

COUNCIL OF THE COUNTY OF MAUI

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, ETHICS, AND TRANSPARENCY COMMITTEE

August 13, 2024

**Committee
Report No. _____**

Honorable Chair and Members
of the County Council
County of Maui
Wailuku, Maui, Hawaii

Chair and Members:

Your Government Relations, Ethics, and Transparency Committee, having met on July 9, 2024, makes reference to Resolution 24-111, entitled “APPROVING THE APPOINTMENT OF KUMU HULA KAPONO‘AI MOLITAU AS THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ‘ŌIWI RESOURCES.”

Resolution 24-111’s purpose is to approve the appointment of Kumu Hula Kapono‘ai Molitau as Director of ‘Ōiwi Resources, effective July 1, 2024, in accordance with Section 8-21.2 of the Revised Charter of the County of Maui (1983), as amended (“Charter”).

Your Committee notes that voters elected to establish a Department of ‘Ōiwi Resources, effective July 1, 2024, as a result of a 2022 Charter amendment, to collaborate with the Mayor, Executive Branch, and the Council to ensure proper management of ‘Ōiwi resources throughout the County, including:

- Guiding the County in the correct usage of the Hawaiian language, including place names and the integration of Hawaiian language within County functions;
- Promoting healthy ecosystems through natural-cultural resource regeneration, protection, and sustainable utilization;
- Advising State and Federal agencies on all programs and projects that affect ‘Ōiwi resources in the County; and

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- Reporting to the Mayor and Council annually on the County's overall performance in meeting 'Ōiwi resources objectives and any issues that could be addressed by ordinance.

By correspondences dated June 12, 2024, and June 28, 2024, respectively, the Mayor transmitted Kumu Kapono'ai's resume and a copy of Charter Section 8-21.

Your Committee also notes, effective July 1, 2024, Charter Section 8-21.2 provides that the:

- Director of 'Ōiwi Resources be appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the Council;
- Director be experienced in Native Hawaiian cultural resource management, Native Hawaiian cultural practices in the County, and proficient in the Hawaiian language; and
- Minimum qualifications for the position include five years of experience in a leadership capacity.

Your Committee received comments from the Mayor and Kumu Kapono'ai regarding the appointment before interviewing Kumu Kapono'ai.

The Mayor noted Kumu Kapono'ai's deep connection to Hawaiian traditional practices and the Hawaiian community, and highlighted his accomplishments, including as Master Kumu Hula for Nā Hanona Kūlike 'O Pi'ilani, Owner and Chief Executive Officer of Native Intelligence, and Kahuna Nui of Pu'ukoholā Heiau—an honor only granted to seven individuals.

Your Committee notes Kumu Kapono'ai is pursuing a doctoral degree in Indigenous Studies on Heiau and Cultural Protocols at Awaianuiarangi University in Aotearoa.

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During his interview, Kumu Kapono'ai introduced himself first by sharing his respect and gratitude to his ancestors and the mountains, waterways, winds, and sources of mana that have raised and shaped him. He noted the importance of collectively caring for our 'Ōiwi resources and 'āina because there is and will only ever be one Maui County.

Kumu Kapono'ai said his contributions through hālau and as a kahuna kakalaleo and kahuna pule have provided him with an intimate connection to 'ohana and kuleana. He said these connections have taught him how to best advocate for, and contribute to, the collective of Maui County.

Kumu Kapono'ai said his approach to leading the Department will be to gain knowledge from experts, enhance the cultural intellect of Maui County's community and promote the use of its ancestral mother tongue, and build on tangible and intangible resources that can serve Hawaiian culture. His leadership style is to observe and listen and noted the importance of the phrase, "in words, there is life and in words, there is death."

Your Committee expressed support of Resolution 24-111 and highlighted Kumu Kapono'ai's reliability and integrity as necessary skills for the position.

Your Committee voted 7-0 to recommend adoption of Resolution 24-111. Committee Chair U'u-Hodgins, Vice-Chair Paltin, and members Cook, Kama, Lee, Rawlins-Fernandez, and Sugimura voted "aye." Committee members Johnson and Sinenci were excused.

Your Committee is in receipt of Resolution 24-111, CD1, approved as to form and legality by the Department of the Corporation Counsel, incorporating your Committee's nonsubstantive revisions.

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Your Government Relations, Ethics, and Transparency Committee RECOMMENDS that Resolution 24-111, CD1, as revised herein and attached hereto, entitled "APPROVING THE APPOINTMENT OF KUMU HULA KAPONO'AI MOLITAU AS THE DIRECTOR OF 'ŌIWI RESOURCES," be ADOPTED.

This report is submitted in accordance with Rule 8 of the Rules of the Council.



NOHELANI U'U-HODGINS, Chair

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Resolution

No. 24-111, CD1

APPROVING THE APPOINTMENT OF KUMU
HULA KAPONO‘AI MOLITAU AS THE DIRECTOR
OF ‘ŌIWI RESOURCES

WHEREAS, by letter dated June 12, 2024, Mayor Richard T. Bissen, Jr. notified the Council that he will be appointing Kumu Hula Kapono‘ai Molitau as the Director of ‘Ōiwi Resources effective July 1, 2024; and

WHEREAS, Charter Section 8-21.2 (effective July 1, 2024) provides that the director of ‘Ōiwi resources shall be appointed by the mayor with the approval of the council and may be removed by the mayor; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the County of Maui:

1. That it approves the appointment of Kumu Hula Kapono‘ai Molitau as the Director of ‘Ōiwi Resources; and
2. That certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Mayor and Managing Director.

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

/s/ Cody Minatodani

CODY MINATODANI
Deputy Corporation Counsel
County of Maui
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INTRODUCED BY:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Alice L. Lee".

ALICE L. LEE

Upon the request of the Mayor.