

WATER AUTHORITY, SOCIAL SERVICES, AND PARKS COMMITTEE

Council of the County of Maui

MINUTES

October 2, 2023

Online via BlueJeans

CONVENE: 9:02 a.m.

PRESENT: VOTING MEMBERS:

Councilmember Shane M. Sinenci, Chair
Councilmember Gabe Johnson, Vice-Chair (Out 11:00 a.m.)
Councilmember Tom Cook, Member
Councilmember Tasha Kama, Member
Councilmember Alice L. Lee, Member
Councilmember Tamara Paltin, Member
Councilmember Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez, Member
Councilmember Yuki Lei K. Sugimura, Member
Councilmember Nohelani U‘u-Hodgins, Member

STAFF:

Clarissa MacDonald Legislative Analyst
Jarret Pascual, Legislative Analyst
Megan Moniz, Legislative Attorney
Stacey Vinoray, Committee Secretary
Jean Pokipala, Council Services Assistant Clerk
Lei Dinneen, Council Services Assistant Clerk

Dawn Lono, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Shane M. Sinenci
Gina Young, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Shane M. Sinenci
Axel Beers, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Gabe Johnson
Kate Griffiths, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Gabe Johnson
Laura McDowell, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Nohelani U‘u-Hodgins
Haunani Madela, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Keani Rawlins-Fernandez
Davideane Kama-Sickels, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Tasha Kama
Evan Dust, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Tasha Kama

Zhantell Lindo, Council Aide, Moloka‘i District Office
Roxanne Morita, Council Aide, Lāna‘i District Office
Mavis Oliveira-Medeiros, Council Aide, East Maui District Office
Christian Balagso, Council Aide, West Maui District Office
William “Bill” Snipes, Council Aide, South Maui District Office
Jade Rojas-Letisi, Council Aide, Makawao-Ha‘ikū-Pā‘ia District Office

ADMIN.:

Kristina Toshikiyo, Deputy Corporation Counsel, Department of the Corporation Counsel
Mariana Lowy-Gerstmar, Deputy Corporation Counsel, Department of the Corporation Counsel

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OTHERS: Dr. Aukahi Austin Seabury
Nicholas Carroll, Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement
Dr. Malia Purdy, Hui No Ke Ola Pono
Risa Yarborough
Chantelle “Tellie” Matagi, Papa Ola Lōkahi
Dean Wong, Executive Director, Imua Family Services

Additional attendees (61)

Jacy Law

PRESS: Akakū: Maui Community Television, Inc.

CHAIR SINENCI: . . .*(gavel)*. . . Aloha kakahiaka and ia orana. Welcome to the WASSP Committee meeting of Monday, October 2nd, 2023. It is now 9:02 a.m. I'm Shane Sinenci, your Committee Chair. And as a reminder, for members of the public to please silence all cell phones and noisemaking devices. Members, in accordance with the Sunshine Law, if you are not in the Council Chamber, please identify by name who, if anyone, is in the room, vehicle, or workspace with you today. Minors do not need to be identified. Also, please see the last page of the agenda for information on meeting connectivity. Joining us today, we have Committee Vice-Chair Gabe Johnson.

VICE-CHAIR JOHNSON: Good morning, Chair, Councilmembers, Committee Members. There is no testifiers at the Lānaʻi District office. I'm alone in my house with my dog, and we're here and ready to roll--work. Mahalo, Chair.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo for being here. In the Chambers today, we have Councilmember Tom Cook. Good morning.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Ia orana, Chair. There's nobody in the South Maui District Office for testimony this morning, and I'm looking forward to work today. Thank you.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo for being here, Member Cook. Pro Tem Kama will be here shortly, a couple minutes. Also in the Chamber, we have Council Chair Alice Lee. Aloha and ia orana.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Ia orana, Chair. Thank you for having us all today in our construction site here. Looking forward to your meeting.

CHAIR SINENCI: Yes, we'll get through it. Next, online we have West Maui Councilmember Tamara Paltin. Aloha kakahiaka.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Aloha kakahiaka and ia orana. Alone . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

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CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo for being here this morning. Also online is Councilmember Rawlins-Fernandez. Aloha kakahiaka.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Aloha kakahiaka kākou, my Moloka'i nui Ahina. I'm at the Moloka'i District Office, alone on my side of the office. And I...we have our Community Outreach Specialist Zhantell Lindo and my EA Haunani Madela at the other side of the office. Mahalo.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo for joining us this morning. Next in the Chambers, we have Councilmember Sugimura. Aloha, ia orana.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Aloha and ia orana. It's so exciting to see all of the people that are your resources that are congregating here. I look forward to this very interesting meeting. Thank you. Good morning, everybody.

CHAIR SINENCI: Good morning. Next, we have Councilmember U'u-Hodgins, who will be joining us shortly. From the Administration, we have Ms. Mariana Lowy-Gerstmar from the Corporation Counsel. Also in our meeting this morning, we have Committee Staff Member Stacey Vinoray. Welcome back, ia orana.

MS. VINORAY: Ia orana.

CHAIR SINENCI: Also, our Senior Committee Analyst, Ms. Kasie Apo Takayama. Good morning.

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: Ia orana, Chair and Members.

CHAIR SINENCI: All right. Next, we have Mr. Jarret Pascual, Legislative Analyst. Good morning.

MR. PASCUAL: Good morning, Chair.

CHAIR SINENCI: Ms. Clarissa MacDonald, good morning.

MS. MACDONALD: Good morning, Chair.

CHAIR SINENCI: Ms. Megan Moniz, aloha. As well as --

MS. MONIZ: Aloha kakahiaka kākou, everyone.

CHAIR SINENCI: 'Ae . . . *(inaudible)*. . . Ms. Lei Dinneen, our Assistant Clerk, as well as Ms. Jean Pokipala. Aloha and good morning. Okay. Members, on today's agenda is a panel about community social services available to those affected by the August wildfires, WASSP-1(6). We are focusing on locally-based and culturally-rooted social services provided by I Ola Lāhui through the newly created Kāko'o Maui Relief and Aid Services Center, located here in Kahului. I Ola Lāhui is a nonprofit, which not only provides services to individuals, but runs a training program designed to increase access

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to psychologists in neighbor islands' rural and underserved communities. Just last week, Councilmember Johnson and I attended the Hoʻoikaika Partnership Conference, and heard loud and clear the need for increasing access to social services through training programs like I Ola Lāhui. We will also hear about the resource hub recently created by the Center for Native Hawaiian Advancement to provide a collaborative and cultural approach to help fire victims with direct aid and services. For this meeting, we are specifically focusing on social services provided by the hub, but I want to acknowledge that they also provide financial and legal services by recognizing that mental health cannot be provided within a vacuum. As we will hear, issues of poverty and social inequity are directly linked to mental health, and as much, must be addressed together. However, because this is a social services committee, and we have limited time in our Committee meeting, Members, for today, we are just focusing on the social services programs provided by the Resource Center. So, Members, as a reminder, we'll take testimony after all of their presentations this morning. Okay. We're happy to have with us today a panel of dedicated resource people. I'm designating the following presenters as resource people due to their specific expertise and educational background in the social services. With us today online we have Dr. Aukahi Austin Seabury from I Ola Lāhui. Aloha. We have Mr. Nicholas Carroll, Chief of Staff for the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement. We have Dr. Malia Purdy, PhD, Executive Director, and Ms. Risa Yarborough, Programs Director, for Hui No Ke Ola Pono. Did I get that right? Okay. Good. Ms. Chantelle Matagi, Director of Innovation at Papa Ola Lōkahi. And Mr. Dean Wong, Executive Director for Imua Family Services. Did I forget anyone? Okay. Good. Members, if there are no objections, I'd like to designate these resource...resources under 18(A) of the Rules of the Council.

COUNCILMEMBERS: No objections.

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay. Thank you. Okay. So, our first--Dr. Aukahi Austin Seabury to start our program on mental health services. I invited Dr. Seabury, Director...Executive Director of the I Ola Lāhui, to not only explain the services provided by her organization, but to also help us better understand the importance of mental health and trauma recovery, and why, as individuals and as a community, we must address these needs. Dr. Seabury received her undergraduate degree and PhD in clinical psychology from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. She completed a fellowship focusing on community and health psychology at Tripler Army Medical Center, and a postdoctoral fellowship at UH Mānoa in child and adolescent evidence-based practice. She has also won several awards in the health field due to her important contributions to the health field. We are very honored to have her with us today. Aloha, Dr. Seabury. Is she unmuted, Staff? Hold...hold on. Let's get you...can we hear her?

MR. PASCUAL: Chair, she might have to change her microphone settings in the BlueJeans...in BlueJeans.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Chair, I heard her. She just needs to speak louder.

MS. SEABURY: . . .*(inaudible)*. . . okay?

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CHAIR SINENCI: Oh. Yes, you're coming in very faint. If you can either move closer to the mic?

MS. SEABURY: Okay. Let's try this. How's that, better?

CHAIR SINENCI: Oh, before you start, I'd like to welcome Pro Tem Kama. Aloha and ia orana.

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Aloha kakahiaka, Chair [*echoing*], and ia orana.

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay. Go ahead, Dr. Seabury.

MS. SEABURY: Aloha. Good morning, everyone. As I understand it, I look like Oz on the big screen in the room there with you. Okay. Maika'i. I'll do my best to fill it up. And thank you so much for that introduction, it was very gracious. Many of the folks in the room are partners in the service that I'm about to describe. So, folks in the room, please know that I...I recognize very well that you can elaborate and give them the in-person feel of what I'm about to talk about. I'm just going to go quickly through explaining the porch I'm speaking from so that folks know what is the work that I do when I am sharing about what our efforts are in Maui. Especially because, very respectfully, I am zooming in from O'ahu, and so I have a lot of--I want to acknowledge that I am not of Maui, and in that way I...I am a guest in this space, And I very much appreciate the welcome. And just know that I'm speaking from a real recognition that this recovery effort is being led by Maui Nui, and that I am...am gracious and...and happy to be an ally in this work as I can be. I'm going to do some quick slides just because I don't even know if it really happens if you didn't make slides about it, right? Something like that? Just...just quick to kind of make sure we all know we were here together. This is me on a different day with bigger hair. So I Ola Lāhui was really formed because even before any major incident, before COVID-19, we recognized that there was a shortage of behavioral health services in Hawai'i, a shortage in terms of providers that would be in our neighbor island communities and stay, and certainly a shortage of folks that provided culturally responsive and culturally--community acceptable kinds of care. And so, what we did was we recognized the importance of building and maintaining sustained partnership and collaboration in communities and leveraging existing resources. Rather than trying to show up and make an identity for ourselves, we engage with the health providers and the community organizations of that space, and fuel and support their growth and development by providing behavioral health providers rather than creating another piece in the system. And I think in this way, many of you wouldn't have heard of I Ola Lāhui before because you know of our partners, and so no need know our name. And so we formed a 501(c)(3) to do this, and this was 16 years ago now. And our mission is pretty simple; provide culturally minded, evidence based behavioral health services that respond to the needs of medically underserved native Hawaiian and rural communities. I Ola no ka Lāhui. That's why we exist, so that our people live and thrive. And so we do that through a number of strategies that you mentioned earlier. The first is that we have a psychology training program. We engage with clinical social work training as well, and then we also do training with health professionals. So we try to make workforce ready to provide the care that they need for our communities. We build and

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maintain partnerships. We play well with others. That's a really big deal to us, and it's the reason we've been around so long. We provide behavioral health services on site, on four islands, and then telehealth everywhere. And then because we want to know if what we do works, we do research and evaluation to stay relevant and engage in consulting and advocacy activities. Because it turns out you can't sit in a chair one on one and help someone figure out how to live in this world, and not try to work to make it better at the same time. So that's our vibe, and it's been tremendously successful. Oh, maybe not tremendously, but it's been really successful over the last few years. I want you to just track on this picture. So, the...the yellow parts are what are designated as medically underserved areas, and--but you can recognize where Maui is down there. Hi there. The stars are trainees in any one training program here. But what I want you to look at, as I click through these slides, is the number of pink triangles. Pink triangles represent graduates of our program that, after having been through it, get hired on into permanent positions on those islands. And so, the real win is when we see the pink triangle. So yes, more trainees is lovely, but those pink triangles that have come over the years, those really matter. This describes up to the training year that just finished. And you can see--I know O'ahu has too many pink triangles, but it turns out there's like a million people there. So, there's lots of underserved communities there that we put our effort towards. And you can see lovely--those green...those green circles just joined us. Those are the clinical social work interns. So, we've begun to expand our practice to include training in that area. So, this is the porch I speak from, and this is where we are right now in this moment here in Maui. As I said, if you're interested in our outcomes and the kinds of things we focus on, we don't just focus on traditional mental health concerns. We also know that change is hard. That's why I have a job. And so, we work with folks that have chronic health conditions, that have behavioral concerns, that have stress concerns, can't sleep, all of that stuff as well. And we've provided--you know, the impact has been a long time. So this is the porch I'm speaking from. Somebody who's very O'ahu, totally, but has worked over the last decade and a half to engage and provide the care that's needed in a way that the community is asking for. We don't show up elephant feet and tell everybody what they need. We engage with partners that want what we have...what we are offering, and then work with them to provide a vehicle or a venue for doing so. And then at the same time, we're, like, looking for the right humans with the right to serve to place in those specific communities. So that's...that's me. And as--in that work, we have been engaging with Maui. And most recently--so, our work with Maui has...has been--we began working with Hui No Ke Ola Pono over a decade ago, and then back again now with on-island behavioral health services. So we are there at the Hui for a total of .6 FTE a week. It happens on Mondays and Tuesdays, but there's a double on Tuesdays. And they provide individual care, as well as group activities...group therapy services. And then we also, as Project...Project Vision partners, have begun very excitedly at the Pu'uhonua. Today is our first day on site there, where we'll be providing two days a week of service at the Pu'uhonua directly as it has just launched. And in that way, that's a really nice example of when there is a need, we show up. In addition, on Maui, since the fires, there's been a greater ask for additional kinds of services beyond just the regular therapy that we are there providing. And those have included groups that request for group supports and education. So, working with folks on trauma recovery in various venues. And it's been with...with youth, with students, adolescents, as well as adults. And then the other kind of support

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and education has been with those folks that I'm going to call helpers and health and outreach workers. So, folks that are holding up their recovery efforts there, providing them a safe space to lean in and get support from us so that the...the system is not burning itself out, so that the helpers aren't leaning into the system that's already taxed. And then...and then also participating, as in this meeting, in consultation and planning around how to anticipate the mental behavioral health needs and spiritual needs, really, of the community of Maui as it walks through this together. There's many layered issues as you all know, and mental health sits alongside so many of the other things that are needed right now. And so, in general, we--I'm encouraging that folks look at those services that integrate and align with the other kinds of wraparound supports that you guys will all be talking about today, leading with the idea of culturally minded and community led, or asked for, or acceptable services being a priority. And also, one of the things that's been really important is to think about the longer strategies. So, at this point in recovery--and I might be telling you something you already know, so forgive me. I can't read the room quite so well with the video. You know, in the first few weeks of things, it was shock, it was emergency, it was everybody get through it. It was sort of white knuckle it, everybody just survive. We knew there was a lot of trauma, but we just got to keep going. Nobody was sleeping. Everybody was just kind of driving real, real hard to help. And that was maybe one of the main coping strategies that I heard from people, was, focus on helping other. And in that way, ignore the stuff that's hard for you about how this hit you, because the waves of impact are many in the community. And so, not just the folks most directly impacted, but everybody in the layers thereafter all have a different kind of impact. So, in that first wave, it was shock. Now what we're beginning to see is, yes, the vast majority of people who go through trauma don't experience post-traumatic stress disorder. That's not--right? The majority of them, over the weeks and months, what you begin to see, is slowly, inch by inch, things start to get a little bit better. And so, for most folks, that's the pattern you see. At this point, however, we start to see for some folks, it's not getting better, and maybe it's even getting a little worse. And so, we're going to need to address that. Now, the other part is, everybody who was holding their breath, just pushing and pushing to make sure that Maui made it, is now reaching that burnout point. And so, needing to tag in other folks to support them, to help...because they're exhausted, because you can't sort of sustain that white knuckle way of doing things for a long time. We're beginning to see people's edges bumping into each other. We knew from the beginning that one of the sort of shock reactions was a short fuse, easily angered by things, finding things more irritating than you usually do. And we're seeing that not just among the community of folks that are surviving, but even in the spaces where we're all working to find solutions, having to move gently, knowing that our edges could bump into each other with something that was really characteristic not of Maui specifically, but of what happens after something big and awful like this occurs. And so, I think that helping folks know what to do from here, continuingly...continually offering those...those supports to the providers, helpers, and solution finders as they--it's a multiple layered thing because they're not just solving problems and working for the solution, they're also the affected. And so, that double layer is something we have to attend to in the way that we move. And then...and then I think continuing to offer those supports to all survivors, to finding ways to provide that, that fits what they're asking for. And so, just listening as we provide those services, knowing we already had a shortage before this started. So, having to be really innovative

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in the way that we provide those supports, but knowing this is a long game kind of thing. This is not a everybody show up for the first 30 days, and everything will be fine after that. Yes, things will return to some kind of normal, but it'll be a different normal than we ever knew. And so, being ready to fit with that is...is maybe what I think of as the focus when I'm looking at how mental health services are going to fit into the larger array of recovery. I hope that is helpful, and I will hand it back to you. Mahalo nui.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Dr. Seabury. And Members, please keep your--write down your questions. We're going to hear from all of our resources, and then we'll have a couple rounds of questions. But before we move on, I'd like to introduce Councilmember Nohe U'u-Hodgins. Aloha. Good morning.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Good morning, Chair. Aloha, everyone.

CHAIR SINENCI: Thanks for joining us. Next, Members, we have Mr. Nicholas Carroll, Chief of Staff of the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement. Prior to being with the CNHA, Mr. Carroll was a legislative aide in the Hawai'i State Senate. He's here today to share with us the Center for Native Hawaiian Advancement's work to support our community, and give an overview of their Kāko'o Maui Fund and Resource Center located in Kahului. Mr. Carroll, you have some opening comments for us?

MR. CARROLL: Aloha, Chair, and Members of the Committee. Mahalo for the invitation today to be here and share the efforts that we are to Kāko'o Maui. Again, my name is Nicholas Carroll. I'm the...or I'm the Chief of Staff at the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement. You know, I'll just start off by saying that it's normally Kuhio (*phonetic*) that does all the talking. I'm the guy that's behind the scenes, so please forgive me if I stumble over a couple of my words. But Kuhio does send his aloha, and he does apologize that he can't be here today. You know, I think one of the--first off, I just want to mention that though we are the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement, our programs are available to all of Maui, regardless of ethnic background. What you folks may be familiar most about us is our Kāko'o Maui resource hub located in Kahului at Maui Mall. You know, what we did was we took the concept of the DRC, the disaster recovery centers, and what we recognized was, it's kind of scary. You know, it's...it's not very welcoming environment for people who go in there. And it could just be intimidating for people who just want to try to find solace. So what we did was we refined the concept. Number one, we hired Lāhainā people to run the hub. It's familiar faces who are--have experienced similar experiences, greeting you with a smile, to assist you on navigating the various assistance. Number two, we grounded it in cultural values. We have a lot of the similar service providers you would find at the DRC, specializing in things such as financial assistance, legal aid, mental health support, and application assistance as well. You know, also, Red Cross and FEMA have been at our hub too. And what they realize is that they can reach an audience who they may have not been able to reach before. Over 30 percent of the folks who are coming to our hubs are staying with friends and family right now. You know, I'm proud to say that we've been able to support over 1,300 families in our top demographics--Filipino, native Hawaiians, and then Caucasians, respectively, in that order. And our hub will remain open as long as the community needs, so please know that. You know, some of the

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other things I just want to mention to the Committee is, you know, social development can be hinged on the economic situation. So, some of the different programs I'm going to be talking about next is based upon economics. The first one is our workforce development program. You know, CNHA did have a presence on Maui prior to the fires, but after the fires, we recognized there's an emerging industry coming along with the cleanup in the rebuild. So what we did, CNHA's workforce development programs we stood up is for Maui residents to receive the basic certifications to prepare them for those emergent industries. And what we did was we also partnered with the labor unions like ILWU and the Carpenters Union, plus partnered with the companies like Goodfellows and a lot of the trucking companies over here to pipeline these students into the jobs as they become available. I'm proud to say that there's been over 600 applicants so far, and a third of them are from Lāhainā. Within the past three weeks, we've been able to graduate 100 students. And I...I also want to mention that the classes are free for all Maui residents. You know, as we go along, the programs...the workforce development programs that we do offer are going to be evolving. So, I'm...I'm happy that as they come available, we'll...we'll be making announcements. Another thing that we're doing is we're helping with the Maui storage and donation distribution. Early on, we did recognize that Maui had--were inundated by a lot of the donations that were coming in, and CNHA provided a grant to a nonprofit to aggregate the donations that are coming from O'ahu and ship them to Maui as you folks need. And that same nonprofit is working with the Mayor's Office currently to operate the distribution center in Kahului at the old Safeway next to Ross. Just talking about some of the other future initiatives that are coming down the pipeline. Tomorrow, we'll be announcing a program to provide aid to families who are taking care of 'ohana impacted by wildfires. I'm happy to provide more information as they do come. And in the month of November, what we are going to be doing is we're going to be using our Pop-Up Mākeke. You know, you folks may know our Pop-Up Mākeke. It started during the pandemic to support local artisans who are unable to sell their products because, you know, the state was closed. So what we're going to do is we're going to be taking that same concept, and we're going to be providing some economic stimulation for those Maui businesses that have been impacted. Number one, we're going to have...or we're going to bring the Maui vendors over to O'ahu for two different events; one at the Stan Sherriff Center during the Maui Invitational, and another one at the Blaisdell Center. Another thing that we're going to be doing is we're going to be doing...we're going to be bringing back Pop-Up Mākeke live on *Hawai'i News Now*. If you folks were watching yesterday, McKenna Maduli's talk story, she was recognizing some of the Maui vendors on her show as well. And we're going to be doing that all along...all throughout the month in November. You know, just in closing, I just want to just say that CNHA is here to help. And you know, our programs and our initiatives will evolve, but we will be here to Kāko'o. I just want to say that I am available for questions. Auntie Blossom is here as well, she's available to answer questions too. Mahalo, Chair, for this opportunity. Aloha.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Mr. Carroll. Thank you. Up next, Members, we have Dr. Malia Purdy, Executive Director, and Risa Yarborough, Programs Director, for the Hui No Ke Ola Pono. Dr. Purdy received her doctorate degree in public health from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. She is a Kamehameha School Maui campus graduate and the Executive Director for Hui No Ke Ola Pono. She has brought her Program Manager,

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Risa Yarbrough, with her. Dr. Purdy.

MS. PURDY: Mahalo nui for having us. Aloha kakahiaka ia kākou a pau. Truly, truly humbled to be here to share what we have been up to. You know, Hui No Ke Ola Pono has been in existence and a community partner on Maui for over 30 years. And so, with that, you know, our mission is really to be the bridge between the native Hawaiian community and western medicine and traditional practices. So, health care is kind of what we're known for, but also, all the supporting, enabling services that our people need in order to navigate a very complicated health system. So, on this slide, what you see surrounding it is all of our different departments. So we do have a primary care clinic that encompasses our Ornish program. We partnered with I Ola Lāhui. So, we are a site in which Dr. Aukahi's team is stationed at. And so, you know, since the fires, of course, behavioral health, mental health services has been huge. And so, this was a partnership that has already been established. And so, previous to the fires, we had one doc come once a week, every Tuesday, to see patients in person. However, the beauty of partnering with I Ola Lāhui is that through telehealth, we have an extensive network of other providers. So, if you're somebody that's okay with telehealth, we can connect you to I Ola Lāhui and Dr. Aukahi's team. But if you are somebody that needs in-person, I want to come in and see and talk to you face to face, that's also an option. After the fires, we kind of increased those numbers. So, now we have two behavioral health practitioners, clinical psychologists, and they are seeing patients on both Mondays and Tuesdays. We have our dental program. And so, part of our efforts was, you know, we had a huge stake in helping the Lāhainā Comprehensive Health Center kind of stand up. Hui No Ke Ola Pono's role was really administrative support, and getting people into the health center in partnership with the State Department of Health, as well as Mauiola Pharmacy. And so, I'm going to let Risa talk a little bit about what happens at the Lāhainā Comprehensive Health Center. But our dental program is looped into there, and we're offering dental care out in Lāhainā. We have a cafe, we have the Kealaho'imai Workforce Training program. And so that is, you know, the lomi lomi program, and CNA, and just a lot of health professions run through the University of Hawai'i Maui College. And so, if you're native Hawaiian, and you're interested in one of our health profession programs, we have a scholarship where you can attend and get those skills and that training free of charge. We are mostly known for our traditional healing department. So, Hui No Ke Ola Pono has lomi lomi services, we have access to Ho'oponopono practitioners, and our newest adventure was starting a lā'au farm out in Waikapū with Uncle Bobby Pahia. And so, you know, when we say that we're meant to be a bridge, Hui No Ke Ola Pono is really that organization that provides access to all of our traditional healing practices. And then we have a gym. So, you know, if you look at all of our services and all the different departments, we're really talking about total and holistic health, right? It's not just, you know, you got to see the doctor, you got to go to...take your medication, you got to go to all your appointments. But it's all of these lifestyle things that help to support somebody's wellness and somebody's mauiola. And so, that is kind of the services that we offer, and continue to offer through this. I'm going to have to Risa talk a little bit about Lāhainā Health Center.

MS. YARBOROUGH: Good morning. So, the Lāhainā Comprehensive Health Center . . .*(inaudible)*. . . a community partnership with State of Hawai'i Department of Health,

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the Maui District Health Office, the Public Health Nurses, as well as their behavioral health team, Malama I Ke Ola Health Center, Mauiola Pharmacy, and then our organization. We were really fortunate to be part of the formation of the Center. It offers medical, dental. They deploy outreach teams from the site to go door to door or canvass neighborhoods to offer services. And then we've had a couple of other community providers come in to do vision services. Podiatry, I think, came in also, and it's just sort of expanding. The long-term plan is to try to sustain services out there. And so, that's in the works. We'd like to see medical, behavior health, dental, and traditional healing eventually be out there. The payers also provided a lot of support with case management, and I believe they were on a rotation schedule to--so, if anyone came in and they needed help sort of navigating their insurance or any services that they needed, we also had those case managers there as well.

MS. SEABURY: Mahalo.

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay. Mahalo, Doctor. Mahalo, Risa. Okay. Members, next, we have Executive Director Sheri Daniels. I have Chantelle Matagi, Director of Innovation at Papa Ola Lōkahi. And Sheri Daniels is off island, and asked Ms. Matagi to represent Papa Ola Lōkahi today. So she will share with us information about the organization, and what they have been doing over these last six weeks since the fire. Chantelle, a/k/a "Tellie," is a health educator and community leader. Her academic background, lived experience, and community connections have assisted, prepared and guided her professional career. As a Pacific Island woman, she grew up in Utah, Samoa, and Hawai'i, and she understands the culture nuances necessary in working with diverse communities across the Pacific Island diaspora. Tellie filled the pivotal role as the lead investigator of a contract tracing team dedicated to addressing health disparities Pacific Islanders and Filipinos faced during the COVID-19 pandemic, bearing 15 percent...50 percent of positive cases statewide. Her team's work, which included further data, disaggregation, and providing vaccine and testing sites directly in these communities, helped to reduce cases by nearly 25 percent over one year, and led to publications on the importance of data disaggregation and addressing health disparities. Tellie is a strong advocate for organizational change--is that my timer?--that ensures those doing the work represent affected communities, and that community-led initiatives are supported. Her collaborative community-based partnerships have increased educational outreach and community engagement, and is culturally safe and available in many languages across the Pacific in fostering relationships that encourage community participation across Hawai'i. Aloha, Tellie. Welcome.

MS. MATAGI: Aloha. Good morning. Sa alofa ia we (*phonetic*). Malo le lei (*phonetic*). It's awesome to be here. I...Sheri wants to send my regards to all of you. She was joining us via telephone, but because of connection, she's unable to give the presentation this morning. Thank you so much for the kind introduction. I'm hoping all of you can hear me. I would like to start, if it's okay, this morning with a video that shows you basically what we've been doing, and hopefully gives you an idea of where we would like to head. It stopped sharing for some odd reason. . . .(*inaudible*). . . I'm so sorry, guys. So, I'm going to go ahead and start, and then I will...I'll pick it up after it's done. Let me know if you can't hear it, please.

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UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Sorry, we can't hear it.

MS. MATAGI: Let me see if I can...all right. Sorry, guys. Apologies. While I'm waiting for that, I'll tell you guys a little bit about our--what we do. It looks like it may start now. Hold on one sec.

[Video played]

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So we have--[musical introduction] Thank you so much for being here . . .(inaudible). . . We are hoping that we can get the services to you in an orderly fashion. So we have . . .(inaudible). . . patients windows as our team is getting ready for you. As they call you forward, you'll check in right here. The tent that you see on the right-hand side, we have FEMA (audio interference), we have SNAP available, which is food assistance, and then, of course, Medicaid, insurance for you and your family. And then we also have the Lāhui Foundation also here providing services . . .(inaudible). . . Hawai'i. You're in the right place, and we hope it'll bring you folks some joy, some smiles, and . . .(inaudible). . . the music. We want to service as many of...of you as we possibly can.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Main thing is . . .(inaudible). . .

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What I'm seeing here is a lot of need, a lot of folks that need all kinds, it's housing, financial assistance, and also, just to tell their story, what they're...what they're going through. Sometimes it's just some mental health assistance that they need, and that's what the American Red Cross is here for, and we're more than happy to participate.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Community...just plain and simple, community. You know, we're boots on the ground, like when there is a need, that's, you know where we'll be. You know, I feel like we're either forgotten, not listened to, or if there's help, it's so far in the future that it actually doesn't really help in the immediate. But I think we gotta get dirty, we gotta help each other. That's our neighbors, you know, this was our family, this was...this is our future, you know. I feel like that's where the people have the power to help each other. That's, I think, the best place we could be. We're all we really have.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Well, I think being here at the community center, that's what we need to address . . .(inaudible). . . community. As you see, here we have multiple different interpreters, the people who speak the languages, so different communities here in Maui. That's extremely important when trying to assist individuals where there's a...might be a language barrier. So, I think it's been great being here the last few days, I've been able to see multiple different people come in from different backgrounds and actually be able to receive assistance.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: In times of like sorrow and pain, you've still gotta...still gotta be there for people. We gotta think about those things. Who is gonna take care of who? Like we know we can, you know, depend on our neighbors, 'cause they're right there. I

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think we need to think of it as an opportunity to learn another skill, to make more connections. It's a opportunity to build community.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I think the last few days were great. When you have community leaders and people actually from the community come to participate and bring individuals who have been affected to receive assistance that I think it makes a great dialogue and communication. So there's gonna be communication if...what FEMA can do and what FEMA can provide. You know, it's very important, I see a lot of members from the, you know, Pacific Island community here, and they have access to all the resources at the Disaster Recovery Center of FEMA, and also the Family Assistance Center over at the Hyatt Regency. But they come here because they feel comfortable. And as you can see, the response is overwhelming, and...but you don't see this community in those two other locations.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Being here has been great. Had a lot of individuals saying thank you. They were afraid previously to speak with the people, but because the interpreter is here, I feel like it's a great place for people to come and feel comfortable, and get the information they need under the language they need from the community.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I think...you know, anything you can spare. I can tell you, we've gotten tons of \$5 donations, but that \$5 means so much to someone that has nothing. You know, and not just nothing, but has lost everything. I mean you're...you're talking about people who have worked their whole lives for a home, worked their whole lives to keep their family here. You're talking about dreams and passions that are just gone. So I think...you know, we gotta think about that. You never know what's gonna happen.

[Video ended]

MS. MATAGI: Well, thank you guys for allowing me to share that. So, what I wanted to share with you is some of our numbers. So, since our first event, which--the video you saw was actually our second event, and we had 1,200 Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander individuals and families who attended. That day, we placed 150 Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders into transitional housing. That was the highest number of American Red Cross--or community members who had been placed by the American Red Cross. To date, we have served over 7,400 Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Filipino. We have given out over \$400,000 in direct financial services. This money has been facility...facilitated and provided by our community-based organizations such as Lāhui Foundation, who you saw in our video, as well as 'Āina Momona and Ashley...Ashley--and I'm going to say her last name wrong--Ashley, wherever you are, I'm so sorry. She is a local artist, and she gave us \$1,100...or \$11,000, excuse me, in gift certificates that, again, we provided directly to those who were impacted either by the wildfires or their employment was affected. We've given out 1,500 hot meals. We have provided 200 haircuts. We also partnered with the Consulate Generals from the Republic of the Marshall Islands, which is why you saw so many Marshallese with the Federated States of Micronesia, which included Chukey and Pohnpei. Those were the other two large Pacific Islander communities that were affected, along with the Marshallese, as well as Tonga. So, we had the Tongan Consulate General there. And

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also, because of the work that we've been doing with the Tongan community, we were invited to participate...or to meet the Tongan Princess when she recently came to Maui. Those are just a few of our community partners. We've also worked with DHS, Project Vision, Hui No Ke Ola Pono...and I'm going to miss a lot of our community-based partners, but I think what's important to highlight there is that Papa Ola Lōkahi and the NHPR3R, which was developed and convened during COVID, has created a partnership that bridges Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and other underserved and marginalized communities. You also saw the Filipino community there. We bring interpreters, community health workers, or navigators. We provide in-language services. So, when someone walks through the door, they're not simply walking into a situation where everything is being presented to them in English. They're also walking through that door with a community navigator who takes them table to table, and assists them throughout the process. We know through our community needs assessment that the top needs identified by our community members are shelter, food, transportation, employment, and schooling for those who have keiki. We would have hoped that we would be further along in the process, but at our most recent outreach that we had in Kihei--which thanks...thanks to Councilmember Kama, who facilitated that facility--we know that they're...a lot of our community members are still in that first stage. They're still trying to find housing, they're still trying to find food, they're still dealing with employment. So, our...our hope would be is that we can continue these collaborative partnerships, but also, that we can address the needs of the community first. We need to find them housing. Sorry. We saw this during COVID. We saw our communities where only Native Hawaiians are 21 percent of the population, Pacific Islanders are 4 percent. In August 2020, we were 50 percent of the cases. We're continuing to see that same disparity as we address the Maui wildfires. We learned lessons during COVID. Why are those lessons not being highlighted and continued during the wildfires? There needs to be transparency. There needs to be assistance. And if we can help that, then we're here to support Maui and everyone here. I am humbled to be here today with all of these community based organizations, Malia, CNHA, Dr. Aukahi, to hear all the work that they're doing. But in order for us to continue doing this work, there needs to be coordination, there needs to be sustainability, but there also needs to be coordination from the Federal Government, from the State Government, and from the local Government. And we appreciate all of your efforts, and whatever we can do to support you in that, we're here for it. We know that because community relies on us because they want to see faces, and they want to hear their native languages, that this is our responsibility, this is our kuleana to be there. And we are so grateful that Maui has opened up their doors because much like many others here, I...I'm from O'ahu, and the work that I've done is mainly O'ahu based. But because we are known to these communities, we've been able to take this work and amplify this in Maui, and support our partners in Maui. Other than that, we're here to answer any questions, to offer our support. And mahalo, guys, and faafetai tele lava for all of your support and hard work. I yield the rest of my time back to the Chair.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Tellie, for that presentation. Yeah, please hang tight with us while we have one more, our last presenter. Wrapping up our panel today, we have Mr. Dean Wong, Executive Director of Imua Family Services. Mr. Wong earned a BA from UCLA. Then after spending several years working in some of Africa's most impoverished

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communities, he went on to earn a postgraduate certificate in public health from the Center of Disease Control through the Association of Schools of Public Health. He currently serves on the board of directors for the Hawai'i Children's Action Network, and is the acting governor with the National Association of Nonprofit Organizations. As Imua Family Services' Executive Director, he has raised over \$5 million in special events and campaigns. This is in addition to their grants and contracts. I'm sure many of you are familiar with Imua's festivals and events, and as a result of this fundraising, Imua Family Services was able to build their early childhood development center in Kahului. Mr. Wong, did I get all of that correct?

MR. WONG: Sure. Thank you so much.

CHAIR SINENCI: And then some. Go ahead.

MR. WONG: I try not to listen. Thank you, Council Chair, for having me. It's weird to have you behind me and talk to you, but I'll address the Council here. And aloha to all of you. Thank you for having me. I'm exhausted. I can imagine how tired you all are as well. Someone pointed out in their presentation that it's been six weeks. I thought it had been six months already, so forgive me if I don't get this as concise as I would like it to be. I think you all know that Imua Family Services has been here serving this county for more than 76 years now, having started in a situation that was polio back in the day. And, you know, organizations like Imua, like Hui No Ke Ola Pono, they begin when there is a need that isn't being met, or comes up with a way to meet a need that can maybe get past some of the barriers that exist. We continue to serve children primarily, and to support their family so that children have what they need, they have the resources that they need so that they can reach their full potential. Some of the core programs that we have at Imua Family Services include newborn hearing screening for all newborns that are birthed at home, which I don't know if you know that Maui County has the highest number of newborns who are home birthed in the State of Hawai'i. From there, we provide our early intervention services, which is, of course, a contract that we have with the Department of Health, and Imua has carried that contract for many decades now. And that is for children birth to three years old. So, those services are available free to all families until their children turn three. Additionally, Imua Family Services continues to provide therapeutic and clinical services to children after the age of three until they are in kindergarten. And we do that through our own fundraising efforts, to provide the same type of clinical and therapeutic services that children under the age of three may receive through Federal services. We also have an autism program that actually supports some of the youngest children in the state that have been diagnosed with autism, many of them starting just as two years old, which is new. Most children were previously not diagnosed with autism until they were three years old. So, our services are for those youngest diagnosed children. And then recently, we began working with the DHS to provide health care navigation services. This actually started during COVID to help individuals who did not have health care coverage to sign up for the health care coverage that they needed through the State. That has since expanded. And during this particular crisis, we also used the same health care navigation outreach team to help people sign up for their FEMA, as well as SNAP and the other services that have been mentioned here today so that families have

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the resources they need. On our...what we call our Play services--because play is actually the greatest form of therapy that we can offer our children--we have our Imua Inclusion Preschool, which is located at our Early Childhood Development Center in Kahului. We offer a Play Imua program across the street at the Discovery Garden, which is for two-year-olds, to help them become prepared for preschool, which is in essence kind of ironic because there aren't really enough preschools in Maui or in Hawai'i for children. However, we see over 100 children each week at the Play Imua program for two year olds, and they attend that with their parents so that their parents can also learn how to play and help their children in their development. Many of you know our Camp Imua program. It's been around since 1976, and continues to be a program that fulfills children's needs with special needs that are school age. We do this now at Ke'anae every year in June. We also have Dream Imua, which formerly was known as A Keiki's Dream for about 20 years here in Hawai'i before it was adopted by Imua Family Services after Gill (*phonetic*) retired. And this provides dreams for children in crisis who have been traumatized or abused, neglected. And as you can imagine, the number of children facing those kinds of crisis now is...is quite high. And now we are in the process of developing and opening the Imua Discovery Garden here at the former Yokouchi Estate, which is across the road from here. It's six acres in the Maui Historic Wailuku District that is being designated to help children find joy, and play, and to grow from those experiences. And that will be an extension of all of our programs, to include outdoor- and nature-based therapies into the kinds of clinical services that we already provide, bringing children back in touch with nature. Just a side note, I don't know if you know, that children today under the age of three years old are actually spending less than 30 minutes a day outside, but they're spending more than 3 hours a day on a device, which has become the new babysitter, right? And playing outdoors is actually how children develop. It's critical to their development. And so when we have taken the ability for children to play safely outdoors and...and to use their imaginations in play, we actually take away a great part of their early childhood development. So, that's just, in a nutshell, a little bit about the organization. I know many of you already know those aspects of us, but I want to talk now about what Imua has been doing since August the 8th. You know, likewise, when COVID first came upon us, and this is how early it was in the COVID situation, I actually pulled all of my staff, 50-plus people, together in one room to talk about it. That's how early it was. We didn't know that wasn't a good idea at the time, right? But likewise, on August 8th, we gathered as a team at our Early Childhood Development Center, and we said, what do we do? Most of us hadn't slept through the night. I had already evacuated my home in Kula with my family, but we came together as a team because we knew that we had to respond immediately. The first thing my team of social workers or care coordinators did was to call and make contact, direct contact, however they could with every family that we were serving in West Maui. We lost our West Maui office in the fires as well, so that space was no longer available to us. We made contact with the families to take an inventory of the people, right...their children, the parents, the kūpunas. We found out what their situation was, what their loss was, and were they okay at the moment, and were their children in a safe place. Then we started to take an inventory of what they needed the most of. So, we did that for all of the families that were already enrolled in our clinical services. And then, of course, our phones were ringing off the hook for families with small children that were needing us so desperately. Within two days, we had mobilized a child care

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and relief site in Nāpili at the park. By working with the people that were doing the Nāpili distribution site, we found that there was a safe place that we could be shaded by the trees, and we worked with the Mayor's Office to get passes for our two shuttle buses to bring out qualified child-care professionals. It was important for us to use people that we knew Imua's...people that knew Imua would trust our childcare providers. So these had to be vetted, qualified, early childcare professionals. So we loaded up two buses every day with food, supplies, snacks, games, outdoor activities, and we went out to the parks to provide that childcare. And it wasn't just to provide childcare, of course, but to provide an opportunity for parents to safely leave their children while they could attend to the things that they needed to most immediately. We also brought our healthcare navigation team so that they could, on the spot, help the parents sign up for the resources that they needed as well. We continued to do this for six weeks, and watched the numbers very carefully over the course of six weeks. We started with 120 children per day. It soon went down to about 80 children, then 60, then 40. And coinciding with the Department of Education slowly finding opportunities, alternatives, and resources to get children back into school, we saw the numbers decline along with that. Of course, it was important for us to work with the Department of Education, and if we continue to provide that same resource, then children...or families could choose that as opposed to getting their children back registered with the Department of Education, and getting the services they needed there. So, at a certain point, I think by the sixth week, we actually turned that service into a sort of like babysitting or book-a-nanny (*phonetic*) type of service for young children. And that's how we phased out that program in Nāpili at that time. There were, of course, many other things we were doing simultaneously with that. We actually became the fiscal sponsor for Mauiola Pharmacy so that they could provide the medications and the pharmaceuticals that were needed for families. We became the agent to provide them with about \$500,000 to buy the medical supplies that they needed. Also, we were providing, of course, crisis intervention counseling, which has been talked about so much by so many of the providers with families who needed that in that most immediate time. On the side...just a side note, I already mentioned that play is one of the greatest forms of therapy that we can provide for our children. It's how they develop, it's what they need. And so we worked with a couple of corporations on the mainland--JAKKS Pacific Toys, who are the creators, and manufacturers, and distributors for Disney Jr., and Sonic, and Super Mario, et cetera--and they sent a 40-foot container to us full of brand-new toys. We decided that we would open a pop-up shop in Mā'alaea as people come in and out of West Maui. And we worked with the harbor shops of Maui, who gave us free rent, a space there, so we could set up a toy store for children where everything would be free for families. Just for that sort of sense of being able to go into a place and finding the thing that inspires you, and a family being able to allow their children to leave with that without having to spend down nondisposable income that they have. Or if their children could still go to a birthday party, they could bring something, et cetera. Very important for children to have that sense of self-efficacy, and to find inspiration for their imagination. So, that store is open currently, and will probably be open until--through December. We also got over 8,000 Halloween costumes, which we are currently distributing for children all the way through parents as well. That will help all children be able to celebrate Halloween. At the Discovery Garden, we will host our annual Keiki Halloween Festival, where we invite all nonprofits to come and join us and

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set up a Halloween tent, and hand out tricks and treats to the children in that environment. We usually have about 3,000 families that attend that event each year, so we look forward to having that safe event for children. It's really important that children still have these kinds of traditions that they look forward to in their lives. It helps them to feel like things will be okay, that there will be a future, and that there are things to look forward to for tomorrow. So, it's really important that we move forward with these kinds of traditional events for children. On the long-term side of things, we are working...we're trying to...I'm desperately trying to work with the DHS to set up a...what will be called a demonstration-site preschool at the Discovery Garden. There are many children who have been displaced, as you know, and are living both in Central or South parts of Maui. A lot of families without preschool. I just want to say that when it comes to early education, Maui and the State of Hawai'i were already at an alarming deficit, right? We didn't have enough preschools and early-education systems before these fires. We definitely have much less now. So, we have to be creative and come up with alternative ways to support children. I want to say that what we did during COVID was not acceptable, right...to just not have school, to not have places for children to go and to connect and have relationship with each other. This is going to be a huge problem for mental health in the years to come when we see how we failed our children. And if we don't provide them with the early education and the quality care that they need while their brain is still developing until they're five years old, we are going to face another huge mental health crisis; one that is not just because of these fires, but because we failed to give these children what they need in these early years of development. But I want to tell you, and I can speak from the fact that I am talking to someone at this County every single day for the past three years. It has taken me three years to get the permission to build a preschool across the street. Three years. We're only just starting to break some ground in the next couple of months. If we...if it takes me three years to build a preschool that is so needed in this community, I don't know how we're going to build an entire town, and give back these children the resources they need. So, that point aside, we are hopefully working with a demonstration site to build a preschool here in Central Maui. There are many families that are driving their older children to schools here at Pōmaika'i or Pu'u Kukui, and so they...they will easily be able to drop children off at preschool here with us here in Central Maui, and we can care for those children. It will provide families with what they need, not only a safe place to have their children, their children having the early education they need so they can be ready for kindergarten and beyond, and it will help those children to actually deal with the type of crisis and trauma that they have been dealing with. I do want to say, though, I did sort of come to a point where I'm going to stop fighting for it. I feel like at some point, the County has to recognize that this is needed, and I'm willing to provide all the resources, the teaching, and I don't need any of the funding, but I need someone to tell me that it's okay to do it. And it...I shouldn't have to fight to do this for our children. It just doesn't make sense to me. Other long-term projects, I wanted to tell you very lastly and quickly, that as you know, aside from the current crisis, Maui, on a long-term basis, will be facing a...an economic crisis of sorts, and that is related to perhaps our visitor industry. There is a way to bring tourism back to Hawai'i, which is called conscious tourism. And in the year 2024, Imua Family Services has booked the world-renowned large garden sculptor, Steve Tobin. Steve Tobin is the artist who did the memorial exhibit at the 9/11 Memorial in New York City. His exhibit currently is at the Houston

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Botanical Garden. I have registered the Imua Discovery Garden as part of the National Gardens Association and Arboretum Association of America. And so the next Steve Tobin exhibit, which will be called Earth to Sky, will travel to Maui. It's coming actually this month, in October. It will be set up in November, and be available to the public to start seeing in January of 2024 through December of 2024. The purpose of bringing this large-scale exhibit is...so, first of all, it is an exhibit that is both for children and adults. It is...it is inspiring. It is art in nature. But it will bring people to Wailuku Town, which we are trying to promote as the...as one of the historic districts, right, and as an arts district. We built a new three-story garage here in Wailuku with the intention of being able to bring some visitors and some business to Wailuku Town. I think it's important to have things for people to do here to distract a little bit from Lāhainā, the historic town that we've lost, while we continue to focus on how to rebuild that, and rebuild it correctly. So, this will bring the ability for visitors to come experience the garden, experience Wailuku Town, help to build up other businesses throughout other parts of the island. So, I look forward to bringing that exhibit to this island. When...when I call it conscious tourism, people will be able to visit the experience, and have the experience, and know that their funds to attend the exhibit will actually support early childhood development services, and services to children and families who need the relief and services. So I look forward to sharing more about that with you. But that's more long-term planning for what we are doing at Imua Family Services. Thank you for allowing me to share today. Thank you for the time.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Mr. Wong, for that opening remarks. Okay. Members--and thank all of you for your remarks as well. We will now start our public testimony. I understand we've got a couple testifiers. Okay. Oral testimony via phone or video conference will be accepted. Please note that if you are signed in, you are on the list to testify, even if he [sic] did not request to testify. Please let Staff know in the chat if you are signed on and do not intend to testify. In accordance with the Sunshine Law, testimony can occur at the beginning of the meeting, but cannot be limited to the start of the meeting. For today, our speakers have provided opening remarks and...and gave their slideshow presentations. Councilmember questions for our speakers will happen after testimony is concluded. Testifiers wanting to provide video or audio testimony should have joined the online meeting via the BlueJeans link or phone number noted on today's agenda. Written testimony is encouraged, and can be submitted via the eComment link at mauicounty.us/agendas. Oral testimony is limited to three minutes. If you're still testifying beyond that time, I'll kindly ask you to complete your testimony. We ask that you state your full name and organization, but if you prefer to testify anonymously, Staff will identify and refer you as a testifier and assign you a number. You may indicate in the chat if you do not wish to testify; however, chat should not be used for discussion or comments. Please be courteous to others by turning off your video and muting your microphone while waiting for your turn to testify. Once you're done testifying, and if you do not wish to testify, you can view the meeting on *Akakū* Channel 53, Facebook Live, or mauicounty.us/agendas. Okay. Staff has been monitoring individuals joining today's meeting, and will call them up in an orderly fashion. At this time can you call the first testimony?

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. . .BEGIN PUBLIC TESTIMONY. . .

MR. PASCUAL: Chair, the first testifier is Sarah Kama Kahio'ole (*phonetic*). And that is currently the only individual on our testifier list.

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay. Aloha, Sarah.

MS. MONIZ: Sarah Kamakawiwo'ole?

MS. KAMAKAWIWO'OLE: Hi, I'm not testifying. Thank you.

CHAIR SINENCI: Oh, okay. Mahalo for joining us. Staff, I see we have...

MR. PASCUAL: Chair, it appears we have one person in the Chamber coming down to testify.

MR. LAW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman Shane Sinenci. Aloha. Wassup. Aloha, Council. Aloha kākou. Aloha, *Akakū*. Makes me want to cry what I got to say, and you know, you probably already can predict that I'm going to talk about the...this community social services available to those affected by the August 2023 fires on Maui Island. Thank you for being here today to...to hear me grumble about the churches in my neighborhood again, mahalo. When you say social services, they think you mean tea and cookies. For real, those guys up there think the church is one country club, and you need a membership to get inside. My house burned up a long time ago in Virginia. That's why I had to move here. It gets really cold in the winter over there. When I ask for help for...at the churches in Kula is Roman Catholics and the King Cathedral guys judge me down for one squatter. And they don't even pay any taxes. I'd like to see at least one family from Lāhainā stay there and have one meal for the community at least once a month. And I'll put a disclaimer in there, nine out of ten people that goes to church is good, but the ones with the keys that think they the boss is the ones you to watch out for. Thank you for your time. I yield the remainder of my time to the Hawaiians.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Mr. Law. Members, Any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Thank you. Staff, any other testifiers this morning?

MR. PASCUAL: Chair, that's currently all the individuals that are on the testifier list. Would you like me to call for a last call for testifiers?

CHAIR SINENCI: Sure. Go ahead.

MR. PASCUAL: To anyone out there in the Chamber or in BlueJeans that is wishing to testify, please come up to the mic or unmute yourself now and begin your testimony. This is the last call, and I'll give a brief countdown...three, two, one. Hearing none. Chair, no one else is wishing to testify.

CHAIR SINENCI: Members, any objections to closing public testimony?

COUNCILMEMBERS: No objections.

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. . . END PUBLIC TESTIMONY . . .

**ITEM 1(6): COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES AVAILABLE TO THOSE
AFFECTED BY THE AUGUST 2023 FIRES ON MAUI ISLAND**
(RULE 7(B))

CHAIR SINENCI: Thank you. Okay. Members, I know it is 10:14. We cannot take a break yet, but I know that we are losing a couple Councilmembers. Ms. U'u-Hodgins, did you want to ask some questions before you leave this morning?

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Sure. Thank you, Chair. First, thank you guys for being with us today. All of your presentations were amazing. And even those online, those are incredibly moving. So, I only have a couple because you guys are doing such amazing things, but one of the things we hear, and we heard quite often last week, was the...the disconnect between what the Federal Government has to offer, what the State, what the County has to offer. So, my question is, to all you guys, is how can we best partner with you folks? How can we bridge the gap from the Federal Government, from the State Government, and how can we best work with you guys to facilitate all that you guys are doing for our community, and filling in the gaps that we're having difficulties doing? And I know that's a big, broad question, but any advice at this point would be helpful. Thank you.

MR. WONG: Sure, I can...for nonprofit organizations, I can tell you this is a little bit difficult because many organizations are grant-driven, right? So, depending on where they are receiving funding from, whether it's County, State, or Federal, will drive the programs that they do, and they have to stay within the boundaries, the guidelines, of each of those funding resources. It's not a bad thing, it is just a natural fact that that is how many nonprofits operate. Not as many nonprofits have the flexibility to be able to operate outside of direct grants. That would mean that they are raising money independently of their grants that...that provide unrestricted funding. You can't apply for unrestricted funding through the County of Maui, nor can you through the State, nor can you through the Federal Government. But you can through other organizations, maybe some foundations like Hawai'i Community Foundation as an example, or some family foundations, or through their own fundraising. But primarily, even grants that come through something like Hawai'i Community Foundation, they're going to be very programmatically specific. So, that's where some nonprofits will be stuck in those categories. How the County, to answer your question, could potentially support is a big step, which is to ask nonprofit organizations to maybe demonstrate where the pukas are that are not being met by Federal, State, and County grant-specific types of work, and see if they could write something that is a way that they could fill in some of the pukas that are being me...not being met. That's really how nonprofits really began, because they were meant to fill in the gaps where...where Government was not...where Government, and actually churches, were not. Then that's how nonprofit's work began. But there is less and less of that funding available. Even within very program-specific grants that are offered, there is less and less opportunity for the nonrestricted money to be used. And so, it's really hard for a nonprofit organization to be able to expand its

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resources and do more when they don't have the unrestricted funding to be able to apply to the operations of running the organization.

CHAIR SINENCI: Anyone else wanted to...

MR. CARROLL: Yeah, let me...let me give it a try at this question. You know, so, CNHA, we're a...we're a national intermediary, and now we do have 1,000 different members that we...that is under our umbrella. So, what we do is we try to gather all of the information from all of these different members, and a lot of them are nonprofits, and asking them, what are what is it that you folks do? Because you're right, they're...all...a lot of them specialize in certain areas and fields. So what we do is we gather all that information, and we help to disseminate that...that information from the private side. You know, we also work very closely with the State, County, and Federal Government to try to identify the...the different resources that are available. And I think that one of the biggest reasons why we brought the hub together is to bring all of the different services into one place. So, you have the Red Cross, you have FEMA, you have SNAP benefits, and all the different local service providers as well that may know about all the other serv--...or resources that are available all in one spot. And, you know, I'm...I'm hoping that we can be able to expand that and be able to broaden the different services and resources that we have available for the community.

CHAIR SINENCI: Any of our resources online would like to respond?

MS. MATAGI: I...I would, if that's okay. I also participate in ESF-6, which is a state task force for emergency care...or mass care, rather. And one of the frustrations that we've had is the lack of communication and clarity. So, as an example, I'm going to use the deadlines for the American Red Cross, which were not sadly extended, despite the fact that community members asked for it to be extended. But unfortunately, the State made the decision not to do so, for whatever reason. The problem is, though, a lot of the information that was being disseminated was not in language. So, for those community members who do not speak English as a first language, it was very difficult for community-based organizations, such as Papa Ola Lōkahi and our community partners, to get out clear messaging to our community members. So, they were already, residents in Maui, two weeks behind. Then you have a deadline that they are unable to meet. And oftentimes, when they went to these resource centers, there were not translators or interpreters available. So, when I went to War Memorial, there was a Marshallese family that was there trying to receive services. They did not speak English, and because of this language barrier, they were then turned away. Luckily, I had my phone with me. I called my Marshallese interpreters that I know, and we were able to walk them through the process. But because there is nothing set in stone, despite there being Federal laws that say that we have to provide interpreters onsite, they were not there. So, there's that issue. There's long-term sustainable funding that needs to be set up for community health workers who serve as navigators. Because what we are asking community organizations such as Papa Ola Lōkahi and our partners to do is to come to these events and volunteer our time, or find community members to volunteer their time. The State of Hawai'i, during COVID, created a...an investigation team that was made up of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders who were native speakers. Unfortunately, they did not

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continue that program. So, we were not able to call on them to assist, as we did during COVID. So, how do we create funding sources to establish these workforces, but also, how do we create collaborative partnerships with our community members so that that way, when there's an emergency, there's clarity in messaging. And everything that's being done from the start includes community. So, if we're going to do something, what we always use is no kākou, na kākou...for us, by us. So, if we're going to be there at the table, then we need to be there at the beginning. You can't bring us in towards the middle or the end, and then say, here's a deadline, I hope you can still meet it. Unfortunately, that has been problematic, and that's why we continue to see Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders again overrepresented and being further marginalized and pushed out of housing...my mana'o. Thank you guys so much. And I'll turn the time over to whoever else would like to share.

CHAIR SINENCI: . . .*(inaudible)*. . . Tellie. Okay. Did that answer your questions?

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Thank you. Thank you, Chair. Yeah, and I...I apologize. I know that was kind of a broad question, but at this point, I think we're all just trying to figure out how we can best help. So, thank you so much. Thank you.

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay. Mahalo, Member U'u-Hodgins. Okay, Members, we've reached our mid-morning meeting mark. And so, if...if there are no objections, we will take a ten-minute break, and we'll come back at 10:35. Okay. The WASSP meeting is now in recess. . . .*(gavel)*. . .

RECESS: 10:24 a.m.

RECONVENE: 10:39 a.m. (Excused: YLS, NUH)

CHAIR SINENCI: . . .*(gavel)*. . . Aloha and welcome back to the WASSP Committee of Monday, October 2nd. It is now 10:39. Mahalo, Members, for that quick break. So, we'll continue with Councilmembers' questions. I...I know that Member Paltin has another meeting with State representation, so I'll...we...we can refer to her for her line of questions, if that's okay, Members?

COUNCILMEMBERS: No objections.

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay, great. Thank you. Member Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Chair. I guess I just had a general question for the healthcare professionals. Like, you know, knowing that a lot of folks don't want to take mental health support from people that they don't know, what would you tell somebody, like, if they...if they can't sleep through the night, or if they're, you know, concerned about sending their kids to school and there's no evacuation plan or route, or that the air-quality monitors don't monitor the air quality in real time, or that, you know, they've been moving every two weeks and so they're not unpacking, and...and their mortgages are not being deferred? And they won't have a job, and they don't want to go to work but, you know, the tourists are coming. Like, how do you...what...what would you say

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to someone?

MS. SEABURY: If it's okay, I'll go. I'm not sure if other folks...

CHAIR SINENCI: Go ahead, Doctor.

MS. SEABURY: Okay. You bring up really, really good questions. And because we know most people don't see mental health providers, many of these answers...many of these questions are going to be answered by someone who doesn't...who doesn't do therapy for a living. We...we know that. And so, how do you find support, how do you find answers for folks that have that? I think normalizing that that's what's occurring across many families right now is maybe a beginning. And then around deciding when and how to talk about it. So, there are times when it's important for them not to talk about those worries, and those are in front of their children, or when their own mind needs to be focused on doing something else. So, there's this idea of when is the time to unpack the worries, and when is the time not to? And if folks have been avoiding talking about this all this time, their brains, their bodies, their souls, are going to force this conversation on them at inconvenient times if they're not talking about it at a time that's...that's of their choosing. And so, the beginning is to know when is a safe time to talk about all of these worries. They're not making up--these are not unfounded concerns. These are very real worries. And so, telling them, oh, you know, you should see mental health because it's...because it's getting out of hand doesn't feel true because these are valid concerns. So, the talking about when to get help often is not about whether or not it's reasonable, but the idea that this is more than anyone is supposed to be able to process. So, this isn't about not having a grip, this is about when it's too much to hold on your own. And so, people have lots and lots of choices about where they lean for their help. That challenge right now is in community. If they're choosing to lean on the people they already know, that whole community is stretched already to the edge, each of them trying to cope with their own, right? So, the idea of finding people that they can lean on that are further away from the epicenter of what happened--so, Lāhainā folks leaning on other Lāhainā folks, there's going to be a limit to how much that's going to help because one's going to set the other one to the other one--you know, they're all burning out. And so, it is the preferred choice that they lean into their own faith and cultural practices. That is just...that's better. It's...you know, and...and so, I would say first you do everything you know how to do that helps you be okay. That's always the first thing. Everything you already know that works for you. And the thing I would emphasize is that they have to do those things as intentionally--like it has to be mandatory lā'au to do those things that keep them well, whatever those are. But with something as big as this happening, that's not enough for most. They have to do more things than they usually do to stay well. And that's where the help seeking might be on the list of finding us a place to talk about those things, and then figuring out how to tolerate the distress of it. It is scary. It...it is, you know? We know that people are triggered by any sound that sounds like an alarm, like distress. We know. And...and it doesn't mean anything's wrong with them, it's...it's just that this was that awful. And so, helping them...yeah, lean to what works first, and then knowing that they have to find a longer list, more things to help them cope, than they ever did before. So, most people, most of the time...you know, we say, oh, you got to sleep well, you got to do this

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and that. You've got to balance. But if they skip two or three, but as long as they have like their main ones in place, they're going to be okay. But right now, it's kind of like you have to do all of the things all at once to stay well. So we know for 'ohana that are moving every few weeks, sleep is disrupted. It was already disrupted because much of what happened, happened at night. And so, we know that many are not sleeping yet. And so, they're using different strategies to cope with that. Some people are finding it comforting to be in a pile of pillows or like under weighted things, simple stuff like that. For other folks, it's nothing like that. They're worrying about real-life safety for themselves and their family. And so, how do you...how do you tell them to put it down? You can't. But you can help them decide when they want to think about that and when they don't. And so, giving them sort of permission to make it work as it's working for them, and then ask themselves if it's working...how is it working, how they're doing it right? You know, I think that would be the question I would start with. It's...I feel like I want to sit with you and talk story for a long time. There's a lot of nuance to what I would encourage people to do. But I would say to the one who cares about the other person's suffering, to make sure that you've got gas in your tank before you start helping someone else unpack their story. Because if you're already at your edge, then trying to help them by sharing their load is not going to be...in the long run, that's not going to be okay. Both of you are going to fall. And so, how do we make sure that we're okay in taking in the story? And then if we have to--because we're the only one, right? We're the one people want to tell their stories to, then that might mean you lean into the help that they're not able to lean into. So, then if you're the one they tell stories to, then you have to have somewhere to put the stories. You have to have a way to ho'oku'u, to release it. And so, if you can't help the person directly, then you help who they're leaning on, and then so on. You just help where you can. I...I don't know if that helped at all.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I just had a follow up, you know, about...with the opening coming and people still having, like, rage against government in general. And then, like, you know, feeling pressured, like, who is opening, but no instruction for, like, dates that took other opportunities, and now they want to be back with their community, but there's not the pathway for that. But then too, like, being scared for their own safety as well. And then I don't think people . . . *(inaudible)* . . . to questions that are not helpful. And then like how you said about the short rope feeling. What would they do in that moment if...if that happened?

MS. SEABURY: Yes. Very good question. And one that's very real, and coming right now for folks especially who are going to re-engage with the visitor industry, or even if they're going to go get gas, and they're going to encounter people who decide in their time that they want to say how terrible they felt when they heard this happened kind of thing, right? So, they...visitors coming are going to want to process how they feel about it, not really understanding the sensitivity of things--I'm insisting you think about this right now because I'm interested. And so, helping folks kind of practice ahead of time, what is your off ramp? What is the thing you're going to say to not do this right now? So, talking about pale, right? How you barrier yourself for different things, knowing that we're not going to be able...we're going to have to have certain, like, thicknesses of pale up for the question, how are you doing? We have to have layers of answer. For the person we don't know and have no investment in, that's the...the most shallow,

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furthest-out answer. Least real information, I don't even check my own gut when I answer. All the way to the person who says, how are you, and they care, and they mean it. And...and if you said not good, they would hug you, right? Like there's...there's all these layers of who you're going to let in. And so, I would say because we are going to anticipate that with just more humans, nice humans, nails (*phonetic*) humans, selfish humans, 'olu'olu humans...just more humans on the island, there are going to be many more opportunities when someone's going to say something that rubs you wrong. That you're going to feel too vulnerable today, or your skin feels too thin today, to take off whatever they're throwing at you...or to resist the urge to tell them off. Both of those urges are going to be there. And so, you got--the...the thing that I always say is--or at least that I would encourage, is, like, know how much gas you have in your tank to make the nice words, to do all those things. And if you can avoid--so if there's days you're just not fit for nails humans, like...you're like, look, I can't...I can't run the risk I'm going to run into somebody and I'm going to get in a verbal altercation today because I need this job that I just got, then we have to prep ahead of time for how to handle that. What kind of pale do you need to be able to be around people if you're forced? And if you're not forced, to not do it. That we have to give ourselves grace right now, and...and wide berth. If...if today, if somebody tries me, I'm going to get in a shouting match, then today's not a good day to go to a meeting where I'm going to see a lot of the people that will very likely do that. Because it's...it's already happening, even when it was just Maui only, you know? It was still...people had the weirdest way of dealing with how they felt. You know, like the people who wanted to blow sunshine up everybody's business the first week. About optimism, and it was like, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa. No, no, no, no, no. That's not...that's not where we are, guys. So, sort of when people...that was already happening. And so, I can imagine that as people more and thousands return, that there will be a lot more of that. Or people who just want to look you in the eye and go, tell me how awful it was. And you're like, ew, no, you know? Like, that's personal, or private, or not what I want to do right now. And so, as a community, leadership can do things like put up messaging about that, or help people know who are the places--if you want to ask a naive and dumb question like that, who's available for that kind of chatting? Because it's not the average community member, right, it's not the average person that has the kuleana to answer their curiosity about how horrible it was. That's not theirs.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And like...you know, like . . . (*inaudible*). . . you might think that you're okay to go out on a day, but then if they say something that is, like...like not expected--like I've been hearing from folks that they'll try to explain why somebody else is having a hard time to deal with a conversation, and the person would say, I don't care. And that's not, like, something that you would expect anyone to say right now. Like, if you don't care, you don't even have to say you don't care, you can just walk away --

MS. SEABURY: Right.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: -- or something. But people are saying mean things too, like, for whatever reason. And like if you think, I'm okay to go outside and go to a meeting, but you never expected people to say, like, mean things...

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MS. SEABURY: Yeah, that'll just catch you under the rib because you weren't expecting it from them, right? Yeah. So, when you do get caught off guard, I mean, that's...that's the part that's hard is, I can even have grace for the person who said something mean, like, I don't care. If I know they're also affected, they may not be able to tolerate the exchange either. And so, they're already--you know what I mean? So, then the words come out junk because they're struggling too. Now, it could be that they're not struggling and they just were careless or thoughtless that day. And so, just knowing that any time you go out there in the world, you run the risk of having someone catch you off guard, you know, you're going to do everything you can to roll with that. But just knowing right now that it feels extra easy to irk you or to hurt you, you kind of have to save a little bit to...to protect yourself in that moment. If it means you have to be just a little more standoffish than you normally are, then that's what you've got to do because there's...you know, it's either that or you get in trouble for being the one who's overly emotional, or this, or that, or the other thing, you know? And you don't...we don't need a blame game throwing around right now. We're trying to give each other as wide grace as we can, but it's not...it's not easy. And this is Advanced...Advanced Placement community right now because everybody's healing. So, you know, it's like we have to all know that we can really hurt one another right now, even more than usual. Even right now, me talking about this probably is irking someone, and I don't mean to. It's just we can hurt one another right now so easily in the middle of all of this. So...

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

MS. SEABURY: And you just kind of got to know that to be. You just kind of got to know that's what you think.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: If you--because, like, the holidays are more and more . . .*(inaudible)*. . . is there a plan for...

CHAIR SINENCI: Doctor, did you get that? . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I just think there is a problem for, like, the upcoming holidays, because a lot of time, it's hard for folks that lost people . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

MS. SEABURY: You know, that's a...a really important community conversation about what everybody's going--because I can tell you that in the people that I've spent time with, the range of what people want and need around, even just things like...like...like family occasions and events has been so varied that it's hard to know what any one community is going to want or need. And so, talking about it as a group and...and letting you folks lead about what you need is important. And then...and then it's up to us social folks, us service folks to figure out how to resource it. So this...the conversation about Halloween costumes, that's not a small thing. Because, you know, for children, you know, we give...if we give--let's say social services gives them ten books each and whatever, it's like, where are they going to put it? You know, and then that is a whole situation. So, when we talk about holidays, I think what I would encourage for the folks that are going to convene that conversation is thinking about letting the community lead itself. So, letting there be enough choice in there. And...and with that in mind, that

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‘ohana need us to let them care for their own. So, if...if we're going to think about how to resource, we want to hand that resource to the parent. Instead of choosing what the kid's going to want, to let the parents create holiday and create meaning for their kiddos, or for ‘ohana to find the ways that makes sense for them to make meaning of these times. As much as we can get our...our ideas of what is good out of the way, I think that that's always better. But a willingness and an awareness that these asks are going to come, and that these expectations that we're ready to be what folks need is...is kind of there also. Some are going to want to skip the whole holiday. I know that. Just depending on where they are in their...in their grief. And so...but yeah, as a...as a Council, for example, you all might want to take up, like what is...what would be traditionally invested in celebration at a community-wide level for these communities? Whatever would normally be there, how do we reroute that effort and empower the community? I think that's a really valid question. How do you...how do you reroute support for this year, when hitting the right note is very hard, but super important. So, yeah. It's a good question.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And then, I --

MR. WONG: I think...can I...

MS. SEABURY: I was just...oh, go.

MR. WONG: Can I add to that, Dr. Seabury? I think what you are saying is...is really valid, is that families...Councilmember Paltin, I think that, you know, there is no one right solution and one right answer that's going to meet every family where they're at and what they need. And so, I think with the amount of service care providers and organizations that we have here on Maui that are responding, the answer is to provide options for families. And I think Dr. Seabury said, you know, that is really where, then, the family member becomes empowered because they choose the option that best...or that...what they feel will best help their family in their situation at that time. And they may choose different things, and what one family chooses to do to help their family cope right now might look very different from another family. So, I think so long as we create the options and the resources for people, and that they know that they exist, then the families will sort of gravitate towards what they think they need at that time. And so, we try to...we can't be everything for all people all at once, but we can provide a lot of different opportunities for families. And only when they...when they pick and choose those opportunities for themselves will they be really ready to open and find the places where they're open...willing to open up themselves to what they really need as well. So, it's just about providing the options for people to self-care in the way that they need to self-care for themselves.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And I just had one follow up from a decision maker, like, from a Councilmember level, and then there's the Administration, and the State, and the Governor level. I know that there has been . . . *(inaudible)* . . . but I'm not getting any kind of data on that. And I just was wondering if...if that was a possibility, like, because as we're making decisions, and...and...and we're lacking the data of how that is affecting people, or just how people are being affected, is that something that happens usually,

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or not at all?

MR. WONG: I'm not trying to clarify the question, but I think what you're asking is, is there data that's being generated about what people are needing and in response so that it would help it would help the decision makers and people like yourselves to be able to make decisions based on what...knowing what the need is; is that right?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Or just accurate information. You know, somebody said that in one day, there were five suicides in Lāhainā, and I'm not...I'm not seeing any kind of official information about it, and I'm not sure if that's accurate, or what is being done if it is accurate. And, you know, not that necessarily we can stop that, but . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

MR. WONG: Yeah. I think...my thought is that this is, again, one of those situations where there is a way to get some sort of aggregated sort of data by, I think, getting reports back from the different nonprofits and the families that they're working with, and what they're experiencing, and what they're...based on what they're providing, and what people are reaching out for. You know, sometimes, as a nonprofit organization ourselves, you know, we'll come up with five different ways that we think we can help. And much to our surprise, the ones that we think are the least useful are the ones that the...the people gravitate to the most, right? And so, we learn from doing sometimes. And...but we don't learn anything by not doing, right? So, I think we turn back to the nonprofits who have really--and the community resources that have been on the ground since day one. And...and we learn from what they're experiencing, and what people are accessing, and what they're asking for. I know I have been receiving, you know, no less than 30, 40, 50 to 100 emails a day, people reaching out to us and asking for what they need. So, that, for me, is data, right? That's where I know that this is what people are reaching out to Imua for because they know what we provide and what we do for families. And I'm sure that what people are reaching out to Hui No Ke Ola Pono or someone else is going to be somewhat different. So, there is information out there, but there needs to be, I think, to your comment, a place to bring that information forward. I had an interesting day on Sunday. We provided, in partnership with Slappy Cakes in Kahana, an opportunity for families to have brunch together. And I don't know if you know Slappy Cakes, but they have grilling stations at the tables and you make your own pancakes, and they bring you all the different batters and all the toppings. And so, we had 40 families register for the brunch. There was a 10:00 seating, and 11:00 seating, and they could bring in a table of six. And they came down with their families. They had brunch together. And at some point in their brunch, you know, someone from Imua would come and sit with the family and talk story just for a couple of minutes and check in with them, see if they were finding all the resources they needed, to see if...how their children were being cared for, what was lacking, what they still needed to find resources for, what help could they have. And we took an inventory. We just listened, talk story. We wrote down what they were saying. But the thing that really took the families by surprise was, you know, the idea of sitting down together and having breakfast--and making your own breakfast, they said, was very healing for them. Because up until this point, someone's been doing everything for them, right? They've been getting their food from a handout truck, or a relief center, or from the hotel, you know, fast food line. But

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the idea of being able to just sit, and flip their own pancakes, and make their own breakfast gave them a sense of self-efficacy, and they were able to break bread together as a family in a...in a comfortable environment, which they haven't been able to do for so long. And that put them in a state of mind and comfort where they were able to open up and share with some of the things that they needed, and that they were still looking for. It's just that might have worked for that group of families that day, but it might take something else to work for another group of families to get them to share. But we just keep doing these things until...until we've had a chance to touchstone with the families, with people, and...and help them get what they need. It's a long--this is--we've said it from the beginning, I think, that we're in this for a very long haul. There's no short-term solutions to all of this. We have to do this for a very long time, while continuing to do the thing that we know we have to do as well and move forward. You know, this is Maui's 9/11, to be honest with us, right? This is...this is that level of devastation to our community and our environment. And we will respond as best as we possibly can, but we have to do it over a very long period of time.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo.

MS. PURDY: Can I add? Sorry.

CHAIR SINENCI: Go ahead, Dr. Purdy.

MS. PURDY: So, mahalo nui for all your questions. I'm sitting here taking notes because as you're talking, I'm just getting triggered by all of these things. But to your point, I'm going to backtrack us to tourism, right, and how...how do we prepare the community for the opening up of the West Side? And to me, it's very unfair that the community members of Lāhainā have to prepare. I think there has to be some education on the tourists' part. And you know, at the airport, when you're standing at baggage claim and, you know, you see this video of all these luaus that are available, I feel like there needs to be an education. Like you are here, this is a new Maui you are visiting. The Maui that you knew is no longer. Yes, the West Side was impacted. But so...you know, Dr. Aukahi talked about the layers. Yes, I don't live in Lāhainā. I live in Wailuku, but I am supporting people from Lāhainā. And so, I feel really bad. And I'm just going to call myself out and say, like, driving in and out of Lāhainā, and you see a car with their convertible roof down just cruising...I can't help but feel like, oh, my God, I don't have aloha for you right now. You know, and...and that's so bad to say. And like I said, I'm not a resident of the West Side, but I'm just like, what are you doing here cruising? So, I think there needs to be education on the tourism end. Like, if you're a tourist, please understand that these are the things that we are dealing with. Our community is still processing. If you don't feel the aloha that you used to feel, I hope you're coming and visiting understanding that. It's not that there is no--I mean, look at all the beautiful things that had happened in the community, you know? It's not that there is no aloha, but we are just stretched very thin, and tread with caution. And I don't know who's the right person that needs to tell the tourists that message. So, that's one thing. And the other thing, I think also Dr. Aukahi talked about, was connecting back to your cultural practices. And so, I think at Hui No Ke Ola Pono, you know, that's--we have been trying to figure out how to set up, where to set up these cultural workshops that help people

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reconnect to those practices. You know, I was weaving lauhala one day in my class, and I sat next to a mom of a son that goes to Lahainaluna. And we're just weaving, right? Like, we're in the class, we're learning. And she sits next to me, and she's just like, I am so over this year. I cannot handle one more thing. And, you know, it's...it's in these spaces that we engage...like, breakfast, you know? Like, there's an activity happening, but your mind quiets a little bit, and you're able to focus, and you're able to have these productive conversations that elicit all these emotions that you don't neces--...you know, I'm sure this mom had no idea she was going to tell me how it's been so hard. But, you know, it's creating these safe spaces, I think, both on the West Side, outside of the West Side, wherever these families are. That's kind of, I guess, the angle and the things that our organization is trying to figure out, like what are the cultural practices that we can bring in that will help people just reconnect and process without really knowing that they're processing, right? Like, we have to almost trick people, or set up these environments, right? Like, set up breakfast, set up these things where that elicits kind of the processing. So...mahalo.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Doctor. Yes, I think we got to lead with pancakes, chocolates, and...and ice cream. And thank you, Members, for allowing--we did want to support Member Paltin, our West Maui representative, so mahalo for your patience. But we'll go to some of the other members for questions. Chair?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: I don't have any questions.

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay. Thank you. Tom, go ahead. Councilmember Cook.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you. Thank you, Chair, and thank all of you. I mean, this is very, very emotional. And I mean me personally, I've been feeling numb, overwhelmed, and your being here today and, you know, talking about mental health and a lot of things, and it's just like, pchoew (*phonetic*). What you're sharing is appreciated, valued. So, I'm going to shift gears for a minute. But Director Wong...and we spoke briefly, but building permits in the County of Maui. And I think this...this conversation, although it's--I'm...I'm kind of like intentionally compartmentalizing this--it resonates through what we've been discussing because Federal, State, County Government agencies...I don't want to get too philosophical for a second, but we...our country is basically, and our world, is suffering from, you know, what it means to be human, and how we support and love each other, and dealing with materialism, and constantly being bombarded with negative stuff, and, you know, safe place...safe spaces. I mean, I get chicken skin with it, like, where are they? Can you tell me where these safe spaces are? Could you briefly describe how long ago you applied, that the...your project, like just snapshot, how long you applied, and briefly, your sort of synopsis of the process? We, collectively...I know the Administration's working on it. The Council, everybody I know this feels strongly about it, to be able to enable our community to not just rebuild homes, but have jobs, and commerce, and be creative, and enjoy, and feel.

MR. WONG: Yeah, it's a big question. And I think it ties together some of the feelings that we were saying we were having about tourism too, right? I think when we approach our community with balance, right, then people will respond more to our community. So,

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when people see things happening, like strip malls and fast food places opening up so quickly on top of each other, they feel like there's no balance to that, right, and how are we supporting the community? We, Imua Family Services, applied for permits to build a new preschool over three years ago now. And to this day, I'm still waiting for the final aspects of the permits to go through. And yes, there was a lot to go through, but we were--this was with me, as a nonprofit, working with three consulting companies that do this for a living. Chris Hart Partners, MC3 Architects, who built our early childhood development center, and Castaway Construction. So, it wasn't like I was filing papers myself and walking in there not knowing what I'm doing right, right? Three major consulting companies, three years. And I don't want to make it seem like no...some...there wasn't somebody who wasn't doing their job. Everybody was doing their job. But the problem was that the file would go in, and it would sit there. And a month later, someone would open it up, and they would make a comment, right, to one thing. And that comment would maybe make its way to the MAPPS. And then it would go to the next person, and then they would have to...would take a month. And then that person would look at it and make their comment, oh, and then it would go back to that office. But when you think of how many permits you need to check off to build something, and if it takes a month every time for a comment to be made, this is why it's three years, right? This is a preschool for 25 three- to five-year-olds. We...we're already an early childhood service provider with a preschool that's accredited, nationally accredited. This isn't like we don't know what we're doing, right, in an area that's already zoned to house a preschool, okay? So, it's not that complicated. This is low-hanging fruit to me, but it makes you stop and wonder what the priority is. Now, I know that I've had support from the Administration, this current one, as well as the one former, but there were definitely some roadblocks in the processing side of it, right? In order to build our preschool, we were required to do some off-site work, right, for the County, which helps to improve infrastructure in the town. I understand that. And so, we were very agreeable, all right? We need to add a new manhole. We need to add a new fire hydrant. We're going to change out a four-inch pipeline under Koeli Street to a six-inch pipeline...absolutely, we'll do that. And the Mayor was gracious at the time to say, well, we'll pay for that because your donors shouldn't have to pay to improve that Wailuku infrastructure. So, thankfully to all of you, that funding was approved. So, we even had the money from the County to do the work, to improve the infrastructure, to build the preschool. Still waiting on the final approval to do the work that we were being asked to do by the County to begin with, right? But what it communicates on a larger level, to your point, I think, is what is the County's priorities, right? We already knew that we were suffering even before COVID, right, before the fires, we were suffering from a deficit in childcare, quality childcare and preschool education. Only 43 percent of children in the State of Hawai'i go to preschool. Not because they don't want to, because that's all the capacity there is. On top of if there were more preschools that could be added and built, then you actually have to find the childcare providers and the teachers, right? So, we already are running at a deficit to provide our most vulnerable population, before their brains are even fully developed, with the support that they need to succeed in kindergarten. And then we wonder why, academically, the State of Hawai'i ranks so low on its outcomes. It's because we haven't put the emphasis at the early childhood level. And without supporting that, we're saying that this isn't important. But then when our community sees a strip mall go up, or a fast food place, or something else,

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and it seems to go up within a matter of months, you have to wonder what they think we're prioritizing. So, then when you talk about the aloha and tourism, it's because the message that is out there is that something else is more important than our people. Something else is more important than our children. So, the way to approach it, in my opinion--this is just my opinion--is that there has to be that balance that creates the aloha, that says for every fast food chain we'll put up, let's open a school, let's open a preschool. For every fast food chain we open up, let's open a health resource in Lāhainā. We...most of the nonprofits had some sort of satellite hub in West Maui, and now most of us have none, obviously. And that's not necessarily to be the priority, but we do have to prioritize, when rebuilding, that we are rebuilding the resources that families need. And I think when families see that we're rebuilding the resources they need, like the health care, and preschools, and childcare, and daycare, then they'll be more okay with the lū'aus and the tourism because they're feeling supported, and their families are feeling supported. But we're not going to be able to do any of that if it takes more than three years to build a preschool. And in response to the fire, all I wanted to do was find a safe place to put these children. And I have the physical space. I can do this. I could have done it from week one without all of the roadblocks in my way. So, we have to determine what the priorities are, but we have to...we have to say their priorities, and then we have to prove to people that we actually are making these our priorities, that these children matter.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you.

MS. YARBOROUGH: Can I add to that?

CHAIR SINENCI: Go ahead.

MS. YARBOROUGH: So, speaking of a little bit of the roadblocks, without getting into too much detail, Nohe had asked, how can the County sort of help in regards to some of the gaps, because she mentioned Federal, State and then County resources. The deadlines for each resource do not match up. So, for nonprofits, especially if you have the opportunity to apply for Federal funds, you already anticipate this very long process that you cannot use those Federal funds up by the time the process is done. So, it's like a reimbursement thing, right? We're going to give you the money, but you need to fulfill these, you know, guidelines which are provided through your County processes, or your State, but we can't get it back to them in time to get the funding. So, there is that gap where all processes do not match up in timeline. And to what he's saying about it takes a month for someone to open your file, read it, make a comment, it can take six months for someone just to give it back to you to tell you, you did something wrong, or it's then incomplete. So, for a lot of people providing social services, all these nonprofits, there is that barrier where the Federal, State, and County systems do not match up.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Risa. Any other questions from the Members? Member Rawlins-Fernandez, did you...go ahead.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. I wanted to thank all of our resource personnel. On behalf of our communities, just so much gratitude for

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everything that you're doing. And...and mahalo, Chair, for allowing Member Paltin to exhaust all of her questions before leaving. I wanted to thank Mr. Wong to really speaking the hard, honest truth to us, and holding Government accountable. And not just, you know, stating problems, but bringing some proposed solutions. And I...I really like a lot of the ideas that you've suggested, and I'm sure there's more, so I would love to meet with you later to figure out how exactly we can put those ideas into action. I think...you know, it embarrasses me that we...we move so slow. And I think that what everyone has been speaking to is that the government has to stop causing more harm to our community members. And so, we have to work together and better to figure out how we're...we're not causing more harm to our community. And one of them, you know, we keep speaking about is opening tourism to West Maui. You know, and I...I know this...this Council, you know, we...we...we don't have direct control over that. We heard from testifier after testifier last Wednesday about it. And so, I...I don't want to ask a question about how we help our community members prepare for that mentally and emotionally because I think it's near impossible. So, I did have a question. I'm sorry. I just...when I started speaking, it just kind of pssht (*phonetic*)...it's a lot. It's a lot.

MR. WONG: I can...I can chat while you think about it.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Go ahead. Go ahead.

MR. WONG: To what I hear...I can hear what you're saying a little bit. And I think that...I think that that's where I was bringing up conscious tourism before. I think there is a way to educate the tourist community. I think there's a way to be more selective with the tourism community, especially...we have the advantage of being a neighbor island, an outer island.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: I do have a...

MR. WONG: Good. Go.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Mr. Wong. I remember the question. You brought up conscious tourism. Is that in the Maui DMAP, and are...is anyone that would advocate on behalf of that concept in...on the steering committee for the Maui DMAP?

MR. WONG: I don't know what that would be, you guys. I can...let me...

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: I'm sorry. I'm sorry. DMAP stands for Destination Management --

MR. CARROLL: Action Plan.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: -- Action Plan. . . .(*laughing*). . . Thanks.

MR. CARROLL: Yeah. Destination Management Action Plan. I can...I mean, I...I can

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add...add...mention a couple of comments here. So, the Destination Management Action Plans was created by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority. It was a steering committee that was created for each different County, it was developed during--well, it started during the --

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Not County. Island.

MR. CARROLL: Island. Excuse me.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Not County.

MR. CARROLL: I'm sorry about that.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Island.

MR. CARROLL: By island. Sorry. So, what it was, was it was created to help to create...manage destinations, and help to understand what are the...the issues that each island is facing, and create different solutions for it. I think what is needed--and that was created by HTA, so this is something...and a lot of the things that we're discussing right now about tourism, I think that we need to be including Hawai'i Tourism Authority in...into the conversations as well. But I think that it would be really vital for us to consider bringing back the DMAP steering committees to be talking about the issues, and to, as a community, come together to be able to provide the solutions.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Mr. Carroll. And then I'm sorry I interrupted you, Mr. Wong. Did you want to finish your --

MR. WONG: No, no. I...I just was trying to give you a minute. I think...I think that it's...to what you're talking about, the DMAP, which I didn't know that term, but I like it, is...is sort of about. And I think that we have an opportunity on Maui because of our situation to really talk about conscious tourism. You know, in a small situation, we're sort of in the mess we're in because we don't really have a lot of diversified income on the island, right? And so, there needs to be an emphasis for future planning to diversify Maui's economy. And I think that a situation like this shows why that is so fundamentally necessary. But that's not going to help us in the immediate, right? But that's part of, I think, the responsibility of a group like this when it comes to long-term planning. But in the meantime, what we can do with people that will continue to come to our beautiful islands, is to be...to be culturally educational, to talk about conscious tourism from the onset. People that want to come to do good, to give back to...to build up a community, and...and to add to it, and to learn about it when they're here. And I think that when you really build on conscious tourism, you can build on island sustainability and all of its efforts as well, and...and people can really have a positive impact in a community. And I mean, you can see that in the most simplest of things. When people build wells in Africa or, you know, build schools in...in parts of South America and things of that nature, you can use your tourism economy to help build your community. It doesn't always have to be about what they take from it, but you can use your tourist community to help build community.

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CHAIR SINENCI: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Wong.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Mr. Wong. And then I have one last question, Chair. Oh, sorry.

CHAIR SINENCI: No. Just a reminder, Staff reminded me that we're...we'll keep discussion to our social services. And I understand, as tourism being that extrinsic factor that may, you know, weigh in on our residents' mental health. So, we'll...we'll keep it at that. Go ahead, Member Rawlins-Fernandez.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. Yeah, because tourism is putting a strain on the mental health, causing their...creating a higher need for social services. So, that's...that's the connection there. And then I have a question for Mr. Carroll. So, I...I heard that CNHA is planning to have a convention on Maui. And are there, like, some social services panels, or workshops, or any of those that would be associated with that, and...yeah?

MR. CARROLL: Thank you, Councilmember Rawlins, for that question. Yeah, there...there's been some rumors that we were bringing our convention over to Maui. You know, we've held our convention annually on O'ahu for the last 22 years, and we haven't made a public announcement yet but, you know, after talking with community leaders, we've decided to bring our convention over to Maui, yes. It's...the goal is to uplift the...the voices of Maui and...and the...and...and the people as well. And also to provide a economic stimulation for a lot of the Maui businesses. So, we are still discussing the different type of agenda items that's going to be part of the...the convention, but we will be focusing some of the discussions on, yes, social services, and how we can be able to provide...or what...what is it that the community needs? You know, I think another thing that we want to try to do is to be able to bring a lot of our different partners that we have at our...at our resource hub, and maybe other providers as well, to be stationed at our convention to be able to pro--...or so they can share their different services that they...they do offer too. Oh, last thing, November 12...or 14th through 17th...November 14 through 17 at the Maui Arts and Cultural Center is likely where the location is going to be.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Mr. Carroll. Mahalo, Chair.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Member Rawlins-Fernandez. Go ahead, Pro Tem Kama.

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Thank you, Chair. And thank you, everyone, for being here this morning. It's...it's really exciting, at least to me it is. I mean, I feel like that we've all had a mental health morning just talking about all of the things that...that is impacting how we feel, how we think, what we believe, what we've heard. And, you know, when you pack it all in, at some point you have to ensure that you don't take it all in. You hear it, you...and you listen, you understand it, you try to resolve some of those things, but you don't necessarily have to own it because you don't want that upon you too much, that you can't continue to do the work or even enjoy your family when you are at

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home with them. But one of the things, you know, I remember when I was a kid, when we would go visit family or friends, school friends like that, if we went to their home and they had chores to do, they couldn't go out and play. But if we help them do the chores, then they can go outside and play mo' (*phonetic*) fast, stay mo' long, right, until the next chore came around, probably around lunch, or after lunch, or something like that. Which reminds me that when...you know, as we became moms and dads, and...and our children started to bring their friends over the house, right? So, we'd have to tell our children how we want them to behave when they go to other people's homes, and when they bring their friends to our home. There are rules, right, and we all have rules. Other family members have rules. I mean, one of the first rules my dad always told us, that when you go to other people's house, you make sure you come home for lunch or dinner. You don't stay. If you are invited, you call, right, because we don't want to be a bother. We don't want to, you know, be a burden to other families, right? Because when my dad and them were kids, they always remembered that they were so poor that, you know, they couldn't afford to feed another mouth. Therefore, it was like if you go visit your friends, it's okay, but, you know, don't intrude upon their mealtimes like that. But the idea about that was when you go and you visit, and people need help, you help them, right? And then you have a great relationship with them. So, going back to what you're talking about, Dean, about conscious tourism, right? Yeah, these people are unconscious sometimes when they come. But you know, it's up to us. When we're sitting next to them on the plane, on the flight, hey, for five hours, at least for five, we have their ear to us, right? That's a lot of education we can do with these tourists. And it becomes incumbent upon us, I think, to help share our culture, our traditions, our expectations of how we would want them to behave. So, I do that on flights all the time. And sometimes I'm really so exhausted, I just put my glasses on, I close my eyes, and I sleep because I don't want to talk to people. Because sometimes you'll get on a plane and people want to talk to you about other stuff too. But...but anyway, that's...the issue is, I wanted to talk about and ask you folks the question that, as you are all service providers onto our community and onto us, that similar to what Member U'u-Hodgins had asked, how can we, as a Council, help to relieve some of the pressures that you folks are under, such as we heard from you, Dean, about the issue with--and I'm sure that Member Cook, because that's his Committee, is going to take a real hard look at that. But what are the other things? And so, I met Tellie because my son is a...and his wife were navigators on O'ahu from Papakōlea. And...and so, they needed a spot, and they didn't know--and they were trying to call Parks, and they weren't getting anywhere, and they needed someplace in South Maui. So my daughter-in-law calls me, and she connects me with Tellie, and then we ended up having to get a facility out on the South Side. So, my question, again, is how can we help to take some of the pressures that you folks are under as you support our community here that this Council can actually do for you? That's my question to all six of you on the panel today. And anybody can begin.

MS. PURDY: I'll start. Mahalo nui. Papakōlea was huge in helping Hui No He Ola Pono run their donation center, so it was so nice to see Iwane (*phonetic*). But it's exactly that, it's...it's these spaces, you know? You have people, all kind of organizations coming from the neighbor islands, and they come, and they're like, we need space. And then

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like, stand in line, everybody else needs space too. But that direct access and able to provide options, even like KCC, you know.

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Yeah. Yeah.

MS. PURDY: It's just so helpful because while we would have loved to host them at Hui No Ke Ola Pono --

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Yeah.

MS. PURDY: -- there's no way that the Cameron Center could...could hold all of that. So, they're like, no, we got space at KCC, so that was super helpful. But I think it is those, you know, I would love to plan for it, but it's...it doesn't happen that way. It's just one off, we need space, we've got to set up, we've got to stand something up real quick. Where can we go? And, you know, even as we plan, and as we're looking to host workshops, right?

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Yes.

MS. PURDY: Of course, we want to go into the hotels --

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Yes.

MS. PURDY: -- where people are, but --

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Yeah.

MS. PURDY: -- every conference room is taken. Some of the timeshares, no more conference room, right? So there's no, really, space. I think if there was some kind of inventory--because we do this at Lāhainā Health Center too, where there's a designated room where specialists can come.

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Yes.

MS. PURDY: So, there's a calendar, there's a schedule. This space is open for anybody to pop up. Just schedule it in advance. I think from what I hear of other organizations, because nobody has space out there, something like that--you know, I don't know what the inventory on West Side for the County --

COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Um-hum.

MS. PURDY: -- Parks and Recs looks like, but I think resources like that would be helpful for us to know so we know what's available whenever there are groups that are like, hey, we want to go--you know, and it's great to be like Nāpili, Gateway. You know, there's all these spaces, but it's so cumbersome, it's busy, it's not welcoming to some, you know? Like if you don't know, you don't know. But yeah, I would say that would be helpful for us on our end.

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COUNCILMEMBER KAMA: Good. You got that? Okay.

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay. Anyone else? Nick, did you want to chime in?

MR. CARROLL: I...is it working? Okay. I...mahalo, Councilmember Kama, for that question. I...for...for us, I think the question we have is, how can we help you? We're all over here to Kāko'o Maui right now, and if there's any other services or resources that you think that we should be providing, please just let us know, and then we're happy to support.

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay. Thanks, Nick. Member Sugimura, did you have any questions, or --

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: I actually --

CHAIR SINENCI: -- comments?

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Yeah. I want to express our appreciation. You know, whenever I see Dean Wong, right, I think, okay, what is Dean Wong doing? Because it's creative, it's...it's heartwarming, and he always has big pictures, you know, like what you expressed today, and appreciate that a lot. And please continue, right? So, in...in terms of the visitor industry, I think what you're talking about is so relevant because of...of what was mentioned, the testimony that we heard from Nohe U'u-Hodgins' Committee on Wednesday night, 1,000 people into the Westin Ballroom. And we heard loud and clear, you know, not the right time, October 8th, we're opening. And, you know, the community spoke loud. There's also a community out there who says, but we want to come back. We need to hire our people there on--you know, or we need to...we need to bring business back. So, there's a...a lot of tension, you know, in the community. And I wonder if, you know, through all your good work with CNHA, you know, we can bring Hawai'i Tourism Authority, you know, ideas like this, and...and make it work for, you know, the greater good. That is a big, big ask, but...and a lot of emotions. It was...was very...very sad for a lot of people. Very angry. I don't...I don't blame them. And more of that needs to happen. One of the things that I got to--and thank you, Member Sinenci, that you were a part of the Pu'uno [sic] --

CHAIR SINENCI: Honua (*phonetic*).

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: -- Pu'unēnē. So, there was an opening that happened, and some of you are involved with that. Appreciate it. So, this is what we learned. This...I call it tent city, you know, because it really came up...26 tents came up for 150 adults. I posted this on my...on my social media because I thought, wow, this is amazing that--my thing was, Government can work fast. Let's...let's do this for housing. And that one tent was for...you know, for television, one tent was for medical, one tent was for eating, and, you know, showers and whatever. So, there was an administrative tent. And I looked at it, and I want to know what you think of it. But I looked at it, you know, that people from the wildfire that were impacted, there were three things I was told from Red Cross you needed to do. You either got to get registered with FEMA, have a FEMA number, Red Cross number, and be impacted by the fire. If you were in the

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hotel--because all of these people went to...from the shelter, War Memorial, right, into hotels. Nobody said, were you...you know, nobody qualified them, but we wanted to get everybody housed. So, that happened with great effort. And then through periods, as you said, there was FEMA and Red Cross in the lobbies, register, register, register, right? But people didn't for whatever reasons, and that's fine. But if you were in a hotel, you had children, you could stay under Red Cross Care. If you were in a hotel and...and were medically deemed handicap, the Red Cross was going to still continue caring for you even if you didn't do the three things, right? So, I thought, great. And guess what? The 150 people that went to...into this tent city were those adults that didn't qualify for those three things. But I was looking at it from a perspective of we wanted to figure out how to house the unhoused, right? And what a blessing, you know, it could be. But on my social media, people were upset, like, how can you treat the people in West Maui like that? And I didn't look at it quite like that. I was looking at it from, yay, now we can house people that we didn't have the opportunity to do. But this wildfire brought a 26 tent in Kahului, for them to now be sheltered, and have medical treatment, be safe. And I...on my social media, I said, please call me so I can explain this to you. Because my perspective was so different. You know, I want to house these people. I want to give them another opportunity. This is better than them sleeping in their cars, you know? But they'll have access to medical and wraparound services, and look, some of you are helping them. Isn't that wonderful? Shane Sinenci brought Project Vision to them. I mean, there's just this...all this wonder that went on. And...and I hope that through this...through this terrible wildfire, right, one, it never happens again; but number two is, all these people who we could not help, we could not reach before, let us help you, you know? Let...let government be the path to your next steps. And I was especially grateful that these unsheltered people with children and who had medical needs could stay under the Red Health...Red...Red Cross Care. I was so grateful, right? They didn't say, oh, you didn't qualify, so you got to get out. They said, continue on, let us help you, right? That's the beauty of who you are. Sorry. Going on.

MR. WONG: You got a small taste of being in the health and human service industry?

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Yeah.

MR. WONG: Rule number one, never read the comments.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: . . .*(laughing)* . . .

MR. WONG: It's never good enough, and it...there...and you can't make everybody happy, right?

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Right.

MR. WONG: But you do it with the intention of helping the people that you were trying to help, and so you did good. And those people have something that they didn't have before. This is...we face this every day.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Oh.

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MR. WONG: Every--you know, as...as much as the praise that you gave me, I get emails every day--you didn't do enough, you should have done this, you could have done it this way. We do the best we can with what we have, with the resources we have, in the places that we are, and the energy, you know, that we can put into it. And it's never going to make everybody happy, it just isn't. When we provided the immediate childcare relief and the respite for families in West Maui, we got a lot of complaints when it stopped, right? No one said thank you for the six weeks prior to that. But we got a lot of complaints when it stopped, even though we were down to less than 20 children per day. So, we knew that the timing was right. But it's just the point, right? It...it's just...this is what keeps us moving forward all the time, is that we...there's always a need, there's always more to do, and we can't do it all. You know, it's just...just don't read the comments.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: I will tell you something. You're right. So, this morning, I talked to Ed Sniffen because the land is DOT land. I don't know how many acres it is, but where the 26 tents are. And I said, okay, how long is--what's going to happen, right...because as the emergency goes and as thing goes on, things have deadlines, or things come to an end, so I wanted to know. And he said that land is DOT, and it gave me the feeling like they can stay there. And I hope so, you know, because 18 months was the plan time frame for that tent city. But you're going to have all these people now who may be depending on the shelter, and I would like them to still continue to have that care, you know? So, I appreciate what you're saying, Dean, because I read the comments, and I just thought, oh, I'm being misunderstood. I'm so grateful, and it's very, you know, silver lining way that now these people who the Council had put in, what, \$200,000 is, you know, Gabe Johnson and...and, you know, initiative to get work. And Kelly King, I think, trying to get people in cars...to be able to stay in cars, right, for the unhoused, and...but I think this is such a better solution. It's like a silver lining for this...for this disaster.

MS. PURDY: And I think to...so, just to clarify --

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Yeah.

MS. PURDY: -- this tent or Pu'ū Nēnē...Pu'uhonua o Nēnē is specifically for those that were unsheltered prior --

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Prior to --

MS. PURDY: -- the fires.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Exactly. Yeah.

MS. PURDY: And so I think that's the communication. Because that's what I understood it as, like, this is for people who are already unsheltered. They're like, no, it's for anybody. I'm like, are you sure, you know? So, I think...I mean, I don't know how much more you have to communicate, or market, or...you know, but there is that understanding

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that Pu'uhonua o Nēnē is for anybody that lost everything. And I'm like, ooh, I'm pretty sure it was specifically for those who were --

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Who were pre--...

MS. PURDY: -- unsheltered prior.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Yeah.

MS. PURDY: Okay. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Thank you. You can add to my Facebook.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Because I didn't...yeah. Okay. But anyway, exactly. Yeah, misunderstanding. And no matter how much I explained it, it didn't quite get there. So...

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Member Sugimura. Okay. Members, we've got a couple more minutes, but I did want to go to our panelists--I don't know if Dr. Seabury or Tellie is still online--and just do some closing remarks--oh, hi--before...before we close, and...and if you want, if you could address...we did address this being a marathon of sorts for the next couple of years. So, if you want, in your closing comments, to just address maybe some of the shortfalls that you may have with either funding, with either staffing, health providers, housing, those types of things as we, you know, foresee the next couple years. So, Dr. Seabury, did you want to start?

MS. SEABURY: Happy to. Thank you so much. I...I give much gratitude for being invited and included in this conversation today. In terms of the long run and the long haul, I think we are always doing a balance in the same way that we're talking about with sort of conscientious, appropriate tourism decisions and policies, similarly in health service provision. If we make it too big too fast, we run the risk of not having the right folks in the position. So, what do I mean by that? The right folks, meaning folks that are trained culturally, that are acceptable to the communities that...that need the care. And so, in all of these ways, when we evolve the health system, we want to make sure that...that just in the same way that community participation in the conversation stays at the forefront, I think that's...I'm going to say that that's maybe my take home point for today. As one of the folks that's joined Project Vision at Pu'uhonua o Nēnē, I can say, for example, that the conversation about what happens after the 18 months started before the first tent went up, you know, that everybody was talking about what is the long-term vision for that site? And that looking to the long-term vision is vital at this time as we try to help folks who have lost everything secure a sense of steady footing. Yes, we need to provide urgent and emergent care right now. That is absolutely true. You know, we've been going on ride-alongs with folks that are still being treated for burns...for...for burns that happened in the course of the fires. There's still that urgent and emergent right-now care. And then that's got to be balanced with these longer-term

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approaches, the things that have a little bit more vision than just, hey, Malia, we're bringing a whole legion of folks tomorrow, can you...can you open your offices for our guys right now? We need to have a little bit longer-term and kinder view of supporting the health systems and structures that exist. These agencies in many ways are...are energized by the people sitting at that table over there. They need us to make sure that we're not burning them out for no reason. And so, supporting them in the ways they ask for, and not just asking them to be the solution yet again one more time is...is maybe another of the priorities in terms of addressing shortfalls in funding. It's just to make sure that we have some succession planning going on with respect to all the do-gooder health providers in Maui, and that there's always that attention to the workforce pipeline, developing the next set of health workers. You can imagine how hard it is to talk to someone who had considered a heal--...a career in social services to continue to do so if they looked at how tired the helpers look right now in Maui. It's a tough sell. I know. I went and I spoke with the first day of the School of Nursing. And so, I can say that resources that go towards supporting that kind of workforce development all along the pipeline is going to be welcome and necessary if we are to have a sustainable workforce that is of Maui, for Maui...or at least do-gooders who come from other places, but feel kind of close, like allies, you know? Okay. Mahalo. Appreciate...appreciate your time.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Dr. Seabury. Is Tellie still online? Okay. She might have dropped off. Nick?

MR. CARROLL: Yes. I...I just want to say mahalo again for the invitation today and just reiterate that as we...as we continue, you know, our...our...the programs and initiatives that we offer will evolve. And I'm hoping that we can all come together and figure out how we can not silo each other and our resources, because bringing us together as one community makes us a lot stronger. And just...finally, just making sure that we're staying grounded throughout this whole process. Mahalo.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo. Dr. Purdy.

MS. PURDY: Mahalo to all of you for this morning and this conversation. I think for Hui No Ke Ola Pono, you know, culture is always at the forefront of everything we do, and so just trying to bring that. And, you know, while it's easy to just set up and do a little workshop, for us, it's about sustainability. And the community on the West Side deserve our best foot forward. So, as we plan, as we enter this community to provide services, workshops, care . . . *(inaudible)*. . . it goes back to knowing the culturally appropriate way and manner to enter these spaces so that we are not doing more harm than what has already been done. When we think about expansion and sustainability, you know, in our staff, we are having to upscale because our little operation in Wailuku is no longer enough. And so, to be able to hire, to onboard, to do all those things, it all takes time. Unfortunately, the funds that we're receiving to do all of this is like nine months, right, because it's COVID relief funds. And so, it's hard to plan for sustainability when our funding resources are up by the end of the year, or going to be 18 months, or, you know, I mean, it...it does buy us time to kind of figure it out. But we need long-term planning and long-term funding. You know, if I'm going to plan something, how can I get a

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five-year commitment down on the road when we're actually ready, because it's going to take time to train people to work in West Maui with the right demeanor, manner, lawena, behavior. So, yeah. I think just the long-term plan.

MS. YARBOROUGH: Thank you, everyone, the...for, again, the discussion this morning. Just to kind of echo what Malia said, and Councilmember Yuki Lei, there was...there was so much work that went on, you know, prior to you folks standing up tent city or...but there seems to be more urgency to support the nonprofits doing all this good work now because we're in a state of emergency. But what can we do long term so that we're continuing to support the services that are here all the time? And so, we're not behind the ball, you know, preschool three years later, but we're a little bit more ahead. So, that would be it.

CHAIR SINENCI: Dean.

MR. WONG: I wanted to close with, you know, your thought, Councilmember, about bringing back tourism. I think it's important that when we think about that, I think that there's a lot of thought that we're just assuming to West Maui. But I think, really, we can think about the other areas of Maui for the bring back right now, right? To our Paniolo Town, to Pā'ia Town, to Wailuku Town and the Historic District there, to South Maui. I think that's what we think about right now when we think about bringing back. And in...in doing so, and building up these communities, we're building small businesses that are already there. We're building resources, and we're maybe diverting some attention from the pain that still exists right now. I thought I would...you know, I handed these new documents out that...to you all. They're called the Imua Way. And I thought I would just share the manifesto in closing of Imua Family Services. The spirit of Imua invites and emboldens us to forge forward. Since 1947, Imua Family Services has thrived on cultivating a culture of creativity. Today, Imua celebrates how play is at the heart that drives children's success onwards. When we invite our community to Imua, we create spaces for children and their families to discover, nurture, and share a love for learning, and the joy of caring for themselves as much as they do for others. When we promote play, we promote a lifelong process of inner and outer discovery, helping each child, and every inner child, to learn and love something new about themselves, their community, and culture, and their planet. And since play can look, and feel, and mean something different for everyone, championing play means every child of any ability has the right and a place for play. Imua believes every child should have the opportunity to play, to experience the world through exploration and artistic expression, and to play their way to their full potential. Imua.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Dean. And mahalo nu nui ia o koa kahea (*phonetic*) pau for being here today. Members, we have finished our question and discussion with our panelists today, and I will now defer this item if there are no objections.

COUNCILMEMBERS: No objections.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Bring it back.

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CHAIR SINENCI: Again, mahalo everybody for being here, and sharing all of your guys' hard work and your mana'o, and we continue to support you as you move forward with...with your work. This now concludes the Water Authority, Social Services, and Parks Committee meeting. The time now is 11:59, and this meeting is adjourned. . . .*(gavel)*. . .

ADJOURN: 11:59 a.m.

APPROVED:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shane M. Sinenci", is written over a horizontal line.

SHANE M. SINENCI, Chair
Water Authority, Social Services, and Parks
Committee

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Transcribed by: Logan Tsuji

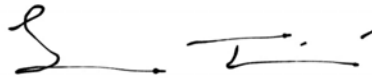
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CERTIFICATION

I, Logan Tsuji, hereby certify that pages 1 through 45 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 30th day of October 2023, in Wailuku, Hawai'i



Logan Tsuji