

DRIP Committee

From: Susan Pcola-Davis <susanp60@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 5, 2023 9:01 PM
To: DRIP Committee
Subject: Late Written Testimony
Attachments: 10_4 DRIP Committee Bill Presentations Recovery.pdf

Susan Pcola-Davis written testimony following meeting

I gave oral testimony at your meeting October 4. This is my written testimony provided for meeting documentation.

Mahalo

DRIP Maui Council Committee

October 4, 2023

My follow-up written testimony: Susan Pcola-Davis

Updates on Recovery Efforts in Response to the August 2023 Wildfires on Maui (DRIP-2(12))

Social Resilience

Social resilience, which may also be called **community resilience**, involves the ability of groups to recover from difficult situations. It involves people connecting with others and **working together to solve problems that affect people both individually and collectively.**

Aspects of social resilience include **coming together after disasters**, supporting each other socially, becoming aware of the risks that the community faces, and building a sense of community. **Such responses can be important during challenges such as natural disasters that affect communities or large groups of people.**

Presentations were verbal. Management communicated a number of things that are going on: but without a hard copy it was pointless. He also mentioned a county wide email issue as the reason for not having a presentation. Hard copies for the committee members would have been appropriate.

As I testified, I have been following up on issues that Dr. A. Whelton (Purdue) has knowledge of.

Due to the BOE announcing that the three Lahaina schools would be opening after Fall break, I had concerns about the water.

Referring to the actions taken by the Maui Department of Water, the hydrants and hose bibs have been sampled and found none detect (ND). Non detect does not mean that nothing was found. It means the findings were lower than the EPA standards deeming the water safe.

This has been a bone of contention with the Hawaii Department of Health for several years. Ernie Lau Honolulu Board of Water Supply and affected residents and military families since the Red Hill Jet Fuel spill that contaminated a water distribution system and the aquifer.

In response Dr. Whelton said that testing hose bibs are not great for sampling.

He said, in general all post-fire schools should have faucets sampled and also their service lines before opening.

I also brought up excerpts from this story regarding the water availability. Mr. Stufflebeam made some statements that are of concern.

1. He knew that all of the pumps did not have backup generators.
2. Since being in his position, were there any attempts to get generators on all of the pumps?
3. What will diesel generators do?
4. Where are the pumps located that have generators?
5. Where are the ones that don't?
6. Are the generators strategically located?

7. Is there recovery money that can take care of this?

Lack of backup power for pumps hindered firefighting in Kula

Associated Press October 3, 2023.

The lack of backup power for critical pumps seriously hindered firefighting in Kula, county water director John Stufflebean told The Associated Press. Once the winds knocked out electricity, pumps were unable to push water up into tanks and reservoirs that were key to maintaining pressure.

“If all those (pumps) had had generators, I think there is a pretty good chance we could have kept up,” Stufflebean said.

Besides hamstringing firefighting, the lack of pressure can make water systems vulnerable to contamination that jeopardizes clean drinking water.

The impact of August’s fires in Kula was far smaller than in Lahaina, where at least 97 people were killed and some 2,200 buildings destroyed in a fire so hot that thousands of water pipes melted. More generators wouldn’t have made a difference there, Stufflebean said. But it might have in Kula, where no one died and a few dozen buildings burned.

Stufflebean, who became director of Maui’s water systems in January, said it would **cost about \$12 million** to install the generators needed. He says the department will buy several diesel generators and seeks outside funding for others, but **“we may need to live with whatever we can get.”**

“It really comes down to funding,” he said. “The Maui water supply department has been underfunded for decades.”