EXCUSED:**

Mr. Larry Dill

Quorum was achieved with **6** members present at Roll Call.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Next Scheduled Meeting: Thursday, June 15, 2023

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**The agenda was approved with no objections.**

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

1. Regular Board Meeting – April 20, 2023
2. Executive Session – April 20, 2023
3. Special Board Meeting – May 3, 2023
4. Finance Committee Meeting – May 8, 2023
5. Finance Committee Meeting – May 10, 2023
6. Finance Committee Meeting – May 11, 2023

**The meeting minutes were approved with no objections.**

**PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

**CORRESPONDENCE**

1. Letter from Council Vice-Chair Kipukai Kualii dated May 2, 2023 re: Council Committee of the Whole Briefing on State Water Policies scheduled for June 21, 2023

**Correspondence Item 1. was received for the record.**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

1. Report of the Finance Committee of the Board of Water Supply, County of Kauai Draft Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024

**The Finance Committee Report was received for the record.**

**OLD BUSINESS**

1. *Manager's Report No. 23-27*: Discussion and Possible Action to execute an annual Use and Occupancy Permit No. 874 between the State of Hawai'i and the Board of Water Supply, County of Kaua'i for non-trenching maintenance, inspection and other uses and activities

within the State Highway Right of Way, Kaua'i, Hawai'i. (*Deferred from April 20, 2023 regular meeting*)

**Board member Simonton moved to approve Manager's Report No. 23-27, seconded by Mr. Shigemoto; with no objections, motion carried with 6 Ayes.**

2. Discussion and Possible Action on Department of Water's DRAFT Operating and Capital Budgets for FY 2023-2024 (*referred to Finance Committee at May 3, 2023 Special Meeting*)

**Board member Shigemoto moved to approve DOW's Draft Operating and Capital Budgets for FY 2023-2024, seconded by Mr. Tanigawa; with no objections, motion carried with 6 Ayes.**

### **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Discussion and Possible Adoption of Budget Resolution No. 23-09, Department of Water's Annual Operating and Capital Budgets for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-2024

**Board member Simonton moved to adopt Resolution No. 23-09, seconded by Mr. Shigemoto; with no objections, motion carried with 6 Ayes.**

2. Discussion and possible action, including permitted interactions under HRS Ch. 92, Pt. I (Sunshine Law), on Correspondence item 1, Letter from Council Vice-Chair Kipukai Kualii dated May 2, 2023 re: Council Committee of the Whole Briefing on State Water Policies scheduled for June 21, 2023

Board member Shigemoto asked to clarify that in addition to the 2 board members that would be attending to represent the Department, another Board member would not be allowed to attend as a member of the public. Deputy County Attorney Mahealani Krafft explained that if it was not going to pertain to board business, all the members could attend. However, some of the items listed, such as the short- and long-term priorities, could delve into specific matters over which the Board has supervisory jurisdiction, which would be considered board business. Any discussion on something that can be considered board business that takes place outside a posted meeting would be a violation of Sunshine Law. Because of that, Ms. Krafft's recommendation is to keep it to 2 board members attending and keeping the discussion very general with no specifics and then providing a report to the full Board at the July meeting.

**Board member Simonton moved to delegate 2 members of the Board for response to Council Vice-Chair's request, and attendance at the Council Committee of the Whole briefing re: State Water Policies scheduled for June 21, 2023 pursuant to HRS 92-2.5(e), and provide a report on matters presented and discussed at the July Board meeting, seconded by Mr. Tanigawa; with no objections, motion carried with 6 Ayes.**

### **STAFF REPORTS**

1. Public Relations Activities – updates on Public Notices & Announcements, Community Outreach & Education and Upcoming Events

Information and Education Specialist Jonell Kaohelaulii provided a summary of the PR Report submitted, highlighting the Annual Make-A-Splash water education festival scheduled for September 15, 2023. She shared that DOW hosted their first water station event of the year on May 6 at the Visitor Industry Charity Walk, where they provided chilled tap water in reusable

Department of Water bottles. Ms. Kaohelauii emphasized that participating in events like this where we serve our own drinking water is a crucial part of DOW's community outreach efforts which not only allows for engagement with residents and customers, but also enables us to instill good will in the quality of water we serve as well as customer service.

## 2. Fiscal

- a. Monthly dashboard
- b. Budget Report for April 2023

Waterworks Controller Renee Yadao thanked Anne Parrot for preparing the April recap while they were busy working on the budget. She provided a brief summary of the April report and noted that the dashboard was not prepared for this month, but the primary concern was the budget and now, her focus is on the fiscal vacancies. Ms. Yadao reported that she currently has 7 vacancies, 2 of which will be filled June 1 – a CSR I and Accountant IV. Her goal is to fill all but one before July and are actively recruiting; they will be interviewing for 2 Accountant II positions in the coming month.

## 3. Operations – Monthly service dashboard and highlights

Assistant Chief of Operations Ryan Smith provided a summary of the Operations Dashboard submitted highlighting that they have been actively getting staff refreshed and updated with their annual and current trainings. He noted that Water Plant Operators are now fully staffed, which is the first time that has happened in 12 years and that they are moving forward with selecting a Water Service Investigator, which they have a good candidate for and are excited about. Additionally, the automotive shop staff are all certified crane operators now. Mr. Smith noted a few changes made to the dashboard on the Monthly Water Audit chart that changed the non-revenue water numbers from percentages to gallons/connection, which follows AWWA standards. He also noted that the annual and monthly financial impacts are based off the total non-revenue water, of which one-third are due to leaks, hydrant flushing/hits that would not be recoverable revenue.

## 4. Engineering – Monthly Service dashboard and highlights

Acting Engineering Division Head Jason Kagimoto provided a summary of the Engineering dashboard submitted. He reported that they were able to internally fill the Program Support Technician position in Water Resources and Planning, which has been a big help. Regina Flores has hit the ground running in her position as Acting Water Resources and Planning head and has made a lot of changes which has been instrumental in keeping things up to date. They are looking to interview one of two Water Microbiologist vacancies and have scheduled interviews for the Civil Engineer V position under Construction Management. Mr. Kagimoto provided an update on the SRF loan for Kalaheo, noting that the initial discussion was for a \$3 million principal forgiveness, but they were recently informed that the executed loan has a \$5.2 million principal forgiveness. In total, \$15.4 million out of \$23 million will not be paid through our rate payers. Chair Akamine asked if DOW received a lot of Federal monies in the past to which Deputy Manager Hinazumi stated in the recent past, they have not leveraged their State and County dollars to gain Federal funding. Manager Tait stated that there is quite a bit of money available every year and will be a new initiative moving forward.

## 5. IT – Monthly Update

IT Manager Wayne Takabayashi was unable to attend the meeting. Deputy Manager Michael Hinazumi provided an update on his behalf noting that IT has been continuing to address deficiencies with physical equipment and appliance replacement and upgrades as well as cyber-security which continues to be a challenge among all water utilities. Primary focus has been on site security as well as infrastructure network security. They are currently working on getting professional services consulting contracts to assist the Department with upgrades, software updates and security issues. Mr. Hinazumi noted that the number of Help Desk tickets reported shows a low number, IT is continuing to encourage staff to submit tickets. The actual number of issues resolved is three times what is shown, mainly because Wayne and Scott are so easily accessible and accommodating.

### Manager and Chief Engineer – Monthly service dashboard, update on monthly activities, personnel matters, and required communications to the Board

Manager Tait provided an overview of his Manager's Update. Board member Finnila mentioned that she did not see any links to our job openings on our website and asked if that is something that we would consider including. Information and Education Specialist Jonell Kaohelaulii stated that DOW is doing periodic updates of our Facebook page which lists our current open positions. Additionally, she has been working with our IT division as time permits to include an HR link that takes you straight to the County website where all the job listings are posted. They will continue to look for more ways to promote job opportunities. In response to Ms. Finnila Mr. Hinazumi stated all jurisdictions are advertising similarly; however, Kauai County is the only County not offering salaries on the range which has been a huge deterrent. There are candidates out there with many years of experience that would fill an SR class, but County HR only allow us to offer them the minimum range. In response to Mr. Shigemoto Manager Tait explained that DOW has attempted to propose alternate recruitment and hiring options to COK DHR, but were could not get them to agree. We were fortunate to acquire our current Waterworks Controller, but to attract and retain talent like her, we need to offer them a competitive edge which we are unable to do with the current process.

### **TOPICS FOR NEXT BOARD OF WATER SUPPLY MEETING: (June)**

1. Report from Manager and Chief Engineer – Manager's DOW Performance Audit

### **TOPICS FOR FUTURE BOARD OF WATER SUPPLY MEETING**

1. Water Systems Investment Plan Briefing (July)

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Pursuant to Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) §92-7(a), the Board may, when deemed necessary, hold an executive session on any agenda item without written public notice if the Executive Session was not anticipated in advance. Any such executive session shall be held pursuant to HRS §92-4 and shall be limited to those items described in HRS §92-5(a).

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Cherisse Zaima*

Cherisse Zaima  
Commission Support Clerk