

**BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**
Council of the County of Maui

MINUTES

April 10, 2026

Online Only via Teams

CONVENE: 10:02 a.m.

PRESENT: Councilmember Yuki Lei K. Sugimura, Chair
Councilmember Kauanoë Batangan, Vice-Chair
Councilmember Tom Cook, Member (Out 2:39 p.m.)
Councilmember Gabe Johnson, Member
Councilmember Alice L. Lee, Member (In 10:06 a.m.)
Councilmember Tamara Paltin, Member
Councilmember Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez, Member (In 10:08 a.m.)
Councilmember Shane M. Sinenci, Member
Councilmember Nohelani U'u-Hodgins, Member

STAFF: Kirsten Szabo, Legislative Analyst
Pauline Martins, Senior Committee Secretary
James Krueger, Senior Legislative Analyst
Peter Hanano, Legislative Attorney
David Raatz, Director, Office of Council Services
Jarret Pascual, Legislative Analyst
Clarissa MacDonald, Legislative Analyst
Lenora Dinneen, Council Services Assistant Clerk
Ryan Martins, Council Ambassador

ADMIN.: Kristie Wigglesworth, Deputy Corporation Counsel, Department of the Corporation Counsel
Lesley Milner, Budget Director, Office of the Mayor
Jordan Molina, Director, Department of Public Works
Paul Barany, Deputy Director, Department of Public Works
Kyle Ginoza, Engineering Program Manager, Department of Public Works
Lesli Otani, Development Services Administrator, Department of Public Works
Michael Kinores, Chief of Field Operations and Maintenance, Department of Public Works
Kristin Shimada, Chief Building Plans Examiner, Development Services Administration Division, Department of Public Works
Michael Busch, Contracts Coordinator, Department of Public Works
Carolina Jensen, Private Secretary, Department of Public Works
Cynthia Razo-Porter, Director, Department of Personnel Services
Kainea Aiwohi-Alo, Deputy Director, Department of Personnel Services
Nanilei Arnold, Human Resources Specialist, Department of Personnel Services
Chastiny Greig, Economic Development Specialist, Office of the Mayor
Georgette Tyau, Administrative Officer, Department of Human Concerns
Spring Koja, Personnel Assistant, Department of Human Concerns

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OTHERS: Autumn Ness, Executive Director, Lahaina Community Land Trust
Travis Liggett
Jasee Law
Christopher Salem
Jim Langford
Sam Small
Others (25)

PRESS: *Akakū: Maui Community Television, Inc.*

ITEM 1: PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET FOR THE COUNTY OF MAUI (BILL 55 (2026), BILL 56 (2026), BILL 57 (2026), BILL 58 (2026), BILL 59 (2026), BILL 60 (2026), BILL 61 (2026), BILL 62 (2026), BILL 63 (2026), BILL 64 (2026), BILL 66 (2026), BILL 67 (2026), and RESOLUTION 26-63)

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . .*(gavel)*. . . Good morning, everybody. Welcome to the Budget, Finance, Economic Development Committee. Today is Friday. Wow, this whole week has gone by and all of you have worked hard. This morning, we have before us Public Works and Personnel. This is...my name is Yuki Lei Sugimura. I'm the Chair of this Committee, and this meeting is being conducted in accordance with the Sunshine Law. And as a reminder, when your name is called, if you're not in the Council Chamber, please identify by name who, if anyone, is in the room, vehicle, or workspace with you today. And minors do not need to be identified. Good morning, Vice-Chair Batangan.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Good morning, Chair. Good morning, Members.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Good morning. Good morning, Member Cook.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Good morning, Chair. And welcome all.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: And Member Johnson, you are on Lānaʻi. Member Johnson, good morning.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Good morning, Chair, Councilmembers, community members. There's no testifiers here at the Lānaʻi District Office, and we're preparing for the storm that seems to be a little bit slower in coming, but it's not here yet. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Chair Lee, I do not see her. She'll join us. Member Paltin, good morning.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Aloha kakahiaka kākou. Streaming live and direct from Nāpili. I'm at my kitchen table. I have with me one adult male named George Vierra, and one minor canine.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

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COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Good morning. Member Rawlins-Fernandez, I don't see her yet. Member Sinenci, good morning. He's here in the Chambers.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Aloha kakahiaka, Chair. Sorry, just hopping on the meeting now.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Good morning.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Good morning.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Member U'u-Hodgins will be joining. Oh, there you are. Member U'u-Hodgins, good morning.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Good morning. Good morning, everyone. I'm at my private residence alone, and I'm looking forward to Friday's meeting. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah, good morning. We have done a whole week of this and more to come, so thank you, everybody. And we will greet those Members when they join us here in the Council Chambers. Assisting us with today's meeting is the BFED Committee Staff, and also invited resource members from the Administration, which include the Budget Director who we are married to for the next month. Where are you? Oh, there you are. There you are. Okay. And the Director of Public Works, Director of Personnel Services, Deputy Corp. Counsel Wigglesworth. Please see the last page of the agenda for information on meeting connectivity. Thank you, Members, for attending today's...today's BFED meeting. We have one item on the agenda today, and before we get started, I wanted to announce a big congratulation to Maui's own Faith Kealohapau'ole Paredes. Yay, she's Miss Aloha Hula. Yeah, she won yesterday. Huh?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yes. And as we all know, the Paredes family is, you know, part of our 'ohana, right? And so, we'd like to also congratulate their parents, Haunani and 'Iliahi, as well as they must be having a blast at the Merrie Monarch Festival and celebrating. I do remember talking to a Miss Aloha Hula several years ago, and they said once they win, their...their time is really dedicated to portraying the spirit of aloha and appearing, and it...it is a big part of your life. So, anyway, congratulations, and I hope somebody, like maybe Chair Lee or Mister...Member Batangan, I'm not too sure where they live, but maybe we can do a congratulatory resolution. Agenda items for today is BFED-1, Proposed Fiscal Year '27 Budget for the County of Maui. I will be taking member...I will be taking testimony after opening comments from the departments. So, we will continue our deliberation on Fiscal Year '27 Budget. We have the departments of Public Works and Personnel. At this time, I'd like to invite the Department of Public Works to provide their opening comments, and then we'll do Personnel next. Director Molina, good to see

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you here. Thank you. I know you must have been working...or have been working hard for the Kona low storm and preparing for, how are you doing?

MR. MOLINA: Good morning, Chair and Members of Budget Committee. We're hanging in there. I've been entrenched in BFED letters for the last three days, so I'm ready to go.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . .*(laughing)*. . . Oh, that's pretty good. Thank you. That's your whole presentation?

MR. MOLINA: Oh, no, sorry.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: . . .*(laughing)*. . .

MR. MOLINA: So, Chair, I don't have any formal presentation prepared, but what I thought I'd do, because we didn't get a chance to return our letters to you folks, if...if you don't mind, I'd like to use my opening comments to review some of the responses to the questions that we have been plowing through to get responses to, as a way, hopefully, to move along the meeting this morning.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Proceed. So, Members and the public, Director Molina used to be Office of Council Services, so he understands how we work. He worked in Budget Committee and did really well. So, when I got the Budget Committee and I spoke to him, he goes, wow, that's fun. That's how he thinks . . .*(laughing)*. . . with all his experience. So, he must be fun to work with, right, Budget Director?

MS. MILNER: Of course.

MR. MOLINA: Some may say that. But yeah...yeah. So, for the record, I'm Director Jordan Molina, Director with Department of Public Work. Here with me is my Deputy Director, Paul Barany, and some of our division Staff are also on the Teams call.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Who's on?

MR. MOLINA: Oh, let's see. I know we have all our division heads that are on, and some of the other support Staff.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Do you have Kyle Ginoza?

MR. MOLINA: He should be on.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you.

MR. MOLINA: Yeah. So, you know, fortunate to be here. This is my tenth budget session, and I've handled it from every chair in this room. So, you know, fortunate to have been able to gain the experience and be with you folks here today. So, the first item, you folks asked us about changes --

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yes.

MR. MOLINA: -- from the current year budget to now. Notably, for our expansion positions, you know, we have a lot less than in past years, in large part due to challenges with our...with vacancies in our personnel team who are integral to getting expansion positions and reorganizations processed and approved. So, this year, our expansions are focused in a few areas, primarily with our Flood Program and trying to grow out support with an additional engineer position. We currently operate with one engineer, and she's been doing a tremendous job keeping us afloat. But, you know, that's not going to be sustainable long-term so we're looking to bring that support in for her. We also have exploded in our facility maintenance obligations. And we are at a point where we need to expand our supervisory structure to ensure we can provide reliable services. So, we have several expansion positions from the boots on the ground to our mid-tier and upper-tier management to help us get a handle on the day-to-day facility operations and also the repair and maintenance programs that we oversee. You know, unfortunately, we like to buy old buildings, so that comes with a lot of work. And then the last big change we have is we...is really just an accounting adjustment where we're reorganizing our garages to break them out into individual districts. We already do this for Molokai and Lānaʻi, but historically, Maui's been lumped together. And so, to improve cost tracking and accountability for those programs, we've split them up into each district. So, now there's a garage index for each of our districts across the six districts we operate in. The other big expansions you'll see, of course, are tied to our facility acquisitions, with Hawaiian Telcom finishing up its renovations and looking to have move-ins this year, I believe, or in Fiscal '27, as well as the acquisition of the Prosecutor's offices at the Wailuku Executive Center. And then the other big one is expansion in professional services in our Special Maintenance Program to support our MS4 and our drainage maintenance efforts that are undertaken by our Highways Division. Regarding our vacancies, there are currently 60 vacancies on the books, but really, we're...most of those are in active recruitment. And so, when you run Workday reports, it'll show you everything that doesn't have a body in it, but that's not necessarily representative of the process to fill those vacancies. So, of those, we really have 12 that are more outstanding, or that I would consider more true vacancies where that we haven't started the recruitment process. Some of those are pending reorganizations or redescriptions through DPS. Some are recently vacated, so we just haven't had the opportunity to initiate the recruitment process. Some are supervisory, which are hard to fill when we're not allowed to provide competitive pay for those positions. And then, of course, our perennial challenge of engineers, four of those positions are...are engineers, which unfortunately right now, those lists are empty. And despite the pay adjustments that were incorporated with the engineering salary schedule, we still are limited on how much we can offer on the pay range, particularly for the unlicensed engineers, and so we continue to see the list be empty. Then some of the other positions are just those that are frequent turnovers, our laborers, our plan reviewers, and again, just challenging competing in the marketplace, primarily on...on salary and being able to really offer growth in pay at the County for some of those frontline positions. So, we'll have that in our response back to you folks. Let's see. Oh, Budget Director just noted we did transmit our PW-1 late last night to you folks...but yeah, because I know you guys didn't have a chance to review it, appreciate the

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indulgence in letting me walk through it. As I mentioned earlier, we do have a challenge with our personnel team of just, you know, it's hard to fill that...that team, and Public Works is a beast of a department. We just have a great diversity of program on top of the scale, and so that keeps our HR team very, very busy. As a result, we've been unable to really complete a lot of the expansion positions from FY '26 solely because I don't have those key admin people that are needed to do those functions in, you know, preparing and processing reorgs, preparing and processing position descriptions and creation requests, and just all the coordination that goes into creating a position. So, I think of all the positions we asked for, only one we've been able to get to interviews...and unfortunately, no one wants to work for us right now. So, we have gone through with recruitment, no one's accepted the position, and so we're trying again to see, and also evaluating whether we consider an alternate position that perhaps there may be more candidates for. You know, regarding our overtime, several...several drivers of overtime, of course, are our unplanned work, which is our emergency response after-hour call-outs. Then we have plan...planned work, which is things like where we now need to do night work just for improving our efficiency and not having to fight traffic during the days. So, we do have, you know, OT booked for those purposes. Work in remote locations that require additional travel time by crews are another cause of OT incurrence for planned work. And of course, when we have critical deadlines, particularly with funding for projects, those create needs for OT. But the largest one, of course, is just due to vacancies. I do want to shout out to our team because you can't incur OT without people willing to work. And we have a strong team that is willing to put in the time and is dedicated to the services we provide that, you know, not everyone is willing to work the OT. So, it is...it is cost, but it's also representative of the commitment of our Staff to try and keep us afloat as we face our challenges with vacancies.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Director?

MR. MOLINA: Yes.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Can I...just a second, I want to welcome Chair Lee. Welcome to the meeting, and then Member Rawlins-Fernandez next. Chair Lee, welcome.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Good morning.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Good morning.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Sorry for my tardiness. I am home alone in my workspace, looking forward to your meeting. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you. And you both have been sitting there for a while, so sorry to interrupt you, but Member Rawlins-Fernandez, welcome.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Aloha kakahiaka kākou, mai Molokai Nui a Hina. I am at my private residence alone here at my kitchen table. I...well, I will have...school's canceled, so both my minors are here, as well as...well, my husband will be back, Makena Fernandez, and there are currently no testifiers at the Molokai District Office.

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My apologies for being late. Reporter called about gas prices on Molokai, and I had a lot to say about that, and we'll probably talk about that today as well. Mahalo, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Wow. What is it? What is the gas price today in Molokai?

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Oh, I haven't checked today, but the last, it was like 7.07 and 7.09.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Wow.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Way more than...sorry, yeah, seven. Yeah, 7.09.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Wow. Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Way more...way more than Lānaʻi.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Wow. Yeah, Lānaʻi, we have Ellison.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Member Johnson, she may be calling you, too, because I...I told...I told her that you said that gas prices are only like four or something there?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: 4.99. Yeah. Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: 4.99, because they're subsidized by the company.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you. Welcome both, and sorry I took a while to introduce you. Okay. Director, please continue.

MR. MOLINA: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: I could tell you were going to go on and on.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: . . .*(laughing)*. . .

MR. MOLINA: Yeah, yeah. If...if...yeah. And please stop me if you feel this is not helpful.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: No, you're trying not to answer our questions in writing, huh?

MR. MOLINA: No, we...so I...we sent PW-1 last night, so you'll get those, but yeah, appreciate the indulgence. So, as far, there was a question on CIP priority.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yes.

MR. MOLINA: And so, for us, we can clearly call out our DPW Baseyard Facilities Program is one we feel like we can endure without if necessary. You know, we've been operating in some of our baseyards for nearly 100 years already, and I'm sure a couple more years the guys can...can manage, but that is something that I personally have been trying to pursue, just seeing how much work we do. And with how little facility some of...some of our districts have to operate in, it's commendable. And I think it's past due to revitalize some of our facilities across the County. As far as department priorities, I mean, personnel management continues to be our top focus. Public Works, we are our people. We...we want to be able to grow our team, provide career paths, and so that requires us to consistently be evaluating and revamping our organizational structures, our positions, and how we assign work to make our positions attractive for people to come in and promote up into. We have a heavy lift still with supporting wildfire recovery now with the infusion of this CDBG-DR infrastructure funding. So, our engineering team is working to be able to deliver on those projects within the tight schedules we've been given on top of, yeah, last couple weeks, getting a whole bunch of new projects added to our plate with the flooding impacts we've encountered. And then lastly, we just try and continue to improve how we deliver services to the community across all our divisions. Yeah, appreciate the feedback of, you know, the Members and the public in our response, you know, during the last few weeks and prior events, and we just continue to try and improve where we can to service our communities. So, now I'm going to pivot into some of the PW-2 questions. So, the first couple regarding County compensation programs, this question about Department's involvements in supplemental agreements. Since I've been here, there's been very limited engagement with the departments on the supplemental agreements that come out. So, we're not privy to those discussions, we just learn about them once they're done. I think one of...there's a question regarding how to become more competitive. One of the things we've been trying to resolve is, how do we incentivize our high-performing Staff? And unfortunately, the current performance evaluation program administered by DPS really only provides disincentives for poor performers. Anybody who receives a satisfactory or an exceeds on their performance rating gets nothing more than a pat on the back. And it's definitely a source of discouragement and frustration for those Staffs that want to excel at what they do here at the County. We've tried to propose programs that would allow for that, but unfortunately, we have not been supported in our request to do so.
(pause)

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: We lost sound online. Is there still talking?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: He's thinking. So, are you...

MR. MOLINA: Sorry.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh. Oh, okay.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah. He's going question by question and digesting the question, and now he will say something.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, okay. My bad, sorry.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: No, no. You're...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: The *Akakū* is off, and I seen his mouth still moving on the TV, so I --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . . *(laughing)*. . .

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: -- I guess it's not synced.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Not synced.

MR. MOLINA: You know, Chair, a lot of the PW-2 are very specific line item questions, and so I don't know if I can necessarily cherry pick the best ones for the Committee's interest. So, I think with that, I'll end my opening comments, and you know, we'll be here for questions. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Thank you very much. Appreciate your work, and I appreciate you sharing with us your thoughts. So, next we have Department of Personnel Services. Director is online. Not with us, right? Director Razo-Porter. Is she there? Yeah, she is there. Okay.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Hi. Good morning --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, good morning.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: -- Budget and Finance Committee. I'm sorry I couldn't be there with you, but we're kind of in another meeting and got...lost track of time a little bit, but it's good to be with you. Short presentation, just kind of want to highlight the high-level changes in our budget. It's a 16 percent increase to our former budget, and we are asking for a few things, digitized documents. We do have some expansion requests for an Investigator V...really, in support of departments, we did transmit our letter to you in response to that request, and also looking for a Public Information Officer to help promote County job opportunities, kind of just specific to, you know, the...the roles and duties that counties provide, and just educating the public, essentially. But we'll be open for questions, and appreciate your time.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. That's it?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Yes.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, very good. Okay. Nice seeing you. So, Members, at this time then, I'm going to take public testimony. I see Autumn Ness in the audience, and do we have

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other testifiers? We do, yeah? Okay. So, we will...okay. Public testimony. Anyone who would like to sign up, please join us either online or in the...sign up on the desk outside in the lobby. And testimony is not limited only to today's agenda on...is noted...is to today's agenda, which is everything in our budget. And written testimony is encouraged and can be submitted via the eComment link at mauicounty.us/agendas as well. Under the Sunshine Law, the Chair will receive oral testimony for agenda items at the beginning of the meeting and as the item is called up. For individuals wishing to testify via Teams, please raise your hand by clicking on the raise-your-hand button. If calling in, please follow the prompts via phone, star-5, and raise your...and raise your...and lower your hand, star-6 to mute and unmute. Staff will add names to the testifier list in the order testifiers sign up or raise their hands. For those on Teams, Staff will lower your hand, and once your name is added, Staff will then call the name you've logged in under the last...or the last four digits of your phone number when it's your time to testify. At that time, Staff will also enable your microphone and video. Please ensure your name appears in Microsoft Teams as the name you prefer to be referred to as anonymous...or as anonymous if you wish to testify anonymously. If you're in person, please notify Staff you would like to testify anonymously, otherwise, please state your name for the record at the beginning of your testimony. Oral testimony is limited to three minutes per item, and if you're not done testimony...testifying, you'll be given another 30 seconds to complete. Once you're done testifying, or if you do not wish to testify, you can also view the meeting on *Akakū* Channel 53, Facebook Live, or mauicounty.us/agendas. We will do our best to take each person up in an orderly fashion, and we'll now call on testifiers wishing to testify. Staff, please...

MR. PASCUAL: Thank you. Oh, thank you, Chair. The first testifier is Autumn Ness, to be followed by Travis Liggett.

. . . OPEN PUBLIC TESTIMONY . . .

MS. NESS: Good morning.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Good morning.

MS. NESS: Aloha, everybody. It's hard to believe that it's budget season again. Sending love to you guys as you navigate this whole thing. I'm always shocked that we successfully complete this process every year, so go team. . . .*(laughing)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . .*(laughing)*. . .

MS. NESS: It's not my subject-matter day, but Lahaina meeting was canceled, so I came here today, even though it's a different subject-matter. They say an annual report is worth 1,000 words, so I brought LCLT's 2025 report. Things move so fast right now, it's already a little out of date, but you'll get the idea. The back of the second page has stats on progress. The back of the third page is stats about land sales in Lahaina. At the time of publish, LCLT was the buyer in 20 percent of the 66 parcel sales in Lahaina post-fire. Data published in late 2023 predicted that 20 percent of Lahaina's real estate

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would change hands in the three-ish years after the fire, so that 20 percent stat seems important in both cases. That prediction is kind of breathing down our neck right now, though. This coming August will be three years. Recent reports indicate that the first settlement installments could go out in April 2026. As soon as the settlement is signed, we anticipate a huge wave of land sales, as most folks who intend to sell were advised by attorneys to wait until the settlement decision as it affects their payout. We have an internal list of folks in that situation who contacted us directly and plan to sell as soon as the settlement is signed, and there are plenty more we don't know about. In fact, over the last few months, we actually had to buy a few of the parcels from the people in that boat who just couldn't hang on any longer. And here's the thing--if we know that, so do the big investors with strike capital in their pocket and Lahaina in their crosshairs. We've been building our own strike fund so we can cut those investors off. We have a \$5 million angel donor with an active matching grant campaign, about 30 local businesses who donate some of their profits regularly to our land fund. It's an all-hands-on-deck situation. That said, if you know me, you know I don't like to keep coming back to ask for more money. When we rolled out Maui Hub, the commitment was to get it started and then fly on its own, and that's largely what happened. So, believe me when I tell you that it's really hard for me to come here for the third year in a row and keep asking for more money than I've ever asked for. And yet, if I wasn't honest about the current situation, I would not be doing my job. So, here's where it gets awkward. In Mayor's Lahaina community budget hearing some months ago, he announced that LCLT was in his proposal for \$6 million. Oh, my God, yay. This current fiscal year, he and you folks allocated \$6 million in the Department of Housing, but General Funds. So, I assumed--know, assumptions--that this would be the same. Then separately, we were advised to apply through the RFP for Affordable Housing Funds, specifically for vertical construction. So, we submitted a \$2.7 million application specifically for vertical construction, and yay, we got a letter that that was included in the Mayor's affordable housing proposal. Cool...but there's no 6 million. So, I'm assuming what happened, good intentions, that folks probably saw our \$2.7 million application and thought, oh, great, we'll award that 2.7. They don't need the six. . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . Everything's good. Do I have like two more seconds?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: 30 seconds.

MS. NESS: Okay. So, I'm in the awkward position to have to stand here and thank the whole team for the \$2.7 million allocation because we are at the big vertical construction phase, while I also feel obliged to share with you that we have a big and continued land acquisition need and to admit that had I known the \$2.7 million application of Affordable Housing Funds was going to cancel out the \$6 million of General Fund allocation, I wouldn't have submitted that application. For now, our first two families are home. Our homeowner applicant portal will go live any day now, and our first home will go up for sale as soon as we get the 'ulu trees planted. And we really hope the big window of need for rapid land acquisition will be behind us in the next year or two. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you. Any questions for Autumn Ness? Member Paltin?

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COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Ms. Ness. I just was seeing if you had other sources of funding besides the 2.7, or are you going after other funds elsewhere --

MS. NESS: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: -- as well?

MS. NESS: When I say this is all hands on deck, I am so proud of everybody that's gotten behind this. We've got foundation funders like Weinberg, Frost, Nuestro, Maui United Way, all...all the names you probably know in philanthropy have...have put into this repeatedly sometimes. Those 30 local businesses, that \$5 million angel donor, everybody understands that this is like a very short and expensive window that we're in, yeah, which makes me feel better about coming to ask you guys for more because it's not just the County. Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Would the angel donor...I'm not sure how close we are to the 5 million, but would they also match County funds as well?

MS. NESS: Oh, that is a great question. We have been real...so when she came up with this, I've been trying to...she's a great human, clearly. We've been trying to really...this was to get new money off the shelf. Like she was like, if I put money here, is that going to attract folks who have been hesitant? So, we haven't used that match opportunity for funds that we really believed were already coming our way. We're really trying to maintain some integrity here. However, if I were to go back to her and tell her about this conversation, and that the County, you know, is coming in because of that match, I imagine that would be doable, you know?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And how much more of the 5 million is there?

MS. NESS: We just started, and like I said, we're being very careful about what we qualify as a match to maintain, you know, trust. So, I think we're like almost at the first million. So, there's...there's another four on the table.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. Thank you. I'll yield.

MS. NESS: Thanks for the question.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. So, the fund that you're talking about, Affordable Housing, is number 4, and up to 2,461,000 must be for a grant to Lahaina Community Land Trust. That's what you're referencing.

MS. NESS: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

MS. NESS: Oh, sorry, I thought it was 2.7. E kala mai.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: 2.4.

MS. NESS: 2.4. Okay. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you. Member Rawlins-Fernandez?

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. Mahalo, Ms. Ness, for your testimony. You mentioned the 6 million that was proposed at one meeting. Do you know if it was meant to be in like Affordable Housing Fund? Because I know the...you know, the situation in Lahaina, some lots aren't necessarily would qualify for affordable. Or if it was proposed to be like General Fund so that it would provide the flexibility to the organization to protect as many lots and homes as possible?

MS. NESS: Gosh, you know, looking back, I regret not digging down into that a little bit more, but we're all so overworked. I kind of...so, in the...in the arc of things, our first year of funding for housing came out of Affordable Housing Funds, yeah? So, we had...that was the thing. The second year, that 6 million that was allocated was in the Department of Housing, but it was General Funds. And that came out of the recognition that we are going to need some of these houses to be available for folks who are over 140 AMI. Like LCLT's policy goes all the way up to if you...the household can make \$300,000 a year because there's just no house for even that, right? So, the understanding was more funding, a little bit less strings. And so, I just kind of assumed without asking, I regret that, that that was the intention when he announced that, but I don't know anymore. I'm really sorry.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Ms. Ness. Mahalo, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you. Anybody else have questions? Seeing none. Thank you very much.

MS. NESS: Oh, I see Alice.

MR. PASCUAL: Chair?

MS. NESS: Hi, Chair Lee.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, sorry, I didn't see you. Chair Lee?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Thank you. Hi, Autumn.

MS. NESS: Hi.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: I'm just wondering, you know those higher priced houses you're talking about, are they going to have deed restrictions on them?

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MS. NESS: Oh, all of them. Yeah, all of our houses, whether it's a deed restriction or a ground lease, they come with the same 1.5 percent appreciation cap. And if you look at what our portfolio is...is like sketching out to be, it's going to...we have a...we have a house under deed restriction that if it ever sells, it's going to be like affordable to like the 50 percent. And then we have another house, if...if the deed restriction says it's going to...you know, as time goes on, it's going to be probably 120. And all in the...all in the...in the range. Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. How long...how long is the deed restriction?

MS. NESS: 99 years, and then it resets every sale.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. And then are you working jointly with the Housing Department to where, let's say there's a master goal of "X" number of units, and you're going to help provide "X"? Or is it just kind of whatever happens, happens?

MS. NESS: Well, since you asked--please don't think I'm crazy--but we haven't worked with the Housing Department to develop this goal, but our goal is like 400 units over ten-ish years. Our goal...we heard from the community, this is not a small thing, we want to protect 20 percent of Lahaina's housing units in the next ten years. We want to...we want to show the community, what does it feel like when a fifth of your housing units are protected from the speculative market? You know?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. So, no, I'm just wondering, because, you know, you...you wouldn't want to be in competition with the Housing Department.

MS. NESS: Oh, no.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: You want to be working...

MS. NESS: We...we talk as much as we both as...you know, departments are busy, we're super busy. We have our own lanes going on, but we talk as much as needed when we're developing our...our grant agreements. And we even talk about some affordable housing deed restriction violations going on. Like we...there's...there's healthy communication there, I believe.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: You have violations going on already?

MS. NESS: Yeah...well, not of ours, of old projects. And like, you know, when we...also, when we consider buying a certain parcel, we have a team that talks about whether or not we should purchase a certain parcel. And gosh, I don't know how many times, at least eight or ten times, we've taken up some information before we make an offer, and we talk with Department of Management or sometimes Public Works just to be like, hey, is this a parcel that's involved in one of your plans? Because we don't want to be bidding against each other. You know, that kind of a thing. And that's been really helpful, actually.

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COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. Thank you. Thank you.

MS. NESS: Okay. Mahalo.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Anybody else have questions? Seeing none. Thank you.

MS. NESS: Mahalo, everybody. Good luck today.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I just wanted to clarify --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Come back.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: -- if she sent the annual report in...of email or if there's physical copies waiting for us over there.

MS. NESS: There's a physical copy, but I can email the whole...I wasn't sure how many people were going to be present. I can sit down and email a copy to everybody right now.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Can you do that?

MS. NESS: Yeah.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Or do...oh, we have copies here, your hard copy, but the ones that are not in the Chambers, can you send that to them?

MS. MARTINS: It's in Granicus.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, it's in Granicus.

MS. NESS: Oh, great.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: What number in Granicus is it, Pauline?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you. And I'll...I'll be happy to get my hard copy on Monday.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

MS. MARTINS: 124.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: 124 in Granicus, Members.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Thank you, Autumn Ness. Nice to see you. Okay. Next testifier.

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MR. PASCUAL: Thank you, Chair. The next and currently last individual signed up to testify is Travis Liggett.

MR. LIGGETT: Good morning, Chair. Good morning, Councilmembers.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Good morning.

MR. LIGGETT: Happy Aloha Friday. I am back again, and I'm here to talk about two things. One is my testimony. So, I was really moved by Uncle Bobby's testimony that the limit on food production is basically money, currency, that people know what to do. It's just the math of profit versus margin is just so slim. And this whole MOA thing, I just thought, what would it look like? You know, there's a lot of currency moving around with that whole ending of civilization comment and all that. People are hedging their bets. People with a lot of zeros behind their names. And there's other things in currency, which is to invest in an idea. And I would say Maui's a pretty good idea, and that this living life support system just needs to get struck by currency lightning. And I've put together a framework that costs zero dollars. It's called MLAST, Maui's first, and we can be last alive on the planet because there is a way to design Maui so that it is not a resupply system. It's a closed ecological life support system. It's been done before. It's called before colonization. So, the framework is just a framework so that someone can just transfer \$15 billion, \$1.5 billion a year for ten years, ten core areas, \$115 million a year. I call it da bucks for da budget. And I think some will bite because your bunker is only as good as the surrounding environment because your pantry is going to run out. And people think that way. People do think that way. And it's...it costs zero dollars. It's formatted for introduction. I just want you to think about it because if you don't put the lightning rod up, it's not going to get struck. And somebody might hear this message because people are freaking out, as they should be. That was not okay. So, that's my first point. My second point, disinfection in Kahului, accelerating design. Here's my rationale, and this is very relevant to oil prices. So, you can recover almost that \$1.8 million from the current budget. There's 400,000 already allocated to lawyers to defend the DEM's right to not meet the requirements of the NPDES permit. I have a solution, and it started in Nāpili in 1985. The reefs were quite good. I was so inspired. I got the message. And this is a fully baked solution. And I have a filing ready to go. I've emailed it to Member Hodgins. I'll send it to anyone on a personal address as a citizen because I don't want the lawyers to see it because when I told them a one-page filing could remove your protest and adopt my plan, they looked at me like they didn't like me because they've already counted that 400,000. So, the idea is the plan is fully baked. I am both a NASA and Sandia investigator. I have the top leaders in the world. It's a seven-year compliance...phase compliance plan. And here's the relevant part with gas. Sandia is interested in this because the limu, which is the basis for this, consume the nutrients . . . *(timer sounds)* . . . which is what they can't meet in the permit. That biomass can be converted to biofuel because what is petroleum products? Old, old aquatic plants. It's limu juice. So, the idea is new limu juice is just as good as old limu juice, and Lahaina can actually, worldwide, get us away from old limu juice. And the idea is basically you can convert the wastewater into fuel. And also,

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you've got 1.25 million for Mā'alaea. The former president is the president of some sort of . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . Alaska oil producers association, so they don't need the money.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you. Thank you very much.

MR. LIGGETT: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Okay. Next testifier, please.

MR. PASCUAL: Chair, that is all the individuals signed up to testify. Oh, I do see one individual walking to the podium.

MR. LAW: Thank you, Jarret. Aloha kakahiaka, Ka 'Aha o ke Kalana. Mr. Molina over there, thank you for coming in today. Oh, sorry, Yuki Lei, I'm not supposed to talk to...thank you for inviting Public Works. Ohayō, Chair Kashiwa Sugimura. It's a long story, but...and you'll like this one, Mr. Cook. I got a trespassing ticket on the sidewalk in Fredericksburg, Virginia, probably right where George Washington had walked 200 years ago. But I'm fond of sidewalks because the whole thing eventually got...my first wish in life was to come back to Hawai'i. So, maybe if Yuki Lei is Mayor, then we can get a sidewalk in Kula from Alanui to the Kula Post Office. Thank you, buddy. Thank you for your work for the County.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Any questions for the...oh, sorry. Any questions for the testifier? Thank you. Okay. No...

MR. PASCUAL: Chair, we actually have one more individual signed up to testify, Christopher Salem on Teams.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you.

MR. SALEM: Good morning, Councilmembers, Chair. Am I live?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yes, we can hear you.

MR. SALEM: Okay. Thank you. I was not prepared to testify in relationship to Public Works. Once again, I see no references as to who's coming and when, but beyond that, let's get down to the matters of the day, which have been shifted by listening to Jordan...or excuse me, Director Molina. I do need to comment on the fact that a statement of no one wants to work with us. I don't think that's true. Hey, Jordan, I want to work with you. No one is more passionate or qualified to lead the reconstruction of Lahaina as it relates to infrastructure and ensuring what takes place here is done in a diligent and cost-effective manner. Unfortunately, the lawyers in Honolulu, as a condition of settlement, are trying to force my hand that I never work with the County of Maui again, and I never enter the County buildings. That's the kind of attorneys that we're dealing with here. So, getting down to subject matters...and by the way, for disclosure, Jordan and I worked together in Sol Kaho'ohalahala's office when he first came into the County.

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Jordan and I worked together on PC-17, which was an assessment and collection in a fair and equitable manner of the developer agreements. Jordan is aware that I brought forth the...the infrastructure company, a nationwide company that actually is Hawai'i-based, to assist everyone in that process so that every one of the things were done with both diligence and respect to the process. So, Jordan, it hasn't been ten years that you've been there. I think it goes back maybe more 15 and so on, because as your counsel...as an Executive Assistant with Elle Cochran. So, moving on. So, in relationship to, as a Staff member of the Office of Mayor serving as a legislative liaison, I brought forward approximately six pieces of draft legislation that I created on my own time. Each one was designed to either stop financial harm to the public, generate revenue, or close loopholes that benefit private developers at the public expense. At the top of the list was the PC-17 ordinance. Consistent with that, we're dealing with Parks and Recreation the other day. In that...in the Parks ordinance, three lots or less subdivisions are also exempt from park fees. So, no infrastructure, no park fees. Man, what...developer has got a good deal. Even if they're an oceanfront development resulting in \$10 million homes, they pay no park fees? Greg Brown, 14, 12, 14 bedrooms, no park fees? Finalizing this, you go from the tunnel all the way to Lahaina. Does anyone see a park? Why are there no parks? Oh, that's that 2372 ordinance. And perhaps Chair King [sic] . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . you were involved with that, and I'll wrap it up. Peter Martin should not be giving land for a fire station, just like dedicating to paying park fees. They should have been dedicated as part of a subdivision, but that lot line subdivision and realignment ordinance is a joke. All it does is circumvent Title 18 infrastructure, fire, and public . . .*(inaudible)*. . . ordinances. So, that's a nice picture in the paper of what he's giving us. . . .*(laughing)*. . . .*timer sounds*. . . Can you see how many ordinances all of this affects? And all of these, Mayor Victorino and I agreed to do so without --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Please wrap up.

MR. SALEM: -- in any way incriminating--I am--without incriminating anybody, we agreed we wanted this done in a peaceful and professional manner. Unfortunately, the goal was to remove and stop litigation, which obviously is going to mushroom even further. So, Jordan --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you.

MR. SALEM: -- I would ask you to reach out your hand. And I'll wrap it up. I'm offering my services to the people of Lahaina, which I'd love to work with you. Thank you very much.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Thank you very much. Next.

MR. PASCUAL: Thank you, Chair. The next testifier is Jim Langford on Teams.

MR. LANGFORD: Aloha, Chair, beautiful souls. Very happy Aloha Friday. And...and you're all...sorry, I'm stuttering. I was listening to everybody's rhythm before me. The...what a blessing for you guys to be in Wailuku, representing our Miss Aloha Hula from last

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night. How about them apples? That some...that reflects on the great work you guys are doing, too. It's really happening. I just wanted to update, I listened to representative...Councilperson Hodgins yesterday about...about the union folks and wanted to let you know I updated my projects to...to make those apprenticeship programs and kūpuna wage protection programs with the information that I submitted to you folks. So, in the...the affordable developments and the software that I have that finds all the grants and writes them with my own models, not external AI models, just wanted you guys to know that. So, I trained those models for the past two years from scratch. So, long story less long, I submitted and will continue to submit in writing how that works with unions and how it adds value to kūpuna and the folks coming up, you know, post-high school, going into their entrepreneurial efforts. So...so, yeah. So, thank you and I hope your Friday and weekend is safe and blessed, everyone, and prayers to...to the 'āina. May it stay safe over the weekend.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you, Mr. Langford. Any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Next testifier.

MR. PASCUAL: Thank you, Chair. The next individual signed up to testify is Sam Small.

MR. SMALL: Okay. Are you...I apologize if there's an echo. Are you hearing me?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yes, we can hear you. Yes.

MR. SMALL: I have a delay, I'm sorry. Can you...can you hear me?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: We can hear you.

MR. SMALL: Yes. Okay. Great. All right. I'm going to turn off. You know, thank you again. It's always an honor to participate in this process. It is a little bit disconcerting that we don't...the public has not been appraised. We have no way of knowing who's going to show up from the County to present at these sessions. I personally believe that that's a violation of Sunshine. And I think that you're...the entire Council is putting itself at risk by excluding the public from this process. We all feel excluded because we don't know who's going to show up and what issues are going to be addressed. And that is absolutely, you know, counter to Sunshine. I also listened to Mr. Molina's testimony, and I understand that, you know, professionals don't want to work for the County. And there's good reason for that. Most of it has to do with Corp. Counsel and the pressures and manipulation that Corp. Counsel has placed on employees to protect past bad acts. Greg Brown is the perfect...you know, is the poster child for this. We can show you ten different violations that were existing right upfront from the Greg Brown project proposal, from...from that stage, that were ignored and facilitated by members of the Planning Department and Public Works. And a lot of those --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Mr. Small?

MR. SMALL: -- people are gone from the County. Miraculously.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: That is not on our agenda today.

MR. SMALL: It was...I mean, they ended their careers --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Mr. Small, can you hear me?

MR. SMALL: -- because of the manipulations that were done with Greg Brown. Even --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Mr. Small --

MR. SMALL: -- Mr. Molina is --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- I think you cannot hear me --

MR. SMALL: -- you know, in regards --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- and I think we need to shut off this --

MR. SMALL: -- to the wrongful --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- this testimony.

MR. SMALL: -- termination case with Mr. Salem.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you for testifying --

MR. SMALL: There's a declaration that was made to --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- on whatever you're talking about.

MR. SMALL: -- the court by KSG of Mr. Molina --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Can you stop him?

MR. SMALL: -- which states that Public Works can override Planning to remove conditions that were part of an SMA permit. That's not true.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Can you stop him from...

MR. SMALL: That's not reality.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: I don't have the button.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: . . . *(inaudible)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, okay. I'm going to call recess. . . . *(gavel)*. . .

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RECESS: 10:56 a.m.

RECONVENE: 11:01 a.m.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . .*(gavel)*. . . Welcome back to the Budget, Finance, Economic Development Committee. So, I...I am advised that, Mr. Small, you have...how much time does he have left? He can finish his testimony.

MR. PASCUAL: Chair, we paused his timer at 51 seconds, and then he also has the 30 seconds to wrap up as well, his testimony.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So, he has...he has over a minute left, is what you're saying?

MR. PASCUAL: Correct, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Please proceed. Can you hear us?

MR. SMALL: Yeah, I think I can.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

MR. SMALL: Am I back?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: You are back.

MR. SMALL: Okay.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: A minute and a half.

MR. SMALL: Wow. Okay. Just trying to get my thoughts together. I thought that I was talking on topic about Public Works' challenges to get staffing. And there is a, you know, professional understanding that the way that business is conducted between Planning and Public Works is severely broken. And Greg Brown is an example of what the result of those breaks are. We've been...I've been testifying for years about the loopholes that developers in the know and lawyers in the know understand how to get infrastructure hidden in an SMA permit and then do a subdivision that does not include the infrastructure. And because Public Works does not circle back to Planning a subdivision plot for verification that it is consistent with the SMA permit that was issued, which is the law, they don't follow the law, and developers and corrupt lawyers . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . they are out there, know how to work that system. And it's your job to fix it.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you.

MR. SMALL: Circling back to...and just one thing, why isn't the Auditor showing up at one of these sessions? The Auditor is supposed to do a six-month audit of how the money gets spent. That is the stopgap. And by not having the Auditor participate, once again, the

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public is held in the dark, and that is this Council's responsibility. You are hindering the public's ability . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . to participate --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you, Mr. Small.

MR. SMALL: -- in a...in a confident --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Anybody have questions --

MR. SMALL: -- and respectful way.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- for Mr. Small?

MR. SMALL: Thank you for your time.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Okay.

MR. SMALL: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Thank you. Next testifier, please.

MR. PASCUAL: Chair, that is all the individuals signed up to testify. Would you like me to do a last call?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Please.

MR. PASCUAL: This is the last call for oral testimony. Please come up to the podium or raise your hand on Teams if you would like to testify. This is final call. The countdown is three...two...one. Seeing none. Chair, no one has indicated that they wish to testify.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Members, I will close public testimony and receive written testimony on...thank you.

. . . CLOSE PUBLIC TESTIMONY . . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much. All right. So, now we're going to be talking on Public Works. In Granicus, Public Works is in number 44, as well as in 95, and I think Director Molina also gave some live answers to some of your questions in his opening presentation. We are...so, I'm going to start with Member Cook. This is...he's in your jurisdiction for your Committee. So, Member Cook, followed by Member U'u-Hodgins, Sinenci, Batangan, Lee, Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Three minutes.

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COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you, Director and Deputy Director, for being here this morning. I wanted to add to your acknowledgement about Director Molina's experience for both Deputy Director Barnaby [sic] and Director Molina have real-world professional experience, and both for civil construction and that, so it's kind of unique. So, I know they know what they're doing, and I want...they want to do the right thing, so hopefully we can empower them and hold them accountable at the same time. Director Molina, your Department is quite expansive, and so like the strategy, strengthen...strengthen community partnerships, increase education and public participation, and providing quality customer service. It seems like...anyway, I'm an advocate of using technology, I've talked to you this before. My question was, the State Speed Task Force that recently concurred...occurred, is...does the Department have intentions of retooling the technology and adapting to some degree? I feel like to some extent, the Maui County government is like using a handsaw, and we have Skilsaws and chainsaws available. Like, getting personnel is a challenge. We're not paying them enough. It's restrictive to be able to massage and move them around. Not replacing anybody, but enabling them and rewarding them. Anyway, any comments about the intentions to address some of the challenges that you have with technology?

MR. MOLINA: Yeah, thank you, Member Cook. Just need to note some of the initiatives. You know, we have been approached about incorporating AI in plan review for building permits, and so that's something our Staff has been looking at, how that works exactly, and to what extent it can be relied upon. In my opinion, I don't see AI replacing people anytime soon, because it's people who determine what is important and where the focus needs to be. Outside of that, we...you know, for me, I make a concerted effort to leverage the systems we have. MAPPS is a great tool. Like you said, we're buying...I wouldn't say we're using hand tools, I would say we use power tools that are throttled down to idle sometimes.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: . . .(laughing). . .

MR. MOLINA: And that's because, you know, we're not always willing to adapt to the tools to leverage them the best we can, and we not...we're not always integrating our tools across platforms so they speak to each other efficiently. So, we are consistently trying to streamline those...those interfaces to make things simpler across --

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Okay.

MR. MOLINA: -- the board.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: I'm going to interrupt you, because . . .(inaudible).(timer sounds). . . 30 seconds. I concur with what you're saying, and I think that that's one aspect, and AI is over...rarely generic, but not replacing people, giving them the tools and enabling it, and so that you can...every...that we can get it running up to speed. It's not running properly, and it's a huge undertaking. Anyway, that's my questions for now. Thank you for your answer.

MR. MOLINA: Thank you.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: You'll have a second round, for sure. Member U'u-Hodgins.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Thank you, Chair. And thank you, folks, for being with us today. I know we had a lot of talk about speed bumps in my district, but I do want to thank you for the two speed bumps next to Pā'ia School. We had a fatal crash there a couple years ago, and I'm really excited about that, saving the traumatic experience from our children. So, thank you. Couple things I wanted to talk to you folks about was primarily in your speech, because I'll look forward to the letters you're going to send over. What do you think we can do to help you folks reduce turnover and help keep our good performers performing well? I appreciate what you said earlier. I was looking at your folks' salary, and I was trying to highlight all the ones I thought needed probably a bump in salary, but I only have one highlighter, so I stopped. Your DSA, I'm quite concerned about, because majority of the clerks don't make enough to really consider a livable wage, and they deal with so much ish (*phonetic*) from the public. So, I wanted your thoughts. What...what can we do?

MR. MOLINA: Yeah. As I mentioned...thank you, Member U'u-Hodgins. I...as I mentioned previously, you know, a couple of things is one, how do we improve our existing systems? And so, the first thing we operate with is our performance evaluation program. And like I mentioned, there really is no component to acknowledging good performers under that program. And so, I think that's a fatal flaw that results in existing Staff becoming discouraged over time when, you know, the...people can...people who can produce more than others, that doesn't return anything for them.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Sure.

MR. MOLINA: So, that is a huge one, in my opinion. The other thing you mentioned, which is something we were supporting at the State Leg. is, one of the recommendations of the Speed Task Force is to identify our permitting Staff as critical positions --

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Sure.

MR. MOLINA: -- and enabling compensation programs that meet that importance that we're placing on them and their role in providing affordable housing to our communities. So, I think that's another key point. If we are serious about these...these focus areas we're in, we need to ensure that the structures and the resources we rely upon for those services are supported so those programs can function at the highest levels. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. Thank you. What do you think we could do better for a performance evaluation program that would benefit our really good employees?

MR. MOLINA: I mean, what we had proposed is a simple bonus program based on --

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay.

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MR. MOLINA: -- your ability to, you know, meet satisfactory requirements or exceed them. Of course, you can earn more, but we understand . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . that it becomes a complicated compensation issue for DPS, and we're not sure how to break through that barrier right now. But we know...you know, we know the unions would support that because they're always advocating for better pay for their teams, but when we're restricted to entry-level offerings, you know, we just can't compete. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Yeah, thank you. Thank you, Chair. I heard the bell.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you. Member Sinenci, followed by Member Batangan.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Thank you, Chair. And mahalo, Director Molina, for presenting this morning, and Mr. Barany. Before I do ask mines [*sic*], I just wanted to mahalo the Department for the work in all the districts, but in Hāna, when we had all of the big trees that fell down, the State was trying to cut through the trees on the State highway, but our local Public Works came from...from the Hāna side and started cutting trees from that side. So, when I finally made it home on Saturday, we had...Public Works workers had to step on the...the powerlines so I could drive over to get...to get...eventually get home. So, thank you guys for that. I think they were, you know, just happy to help out the State guys, so mahalo for that. That said, did...you know, the storm, we didn't have some of the...the sinkholes that we see across, but we did...but we do have a bunch of potholes because of the storm. Is there a way that they can just at least fill some of the larger ones in the meantime? I know the work is...

MR. MOLINA: Yeah...no, thank you for my...the question, and I can do my public engagement plug here. COMConnect --

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Yeah.

MR. MOLINA: -- we are pushing...you know, I've been an advocate of, like I said, leveraging our existing systems. We are trying to maximize the utilization of COMConnect. One, to just organize how we receive requests and allow our crews to plan their work accordingly. But it also provides awareness for the public to see what has been act...or, you know, what has brought up already in the areas. You know, with the storm, we are all over the place right now, and there's stuff we're still finding that we have to address. So, you know, we encourage the public to utilize COMConnect to report anything they see, and that right now is...is our best tool to ensuring that those requests get to the right people and we can respond timely.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Okay. Great. I think I have some Staff members on this meeting. They can start jumping on.

MR. MOLINA: Yeah, I...I use it myself when I'm driving down the road. . . . *(laughing)*. . .

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: . . . *(laughing)*. . . Okay. Good one. Because most of the times you want a picture, you want to up...upload a picture of whatever you're reporting, yeah. And then just some of my questions, you answered some of them, but some of my written

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questions was about just future plans for the...the Hāna garage, the baseyard. What...what would be our future plans?

MR. MOLINA: Yeah. So, we do have funding proposed in the budget to start planning for a new facility out in Hāna.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Nice.

MR. MOLINA: We have started conversations with the State, DLNR, about assuming control of some of the lands abutting . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . the landfill, Hāna Landfill.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Yeah.

MR. MOLINA: And so, they're willing...they've been willing to make those lands available and work with us. So, we are in the early phases of starting that planning and land acquisition discussions. And our intent is to not only move our Department of Public Works, but also provide for our Water Supply facility to also relocate to that new area, potentially providing space also for MEMA and emergency --

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Wastewater treatment.

MR. MOLINA: -- response supplies. Wastewater wouldn't come because no more really wastewater system in...in Hāna. And then with that, we would be freeing up space at the current baseyard that we...we envision MPD and Fire have needs to grow their spaces as well. So, you know, with these baseyard moves, we are looking at supporting our partner departments where we can with these initiatives. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Okay. Thanks, Director. I'll send an invite for my next community town hall meeting. Thanks.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Very good. Member Batangan, followed by Chair Lee.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Chair. Director, did I hear you correctly? You're on your phone using COMConnect as you're driving on our roads?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: . . . *(laughing)*. . .

MR. MOLINA: MPD not listening, yeah?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: . . . *(laughing)*. . .

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: . . . *(laughing)*. . . So, there's a lot that has changed since you guys have submitted your proposed budget requests. I see that, you know, you asked for a 20 percent increase in materials and supplies, but the world is different now. The State, this island has been very different since then. Is the request that you had put in initially still sufficient for your needs now?

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MR. MOLINA: I mean --

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Or is that something the Council needs to consider adjusting?

MR. MOLINA: -- we...you know, we've seen direct impacts on fuel and, you know, things that directly result from fuel pricing. And, you know, just across the board, materials are growing every year. But part of that increase is also our ability to get work completed. And so, we've been improving over the years in how much work we can get done, and so, that translates into increased cost for materials.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Okay. But the request that you had initially submitted is sufficient?

MR. MOLINA: Yeah, we feel so.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Okay. And then you mentioned that there is difficulty hiring, so there's a lot of overtime that's been needed from your Staff, but your budget requests show a 30 percent decrease in premium pay. Am I understanding this correctly? Because it seems odd that you are utilizing overtime to fill gaps in personnel needs, but yet we're decreasing the amount of overtime that's being requested. I just want to make sure that we're giving the Department all the tools that it needs. And if this is something that we have to circle back to, we can. We can transmit it in writing just to ensure that the allocation's sufficient for the Department.

MR. MOLINA: Budget Director --

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Okay.

MR. MOLINA: -- would you like to provide a response?

MS. MILNER: Yeah, we can definitely respond in more detail in writing, but I think part of the reason for that may have to do with, as we've discussed before, in premium pay, that's where those Council reductions and additions are included. And they reinstated some, but not all, but we'll have to dig into the specific --

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Yeah. Because --

MS. MILNER: -- line-by-line premium pay.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: -- even if it was a reintroduction of a Council cut, I wouldn't expect it to be a negative percentage then. But yeah, we'll...we'll circle back in. You can respond in writing.

MS. MILNER: Yes, I will just say, if I remember correctly, Department of Personnel Service...Department of Public Works did not fully reinstate the Council cuts --

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Okay.

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MS. MILNER: -- which could be part of the reason for that because they were trying to account for some of their vacancies by not --

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Okay.

MS. MILNER: -- fully reinstating those. Thank you, Chair.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: And then, Director, you're the first department that's come forth and said, like if there is fat to cut, like this is where we would recommend you guys look, which we really appreciate because so far, we've gotten everything's a priority, or, you know, the things that should be cut are in the district of the Member who's asking the question. Can I . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . ask about the North-South Collector Road? Do you need all, you know, roughly \$27 million to be encumbered in this next fiscal year?

MR. MOLINA: Yes. And that is largely due to the deadline tied to the RAISE grant, which is next September, 2027.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Chair Lee?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Thank you. Hello, Director and Deputy Director. A few years ago, I initiated and the Council agreed to put in seven positions for your Highways Program. At that time, I believe we were actually...I actually was wanting to encourage you to set up a baseyard in South Maui. That's one of our biggest districts, one of our troublesome districts every single storm. And so, I was wondering if you made any progress...but you did take the seven positions. You filled the seven positions, but you assigned them to South Maui, so that's...that's very helpful. But I really think they need their own baseyard considering the work that's generated in South Maui. Are we any closer to getting them that baseyard?

MR. MOLINA: Thank you, Chair Lee. Yes, we do continue to make strides on implementing our baseyard master plan, which includes looking at South Maui. We've gone back and forth about whether we should have a consolidated baseyard in...or, you know, more centralized that we deploy out of versus having, you know, these baseyards in the district. And, you know, I've gone back and forth about it, and I feel like our presence in the districts is part of our strength. And so, we do think we will be pursuing a baseyard in South Maui, but perhaps it doesn't need to accommodate all the facilities we typically put because of its ability to access into Central Maui relatively easily. So, for example, like the garage, I don't feel has to be as robust in South Maui. And things of that nature. But yeah, we are in the direction of looking for baseyard...you know, the County's lands above the police station come to mind, a little bit challenging to develop those. So, we are exploring what alternatives may...may be appropriate to be able to support South Maui better. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: And thank you for being open to discussing what some...some of your projects that can be deferred or reduced in some way. Because it's...it's way easier for us to have this honest discussion with you rather than us trying to guess and guess

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wrong on which projects, you know, not to fund this year. Really appreciate that cooperation spirit, and thank you...thank you for your...your service. That's all the questions I have, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. That's very nice. Member Paltin?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Director Molina and Deputy Barany. Since we started at 10:00, I was able to look through your responses and chart out the vacancies. I noticed that you mentioned the Fiscal Year '26 positions that haven't been created. Do you have some positions that haven't been created from prior to Fiscal Year '26 as well...it seems?

MR. MOLINA: I will have to confirm. I don't believe, but there are some that are stuck . . .*(inaudible)*. . . in the reorg in the position creation process.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Is there any way that you could like call a friend, maybe in Management, to assist you with Personnel? Like...not like try to tell them what to do, but to assist you in the creation of those positions or with the reorg or borrow some...or DM-89 a person, a few people?

MR. MOLINA: I have been doing everything short of screaming to try and get help, and it is the most difficult part of this job, hands down.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

MR. MOLINA: I will go fight wildfires all day than trying to deal through Personnel.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, wow.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: . . .*(laughing)*. . .

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And then what about contracting out? Like 4LEAF, I know some permit clerks left to go work for 4LEAF because they are paying so much more. I don't want to encourage any more people to leave, but the possibility of contracting some of the work out?

MR. MOLINA: Yeah. So, for those frontline services, you know, we do...we are leveraging contracted services, you know, greatly, but there are certain key positions, those supervisory positions, that you just cannot farm out...the decision-making and, you know, that direction that internal Staff need to provide to your contractors to ensure that they're achieving the objectives we set forth. And that's where we've struggled to make those supervisory positions attractive, even to our internal people. Regularly, the people don't want to promote up into supervisors because it's not worth the pay.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Yeah, yeah. I see these two engineering program managers that have yet to be created. Like it looks like half of your admin positions are vacant, so I can see why it would be very hard. But if we're not filling the positions, especially

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positions that need a reorg or union consultation, and you're still asking for 12 months of pay, I know these one you're only asking for 3 months, but some of them that haven't been created yet, is it realistic to think that they will be created as of July 1st?

MR. MOLINA: I mean, honestly, probably not. . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . So, if those were targeted for salary reductions, you know, we wouldn't necessarily be opposed to that consideration. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. I think I heard the buzzer, right?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yes. Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I'll come back around.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Member Johnson, followed by Member Rawlins-Fernandez.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you, Chair. Good morning, Director, Deputy Director. Some of my questions have already been asked, and I was trying to ask about the...the struggles you guys are dealing with hiring. I totally feel where you're coming from. But on Lānaʻi, usually you guys don't have issues with the hiring. People want to work for the County on Lānaʻi. So, how's that for a segue, Director? Really want to get a position filled on Lānaʻi. Do you...do you want me to ask that question? Do you know...do you know who I'm referring to?

MR. MOLINA: Yeah, thank you. I know you've --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay.

MR. MOLINA: -- inquired about a utility worker, and, you know, the reason he's not in there this budget is simply because we're not confident we'll be able to get through that, given the backlog with the FY '26 positions we're still working to create. And with the vacancies in my admin team, you know, considering across the...the priorities across the Department, you know, we just didn't feel that was essential for FY '27.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. And I should clarify. I didn't mean to say, you know, unfilled, I meant to say create...create those positions. You know, I...I went and met with those guys, and because we literally are out, you know, on an island, you know, like even more removed, they're pushing for two positions. I think they really need more, and I...I would support that. We have this big...you know, all the...the stories that are happening on Lānaʻi are kind of universal. We...we don't have the...enough workers. The storms keep coming, and they keep adding more challenges. So, I think the positions are really important that they have. I think they need a women's bathroom at the...at the...at the...their baseyard. They don't have a conference room. They meet out

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just on a picnic table and some chairs. Those are something that I...I wanted to see. What say you guys on...on that, Director?

MR. MOLINA: Yeah, I mean, we're aware that Lāna'i can be brought up into the modern era with some of those amenities.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: . . .*(laughing)*. . .

MR. MOLINA: And, you know, we're not opposed to you supporting our team that way. It's just a matter of bandwidth and...and priority. And, you know, they do a good job of getting by, but we do recognize that, you know, a couple extra positions there would help them manage their workload a bit better.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Right.

MR. MOLINA: Yeah. So, we're aware of the need, definitely.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. Well, I...I just want to let you know that it might be one of my suggestions for this budget, you know. Okay. I want to ask a little bit about something else that's been on...on the community's mind is the cemetery and working with the cemetery. You know, it's owned by the company. The last I heard, they...they want to donate it to the County. What do...what do you think on that, Director? Would you guys be open to that?

MR. MOLINA: You know, for us, it's an extension of existing function. So, it's simply a matter of staffing accordingly. You know, it's easy because we...we know how to run cemeteries on...on that island. So, it's something we could accommodate should that be the direction of, you know, Council and Administration. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: It's...you know, the cemetery, especially . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . after this weather, it's just looking so rugged. And these are our people, these are something I want to help. And it's good to hear...and I heard the bell, Chair. So, it's good to hear your...your opinion on that, Director. I always want to work with you on something that you would agree and that we could come to agreement on as...if we work together on it I think we could solve it. So, the cemetery is definitely on top of mind for me. And I heard the bell, I'll wait for second round. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Member Rawlins-Fernandez?

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. Aloha, Director, Deputy Director, and anyone else on Teams for being with us today. And it's probably a good thing that, you know, DPS was scheduled for the same day as you folks so that they can hear some of the discussion. I'm guessing they haven't, or maybe they have, but it just...there's a lot that we need to get done and we can't without staffing. And so, it'd be really good if, you know, DPS could...could work with us on this. And I know we're not going to solve it today, but it just, you know, sounds like a death spiral where pay isn't competitive, so we can't fill vacancies, which puts more work on those that are working, our current

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employees, which, you know, they don't get compensated for, for being short-staffed. And then it makes it less justifiable for the salary they get and for them to want to take on a management position. So...and then we know that often the reward for strong performers is just more work. In response to your...or your response to Member U'u-Hodgins was that you'd want to provide like a bonus or...for meeting or exceeding their...for meeting or exceeding. And then...so do you have a model for us, or do you...have you seen something that we could use as a guide?

MR. MOLINA: Yeah, we could share our proposal. You know --

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay.

MR. MOLINA: -- it's...it's simple in concept of just determining what kind of per...you know, a percentage of salary for satisfactory and a percentage for exceeds. And just, you know, additional compensation. But I think the problem is the structure of our civil service law and how we...you know, for some reason we feel that it's not equitable to give bonuses out. I don't understand it, but yeah, we're happy to share what our proposal was. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Mahalo. And, you know, like our...our...I know across the County, everyone works really hard. And like on Molokai, we're just so super appreciative of our Public Works Division here for keeping our one highway passable for, you know, as...as much as possible during these storms. Like, that's like critical. So, we...we need...we need people who are willing to...to do that, and then we need to compensate them for...for doing that and going out. And so...okay. So, then I spoke with them and I asked if they get hazard pay . . . *(timer sounds)* . . . for going out during...during the storms, and they said they don't. And, you know, I...I think they should.

MR. MOLINA: We totally agree. That is something we've been, you know, trying to work on as well because, yeah, they are out there. They...we get called by MPD when it's...the action is happening and we are expected to respond. You know, our guys don't get standby pay either, but they're basically on call 24/7. But, you know, I guess not...not all of our partners recognize the services we provide, but that's definitely something we're supportive of and are trying to pursue also.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Yeah, that's just wrong. And we need to compensate them because I don't want to lose them. And, you know, Mr. Apuna here--Chair, you got to mute Chair Lee--and whenever I...you know, whenever the community reaches out to Roger here, like he's super responsive, no matter, you know, what time of day, even on the weekends and holidays. Like...okay. I...I think this Council would be super happy to try to figure this out, especially after the Kona lows and seeing how critical it is to...to have them. Mahalo.

MR. MOLINA: Mahalo.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: I have more questions, but I'll wait for round two.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you. So, I have a question for you. So, you...you actually identified...I want to make sure I get the right CIP number. So, you're talking about CBS-73...7232, Countywide DPW Baseyard Facilities Program, and you're saying that you could delay these, which is 4.7 million and 2.1. Is that correct?

MR. MOLINA: I believe the entirety of that budget this year is 11.9. There are some things that are kind of critical, like our Molokai Cemetery acquisition. I don't think Member Rawlins-Fernandez would want us to drag that one out any further.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: No, I'm not asking that. I'm...

MR. MOLINA: But that...

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Don't drag it out.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- you identified...you identified...I hear...I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about, you said that you would be able to look at the baseyard CIP, no?

MR. MOLINA: Yeah. So, that...that's included in there.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, I see.

MR. MOLINA: It's...it's an extension of our Public Works facilities, or our highways baseyard facilities. So, yeah, like the land acquisitions for the Central and South, like I mentioned, we could...we could get by another year if need be. And even some of the planning work we could delay if needed to support the Council's budget.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So, is this the correct CBS number?

MR. MOLINA: Yeah --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Maybe you can give us...

MR. MOLINA: -- that's the one we identified as being kind of the --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Maybe.

MR. MOLINA: -- the...if I had to give it a "low priority," it would be that one.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So, maybe we can get that then. You...you were going to answer that anyway, then . . .(inaudible). . .

MR. MOLINA: Yeah, there's a question with a breakdown of that --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah.

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MR. MOLINA: -- funding, so we'll be providing that in PW-2 response.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So, it's coming. All right. So, that's what I was wondering. And then Members are talking also about what you mentioned, in terms of a supplemental agreement for the employees. And I believe, Budget Director, when...I don't know what department was before us, maybe it was Office of the Mayor or Managing Director, that you're looking at incentivizing...putting some kind of incentive program for...you called it lower. Well, can you explain that?

MS. MILNER: Thank you, Chair. Yes, it's my understanding that Managing Director, Mayor, and Department of Public Works are currently in conversations about possible supplemental agreements for BU3. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So, BU3. Oh, okay. So, those are basically for HGEA, Bargaining Unit 3 is clerical.

MS. MILNER: Yes, it's the clerical bargaining unit.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Director Molina, are you part of that?

MR. MOLINA: We're aware that, and it's not us involved in those discussions, that the Administration and DPS are working on a supplemental agreement for the Unit 3, which I understand it would be an across-the-board, which is not necessarily something I agree with, because it's...again, you're not necessarily rewarding your high performers with that kind of action. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Oh, okay. So, then we look forward to hearing . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . more about your program then, if you will send it to us as part of your...do we need to send that to you in writing? I don't think it was one of the requests, so...

MR. MOLINA: I guess I would recommend that just for the Committee's record. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. All right. Member Cook, second round, two minutes.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you, Chair. And thank you, Director. I think that last comment speaks to the real-world experience as far as rewarding people who are more productive instead of unilaterally, you know, giving everybody in that category a raise. And, you know, the definition of fairness is really different between in the government employment and in the public sector, and the opportunities to advance are much greater in the public sector than it is in the government sector. It's easier to fail in the public sector. But anyway, I just wanted to comment on that, that that...you put your finger right on the pulse, not being able to reward excellence in the current Department of Personnel Services. My question, sir, is...and I'll put it in writing, but I'm just curious, on page 737, increase improvement, so new sidewalks, linear feet, lanes of bicycle paths, linear feet, et cetera. Could I request that and get like a map and some detail? And the reason I'd like that is basically for my constituents in the community. And if you could add to that--and this isn't something, like, everything you have on your plate--this isn't

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exactly a budget issue, but it's information reflected in the budget that I would like to be able to have in our office. And then if you could also add what's proposed for FY '27 so that we could...it'd be good for the Department and my office and government in general to be able to demonstrate to the public what has been done and what's being planned to be done. Everybody's always wanting sidewalks. Well, for us to be able to...for you to be able to demonstrate we've done this much sidewalks in these areas, and these are what we're planning to do. We're not going to make everybody happy because it might not be a sidewalk in front of their house, but it'll demonstrate efficiency and...so anyway, is that something that's possible?

MR. MOLINA: Yeah. And that's something we've been trying to improve upon, and that's one of those technology items where we're slowly growing GIS, but my concern about starting it is being able to commit to it and ensure it's reliable. You know, GIS is another of those positions that are hard to fill. Unfortunately, our County...or our Management GIS team has been super helpful, but we still need to...you know, our complement on our side to make it really a reliable and, you know, effective system for the public. So, we are looking in that direction. We just want to make sure that, you know, once we start it, it's not going to fizzle out because we lose the person that was managing. But it is something we are...we can work on, at least maybe for a snapshot of the current budget for you folks.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Okay. Thank you. And there again, appreciate your real-world, honest, straightforward answers.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Next testifier [sic] is Member U'u-Hodgins, followed by Sinenci.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, sorry. . . .(laughing). . .

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: I don't think I'm going to testify, but I also don't have any further questions for the Department. I do appreciate your honesty and your transparency, and I look forward to reading your stuff. It just started to rain Upcountry, so yay for more rain. Keep safe, you folks.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So, you're done? Member Sinenci, questions.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Not testimony.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Yeah, weather update. East Maui, it's...also, they're seeing more rain right now, too. Director, in your opening comments, you mentioned that...is it normally your admin that creates the job details or the positions, not Personnel Department?

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MR. MOLINA: No, it's the departments that have to generate all the materials that then are reviewed by DPS.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Oh. Oh, okay.

MR. MOLINA: And those --

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: We could...

MR. MOLINA: -- Personnel Staff are the tip of the spear in...in...in getting those things started and completed.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Oh, okay. All right. Thank you for that. And then one of my questions was, I know I often drive the...from Waiehu or sometimes in the mornings. Is there any interest from the Department about looking at increasing access for evacuation purposes towards Waiehu side, namely acquiring some of the properties?

MR. MOLINA: Yeah. So, Council has funded in previous fiscal year, I think it was '25, allowing us to start work on the Imi Kala extension. And so, that project creates another collector road between Lower Main Street, right above St. Anthony, all the way out to Kahekili Highway in the vicinity of Wailuku Country Estates.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Oh, okay.

MR. MOLINA: So, that...that extension has been planned for a while. It's tied to the Pi'ihana Project District. And so, we have began preliminary design work and planning work on --

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Nice.

MR. MOLINA: -- developing that corridor.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Okay. That's good to hear. Thank you. That's all for now, Chair. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you. Member Batangan, followed by Chair Lee.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Chair. I don't have any other questions.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Chair Lee?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Oh, I don't want to discourage you, Member Sinenci, but I was on the Council when that condition was added to the Pi'ihana subdivision...I mean, project district around 40 years ago.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: ...*(laughing)*...

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COUNCILMEMBER LEE: So, it's taking its time, you know, coming up. Yeah. . . .*(laughing)*. . . So, I wanted to ask the...Director Molina, you know, sometimes when I'm driving on North Kihei Road, I...I can picture that road disappearing, it's...one day because the two sides are rising and rising and rising. What's the long-term plan for that area?

MR. MOLINA: I got to get back to you on exactly, but as far as I'm...so that's a State DOT facility, and as far as I'm aware, that's not in the near-term horizon. You know, we...we just forced their hand by helping fund the bypass in Lahaina extension, and they've also been focused on the Pā'ia bypass for some time, and so I...I'd have to get back to you to know. And maybe Member of Batangan in his past experience might have awareness of that North Kihei Road. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Yeah. Yeah, it can be very scary, very scary. Okay. And then...let's see, when do you think there will be progress done on salary adjustments, which would...could apply Countywide? We're trying to get that for our OCC. We have civil servants in the Office of the County Clerk, and we would like to do that. We asked the Mayor over a year ago.

MR. MOLINA: I'll have to defer to Budget Director.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: But apparently, there's no...no...any progress?

MS. MILNER: Thank you, Chair. I think we should defer that question until DPS is before the body. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. All right. Then I have no . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . further questions. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So, Member Paltin, followed by Johnson.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Chair. I was wondering if you knew the status of the Kahana Nui Basin modifications and Lahaina Watershed Supplemental Plan ED?

MR. MOLINA: Yeah. Thank you, Member Paltin. The Kahana Nui, we just...wait, let me pull up my response. I just got through that one.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, cool.

MR. MOLINA: It is...so, we...it's in the initial design phases. We have sort of a crossroads decision on which funding program to pursue. You know, ideally, we want to try and...well, NRCS is the primary funder of these kinds of programs, and we want to pursue them, but there are some State dam regulations that we're fighting against the timing of, so we are, you know, weighing our options at the moment. But regardless, we are progressing with the design work for the modifications that are needed to bring the facility and to meet the current dam safety requirements.

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COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Awesome. And is there a status update on the resurfacing of Ala Moana Street and Unahiole?

MR. MOLINA: Yeah. And then I forgot about the Kahoma one. We just selected G70 as our consultant, and we'll be...we're in contracts now to get them, you know, under contract and start the...the evaluation work. For those other resurfacing projects, you know, that has been on hold since the fire, we've been holding them back to allow some of the rebuilds and utility work to progress. Because, you know, we don't want to use our money and then have it be ripped up right after. And then there's also the DR money we got for, you know, the Coun...or the district-wide...or burn zone-wide repairs from the wildfires that we want to coordinate. You know, ideally we want to try...you know, do our best to not have our brand-new roads get --

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Yeah.

MR. MOLINA: -- ripped up again. So, you know, we just got those awards and just started that coordination with DR on these projects. So, you know, they'll...they'll be on hold --

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay.

MR. MOLINA: -- for, you know, the next year or so until...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Great, great. And then my other question was, when we had Housing before us, they were able to, under like State law, convert some of their civil service positions to non-civil because of the housing crisis. And I imagine that the housing permitting clerks...I was wondering if...if you have vacancies in that, if you could convert them to non-civil . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . and just hire people at-will under that same HRS?

MR. MOLINA: I had just heard about that from around...so I can't remember who. So, that's something we'll look at. You know, the details of that have not been shared to me, so I'd have to do my research to see how it could apply for our situation. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. Maybe give Mr. Mitchell a call and...and he'll give you his homework or something. I got his number, if you want me to text it to you.

MR. MOLINA: I think I have it. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, okay.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Are you done? Member Johnson? Oh.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Did the bell go off?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Not yet.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, okay.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: Did it go off?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And then...

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, it did go off, sorry.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, okay. Well, then I'm done.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: We're...you're done. Member Johnson, followed by Rawlins-Fernandez.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you, Chair. Well, first off, I just want to say one of my district's priorities will probably be putting in the new position for Public Works for Lāna'i, just letting you know, Director Molina. I'm really curious. It seems to me that a lot of Councilmembers' questions...we're all concerned about filling those empty positions, and every department coming before us has, this is our solution, this is what we're trying to do, this is what we're...do you guys ever, like, have meetings with each other and find out...like what just Councilmember Paltin was saying, find out what Remi was doing in Housing, find out what these guys are doing for...for this department? I...I think it's important. They have kind of...not work in silos and have communication. Are you guys trying to solve this issue together, Director?

MR. MOLINA: I would say there's room for improvement in that area, definitely.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Yeah. Do...okay. This is...maybe you don't want to answer this, but this is me from an outsider looking in. Do you feel like maybe there's a little bit of an attitude, like, don't ninja my employees, man, they're...you know, they're my department's employees? I...I want them not to transfer over to your department. Is that something you...you hear?

MR. MOLINA: Yeah, I mean, we...you know, we don't try to undermine, at least for...so Public Works may be different because I got to deal with all those other guys in my road, so I need them to be functional too. But, you know, when we do steal each other, at least, you know, across generally the infrastructure teams and the...you know, the UPW-heavy teams, you know, we do communicate with each other and it's not...you know, it's not any kind of nefarious act to try and steal people on purpose. You know, we're all...we're all partners here, so we're not trying to sabotage each other along the way. But...

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. Yeah, I...I hear you and that's what I hope it...hope it to be like that, but like you say, there's probably room for improvement. So . . . *(laughing)*. . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . okay. Thanks...thanks for your response, Director. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Member Rawlins-Fernandez?

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COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Mahalo, Chair. All right. So...okay. Before I forget, mahalo to you folks for expediting the new cemetery for Molokai, and again, mahalo to our Public Works team for immediately addressing the 211 graves that were affected by the back-to-back Kona low...sunken, collapsed graves. It was really heart-wrenching. Okay. So, the mechanic positions that were vacant since like...for a while, like...there's like an assistant since 2019. So, when that happens, I think we discussed before some of the positions that are vacant. If we can't get the job done internally, then we contract outside. Do you folks like track the amount that we pay more when we have to contract a private sector than if we, you know, had those positions filled?

MR. MOLINA: I would say we don't. We would have to put together research to really nail down that question. For the mechanics themselves, I mean, we do have a pretty strong team and have been somewhat better in getting mechanics. So, the use on the contracted service is pretty minimal for those folks. And in other areas, it's just simply like we don't have programs that are as developed to be even...to even be able to do the work that contractors do without compromising existing services to do so...or significant growth in those areas.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Great. And then I have three questions. What's the average going rate for speed bump right now?

MR. MOLINA: Yeah, it...it can vary depending on the width of the roadway. So, anywhere from 5,000 to 15,000.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: How about on Molokai?

MR. MOLINA: We can get back to you on specifics from Molokai. I don't...I don't have that ready at the moment.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. All right. And then --

MR. MOLINA: Member Sinenci said triple.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: . . .*(laughing)*. . .

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: -- for question 18...sounds about right. Question 18B, 27 million in Federal relief. Was that bond, cash, mix?

MR. MOLINA: I think it's primarily a grant . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . or assumed grant funding. But we do...we're still working with Federal Highways to get their approval of our emergency repair request. It's not looking very hopeful, but we did also get consideration under DR to conduct those repairs as well.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Mahalo for your responses. That's...that's...that's all my questions, and it's starting to kind of come down. It's raining kind of hard now in Kaunakakai.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So, I want to just say I...I like reading that North-South Collector Road is proceeding because I know it was a little blocked. So, all of that legal things have...have been handled?

MR. MOLINA: No.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: No? Oh.

MR. MOLINA: We...we're still moving, but we do have a few of Member Cook's friends that don't want to participate. And so, we...we likely will be having to come in to request Council's --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Eminent.

MR. MOLINA: -- consideration for eminent domain for a handful of properties.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Ah. Thanks for working hard on it. I know that with MPO, we had the Kihei Community Association come on pretty hard, asking why not, and I think you enlightened them. From that time, it's been a couple of years. So, you're still working on it, then. But the...the --

MR. MOLINA: Yes.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- RAISE grant, you said, has to be...

MR. MOLINA: We...yeah. So, we're going to be up against some hard decisions here shortly. So, yeah, hoping for...hoping for some support from the community. But if not, hopefully that Council recognizes the importance of getting this project delivered.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah.

MR. MOLINA: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah. Thank you. It's been like forever. So, next, you can answer that question, Member Cook. But also, Waiale Road extension, when are you going to start on that? Just give me a date or year.

MR. MOLINA: Yeah, so that one has slipped.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh.

MR. MOLINA: And I'm...I'm not going to take full fault for it, but yeah, we...we...that grant experienced transition at the Federal Administration. And so, there was a lot of adjustments that were...we experienced through the NEPA process that generated significant delays. But fortunately, the Feds have acknowledged their role in that and have given us additional time. But we still intend to move forward with that project on

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the current schedule, which has us looking...hopefully going out to bid sometime in quarter...or spring of next year.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, that's good. Yeah, because there's housing projects waiting on that, so it's...

MR. MOLINA: Yes. We are very cognizant of the, you know, the...not only for the housing, but also for --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: The schools.

MR. MOLINA: -- the school and the future wastewater facility . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . out there to which the road is going to provide access and those utility connections.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah, it's major. Okay. Thank you. I had to ask that. That's all our friends that are waiting. I...okay. So, now it's your turn, Member Cook.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank...thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Two minutes.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Yeah. So, as far as the North-South Collector Road, we can't do eminent domain fast enough. I think the community, it's pretty...the people who don't want it are pretty entrenched and everybody else wants it. And it's one of those instances, so I think where eminent domain is very applicable and kind of indefensible as far as like people just saying, I don't...I don't like the road, I don't want it. So, that's my two cents on that. Talking about the North-South Collector Road, how...how supportive, and is the Department working towards securing the other rights-of-way to complete the road, both on the south end and as well as on the north end? My understanding is the north end, because of eliminating the bridge by Suda Store, would require the extension...potential extension of that road. What's the status of being able to get those easements?

MR. MOLINA: So, for the north end, you know, that property's owned by the Weinberg Foundation and they've been very cooperative in working with us to not only explore the roadway there, but also address some of the...or look at opportunities for flood mitigation as well. So, yeah, they're an active partner at the moment. And, you know, fortunately, they've been willing to accommodate because I think they recognize the challenge on their site as well. When we talk about the south end then, currently it will take us all the way to Auhana Road from Welakahao. The...we have been in conversations with the owners of the Alahale parcel and, you know, so they're aware of our need there. And, you know, we're trying to navigate best approach to it but, you know, I guess both of us are not necessarily ready to commit to anything at this time. And then there's one more parcel which we haven't started conversations with yet.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Anyway, I'm supportive of that, at least that the County made an offer. Just it seemed like what we're dealing with, the potential eminent domain to get

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ahead of it when the people are willing. So, shifting gears. This major flooding that we've had repeatedly for years, and this one, which is extreme and . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . hopefully rare. What is the status of mauka, the...basically flood mitigation from Kula down for the whole side of the mountain, NRCS, Army Corps of Engineers? I think the...all the private landowners that I've talked to, the ranches, are all basically supportive. What's the status of that and what would it take and how could we help to enable that?

MR. MOLINA: I mean, first and foremost, the personnel matter. I mean, I just don't have enough engineers to tackle all these problems. But as far as what we have going, you know, we have modeled Waiakoa, and so now we're developing concepts for potential mitigation there. We've started modeling for Kūlanihākoʻi and Waiakoa in the lower areas. And then the big one we have is with NRCS for looking at mauka mitigation at Kūlanihākoʻi, which is pending review with national headquarters with NRCS to see whether that's a project they are willing to bring into their program.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Does Army Corps of Engineers come into play at all?

MR. MOLINA: They will be involved in permitting when we get to the low-lying areas that are in waters under their jurisdiction. But we haven't tapped them for these projects because I think there might not be as clear of a nexus. They...they're more in the water, and these streams in Kihei are not, you know, your perennial streams. Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: So, they might not be of assistance, but they also wouldn't be an impediment?

MR. MOLINA: Yeah. I mean, they...they're...they're okay.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: If I have a couple more minutes, our last...our two positions, the supervisory engineering positions that we approved last year, did they get filled?

MR. MOLINA: No, we haven't even started on those. You know, I've...I've had turnover in my division heads over the last year, so me and Paul have been doing triple duty for a while now. I'm fortunate to find two very good and very experienced division heads for DSA and Engineering, and so they are helping me navigate how best to incorporate those positions because it's going to require significant changes to existing structures. There's a lot of shuffling that's going to have to happen to align how we currently handle things, which is everybody's got a piece of everything, and trying to build those focus areas. So, it is a big reorg lift, and fortunately, I have a team now that can help me work through that.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Okay. Thanks. Just we continue to be supportive of that, and there again, it's construction management. I mean, it's not rocket science, but it is complicated, and you get the right people and the team working together, it can be very efficient. So, continue to help any way you can.

MR. MOLINA: Thank you.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Next...next, we have Member U'u-Hodgins, followed by Sinenci. Follow...you don't have.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Thank you, Chair. I have no further questions.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you. Member Sinenci, you have no further, right, you're saying? Okay. Next, Member Batangan.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: No questions.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: No more questions. Chair Lee?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Yes, I have a question. You brought up Waiale Extension, but Jordan, when is the roundabout going in on Waiale?

MR. MOLINA: Are you referring to the...at Wai'inu?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Yeah, the one by the graveyard.

MR. MOLINA: Yeah, that one has been challenging. We've had to change archeologists, and of course, we're in the sand in that area, so it's highly sensitive. So, that one is still a few years out.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Oh, my goodness. Is there any possibility that we could acquire the land where John Okamura's property is on Waiale? So, people can make an automatic right turn to go to Maui Lani Parkway?

MR. MOLINA: We are looking at that, you know, because we did receive multiple requests from Waikapū Community Association about that issue. And so, we are looking to...or we started early planning on looking at how to fit that right turn lane in at the intersection. So, you know, we think we have room. The challenge is we got to move a lot of stuff to fit it in, like the traffic signal pole, for example, and the related equipment. So, it'll be a big project --

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: So, you'll probably need --

MR. MOLINA: -- but we are looking at it.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: -- you probably need plans and design first, and then...then land acquisition money later?

MR. MOLINA: Correct.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. Can you...can you let me know how much money you need for plans and design?

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MR. MOLINA: Yes, I will get back to you on that.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Member Paltin, followed by Johnson.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Chair. Shoot, I forgot what I was going to say. Can you come back to me after Member Johnson?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I should have wrote it down.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Member Johnson?

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Well, I didn't have any questions, but I do want to thank the Department for all their work, and really appreciate you guys, and I hope Councilmember Paltin remembers her questions. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Or we can go to...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh. I just...I don't remember the question part, but the comment part was, I've been trying really hard to recruit for you among the, you know, 6 to 12-year-olds that come to the budget hearings that are in STEM. If you had a little talking point that you wanted me to tell those kids, just email it over. But maybe we should also reach out to Leslie Wilkins and, you know, give them like road, bridge, drainage, traffic signal, kind of like little activities so that, you know, they're already planting the seed. Because they say that they want to like, you know, improve their community and make new friends. And I did speak briefly to Christy Chung about like, you know, what we could say. She said when she worked for Public Works, she...she met a lot of new people, she was able to help people and like that. So, if you have any talking points that I can recruit these kids or Ms. Wilkins, I'm...I'm trying to do my part out here.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: She is.

MR. MOLINA: Thank you, Member Paltin. And we...you know, we recognize the need to grow in that area. And, you know, it is outside of our comfort zone. All us guys at Public Works, you know, we don't necessarily like to be at the front of the room or

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recognized even. We like to get our work done in the backgrounds and, you know, basically no one knows that things were broken. But yeah, we do need to tell our story better and need to, yeah, share and entice people and make them excited about the kinds of activities we do here and how we support our community. So, we appreciate your...your support in that area. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: The other question I had is, you know, a lot of private community members as well as some of the big corporations like Goodfellows and whatnot are coming out and assisting the...the community during the storm as well. Like if they have any kind of machinery...you know, especially Lahaina, if you have a machinery, you're just going to come out and try and divert the water from people's houses. Is there any pre-existing contracts for like when things go down that--like especially between Kona one and Kona two, it was such a short time period and we don't have like full manpower--are there pre-existing contracts to be able to hire folks when we're in that kind of a tight squeeze and we need to get like, you know, things out of the gulches and things like that, or like an adopt-a-gulch program or anything along those lines?

MR. MOLINA: We don't necessarily have pre-position. That is something we're going to be improving on now that this is becoming an annual . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . activity. But yeah, there are contractors we work regularly with through our CIP projects, you know, that we're comfortable deploying in those scenarios...because one of our challenges is maintaining oversight of these people when they're out there. And a lot of people want to go, and, you know, I get a lot of calls about, yeah, yeah, I go, and it's kind of like, well, if you don't really work in this area, you know, we can't be...we can't be confident we can manage you guys effectively. And so, that becomes one of those bandwidth issues, but it is something we...we do recognize we need support on, and we'll be getting better on getting those pre-position contracts in place. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Shoot. Last question I...I remembered was my original question. In terms...I've been getting reached out by the t-groin CFD folks again, and I've just been telling them that like, you know, capacity is a problem for you guys. Just let me know if that's not what you want me to say or if you want me to see something different. But I just assume that with all that's going on with the fire, the recovery, and all the floods, that you're not super supportive?

MR. MOLINA: If they keep the maintenance, that'll be fine. But then I guess there's still this oversight component of ensuring that they're conducting their maintenance properly and those facilities, you know, maintain good working order. And so, that would be, you know, the other side of we would need to grow to ensure we can maintain proper oversight because those facilities are going to...or there's going to be a lot of property that's relying on those facilities to remain functional. And, you know, if we're going to make that investment, we want to make sure we...it stays...it returns benefit for the community long-term. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So, just wait until you fill all your vacancies before we move in that direction?

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MR. MOLINA: I was going to say, what's going to take longer, getting a CFD approved or getting positions for the maintenance?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Your eminent domain.

MR. MOLINA: We can race and see who comes first.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. You're on. Bet.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Member Rawlins-Fernandez, you said you didn't have any questions. Is that right? Okay. All right. So, I just have one. Our office, as you know, gets requests from Pukalani and...on their roads, and I'm just wondering that in your...oops, in the Program Budget under CBS-1023, Countywide Road Resurfacing and Pavement Preservation, so I was just wondering if you have any updates on Pukalani Terrace Subdivision pavement reconstruction?

MR. MOLINA: Yes. We have multiple years of funding contracted that we need to catch up with. So, apologies to Pukalani, but...we've been working up there, it's just priorities. Those County-funded projects, unfortunately, will always take a backseat to the Federal ones. You know, our priority is to bring in that outside money to the extent we can, and that's a group that has also been struggling to find a supervisory engineering position since we lost the incumbent over two years ago now. But we are...yeah, that is on the radar to try and get rolling hopefully --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you.

MR. MOLINA: -- this year. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. I will let them know. So, of course, now that we have the fuel prices, right, increasing, I'm just wondering how did your...or how does the Department anticipate meeting the needs of the...you know, with all of those kind of needs? Every day we turn on our television, watch the news, and there's more about the war and how it's impacting.

MR. MOLINA: Okay. So, for FY '26, obviously, you know, the last few weeks on fuel...or month has been crazy. So, those impacts are hitting the budget already, and so we've requested to move savings over to cover the shortfall we anticipate. But I'm...you know, and we would request consideration of adding that into the budget because we...you know, at the time the submission was made from our Department, this was not a concern. And so...but it will be a problem because, you know, fuel's a big part of our operation . . . *(timer sounds)* . . . and the pricing is significant. In addition to any sort of utility, you know, water/sewer increases proposed, those have not yet been incorporated. And so, consideration for that as well. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So, it's not in here, and you want us to consider something, and you said add savings, and Budget Director would direct us . . . *(inaudible)* . . .

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MR. MOLINA: That's for our FY '26 request, but for '27, I think those adjustments would need to be made, or just, you know, appreciate your guys' support when it comes quarter three of next fiscal year to see where we're at.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, okay. So, we don't have to put anything in the current budget is what you're saying?

MR. MOLINA: Defer to Budget Director on...on that response. Thank you.

MS. MILNER: Thank you, Chair. Yeah, I think as Director Molina was saying, there are two ways that we can handle it...if we want to come up with a ballpark figure now and add it to the budget, or just have the body be aware that most likely there will be an amendment forthcoming late in the next fiscal year to account for these increased costs. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Certainly is volatile. Okay. So, that's it for round three, Members. Anybody else? None. Okay. Thank you very much, Department, and this is the first time we had an oral response to our questions. And thank you very much for everything that both of you do, Director and Deputy. Nice seeing you here. So, Members, it is now 12:16, ready for recess, and then we'll do Personnel in the afternoon. Is that good? You want to come back at 1:30, is that good? 1:30. Okay. This meeting is now in recess.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, Chair?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, yes?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I thought the calendar also said MEMA, are we not doing MEMA --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, okay.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: -- because of the storm? Yes. So, we can talk about that now, if you want, because yesterday we did...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I just want to know what to prepare for after lunch --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, okay.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: -- you know what I mean?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah, so DPS, as I said, is coming in the afternoon, and MEMA, of course, because they're busy. Yesterday, Budget Director was able to confirm that MEMA will be here Monday, as long as the other discussion revolving...regarding the oral...Revolving Funds. 'Ōiwi will be here also on Monday. So, next week Monday, April the 16th, is MEMA and 'Ōiwi right now, and then this afternoon is just DPS.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: And Chair?

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COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Is that updated calendar going to be posted on Granicus?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Did...did we do that? I think the latest calendar is April 7th, is that right?

MR. KRUEGER: Chair, we...we don't have an updated calendar to reflect that quite yet, just because we weren't sure if the Members would be available. In able...in order for the Committee to meet on Monday, the...the Committee will need to recess.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, we got to recess.

MR. KRUEGER: So...

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah, we got to recess this --

MR. KRUEGER: Yeah.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- meeting in order to meet on Monday. So, that's going to determine whether we have the meeting or not. Are you guys available? Then they can update the calendar. Monday morning was kind of a time to do research, and then we would end up going to Molokai in the...for the evening meeting. You guys want to think about it?

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Yeah, can we get back to you after lunch?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah. You're fine? Okay. You'll get back to us then. We'll...we'll have this discussion when we come back at 1:30 about the recess meeting on Monday, if it can happen or not. And one more thing, Public Works. Rates and fees, you have no increases?

MR. MOLINA: I don't believe so.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah, I didn't see it.

MR. MOLINA: At least on the permitting side, we wouldn't. I think fuel...well fuel is the...fuel and weight, we don't really have a say in that one. But yeah, not to my awareness, but we'll confirm on that. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Yeah, I didn't see any...in the Ramseyered version, there's no changes. Member U'u-Hodgins?

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Thank you, Chair. This is just an FYI, but I will be picking up my children from school when we return, and the country roads have no service. So, I will try my best to listen, but feel free to skip me until I get back at this chair until about 2:30-ish. Thank you.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Be safe. All right. So, Members, we will see you back here at 1:30 for...after lunch. Appreciate all your hard work and double duty as we're, you know, trying to adjust our schedules because of the storm. Thank you, everybody. And this meeting is now in recess. . . .*(gavel)*. . .

RECESS: 12:19 p.m.

RECONVENE: 1:38 p.m.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . .*(gavel)*. . . Good afternoon. Welcome to the Budget, Finance, Economic Development Committee. It is now 1:38, and the second department that we have is the Department of Personnel Services. And Members, for your information, initial letter and responses is...PS-1 is number 44, and Department question letters, PS-2 is 97. Did we get back their responses? We did, yeah?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I thought you said PW-1 was 44.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: P...did it change? Okay. We'll let you know.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Can you repeat what PS-22 was...or PS-2 was?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: PS-2 is 95 *[sic]*.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: PS-1...is it?

MS. SZABO: . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, PS...oh, PS-2 is 89. It changed. That happens when things get...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, PS-2 is 89?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: 92. And can you check PS-1? 43. Okay. Not 44, 43.

MS. SZABO: . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So, there's a typo here. So, pages in Bill 40...55 is operations page 17, and we'll now welcome the Director. And Cynthia Porter, can you please introduce your Staff who's here, and then do your opening comments?

MS. SZABO: . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, you did your opening comments, sorry.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Yeah. And I don't think we can take more, because then we'd have to go back into testimony.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. That's right. We did that already.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Good afternoon, Chair. To my left is Deputy Director Kainea Aiwohi-Alo, and I'm Cynthia. Happy to be here, ready to answer questions.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Okay. Thank you very much. And everybody always has questions for Personnel, so... All right. I'm going to start off...oh, Member Rawlins-Fernandez, you have questions for DPS. Then we go to Cook, U'u-Hodgins, Sinenci, Batangan, Lee, Paltin, Johnson, myself. Member U'u-Hodgins. Member Rawlins, sorry, Fernandez?

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Yeah, you can come back to me. I'm dealing with something real fast. Okay. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Member Cook, you have any questions for --

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Yes.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- DPS?

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you, Chair. So, could you clarify, we have active vacancies and inactive vacancies?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Chair? Thank you for the question, Councilmember Cook. So, active vacancies are vacancies that we're currently recruiting for. We have an active posting, you know, in the process of establishing a list, or provided a list. Inactive vacancies are positions that do not have a requisition to fill.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: So, what is the...are the inactive vacancies funded? What...what...what happens with the 200-some-odd positions?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: That might be a question best answered by Budget. Those are positions that exist, so I'm not sure if they are funded or not. Maybe departments could respond to that question?

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Could the...would the Budget Director be able to...the 280 grand total for "inactive vacancies?"

MS. MILNER: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Cook. Yeah, I think that varies department to department. We have some departments who are partially funding or unfunding some of those that aren't in active recruitment. We have some that have gone the sort of off-the-top route, like the Council did, and included that. In the premium pay section, we have some who continue to fund them to supplement the overtime. So, I think it varies from department to department. Thank you, Chair.

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COUNCILMEMBER COOK: And so, then the active vacancies, would...would that also fall in that similar category with the departments, some being funded, some not being funded, some...

MS. MILNER: I would say yes. I think for the active ones, they are more likely to be funded or at least partially funded because if they are in active recruitment and in the interview process, they are intending to hire in the near term. Thank you, Chair.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Okay. So, the inactive vacancies, could you provide, not this second, but sort of when...how long they've been inactive?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: I believe we provided when they became vacant on our Excel sheet that we provided.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Okay. Thank you. Yeah, that's this stack of paper I got over here that I haven't had the time to digest yet, but thank you for letting me know I have the information.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: So, yeah. It's...you have a challenging department, and it seems to be at the nexus when we interview other departments as far as challenges and whatnot. Public works, we just met with them. The inability to pay people different rates, whether they're high performers or average performers . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . is there any light at the end of that tunnel?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Sorry. So, we recently implemented a program to address some of that, but that was mostly for...or exclusively for our excluded employees. I know Public Works had talked about that, and they were, you know, talking about doing that for their Department, and so the objective would be to create that Countywide, not just, you know, one department competing for another department. So, we do have some plans to implement those types of policies, but they would require consultation with the union and, you know, some really stringent kind of guardrails around it.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: So, is my time up? Did the bell go off?

MR. PASCUAL: Yes, Chair. The bell rang for Member Cook's time.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Okay. Thank you.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Next round. Member U'u-Hodgins is not back yet. Member Sinenci has his...oh, there he is. Member Sinenci?

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Mahalo, Chair. And mahalo, Director Razo-Porter.

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MS. RAZO-PORTER: Hello.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: I didn't send in any questions, but from our discussions this morning with Public Works, they were looking...they're...they spoke about having their administration kind of either create new positions or to upgrade them. So, my...my question just would be general, what would be the process in...in going through...through that? I know Member Paltin always asks about reorganization. Is there a process for them to...to either switch some of their positions to higher paying ones? Do we...like, could I cancel out all of his positions and...and propose new positions for him? I'm just asking.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Thank you, Chair.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Throwing it out there.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Thanks for the question, Councilmember Sinenci. So, that was kind of a loaded question. So, classification, reallocating positions is...looks at classification. So, it's the duties and responsibilities assigned to that position, looking at the scope of the work, the complexity of the work. So, when a position description needs to be updated, departments are, you know, asked to update their positions, and we will take a review of the classification. What was your other question?

MS. MILNER: . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Oh.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Well, just to follow up to your response, so the...the department would have to update those for the...for the Department to review, and I see Budget Director on the trigger...with her fingers on the trigger.

MS. MILNER: Thank you, Chair. Sorry, I just wanted to add, and then I will hand it back to Director Razo-Porter. I think as you all have seen through the budget process the last few years, when we have pending reallocations, the departments often intend for a position to be one thing, but after consultation and the reorganization process, it changes, and you see that change year-to-year. So, I think we have to make sure we go through that process to make sure the positions align, rather than just changing them all in the budget and hoping that that's what happens in the future. Thank you, Chair.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Oh, okay. So, you wouldn't advise to me cutting out positions?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Good point.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Okay. All right. Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Member Batangan, and followed by Chair Lee.

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VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Chair. Okay. Director, in your responses to the questions we asked about the HR to full-time employee ratio within the County, you said that the national standard is 1.7 HR people per 100 employees. Are you...or should I be counting DPOs that are embedded within the department into that calculation, or should I only be thinking about DPS, Personnel when trying to figure out whether or not you...you meet the national standard?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Right. So, that would be a complex question because departments' DPOs do HR work and administrate...you know, departmental administrative work. So, how that...

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Okay. So, I guess I'm trying to get at, you said that there should be 50 Staff members dedicated to doing HR work within the County. Your Department is asking for some expansion positions, but even if we grant them all, that only takes you to 27, which is half of the national standard.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Right.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Is there a need to increase the personnel in your Department to better be able to then Staff the rest of the County?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, thank you for the question. So, space limitations prevent us from adding any more Staff. Even these two Staff that we're considering is, you know, impacting our office. We are in the process of...we're in negotiation with our RFP, you know, our Guidhouse is our selected consultant, and we are looking at, you know, what is the best processes because we do...you know, we're kind of scattered. So, departments do, you know, part of the hiring. You know, we, you know, input them in the system, and...you know, so it's kind of looking at that. So, that national average that we provided is, you know, from the calculator that we found online, and it's like, okay. . . .*(laughing)* . . .

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Okay. I understand.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Good. So...

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Okay. So, are you guys more successful in filling your own vacancies than the Countywide average?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, I want to say timeliness, yes. You know, as far...we have the same struggles that other departments face with competitive salaries, you know, just people having other opportunities because it is a very competitive market. We hired, you know, some really good employees, and their former employer doubled their salary and gave them a promotion, and they left pretty quickly.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Okay. And then can I pivot really quickly to the healthcare subsidies? In your initial response to the question, you guys say that you are in discussion with EUTF to configure a new rate structure and estimate costs to test

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30,000. . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . I don't understand what the response that you guys are giving means. Can you...can you expand on that?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Okay. So, we asked EUTF. So, they bill us for, you know, medical premiums. And so, for us to make changes to that rate structure today, they quoted us \$30,000 to work with their vendor to update the software. They would need time to test and do that, so that's that extra \$30,000 cost.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Oh, I see. Okay. Okay. Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Department.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you. So, do we have Chair Lee? Chair Lee?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Yep.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, okay.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Yes.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: I see you.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Hi, Director. Can you tell me what's *[sic]* the status is on the salary adjustment issue?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Okay. It's...in regards to the Bargaining Unit 3 supplemental agreement we're in?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Right. Yeah, if you --

MS. RAZO-PORTER: We're...

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: -- if you recall, we tried to...to initiate that with our Office of County Clerk last year for our employees, and we were turned down. So, when --

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So...

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: -- how is...how is that matter being resolved and when will it be resolved?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, the supplemental agreement that I'm thinking about right now is in consultation...or negotiations with HGEA, and that has not been made public yet because we're still in the discussion phases, but it will affect all County employees.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Director...Director...Director, when you say we, do you mean all the counties or just Maui County and the State?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Just Maui County Administration and Personnel Services. My apologies.

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COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. So, we don't...we don't need the concurrence of others, this is something we can negotiate individually?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: This is a supplemental agreement between the County of Maui and HGEA with the union.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. So, how are we doing? We're doing okay?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Making progress?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Yes, yes. They do have some questions. We still have to meet on it. So, hopefully that'll...that meeting will occur next week is the plan.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. And then...and what takes us to actual implementation? Do you have to then come up with standardized...you know, a format that all departments need to follow, or what...what's needed to actually get us over the goal line?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, the...the agreement as written is for all County employees and the union would have to work with their members to ratify the supplemental agreement and we would implement. So, there's no, you know, additional programs that need to be discussed.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: So, we don't have to come up with rules or guidelines or...

MS. RAZO-PORTER: It's...it's a one-time supplemental agreement.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Oh, only one? We can do that only once?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Well, for this supplemental agreement, it's a one-time movement.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: It's not an annual, it's just once in --

MS. RAZO-PORTER: It's...

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: -- the life of a person's career?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: It's...it's effective one time, this particular supplemental agreement, yes. But, you know, the parameters are written out in the supplemental agreement.
...*(timer sounds)*...

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Well, how will...how would that be an incentive if we just can give somebody a bonus one time, period? We can't do it annually?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: I wouldn't consider it a bonus.

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COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Oh. Well, what would you call it then?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: I...

MS. MILNER: You want me to take a crack at it?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Yeah. Okay.

MS. MILNER: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Chair Lee. I'll try and take a crack at it in a legally-appropriate way. It would not be a bonus, it would be something that would impact the individual's salary over the life of their career, but the initial increase would be just a one-time thing that then the collective bargaining agreement would then take over to handle the increases in future years. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: All right. Okay. So, I don't...I don't get it, but, you know, it doesn't make sense that we can just do this one time. But I can wait until my turn again. Thanks.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you. Member Paltin, then Member Johnson. Yeah. Okay. Member Paltin?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Chair. Before my time starts, I just want to say I have so many questions, so little time, so if I cut you off, I don't mean to be rude, I just am going to move on to the next question.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Got it.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. You can start. My first question is, do you guys conduct exit interviews of people that either resign, don't pass their probation, are fired, quit, whatever?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Thank you for the question. Not on a whole system, yeah. Each department conducts their own, we don't do one independent of departments.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. And then I was browsing through your answers on PS-2, and it said that like, you know, you had 8,000-something applications, around 250 hired or something, and that you don't know how many of those are still working. And so, I was wondering, how do you measure like retention, after we just had that recruitment retention contract with...I don't know, I think it was Cynthia Lallo's daughter. So, how do you measure retention if you're not measuring if the people that are hired are still working?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, we have some metrics that we measure, but as far as, you know, when they were hired, were they hired, you know, from this recruitment, or this retention program, we don't have the --

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COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, okay. So, what kind of . . . *(inaudible)*. . .

MS. RAZO-PORTER: -- ability to track that way.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: What kind of metrics do you use to measure retention in that case?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: It's in our performance measures that we share with budget.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh. Okay. And then my other question, and...and it's okay if it's in writing, because I...I don't know if I can retain the...the oral back, but I would also like it in writing is, like how would we know if a reorganization is triggered or not, and how would we know if that reorganization triggers a union consultation or not, or do all reorganizations trigger a union consultation?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, we provided the reorganization guidance, and so we follow that provided by the Department of Management. So, typically, if it's a filled position, if it's an existing position, and the lines of supervision change, or the program changes, it requires a reorg. If...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh. If...even like reallocations of existing positions? I've seen like a Police III turn into an Assistant Chief of Police in the Police details, so would...that would trigger a reorganization?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Correct.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So, if it was vacant at a Police III, it's probably still vacant as an Assistant Chief because they needed to do a reorganization? . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . Or what is the timeline of a reorg?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Well, in that case, they completed the reorg.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, they did complete it?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Yes. Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So, it...it varies, the timeline for the reorg?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: It could.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. I'll come back around.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Okay.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: Member Johnson?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Member Johnson?

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you, Chair. You know, I have so many questions in regards to how we streamline this process to hire, Director, and, you know, and I...I can leave it open-ended and say, give us some Code changes if you like, but really, that's...that's so much of the issue that I see the faces, like why is it so slow to hire? There was a quote here, I think it was Chief of Police one time said, how can you run a race with one leg? And that's really where a lot of departments feel that they're just not...they don't have enough Staff, right? So, let's just start with that. Do you have any Code recommendations, anything in the...in the...that you think we could help make this a little faster?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, I...I don't really have Code recommendations to, you know, change the way the process goes. I would say that --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: -- we can help departments, you know, just with the timeliness of interviews, just...I mean, it's a competitive market. So, acting on an active list is the most important thing to do. We have a careers expo.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: You know, you said it's a competitive market and I agree.

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: If I can add comment --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: You know, I hear the...

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: -- so the...the hiring process is partially decentralized, so our Department does not control the entire hiring process. We do refer the applicants on an eligible list to the departments, and at that point, the departments take over, and they are responsible for contacting those applicants, interviewing those applicants, making selection decisions before it comes back to our Department.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Well, you know, there's the supplement...supplemental issues that we're trying to bring up and, you know, help pay these folks. I don't know if you watch the news or social media, but there's a quote going around, all you got to do is pay us enough to live. And I see so many folks that are trying to make...make ends meet, but they can't because the wages are so low, and then we get into HGEA issues. So, here's my question for you guys. How is your relationship with HGEA?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: We have a good working relationship.

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COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. That's important. I really hope it is, because they're key to this. So, I'm going to ask a question. I didn't hear time, so I'll try to squeeze in one last question. This is about the professional services expenses. There's like \$400,000 in the budget for that, I think. Why is a contract needed to scan and digitalize [sic] DPS documents? How many documents does this entail and has the Department explored the use of interns or temporary Staff as a cheaper alternative? What training courses are planned and what costs? So, we'll start with that, 405,000.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Okay. So, we are asking for \$300,000 to scan and digitize Department documents due to the sheer volume. So, we do have, you know, interns that we could use, but that wouldn't provide them with experience that we're trying to give them in an internship program.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: You know, we have four cabinets that are filled with...I don't know, it's like 2,000 pounds of documents, so...

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. All right. So, it's a...all right.

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: So, I will... . . .(timer sounds). . .

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: How...how are you guys working...

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: I will add to that, though --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Go ahead.

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: -- with the expected or upcoming move of our Department to the courthouse, we have already been told by that contractor that those files will not...the floor of the courthouse will not support the weight of those files. So, we are not able to take those filing cabinets with us.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Wow.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: I...I...there's so many issues. Okay.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: We're not creating more documents, if that helps.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: . . .(laughing). . .

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: There's...there is good news. In the budget, it says \$405,240, but you're saying 300,000, so the numbers are off a bit?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Oh, yeah. So, 300,000 was for the digitization of the documents. We are asking for 47,000, and that was to host trainings. One of the challenges that we have is finding spots to do training in. We do use community centers. We use...

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COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Okay.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: I think...I...I'm...I'm out of time --

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: -- but I'm just going to go back to that number in the documents. Here in the...in here, it says 405,000, but you said you're asking for 300,000, so we can get back to that. I heard my time.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Go ahead, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Member Rawlins-Fernandez?

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. Aloha, Director and Deputy. Mahalo for being with us. Okay. I have a couple questions on the goals and objectives. Okay. So, for the percentage of employees leaving County employment within five years from date of hire, and the estimated percentage was 15 percent this fiscal year, '26, and then 20 percent for FY '27. Thirty-nine percent, the actual number, that seems high to me, like almost half.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: That seems extremely high to me also.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. We're working on...with the departments to try to figure out how to retain?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: How to reduce that, retain. If you look back at that period...so I'll just kind of explain a little bit, that metric. It's looking back five years from that FY 2025. So, if you look back in FY 2020, it's looking at those employees that were there and which employees are here now. So, if you recall, there was COVID, there was lots that happened. So, yeah, we're definitely working on that metric.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. And then it says the number of applications received is like close to 10,000, but we're not able to fill our vacancies?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Yes, not all. . . .*(laughing)* . . .

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. And then the average time to fill vacancies--and I...I understand that it's not all DPS, that it's the individual departments, as you mentioned to Member Johnson--but when measuring this, are you able to

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separate out filling vacancies of...internally and then vacancies that like, you know, promotion, transfer, interdepartmental, and then filling vacancies that are...are not internal?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: I can give you...I can give you a number on that because I...we did take a look at that, but I don't have that available in front of me.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Because I...I wasn't sure how much of the 90 to 100 days was, I assume, internal hiring or filling vacancies is faster --

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: -- than filling vacancies from people who are not employees?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, this...this --

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: -- wouldn't include all, but we do have a metric that we look at, and just to say how many internal hires were made...so, you know, promotions, promotion opportunities.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Yeah, like promotion and like transfers or whatever that's called. Okay. . . .*(timer sounds)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Are you waiting for an answer?

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: I don't know. . . .*(laughing)*. . .

MS. RAZO-PORTER: I'm sorry.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Yes, I was.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: I thought...

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: I...I thought someone was going to say something, but I do have more questions, so --

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: -- round two.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Round two. All right. So, for myself, I'm curious for the 911 dispatchers, thank you very much for working with us. Has it been like two years maybe? And what we have been doing because of their vacancies and the urgency of, you know, the work that they do, so we've been putting in some supplemental retainers

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for them, I've been doing it for the last three years. So, how are they today, and are we still concerned about that, or is their compensation resolved?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, thank you for the question. Yesterday, they asked us to close the recruitment, and they are working through the list of eligibles that we have for them. They're...I'm not...I don't want to use the word stabilize, that's not what they use, but they're asking us to stop recruiting...recruitment, so...

CHAIR SUGIMURA: That's a good sign, yeah.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Hopeful.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So, are we...how are we in terms of, I know we...we've met several times with Police, and you, and HGEA, just trying to figure out, you know, how we can get them...well, I don't think they should be Bargaining Unit 3 clerical, and so that's why I've been trying to work on this for them, because I think they're more first responders, you know, rather than Bargaining Unit 3. But how are we in terms of helping them?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, Bargaining Unit 3, thank you for the question, is white-collar employees. And so, maybe they...you know, if we look at them as first responders, you know, they would need a new bargaining unit, and that would be, you know, Statewide. So, all of those dispatchers, it wouldn't just be Maui, you know, creating a bargaining unit.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So --

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So...

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- I tried to do that at the Legislature and it didn't pass, and I think that was maybe three years ago, because then, like you said, right, the whole State would have to change to a bargaining unit. I forget the number we were trying to change it to, but it didn't, just because of the differences with the different counties and how they handle the 911 calls. I guess maybe the question is, where are we for Maui right now?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, we don't...I mean, I'm not aware of a bill in the Leg. to create...

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, no, we're not going there.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Okay.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah, because that failed.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Right.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So, we're trying to work this on our own with Chief Pelletier, and you, and HGEA.

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MS. RAZO-PORTER: So...so, your...your question is --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: What is the status?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: -- how do we make them first responders?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: No. What is the status of the negotiations we've been trying to do with your office, HGEA, Chief Pelletier, and MPD --

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Right.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- 911?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So...so, the emergency services dispatchers were repriced from SR-16 to SR-17.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah. . . .*(timer sounds)*. . .

MS. RAZO-PORTER: And they have their retention incentive supplemental agreement.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So, it sounds like we still need to continue that this year, this...for Fiscal Year '27?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Okay.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah? That's what you're saying, right? We haven't finished...resolved everything that we need to.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Right. So, if the objective is to move...reprice the rest of the classes, is that the goal? Because we repriced one class, the Is, and they have their supplemental agreement for retention and recruitment.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Okay.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: There's still work to do, yeah? We're still --

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Okay.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- trying. All right. Next, we have Member Cook.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you, Chair. So, a couple times you said we, so when you're...who...in the Administration, your office, sitting down with the unions to talk about just different things we're doing, who's at the table?

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MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, when speaking with Chair Sugimura, it was the union, it was the department, it was Police, it was us, it was her office. It depends. In the supplemental agreement with...

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Okay. Sorry.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: So, just in general.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: In general, it varies.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: In general you have your Department of Personnel Services --

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Correct.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: -- that is part of the County of Maui Administration, and you're going to do union negotiations. Each county's going to have somebody at the table representing their unions. Is it Department of Personnel Services from each island, is it you, is it who?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: It's department of personnel services from each island.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: So, in your office, who would that consist of?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: It would be myself with Staff, Kainea with Staff.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: And then from the union, how is that structured? I mean, who would be representing them and how is the...

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, they have their agents, they have their stewards that are part of the negotiating committee.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: So, that would be for like a major situation. If you're asking for a reorg, can you schedule and you'll have an appointment with somebody, and it's structured in such a way that for Public Works, there's an issue, there's a recommendation, there's a request to modify it to some degree for Maui County only. Walk me through what that would look like.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, the reorganization process would be from the Department meeting...you know, they send a letter, this is the organization structure, this is what we're trying to create. The union would reach out to their members, this is the employer, you know, what they're trying to do, and, you know, do you have any comments and concerns? And that dialogue would continue with the department administration and the union and the employees.

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MS. AIWOHI-ALO: But to clarify, the reorganization is not under the purview of Department of Personnel Services. The Department of Management approves, reviews reorganizations.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: So, yeah. I'm going to be blunt. This is my third budget. And Department of Personal Services is a cog, is...is a broken gear in the wheel. Every single department is underfunded. And it's not just you, it's the unions. It's like we have all of these different rates and pays. The pay is too small. The fringe is great. So, the...the cost of each employee is very expensive. And...and it's not . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . it's not meeting the goals and the objectives. So, it's the unions. And as other people are aware of that, is this just sort of going to...this ship is cruising and not going to change at all? This is just the way it goes? Or is this...is my concern, our concern, our kind of asking you to do what you can't do because it's this bigger animal, is that our awareness of that, or is it just Maui?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Department?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Thank you for the question. I think everyone is aware of it, but because...I mean, we're one vote, right? We talked about this a few budget sessions ago. We don't necessarily, you know, drive the bus. I think I've used that analogy. And when...what we can do is create those supplemental agreements to, you know, do something different. It's, you know, creating hiring incentives, creating...which we --

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Okay. So --

MS. RAZO-PORTER: -- departments have.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: -- we have control. Maui County/our family has the opportunity to negotiate and make those modifications. Do we have to get permission?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, respectfully, we do let other jurisdictions know this is what we're doing, right? Thinking, doing, you know, we're going to go ahead and do this. But I don't...depending on what we're talking about...so a supplemental agreement is between a union and the employer, one employer. And so, there is, you know, opportunity to do that. I think what gets a little complicated is, you know, when...when we have 20-year employees and we have 1-year employees, so if we hire them above the minimum, now they're making as much as the employees that were there for 20 years. And...and just being sensitive to that. You know, it's not an easy...like throw money at it.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: And...and thank you for...that is the reality. That is the challenge. So, it's like, if you improve someone's life at this lower level, one, you have to improve everybody's. But it seems like when I look at the wages between management and the upper people, I mean, a lot of people in the County are making...got huge raises. And

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some people in the bottom tiers got 3 percent. I mean, our clerks and other people do that. So, it's...anyway, it's just really frustrating because --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: -- we need the people. Thank you for doing what you're doing.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Absolutely.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah. Sorry, time up. I hear your frustration. I will go to Member Sinenci, followed by Batangan, Lee, Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Thank you, Chair. In Personnel Services-2, I did see some of my Councilmembers that had some questions, so I can defer to them --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: -- their opportunity to ask their questions. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. I will go to Chair Lee.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. Director, can you just kind of focus on what we can do and don't repeat what we cannot do? So, what exactly can we do to provide incentives to our...compensation incentives to our employees, and right away? What can we do? Because you know, right now you brought up the issue of fairness, and there is fairness. But the point is, this can be based on a performance evaluation. If somebody is not performing, they shouldn't be entitled to a salary adjustment necessarily. Yeah. So, I'm just talking about salary adjustments based on performance. Can that be done right this minute?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Thank you for the question. Salary adjustments based on nonperformance. Nonperformance would be, you know, coaching them up to be performers. We can't do something today. We'd need, you know, a supplemental agreement, something in place. So, you're asking for something today.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: How long does it take...how long does it take to execute a supplemental agreement?

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: Well, we also have a performance policy. So, with all policies, anytime we make changes, we do need to consult with the union. Any policies that will affect bargaining unit employees, we do need to consult and complete that consultation process with the union.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. In like one, two, three, the first step is what?

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MS. AIWOHI-ALO: The first step would probably be coming up with the changes to the policy.
So, any amendments...

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: The change...that would...that would be initiated by who?

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: That...

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: A particular department?

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: That would be initiated by our Department, but we...we would put in whatever changes. . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . We also consult with the department. So, we send consultation out to departments asking for whether or not they agree, don't agree, comments --

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay.

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: -- concerns, and then we send it to union.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Yeah. Okay. But don't...don't forget, we're concentrating on how we get to the end --

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: -- goal, right?

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: Yes. So...

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. Not all the little details in between.

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: Correct.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Just how do we get step one, step two, step three?

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: Yes, so we would have to update our policy to do that. And so, it would take time.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: And how long would that take?

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: It's not something that we could put into effect today.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay.

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: We would need to update the policy.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Take time is like one month, three months? You know why?
Because your answers are so vague.

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MS. AIWOHI-ALO: Longer than one month. So, I will say --

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay.

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: -- we...we have been trying to update several policies within the County, and it's taken about a year.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Wow.

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: And...because we do need feedback from Corporation Counsel, from Administration, everybody puts in their comments, concerns, their changes into --

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay.

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: -- this one policy.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: You know...you know what we see, or at least I see? You know, all the people who are making all these decisions are well-paid, yeah? What we're trying to do is level the playing field for those people who are at the lower end, but who are performing, that need to be compensated and rewarded for their good performance. So, you know, this idea of all these different people sitting around talking, talking, talking, and getting nothing done...I mean, I think you need to impose deadlines on...on these processes. I mean is that...can that be done within a certain time frame, six months, all of this be completed? Is that possible?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Anything's possible. So, I think what we require is, you know, some metrics, like how are you measuring? So, you know, what's the program look like? And start there.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: But who does that? Somebody has --

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Well...

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: -- to do that.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Right. So, I think, you know, working with departments, we have 20 different departments with different lines of business, so each department would have to...like how are you measuring good performance? And, you know, not, you know, trying to be a cog in the wheel, but...

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. Right. But --

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Right.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: -- you know...okay. This happens on a regular basis. Performance evaluations are ongoing. There are...there...there is criteria already. So, I think giving people deadlines to come up with the...the necessary information in order to standardize

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this...this effort, I think, is the first...the first step, because it seems to be open-ended. And that's the reason why nobody's rushing, you know, to get it done. Because we...we've been talking about this for over a year...possibly two years now. So, you know, I have exceeded my time, but thank you for your...for your answers.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Next would be Paltin. I see Member U'u-Hodgins joined us. And...and I'll go to Johnson, then I'll go to U'u-Hodgins, and then Member Rawlins-Fernandez. Okay. Member Paltin?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Chair. My question is with the noncivil. What is your role for the noncivil? Do you just do like their paperwork or anything?

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: So, it would vary what our role is. So, some noncivil service positions are still included in the bargaining unit. Most times noncivil service positions, when we are creating those positions, if they are unclassified, the...we just require the department to give us a position description. We work with the department to come up with a job title that doesn't already exist within our class pay system, and then it gets created.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So, in the case of Housing, where they were able to use the HRS to convert their positions to noncivil, is that something that Public Works could do with their permitting clerks that permit housing, convert theirs under that same HRS to be noncivil, and then just, you know, hire what they need to hire because the housing crisis? And we were in Hāna, they said 330 days for a house permit outside the burn zone, and like 45 days in the burn zone because we contract that out. So, are you aware if they could have that noncivil under HRS as well because of the housing crisis? Or do you need that in writing?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: I would defer that question to Corporation Counsel. There is a Governor's proclamation that allows exempt positions, but I would refer to them.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. And then I thought the purpose of civil service was to try and make things more fair, but like, you know, if you Google cost of living in Hawai'i, it says like, oh, Hilo and Pāhoa are where you want to live because it's the cheapest to find housing or whatever. So, then if the pay isn't reflected like across the islands, it's not like you can live in Hilo and work on Maui and survive, really, then it's not being fair. And has anybody pointed that out to the State Legislature or something? I mean, the UHERO guy was there, and I was like, we can't get teachers in Lahaina because there's no place for them to live, and that's like an essential thing. Like we don't want all our Lahaina kids to be stupid because there's no public school teachers, you know. So, how does...how does that work?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Thank you for the question. So, I think there's room to discuss that. You know, I mean, is it, you know, difficult to fill in Lahaina, difficult to fill in Hāna? Like what does that look like?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: That all the positions are vacant, that's what it looks like.

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MS. RAZO-PORTER: But I mean, what...you know, I'm not an economist to say that this would be appropriate, you know, 25 percent or 50 percent, so...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I mean, we could easily go by the median average of a house cost. I mean, 300,000 on Big Island, 1.3 million on Maui, whatever.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: I...I think that requires a workshop to see like what are our objectives, what are we, you know, trying to achieve, you know, what's the limitations?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. So, for you guys' expansion position, it says...I think it said eight months of funding. Do you think that realistically you could get through a reorg and union consultation within four months of July? And who approves your reorg management as well?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, for those two expansion positions that we're requesting, we would not require a reorg. This would not --

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, okay.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: -- right, impact any current...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: No union consultation?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: No.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So, how soon do you think you could get those created if there's no reorg, no union consultation?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: We could get that created pretty quick. We already have some draft PDs of what we expect that to look like.

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: And those two classes already exist, so we wouldn't be creating a new class. But yes, if when we do reorgs for our Department, Management has to review and approve those.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And then even if you don't have to do a reorg, then do you still need approval from Management, or is it just us at the budget?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, you would approve the E/P and the funding, and it would go through Budget, our requisition to create and fill.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And so, you don't need to check in with Management or anyone else?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Yeah, Management oversees the E/P of the position, but it wouldn't be through that formal reorganization process.

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COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: They approve the expansion...or the equivalent position, which...which E/P do you mean by E/P?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Right, so what's in the budget is what you approve, the proposed budget. You would approve the E/P, you know, the concept of the class, I guess, and then we'd ask for it, you know, through our Workday system. We'd like to create this position. You know, this is the...the P...yeah, position description, and that would get through the budget to approve.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. And for the positions that are on continuous recruitment and have no applicants, what do you guys do for that?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, generally, we check with the department, is this something that you want to reallocate lower? You know, what are the plans? We don't have qualified candidates, or if there's qualified candidates, but, you know, they're not interested.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So, if you reallocate lower, does that...how does that work? Can you just have an Engineering IV position and only Engineer Is apply? Could you say, okay, we only got Engineer Is, we're going to pick you, the best Engineer I. Could you do that, or would you have to go through a whole like redescribed for an Engineer I, repost for an Engineer I?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: You would redescribe your position to be an Engineer I. And we've done that --

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: -- before. So we've asked departments, you know what? We don't have any IVs on the list, but we got plenty Is, IIs, IIIs, and they'll, you know, do what makes sense for them.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. And then as Public Works was saying that they wanted to give awards or retentions to people that are like above and beyond, or at least satisfactory, and they said that . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . you guys said no. What was the wrong with that?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, we didn't say no, we said this should be something that's done Countywide. And so, we did not sign their request, I guess.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Because Management would say...would need to say, let's do this Countywide?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Administration, the union--because we would require union consultation--and generally, it's something that we'd want to do Countywide. So, with 20 departments, if 20 departments created their own, you know, kind of performance program, that may be a little difficult to administer for each department.

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COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So, you don't really want to do it Countywide because it would be difficult to administer?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: No. We'd prefer to do it Countywide so that everyone is consistent and not, you know, 20 different ways.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh. Is the performance evaluation process not a Countywide process?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: The performance evaluation process is Countywide. A performance bonus, or, you know, what he was suggesting would be a deviation from our current process. We don't have a current process that, you know, has a bonus mechanism.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. Could the performance bonus be tied to above or exceeds in the performance evaluation category? Like if someone gets all...exceeds in it, then they qualify for a bonus?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: We could design it that way, yes.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. That's cool. Did my bell ring?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, okay.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Everybody's going over, though.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: All right. Sorry.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: No, no, no. So, everybody's question is like...like exactly like what you're saying, and Member Cook, and Chair Lee. So, I kind of let it go because you have a train of thought that you're trying to get to a goal. Member...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I feel like I got pretty far, because now --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: -- all we have to do is performance evaluation above the meets the standards, and then you can give them an award, and...but could we only implement that for a Bargaining Unit 3, because they're the worst off?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Is that a question? Director?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Thank you for the question. Wouldn't we want to include it for all of our employees, because all of our employees work really hard?

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COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Yeah, but if you're not getting paid the living wage, like Member Johnson said, then you're not surviving, you know? Like everybody works hard, but if you can't make ends meet, then you're not going to stay. You know what I mean? Like you can't pay the rent, you can't pay the gas, you can't buy your kids' shoes, it's just not working.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Like SR-8C.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Thank you for the question.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. All right.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: We can look at that.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So...

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Chair, I have to leave. Could I ask --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: -- one thing before I go?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Members, is it okay? He's going to ask one question, and he has to leave. Okay. Thanks.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: So, thank you. I...great conversation. What I hear is there's a performance matrix, and it's basically you're going to keep your job if you perform, but there isn't currently the opportunity that if you're excelling in your job, that the people that you are providing the service for or the...the expertise for in a certain department, there's no mechanism for them to acknowledge that and for you to be rewarded for it. I disagree with the statement that everybody works hard. I would say this...I would disagree with the statement that everybody works equally hard. Some people are really motivated, and they'll start in a lower position and willing to do that, and they...they'll work their way up because there's a path. So, I just...in comment, would it be possible for them to, within the department, acknowledge you're exceeding a lot, and they get the opportunity...they can make the discretionary call to bump them up to the next level of pay to acknowledge that they're excelling? I mean, it's just a mechanism, but that's the thing is, we have a floor, and people want to get to the ceiling, and what I hear through this whole conversation, it's like, well, everybody has to be able to get to the ceiling. Everybody doesn't deserve to have the ceiling. Everybody isn't working that hard. Everybody isn't that committed and contributing. So, anyway, that's my comment.

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: Yeah, I just...I think what was meant was, wouldn't we want to include all of the bargaining units? So, like Bargaining Unit 13 employees who exceed, but they're

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not in BU3, so they're not able to get some kind of performance bonus. So, I think that was more the direction is including all units, not just Bargaining Unit 3.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Well, thank you for saying that. And there again, someone who's a laborer, someone who's a clerk, anybody would have...I'm saying would have the opportunity to basically like, you hustle, you're first one here, last one to leave, you're always working, that they could move up. I don't know the procedure in the unions to basically be able to go . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . up the pay scale. There are a lot of scales, but that would be part of the solution. But thank you for acknowledging that. I fully...it's...everybody needs the same opportunities, and what I'm saying, that --

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Right.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: -- not everybody's doing it. So, thank you for your patience. I have to get my car fixed. Bye.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So, now you're leaving, right? Okay. So, before you leave, Monday, we're going to have to figure out if everybody can, but I'm going to recess this meeting, and MEMA and 'Ōiwi are available. So, if...if...it may be, it depends on if I can get, you know, a quorum.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: I'm available.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. You're...okay. Good. Okay. I'll put you down for yes. Okay. Bye, Member Cook. Everybody is speaking with the same...trying to understand this frustration. I think it comes up every year. So, Member Cook went. Member Johnson?

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you, Chair. All you had to do is pay us enough to live. That's a quote I'm going to keep on saying. So, this Administration is 3.5 years old. We get four-year terms for Administration. I appreciate the line of questioning says that a Countywide performance evaluation could allow for a bonus or a supplement or whatever you want to call it, or just better pay. If it takes so long, why...did you guys not notice that this is a big problem? I mean, why haven't we started on this 3.5 years or even 2 years? I mean, it seems like the budget has been this constant back and forth where, you know, I hear Administration saying it's...it's the departments, and then I hear they say it's the reorg, and now I hear it's the union. Three point...you know, you get a four-year term, why...why can't we solve this? You know, why are we doing this...if we are doing this, why are we doing it so late? That's my question.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Member Johnson, for the question. I think there's a lot of, you know, competing things that we'd...we'd like to address and look at. So, I don't want to make an excuse. You know, is it a living wage that we're striving for? Then, you know, we can do the best that we can, you know, within the parameters that we have. I...I don't want to say that it's the union, you know, that's at fault. I mean, that is the salary schedule that's been negotiated. That's what's in the contract. We're following the contract. If we're going to work outside of that, then we need, you know, strategies to get there.

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COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Let's pivot on the idea of working outside. So, we had so many disasters, we're almost getting, you know, good at dealing with them. The COVID, the fire, everything. And...and during those times, we had emergency hires, we had essential workers getting, you know, hazard pay. Can we do . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . I mean, do you consider this an emergency, that we're...we don't have the Staff in the County to do the work that needs to be done, the cleanups and the...you know, the engineers to do that kind of work? I...I would consider that an emergency. So, can we use that strength of emergency hires and...and essential workers to kind of push...make it faster?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: I'd like to say, yes. What that...you know, you can't hire talent that doesn't exist. So, you know, we've got 9,000 candidates, you know, applied. I mean, certainly, we can, you know, work closely with departments and be like, who do you want to hire? Let's...you know, is it a DM-89? But, you know, there's rules, too. So, we're trying to, you know, stay within the law.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. That's a statement I have to stew on. And I heard the time. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Member Rawlins-Fernandez?

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. Okay. I have two questions. The first is, is there anything we can do to support your Department with requests for new training opportunities for your Department or Civil Service Commission in capacity building?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Training opportunities. We do have a training budget that we're asking for. That is for Countywide training, but we could certainly use it for our own employees. And the Civil Service Commission, yes, would probably appreciate training opportunities, I would agree.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo. And then you mentioned earlier about refining systems, improving. Do you have enough Staff to help with that transition from having employees specialize in areas of expertise instead of every employee doing everything?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Thank you for the question. So, we have been moving in that direction to specialize Staff, and we are in the process of our RFP, you know, getting to work on that. And we hope to continue to build that capacity where employees are focused on one subject-matter area and not multiple, as has been the practice in the past.

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: I would add short answer is no.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: . . .*(laughing)*. . .

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COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. So...so, if not, how do we address that? Like how do we...identifying that as a problem?

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: Yeah, we could definitely use more Staff, especially if we're going to specialize them in these specialized areas. But like Director Razo-Porter mentioned before, we don't have space to put them. So, we...we need the space first . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . before we can start adding Staff.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Mahalo for that response.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So, I'm going to now go to Member U'u-Hodgins, and then Batangan.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Thank you, Chair. For Sunshine Law purposes, I'm at home again, as you can tell, and I do have two minors with me around the house. Thank you, DPS, for being with us. I'm going to first say I've never lived a day in your folks' life, and so I'm assuming it's probably technical to the point of irritation. And so, I don't think you guys like wake up every morning thinking, oh, my God, how am I going to make this department's life extremely miserable? So, it probably sucks to hear how difficult it is for everybody to like maneuver this extremely technical issues. So, I do appreciate you answering all of our questions. The majority of the questions that I was listening to earlier, I was trying to listen along as I drove, was regarding supplemental agreements, and that's something that's been getting my goat this entire week. I'm probably sure yours too, Deputy Director, since our husbands are in the same department. So, what can we do...in this case, I'm going to talk about HFFA. And if there's...first, let me start by, is there any other bargaining units like HFFA that are going to potentially go without step movements that we should be aware of?

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: BU3 and BU4, they are not like HFFA, but they do not have step movements.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Just like in general, or is it part of their contract like HFFA?

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: It is part of their contract. So, BU3 completely removed it from their contract, the step movement language, and they rely mainly on higher across-the-board increases versus splitting that percent between an across-the-board increase and a step movement.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. And then what about BU4? What happened with them?

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: I believe the same thing happened with them. So, both BU3 and 4, they get higher across-the-board increases --

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COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay.

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: -- than BU13. BU13 gets a lower across-the-board increase, but they have step movement language in their contract.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. Okay. Because as I have been saying all week, and as we all probably know, our firefighters, our first responders . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . are getting a small cost-of-living adjustment, but no step movements. Chair, can I have more time since this is my first round?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yes. Members, it's okay, right?

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: So, they're not receiving their step movements, and so having a 3 percent cost-of-living adjustment, but missing out on their 4 percent step movement ultimately equals in a lower salary than what they were probably going to get for that year. And so, if we were to do something like have a supplemental agreement to accommodate step movements, considering that's already typically policy, would it take a long time to do?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Thank you for the question. So, I understand your question. If we did a supplemental agreement, it wouldn't take long.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. Now, let me just make it clear. Obviously, I can't vote or propose it, but if somebody else was to do it, I'm going to ask the questions, but I can't do it. So, you know, we'll just get to that point when we get to that point. Okay. So, it wouldn't take long, but you would have to...obviously, the policy is typically there. You folks would work with HFFA. We would potentially fund it, and then what other steps does it need to go through in order for it to come in sooner than later since they were already operating without a contract for a year?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Wow.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, the other mayors would probably...we would consult with the other jurisdictions. We wouldn't independently do it by ourselves. I think because it's so fresh and new that, you know, we're all a little bit shocked of, you know, how this came out. So, yeah, just want to be mindful of...of that. You know, I think everyone --

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Sure.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: -- was surprised.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: I hear you. Sure, I bet they were. Maui County, as we were talking about earlier, you know, we have some different issues, like Member Paltin was saying, our cost of living is a little bit different than O'ahu that has more attainable housing sometimes. And, you know, Kaua'i is comparable to Maui County, but they didn't have the wildfires that all of our department just lived through. You know, Hawai'i County, their firemen are also like their AMR, and they have a different training.

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So, where do we find that balance when each county...and not just FFA, but each county has different situations that not the...like other counties don't live through and experience like what we just did?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Thank you for the question. I hear your frustration, and I think that's, you know, sitting down with Administration, you know, and coming up with, you know, what makes sense for Maui County.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. And you folks would be supportive to help us navigate...to help this County navigate a supplemental agreement for some of the unions?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Certainly, we would be supportive of the Administration, this Council, you know, our employees.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Thank you. I think that's it for me, Chair. I don't want to hog cheese the mic. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. I like that, hog cheese. Member Batangan?

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Department, for being here. Okay. So, I think we've heard a few times that, you know, you could use more Staff, but that you are space limited. Given the importance of your Department in addressing the vacancy issues that we have throughout the County, I don't want the size of the old courthouse to be a bottleneck in addressing that. Given that your...your Staff can work from home, is there the possibility of renting outside space to address the physical limitations of...of your office?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: We have certainly looked at that before because of space limitations without, you know, a budget, without, you know, a clear authority. We have not acted on anything like that, but I know in the past...I mean, so I'm going to digress just a little bit, but yesterday we had a water leak in our conference...or in our break room, I'm sorry, and it was...you know, we had to close it up. And so, a lot of our building is falling apart. We couldn't use the bathroom because, you know, some other issues, you know, a few...I guess it was a year ago. So, we have looked at other spaces that are more accommodating to --

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Okay.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: -- you know, us.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: So, I think this Council would be supportive of giving the tools that you need to be successful, and I think we'd appreciate it if you would come to us with some of those proposals that you've looked at. You know, I don't think we tolerate from any department, you know, we have an issue, period. So, with your Department, I'd like to ask if you could, you know, bring forth proposals for solutions. If...if the barrier to you getting what you need, in this case, more Staff, is physical space, you know, I'd

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like to see what some of those options are. Because I think, you know, as we go through the budget, these are the kind of things that we would like to be able to contemplate when we make sure that the County and its departments are adequately resourced. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Do you have a comment, Director?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Thank you. We can work on that.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Very good. So...

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: So, my turn?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Chair Lee?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. Thank you. What are the salary ranges in BU3 and BU4?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Thank you for the question. I don't have them in front of me, but we're about to pull them up right now. They are probably in the lower scale than BU1 and BU13.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: So, it would be SR...SR-7s --

MS. RAZO-PORTER: SR-10s.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: -- 8s, 9s, 10s? What, pardon me?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: SR-10s is generally our entry-level positions.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. So, SR-10 typically starts at how much per hour?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: \$20.03 an hour, 3,471 a month.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: So, I think these...the people in this lower level should be a priority, right? Because...not that those who are well-paid don't deserve a raise or, you know, some kind of reward for good performance, but since we can't afford to give everybody a raise, what if we did a pilot project in the lower level for now and work on salary adjustments for the lower level for now? You think that might be possible? Or will there be resistance because the whole County wants to be in this program?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, I'm sorry. Your question was can we pilot a...

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: A program on salary adjustments for --

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MS. RAZO-PORTER: Okay. so...

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: -- the lower-level employees.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Okay. So, not . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . like a performance-based incentive, it would just be a move...

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: It'll...no, it's be performance.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Oh, it is performance. Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: I'm just saying that starting with a performance-based program, but for only this...for the lower-level folks.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Gotcha.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Because let's face it, the higher-level people making 150, 200,000 --

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Right.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: -- in most...in your Department you have a lot of EMs, right? Making over 100,000.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: We have...we have three EMs, but they don't...I think one makes over 100.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. But you...do you have any SR-10s?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: We have SR-13.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. So, some of your employees could benefit from this program if we were able to start it. It sounds like part of the resistance to it, to doing an experimental demonstration or pilot project, is the fact that some people want it to apply to everyone. But what if we can't afford everyone? Can we just start someplace with a pilot project for the lower end and...and see how that works? And then as money becomes available, we...we can increase, you know, the availability to...to others. Is that possible?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. All right. That...that's all I have for now. I'm just hoping that you guys are...will find a way not only to get started, but to...to find some urgency, you know? Because who can survive on \$20 an hour these days, yeah? Okay. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So, Members, we...by this discussion, we're starting round three. All of you want to go through round three? Yeah? Okay.

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COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Yes.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Chair. Oh.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah. So, Member Paltin, go ahead. Two minutes.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I didn't realize until you told Member U'u-Hodgins that Bargaining Unit 3 wasn't getting step movements because in the Budget Details, it still has them moving up steps, like C to D, D to E. And then like, you know, to Chair Lee's point, I think SR-4 through SR-9 of Bargaining Unit 3 should be abolished because they don't even make \$20 an hour. And that's like crazy, but okay. So, how does that work if they don't get step units, but the Budget Details says like, you know, Accountant...

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Thank you. Thank you for the question. So, in the Bargaining Unit 3 contract currently, July 26th...or July 1st, 2026, their ATB is a step movement. But they don't have built into their contract step movements, right? So, usually step movements are every, you know, two or three years. And so, they abandoned step movements, and now they just get across-the-board increases. But in July 1st, 2026, they are moving a step as the equivalent of an across the board.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, so starting July 1st, 2026, there won't be any more?

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: So, for Bargaining Unit 3, they negotiated for this current contract for 7/1/25 an ATB, I think it was 3-1/2 percent. And then 7/1/26, one step movement, no ATB. 7/1/27, a 4 percent ATB increase, and then 7/1/28, a step movement.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, it's every other then, kind of.

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: Yes, that is --

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And for...for the --

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: -- what they negotiated.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: -- lay folks out there, ATB mean across the board, right?

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: Yes. Yes, correct. Thank you. Yes. So, that is what they negotiated.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And then...okay. Is there any way to say like SR-04 through SR-08 of Bargaining Unit 3 is like we're pretty much handing out welfare checks and SNAP or something? Because how can you live on 17.40 an hour in Maui? Like if you...if you want to have a family or a pet like and pay rent and all the things, like that's...that's really good in the '90s.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: '80s.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Thank you for the question. We do have...we don't have any fours, fives, or sixes, but I believe we still have sevens and nines that we can move them.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I...I did see an SR-8 in there somewhere, too. I mean, do you mean you, Personnel, doesn't have any or the County doesn't have any?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: I think there's a couple departments that use...that still use that salary range for their classes of work.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, SR-8, yeah. Yeah, I thought I saw an SR-4 in Finance one time, but that might have been a different year.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: That's been a while.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. All right. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Anybody else? Member Rawlins-Fernandez?

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Mahalo. I guess a follow up from my round two questioning about staffing, and I know other folks have asked about staffing, Member Batangan. So, he asked if we could find more space. How...I guess, how long has this been an issue? How long...like we...we...so I guess...okay. We've stood up Department of Ag, we've stood up Department of 'Ōiwi Resources, we've expanded, you know, like different departments, Department of Planning. I guess, you know, like if this...if there's a solution, but the problem is space, I...I guess I don't want us to stop at this...this is the obstacle and we can't get over it. And I think I'm joining the chorus of my colleagues in saying like, what is it going to take for...for you to get over the obstacle, right? Like is it funding to lease spaces? Is it like...can we help you? . . .*(laughing)*. . .

MS. RAZO-PORTER: . . .*(laughing)*. . . Thank you...thank you for the question. So, this has been an ongoing issue. I don't think...we're at capacity now. I mean, we keep, you know, remodeling, reconfiguring, adding a wall, building another cubicle, buying a desk. So, we pretty much fit in our location. But going back in time, there was plans for us to have the whole floor. And so, that was where we were...how we were going to expand. And then that fell through and didn't happen, and so, we did start looking. And then it was, you know, maybe not now, you know, COVID happened, all these other things happened. And then now we're...the plan is to move to the old courthouse, which...it was December 2026 was the date that we were given. And so, it was like, cool, we can do that, you know. And now, it looks like it's more December 2027. So, you know, here we are today. And if we can lease space, if...you know, if that's the...the goal.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: . . .*(inaudible)*. . . guys found the mango and the peach and grape.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Tamara, your mic is on.

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COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: . . .*(laughing)*. . . I want mango . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Member Paltin, your mic is hot.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Hot mic.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Your mic is on.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: We'll have some of your fruit salad. . . .*(laughing)*. . .

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Now you made us all hungry, Member Paltin.
. . .*(laughing)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: And we want fruits. . . .*(laughing)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Sorry.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Did my timer go?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, we were laughing. Did our timer go off? Yes, it did. Are you done?

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Yeah. Well, yes and no. I mean, I understand like the history, but like is finding space going to be something your Department works on? And if so, if you think you'll be successful this time, can we put money into your budget so that you can lease a space or, you know, do something? Let us help you.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Thank you. We'll say thank you, yes.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. And I think Member Paltin might have a disclaimer.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: We're not...you know, the fact of renting space is like is there space available? Like where do we find it? You know, there's lots of factors measured to that. So...

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: We're not --

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: I have faith in you.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: -- we're not the experts....experts there.

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COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: We...we...we also just staffed up the Board of Ethics' new office. So, if...if other departments can do it, I...I think...I think your Department can.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Absolutely. We're...we're happy to look.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Put you in the Takitani building. Just kidding.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So...

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: I think Member Paltin has a disclaimer.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Member Paltin? But does anybody else have questions?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I do.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. You do. Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I have two more.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So, my disclaimer is that I have two minors that came home from school that shall remain unnamed. My two additional questions was, I'm looking at your vacancy list. I don't understand, I might have missed it, but while you're here, what does the highlighted mean?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: More than two years has been vacant.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh. Oh, more than two years. And then if it...follow up on that, if it's an inactive vacancy, but the department put money for 12 months, that's not going to work because you need to post it to fill it, right? You're not going to fill it without posting it, unless --

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Correct.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: -- you know...okay. All right. And then the last one I had was, I think we put in like over a million dollars, because we thought we were going to move into the 6th Floor, but you guys aren't going anywhere?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Not this year.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh. So, there you go. Apparently there's space on the 6th Floor. If I cut the million dollars, then you guys can have more space, right?

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UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: . . .*(laughing)*. . .

MS. RAZO-PORTER: I don't think it's that simple. There's tenants across the hall.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah, called Managing Director.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Yeah, but we were going to...why...why are we putting a million dollars in OCS then for the 6th Floor?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Is that a question?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Because we were going to take it over.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: We were...or are.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: We are.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Yeah, you can have that space. Problem solved.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Okay. Thank you. . . .*(laughing)*. . .

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: You're welcome.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: We'll take it.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Chair Lee, were you going to say something, or are you just going to answer that question?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: I was going to answer that question. We are planning to move into...into the 6th Floor at some point, but predicated on the DPS finding another space first.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: When they go to the courthouse.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Well, there's talk of them going to Kalana Pukui as well.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, maybe they don't know.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Okay.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Did they look surprised? . . .*(laughing)*. . . Oh, we just solved the problem. I think they need to talk to everybody.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: I don't think space is the problem right now. I think getting this...together with all the parties and working out a plan and executing a plan, that's what's needed.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Okay. No more, Chair Lee? Done?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Done, done. Time to go home.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Yes. Member U'u-Hodgins, Sinenci, Member Batangan, Johnson, anybody else? Round three, no? Okay. Johnson, done. Member U'u-Hodgins? You're done? Sinenci? He left? Okay. Batangan?

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: No, but Member Paltin . . . *(inaudible)* . . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah, I know, I'm trying to go through. That would be her fourth term [sic], but...fourth turn. Member...

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Sinenci looks like he's . . . *(inaudible)* . . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, and...and Keani. Okay. So, go ahead, Member Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you. Would you guys care to work at Kalana Pukui? We just renovated it, so you wouldn't even have to do that.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Oh, is it ready to move in? Move-in ready?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Yeah.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: We'll take a look.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Just for you. Okay. Come...come by.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: And we're...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Call...call Chair Lee, she'll let you in.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Where's OCS going?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: 6th Floor. Nobody told you, for real? Like nobody said, like, this is our plan. We're going to put a million something in, and we're going to push Personnel out. Nobody said that?

MS. MILNER: I'll try and take that one. . . *(laughing)* . . . Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Paltin. Yes, the plan was for Personnel to move into the courthouse. I know that we've got Staff in Management working on the floor plan and the renovations to accommodate their Staff over there. I'm not aware of the current timeline, so I will defer to what Personnel has heard on that. But apparently, the timeline was in Fiscal Year '27 as OCS opted to put funding in for a CIP for the 6th Floor renovations. But I can talk to Managing Director and get you some more information on that. Thank you, Chair.

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COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. But just...I remember that Prosecuting Attorney said the courthouse was bringing their morale down, and we need Personnel's morale to be up.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: . . .*(laughing)*. . .

MS. MILNER: Yeah, that's part of the renovations.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Because didn't we have this...oh, okay. So, Personnel, do...or sorry, Director Razo-Porter, would that bring your morale down to go to the courthouse?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: We spent...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Because Prosecutors are moving to the Takitani Building, right?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yes.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Thank you for the question. So, we spent lots of hours working on, you know, just updating, making it work for us, so we're really excited about it. We wouldn't have 80 people like Prosecutors did in that space, so we looked forward to having it as, you know, a training room, you know, actual testing, multiple conference rooms, so we have some space. We even built in for expansion positions, so, you know, we're looking forward to it. We also heard that 'Ōiwi was looking to turn it into a museum, and so that's what was communicated, I don't know, to them, or how that was communicated. So, we've heard multiple, you know, rumors, so...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Like a repository kind of museum?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh. But if they didn't...

MS. RAZO-PORTER: And a museum, I mean, like literally, they would be open, right? Field trips, and, you know, just kind of artifacts of Hawai'i's history.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So, there's not space for the museum repository and Personnel?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: No.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: . . .*(laughing)*. . .

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: No.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: No.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And...and if it's not a museum repository, you would be excited to move in there because you like old architecture, and it's mold-free right now, right?

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MS. RAZO-PORTER: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, okay. All right. Okay. Lots to consider, but just want to make sure your guys' morale is up so you can fill those vacancies.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: . . .*(laughing)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: We care, right, is what you're saying?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: We appreciate that.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I don't know about the rest of them, but I care.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . .*(laughing)*. . . Okay. Members, I think all of us care, right? So, our time limit, with...when you were all asking your questions, I think we all went a little bit longer because it was a series of questions. I hear your caring and concern. And I want to ask you something that is completely different, then, shall we move, but I wanted to ask about the DM-89s. So, basically, I know there's a bill going through the Legislature, and how is that going? Is it still alive? I heard there's two, one is dead. And do we have employees that are being impacted by this DM-89? Because when the Mayor was before the Ways and Means Committee and Finance, a joint committee after the State of the State Address, he did mention that he wanted this passed the Legislature. So, made me think we have DM-89s that would be impacted.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Thank you, Chair. Thank you for the question. So, we have DM-89s. I think it's in one of the tabs of the exhibits that we provided. And I do understand that...I think it was both bills that died, but I'd have to double check.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Shucks.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: I think the...the bill that the County was submitting was in regards to creating a special kind of provision for succession planning, unique, special, and so that bill died. We...we still use DM-89s to fill positions that are being recruited and there is a warm body that we can hire to fill that position while we're going through the recruitment process.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: But they don't get no benefits, right?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, it depends. So, some choose benefits, some choose no benefits, and it kind of just depends. So, when a position is filled and it goes through, you know, they're still a DM-89 after 90 days, they automatically get into the ERS and they start paying into that system. If we don't include them in that benefits, when they, you know,

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make that 90 days, they get back charged. So, if we think that we're going to pass that period, we will include them right away, if that makes sense.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So, if they're staying longer than the 89-day period, then they then become --

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Become included.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- employees collecting retirement.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Yes, they become included in taking out those deductions.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So, they can't collect their retirement and work for the County of Maui simultaneously from the 90th day, is that correct?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Correct.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: What about holiday and sick leave, CTO?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Yeah. They would...they would get that if they're working overtime, they get paid overtime, or if they collect, you know...except CTO, if they...right.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Vacation, sick leave.

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: So, if they are hired DM-89 with benefits, they get all of the same overtime, sick leave, vacation leave as a regular employee. If they are hired DM-89 no benefits, they do not get any CTO/holiday/overtime.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Who makes the determination of with or without benefits?

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: The department.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh. Do they know that?

MS. AIWOHI-ALO: Yes, yes. So, most times departments hire with benefits because they know it will take them longer than 89 days to fill the position, so they will hire with benefits. The other caveat of them working longer than 90 days, if a DM-89 is working less than 20 hours per week, then they can stay beyond the 90 days . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . according to the ERS laws.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So, do we have a problem? Or is there a concern that we should have regarding the DM-89s? Only...only because both...both bills died, right? So, I'm just wondering, what does that mean for the County of Maui?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: I think that limits the County's options on how, you know, they bring people onboard.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So, DM-89s then work for 89 days and not collect their retirement, right?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Yes. So, it's...

CHAIR SUGIMURA: That's ideal.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Right. The whole point of a DM-89 is a temporary, kind of like a Band-Aid to keep, you know, the lights on. It's not a permanent solution.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. And if it's being used as a permanent solution, then what do we need to do?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Then that becomes an issue.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: And?

MS. RAZO-PORTER: So, it's limiting...it's...it's kind of reeling that in, right? Because right now we have departments that have DM-89s, and we have active lists with viable candidates. And, you know, they don't want those candidates, they want their DM-89s. And so, you know, we don't really have that hammer to say, you know, pull back on your DM-89 because they're actually doing the work. So, I think that's what we have to work through is, you know, finding that mechanism that says, okay, time up, you have to make a decision on this list.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So, that's a solution. Somebody needs to make that decision.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Yes, yes.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

MS. RAZO-PORTER: Yes, thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. All right, Members. So, we're at the end of DPS. And I sense the concern and frustration that you are expressing. I...I...so, Monday, going over Monday, as you know, because of the storm, as you can see, it's now cloudy and it looks like it's raining outside in Wailuku. As a reminder, Molokai residency area meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 13th. And previously, we had nothing scheduled in the morning, but the Budget Director confirmed yesterday or last night that the Director of 'Oiwi Resources is available to appear before the Committee that morning.

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She also confirmed that the administration...administrator of MEMA is also available to meet with us. If the Members are available and agree, the Committee can recess today, reconvene the meeting on Monday at 9:00. So...and Member Cook said he's available. How about the rest of you? I just need quorum. You're...you're available, Tamara? Okay. Good. Tamara. Chair Lee? Chair Lee, you're available? You said yes. Member Rawlins-Fernandez, thank you. Okay. Okay. Member Batangan. Member Johnson, are you available that morning online? Okay. So, it looks like we have quorum. If you have any additional questions for the departments that were not addressed today, please send them to bfed...staff.bfed@mauicounty.us by 9:00 a.m. the day after the receipt of the second round letter. So, did we get all the second round letters responses? We did? Okay. So, it's due Monday at 9:00. And now a question came up that maybe...

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah, maybe somebody can answer this. So, we have had a presentation because of Member Rawlins-Fernandez on 'Ōiwi Resource in Committee. I don't think we had MEMA talking about budget. But what does it mean when we...who do I ask this question to? Corp. Counsel. Who do we...if we bring MEMA in, and it's a recessed meeting, so we're not going to have public testimony, you know, we're just going to continue like now, is there a problem with that? One of the lawyers.

MS. WRIGGLESWORTH: So, MEMA was on the calendar for today, so there was a chance for the public to testify still on MEMA. I mean, the public knew about it. There was knowledge that was posted, so I would say that it's okay.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, it's okay. Okay. Yeah? Okay.

MS. WRIGGLESWORTH: Okay.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: That's great.

MS. MILNER: Chair?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Even if we changed it.

MS. MILNER: Sorry, I know it's not my job anymore, but the whole budget's posted every day, so they can testify on 'Ōiwi and MEMA any day they choose.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

MS. MILNER: Thank you, Chair.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Yeah, well, that question came up, and so I just wanted to ask it so the public can hear. Okay. Okay. So, this meeting is now in recess, and we will convene April 13th, 9:00 a.m., to the same Microsoft Teams link and connections as...that we're using today with in-person viewing available here on...in the Council Chambers. So, very good. We are done. So, this meeting is...we're in recess. I can't say adjourned. And we'll see you again. It is now 3:24. . . .*(gavel)*. . .

RECESS: 3:24 p.m.

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Transcribed by: Daniel Schoenbeck

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CERTIFICATION

I, Daniel Schoenbeck, hereby certify that pages 1 through 93 of the foregoing represents, to the best of my ability, a true and correct transcript of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not in any way concerned with the cause.

DATED the 15th day of May 2026, in Wailuku, Hawai'i

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Daniel Schoenbeck", is positioned above a horizontal line.

Daniel Schoenbeck