

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Council of the County of Maui

MINUTES

October 5, 2023

Online Only via BlueJeans

CONVENE: 1:33 p.m.

PRESENT: Councilmember Yuki Lei K. Sugimura, Chair
Councilmember Tasha Kama, Vice-Chair (in 1:40 p.m.)
Councilmember Gabe Johnson, Member
Councilmember Alice L. Lee, Member
Councilmember Tamara Paltin, Member
Councilmember Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez, Member
Councilmember Shane M. Sinenci, Member
Councilmember Nohelani U'u-Hodgins, Member

EXCUSED: Councilmember Tom Cook, Member

STAFF: James Krueger, Senior Committee Analyst
Kasie Apo Takayama, Senior Committee Analyst (back up)
Megan Moniz, Legislative Attorney
Yvette Bouthillier, Senior Committee Secretary
Jean Pokipala, Council Services Assistant Clerk

Additional staff

Executive Assistants for Councilmember Gabe Johnson:

Kate Griffiths

Axel Beers

Executive Assistants for Councilmember Tasha Kama:

Davideane Kama-Sickels

Evan Dust

Executive Assistant for Councilmember Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez:

Sarah Sexton

Executive Assistant for Councilmember Shane M. Sinenci:

Dawn Lono

Gina Young

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Executive Assistant for Councilmember Yuki Lei K. Sugimura:

Jordan Helle

Michele Yoshimura

Executive Assistants for Councilmember Nohelani U'u-Hodgins:

Laura McDowell

Residency Area Office (RAO):

Mavis Oliveira-Medeiros, Council Aide, East Maui Residency Area Office

Roxanne Morita, Council Aide, Lānaʻi Residency Area Office

Zhantell Lindo, Council Aide, Molokaʻi Residency Area Office

Jade Rojas-Letisi, Council Aide, Makawao-Haʻikū-Pāʻia Residency Area Office

ADMIN.: Lesley Milner, Budget Specialist V, Office of the Mayor
Luana Mahi, Director, Department of Economic Development, Office of the Mayor (BFED-31)
Connie Gouveia, Administrative Officer, Department of Planning (BFED-32)
Charmaine Rodrigues, Account Clerk, Department of Planning (BFED-32)
Kristina Toshikiyo, Deputy Corporation Counsel, Department of the Corporation Counsel

OTHERS: Others (13)

PRESS: Akaku: Maui Community Television, Inc.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . .*(gavel)*. . . Welcome, everybody, to the Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee. Today is October the 5th, and it is now 1:33 p.m. My name is Yuki Lei Sugimura, I'm the Chair of the Budget, Finance, and Economic Committee...Economic Development Committee, and welcome to this meeting. This online meeting is being conducted in accordance with Sunshine Law. As a reminder, when your name is called, if you're not in the Council Chambers, please identify by name who, if anyone, is in the room, vehicle, or work...workspace with you today. Minors do not need to be identified. Member Kama is coming, and next we have--Member Cook is excused--Councilmember Gabe Johnson.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Konnichiwa, Chair, Councilmembers, Committee Members. I'm in my workspace alone, there's no testifiers at the Lānaʻi District Office, and I have an aquarium, maybe you can hear that in the background, but just me and the fishies today. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: You and the fishies? Okay, how old are they? Next, we have Tamara Paltin from West Maui.

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COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Aloha ‘auinalā, streaming live and direct from Nāpili. I have one minor unnamed, and one dog here with me. Konnichiwa.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Konnichiwa. Perfect background for that. Thank you, Member Paltin. Next, we have Member Rawlins-Fernandez.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Aloha ‘auinalā, Chair. Aloha ‘auinalā, kākou. I’m happy to be here. I like your gavel style, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: And the Moloka‘i District Office is reporting no testifiers. Mahalo.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Great. Member Shane Sinenci.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Aloha and konnichiwa, Chair, and Staff in Hāna has no testifiers there. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Member U‘u-Hodgins.

COUNCILMEMBER U‘U-HODGINS: Konnichiwa, Chair. It’s me, and I’m in the Pā‘ia District Office, and we have Jade Rojas-Letisi with me.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Fabulous. The konnichiwa is for your grandma, and have a special day. From the Office of the Mayor, we have Lesley Milner, Budget Specialist. Do we have Luana Mahi also? Is she on? Oh, forgot you, our favorite. Excuse me. Chair Lee. Yeah, right.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Konnichiwa, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Konnichiwa. Sorry about that. From the...is Luana Mahi on? Not yet? Okay. Department of Planning, we have Connie Gouveia, Administrative Officer; Charmaine Rodrigues, Account Clerk. Department of Corporation Counsel, Kristina Toshikiyo. And of course, the wonderful Staff that we have; Yvette Bouthillier, who is our Senior Committee Secretary; James Krueger and Kasie Apo Takayama, seeing both of you here, Senior Legislative Analysts; Megan Moniz, Legislative Attorney; and Jean Pokipala, out there in the lobby helping us, so, Council Services Assistant Clerk. Thank you, Members, for attending today’s meeting. We have only two items on our agenda; BFED-31, BILL 76 (2023), Amending Fiscal Year ’24 Budget: Office of the Mayor (Administration Program, Maui County Wetlands), and BF-32 [sic], Bill 77, Amending Fiscal Year 2024 Budget: Department of Planning (Grants to University of Hawai‘i Maui College Sea Grant). Do we have any testifiers? We have no testifiers. No testifiers in the

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Chamber. Okay. So, Members, at this time, with your permission, I'm going to close public testimony and receive any written testimony on this.

COUNCILMEMBERS: No objections.

MR. KRUEGER: Chair? Perhaps...perhaps we should receive opening comments first for the first item, and then we can close testimony per item.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Oh, okay. So...so we will do that then.

**ITEM 31: BILL 76 (2023), AMENDING FISCAL YEAR 2024
BUDGET: OFFICE OF THE MAYOR (ADMINISTRATION
PROGRAM, MAUI COUNTY WETLANDS) (BILL 76
(2023))**

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So, Members, our first item is Bill 76, a budget amendment relating to Maui County wetlands, line item under Office of the Mayor. We have...we have with us, from the Office of Economic Development, not yet, Luana Mahi, so at this time, then, we'll have Budget Specialist Lesley Milner to assist us with our discussion on this bill today. So, Director Mahi is not here. Take it away. Oh, she just joined? Okay. Luana Mahi. Opening comments? And then Lesley Milner. So good to see Lesley.

MR. KRUEGER: Director Mahi, you're muted on our end. If you can unmute on your end, we cannot currently see or hear you at the moment.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay, we'll go with Lesley first. Go ahead, Ms. Milner.

MS. MILNER: Thank you, Chair. The purpose of this bill is to correct the names of some of the organizations in the line item, and to also add an additional recipient, Ka'ehu for Ka'ehu Bay, as during the budget process, the Council changed it to Maui County Wetlands instead of being specific to South Maui, so we are expanding the organizations who will be receiving this grant.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Very good. So, is Luana Mahi on? Are you unmuted?

MR. KRUEGER: Chair, Director Mahi disconnected from the call, and we have not seen her join again yet.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, okay. Members, anybody have any comments for this? If not, I'm going to defer it and take it up on the Council floor.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Chair?

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yes?

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: We need to open and close public testimony after...oh, opening comments on the first item, and no additional comments from me.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: All right. So, we have any more testifiers? None, right? I'm going to close public testimony.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: No objection.

MR. KRUEGER: Correct. There...there's no one else. There's no one here to testify on the first item.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. All right. Okay, Members, we're going to close public testimony, and then we'll take written testimony if we receive any.

. . .CLOSE PUBLIC TESTIMONY (BFED-31). . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: I'm so glad to see Ka'ehu Bay being handled this way, because they are actually taking care of our land, so I just kind of wondered, all that we can do to help them. So, I'm going to defer this item, and we're going to take it up on your agenda tomorrow, Council Chair.

COUNCILMEMBERS: No objections.

MR. KRUEGER: Chair? Chair?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yes?

MR. KRUEGER: Apologies. I...I believe Councilmember Johnson may have a question.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, okay.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you, Chair, and thanks for recognizing me. Thank you so much. I just --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: I'm sorry.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: -- wanted to agree with you. I'm so happy that Ka'ehu is going to get on this. And you know, during budget, just to remind everybody, we really wanted to have this be a Countywide because there's so many other wetlands we want to preserve. But hopefully, moving forward, the Administration will take a look at broadening and increasing this fund. So just wanted to take

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that time to remind everybody, we...we all...we all agreed that this is a good cause, and I...I'm in full support, and can't wait until we pass it on and give these monies to these folks that are doing really good work for our wetlands. Mahalo, Chair. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. I'm sorry, I didn't see you had your hand up. Apologies. Okay, so this time we'll try...oh, Councilmember...Vice-Chair of this Committee is here, so Tasha Kama.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Good afternoon, Chair. Good afternoon, Members. Sorry, I didn't know the time had flown by so fast, and I was in another meeting. No wonder I'm hungry now. Good to be here, everyone. Aloha.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Aloha. And did anybody else have any comments regarding this that I missed? Oh, Member Paltin, go ahead.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Chair. I don't know if my question would be for Ms. Milner or for Corporation Counsel, if this has to be listed out, who all the recipients of the wetland's money is, or if we can trust the Administration. Because then every time we identify a new wetlands (*audio interference*), we have to come back and amend the bill? Or how does that work?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Ms. Milner?

MS. MILNER: Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Or is it Corp. Counsel?

MS. MILNER: I believe Kristina Toshikiyo is on line as well, but if the Council would like...I believe these are the only groups for this fiscal year who are getting allocated, but for next fiscal year, if they would prefer to have just a Maui County Wetlands line item, without naming specific organizations, I think that's definitely something the Administration would be okay with.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I...I just was asking because we heard so much testimony about Moku'ula and Loko o Mokuhinia, I'm not sure if that qualifies as wetlands, but if...if there is any funds needed for that, would it be appropriate to add that now, or no?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: I have...Shane Sinenci. You defer? Okay. Luana Mahi, you're on. Oh, Luana --

MS. MAHI: Sorry, I was having technical difficulties.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: Welcome.

MS. MAHI: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: You heard the question?

MS. MAHI: In regards to adding Moku'ula as part of --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, that was the question --

MS. MAHI: -- the wetlands?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- are all the funds allocated...are all the funds allocated?

MS. MAHI: It has been put into recommendations for the funding for the wetlands, but if you wanted to add Moku'ula at this time, I think we might be a little bit premature, just because of the location of the wetlands, and of course, trying to utilize the money during this fiscal year. So, we could definitely add it when the time is right.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I guess that was part of my legal question, if...like, I mean now we see who we'd like to fund, would it be appropriate to just amend it to say Maui County Wetlands for continuing the wetland restoration work in Maui County?

MS. MAHI: Yeah, I think that's --

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Or no?

MS. MAHI: -- no, I think it --

MS. TOSHIKIYO: Chair?

MS. MAHI: -- I...I think that's what it was originally introduced as, right? Because before it was primarily just South Maui.

MS. TOSHIKIYO: Chair, if I can add something? This is Kristina.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Here Kristina Toshikiyo.

MS. TOSHIKIYO: Yes, thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

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MS. TOSHIKIYO: Okay. According to the Maui County Code in Chapter 3.36, the Maui County Grants Program, so under 3.36.030, if there's an appropriation available for allocation other than to a recipient list...identified in the budget or any amendments, then the...the agency or the Department has to post on the County website and make a...and solicit application. So, if you wanted it to go to a specific organization, and then that's like a line item appropriation allocation. But if you make it just kind of a general category, then the County is required to then solicit those applications.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Chair Lee? Or are you done, Ms. Paltin?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Yes, that answered my question, and takes it into Ms. Mahi's preference of whatever she wants to do.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So, Chair Lee, and Member Sinenci.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Yeah, I just wanted to remind the Members that I did put in an appropriation for Moku'ula in the last budget, and Lesley, can you identify that?

MS. MILNER: Chair, I'm looking for it right now, and I'll let you know as soon as I find it.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay, yeah. I believe it was 250,000 under the Cultural Preserve Fund.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: I think I remember that.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Member Sinenci, your...yeah, that's what you were going to say? Okay. Confirmed by Member Sinenci.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Chair? So, I have a question.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Vice-Chair Kama.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Thank you. So, didn't Moku'ula...didn't Moku'ula have its funding source, and wasn't --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: *(Audio interference)*.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: -- there still money in that...in that fund that never got spent, because it was only supposed to be spent for Moku'ula?

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: You know what we can do? This conversation is so important, right, that we've been hearing, so we'll hopefully bring this up in my Committee, and then we can...that...that funding source in the parking lot was --

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Yes.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- was where this all started?

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: It was huge.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: From 2000, I think? And I don't know how much is in there. This is all relevant conversation, especially when we hear from the West Maui --

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Yes.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- families over, you know, that whole --

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Right.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- was it ten hours of testimony --

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Yes.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- many people had the same thing, so we'll take it up again.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah? Okay. Okay. So, Members, I'm going to defer...anybody else have any questions on this? Seeing none. I'm going to defer this, and we'll take it up tomorrow in Council agenda, it's on the Council agenda.

COUNCILMEMBERS: No objections.

ACTION: DEFER pending further discussion.

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**ITEM 32: BILL 77 (2023), AMENDING FISCAL YEAR 2024
BUDGET: DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING (GRANT TO
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII MAUI COLLEGE SEA
GRANT) (BILL 77 (2023))**

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay, Members, the next item that we have is Bill 77, BFED-32 amending the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget: Department of Planning (Grant to University of Hawaii Maui College Sea Grant). And Members, our second item, which I just read, and we have Administrative Officer Connie Gouveia and Account Clerk Charmaine Rodrigues from the Budget Office...is that right? Or is it Lesley? We have Lesley. You're going to be everybody. Okay. If they're on the call. Then, we'll ask for opening comments from them, Ms. Gouveia, and Ms. Rodrigues, and we can hear from Ms. Milner. Are you on the call? You see them? Okay.

MS. GOUVEIA: Hi, this is Connie, Administrative Officer with the Department of Planning. I will defer to our Account Clerk, Charmaine Rodrigues, to give you a just basic breakdown of this budget amendment request for the Department.

MS. RODRIGUES: Hi, I'm Charmaine. Yeah, it was just a...it was a little short in the beginning of the...the budget, when we first put in the request, I guess. It was supposed to be the full amount of 143, but the incorrect amount was carried forward from the previous year. And we're trying to get UH to help us be more on it with the fiscal year, because their fiscal year seems to be a little different than ours. And once that's...you know, we're trying to keep it in control to get it where we'll...we won't need to do this again, but we...we're...yeah, that's what it is. It's just we need a little extra funding for that...for Sea Grant.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So, were trying to get it consistent with the Federal fiscal year, because it's different than the County fiscal year?

MS. RODRIGUES: Yes, that's correct. Yes.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Which theirs ends in September, ours ends June 30th. Okay, anybody else wants to say a few words? That's it? How about you, Ms. Milner, before we turn it over to the Members?

MS. MILNER: No, Chair, nothing additional to say.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Do we have any testimony? Do we have any testifiers? None?

MR. KRUEGER: Chair, no one has signed up to testify on this item at this time.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So, Members, with your approval, I'd like to close public testimony and receive written testimony on this item.

COUNCILMEMBERS: No objections.

. . .CLOSE PUBLIC TESTIMONY (BFED-32). . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: All right. We are cookin' here. And so, at this time then, I have a question for Corp. Counsel. Explain why the proposal is in the form of a bill and not a resolution? Because it's a transfer from one appropriation to another within a Department. And this is under Charter Section 9-10(b)...oh, sorry, 2...point 2.

MS. TOSHIKIYO: Yes, Chair. Thank you. So that provision in the Charter does say that upon request of the Mayor, any part or all of any unencumbered appropriation balance may be transferred within the Department by resolution, or from one Department to another by ordinance. So, while typically a Department could do these transfers and present it to Council for approval by resolution, it does not require that it has to be, so it could still be in the form of an ordinance, again, with Council approval. The difference...of course, the big one is the timing because it would require two readings, rather than one.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: That would be another reason to do a reso. Ms. Milner, you have a comment?

MS. MILNER: Hi, Chair, yes. We opted to do an ordinance in part because this involved a line item grant, so we thought more discussion might be needed. But if, in the future, the Council would like us to submit via resolution, we're happy to have that discussion.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Easier. I guess if you want us to have long discussions, then we can easily do that too, Ms. Milner. You know how we are. Yeah. Okay. And then for the Planning Department, verify that the increase in funding will provide for a 15-month grant period, so that moving forward, the Department will have this grant concurrent with the Federal fiscal year. So that is your goal? Ms. Gouveia?

MS. RODRIGUES: That is what we were looking for.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: All right. Then we won't have to deal with this again, right? Next year?

MS. RODRIGUES: Yes.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: Very good. Anybody have any other questions? None? Did I miss somebody? I don't see Tamara. Oh, there she is, she's not on my screen. Sorry...sorry about that. Go ahead, Ms. Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you. I just was wondering, the reason we can pull it out of the 79.5 equivalent personnel, is that...there a vacancy or something?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Did you hear --

MS. GOUVEIA: Yeah, I can talk to that. This is...yes, this is Connie, Administrative Officer. Yes, we do have a few vacancies. We've had a few people kind of move around in some promotions and things, so, yes, we still are working on filling our...our vacancies. But yes, normally, this...these two UH employees, you know, they are completely grant-funded, so, yeah, that's the goal, to have that be the case for this upcoming budget, that that would be handled in its entirety, and that we wouldn't have to go into using other salaries or operational funds for this.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And...and the vacancies to date, there's enough money to cover this with \$12,695, or...or --

MS. GOUVEIA: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay.

MS. GOUVEIA: Yeah, right now, we have over ten vacancies, so, yeah, we are...we are available with funds to cover this.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay, very good. Any other questions?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Keep calm and plan on.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Any other questions? Seeing none. Okay, Members, with your approval, I'm going to defer this and take it up tomorrow in...in Council meeting.

COUNCILMEMBERS: No objections.

ACTION: DEFER pending further discussion.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Glad you gave it some thought. All right, that...I was...I was talking to Keani. She gave us her...her provocative thinking...thinking hat.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: . . .*(laughing)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay, Members, this comes to the end of our agenda. Thank you very much, Ms. Milner, for coming here. We're so glad that you have your

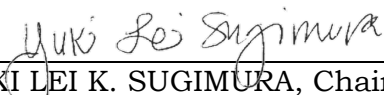
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signature blue hair. I was wondering, since your hairstyle was different, I couldn't see when you first walked in. We love you still, and good to see you in the Chambers. Everybody, this meeting is now adjourned. . . .*(gavel)*. . .

ADJOURN: 1:54 p.m.

APPROVED:


YUKI LEI K. SUGIMURA, Chair
Budget, Finance, and Economic
Development Committee

bfed:min:231005:kr

Transcribed by: Kaliko Reed

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CERTIFICATION

I, Kaliko Reed, hereby certify that pages 1 through 13 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 23rd day of October 2023, in Wailuku, Hawai'i



Kaliko Reed