

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Council of the County of Maui

MINUTES

April 14, 2026

Online Only via Teams

CONVENE: 1:05 p.m.

PRESENT: Councilmember Yuki Lei K. Sugimura, Chair (arrived at 2:08 p.m.)
Councilmember Kauanoe Batangan, Vice-Chair
Councilmember Tom Cook, Member
Councilmember Gabe Johnson, Member
Councilmember Alice L. Lee, Member (arrived at 1:12 p.m.)
Councilmember Tamara Paltin, Member
Councilmember Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez, Member
Councilmember Shane M. Sinenci, Member (arrived at 1:07 p.m.)
Councilmember Nohelani U'u-Hodgins, Member

STAFF: Kirsten Szabo, Legislative Analyst
Pauline Martins, Senior Committee Secretary
James Krueger, Senior Legislative Analyst
Peter Hanano, Legislative Attorney
Jarret Pascual, Legislative Analyst
Clarissa MacDonald, Legislative Analyst
Jean Pokipala, Council Services Assistant Clerk
Ryan Martins, Council Ambassador

ADMIN.: Kristie Wigglesworth, Deputy Corporation Counsel, Department of the
Corporation Counsel
Lesley Milner, Budget Director, Office of the Mayor
John Pelletier, Chief, Department of Police
Wade Maeda, Deputy Chief, Department of Police
Joy Medeiros, Assistant Chief of Police, Department of Police
Melanie Rodriguez, Accountant, Department of Police
Cheyenne Jarnesky, Accountant, Department of Police
Anna Haney, Maui MPO Planner, Department of Transportation
Emily Bartow, Administrative Assistant, Office of the Mayor
Chastiny Greig, Economic Development Specialist, Office of the Mayor
Claire Carroll, Economic Development Specialist, Office of the Mayor

OTHERS: Kay Anderson
Travis Liggett
Keolamau Tengan
Jasee Law
Jim Langford
Others (47)

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

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

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: . . .*(gavel)*. . . Will the Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee meeting of April 14, 2026, come to order. It is 1:05 p.m. I'm the Vice-Chair of this Committee, Kauanoë Batangan, and I will be acting as Chair for today's meeting. This online meeting is being conducted in accordance with the Sunshine Law. As a reminder, when your name is called, if you're not in the Council Chamber, please identify by name who, if anyone, is in the room, vehicle, or workspace with you today. Minors do not need to be identified. Committee Vice-Chair...or Committee Chair Yuki Lei Sugimura is going to be a few...be joining us in a few minutes. Councilmember Tom Cook.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Good afternoon, Chair.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Councilmember Gabe Johnson.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Aloha, Chair, Councilmembers, community members. There's no testifiers at the Lānaʻi District Office, and I'm here and ready to work. Mahalo.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you very much. Council Chair Alice Lee will be joining us in a few minutes as well. Councilmember Tamara Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Aloha 'auinalā kākou. Streaming live from the Council Chambers.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Aloha 'auinalā. Councilmember Keani Rawlins-Fernandez.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Aloha 'auinalā, Chair. The intonation of your voice makes it feel like we're about to receive an award. It's like Keani Rawlins-Fernandez. I'm happy to be here in person. There are currently no testifiers at the Molokai District Office. Mahalo, Chair.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Well, you were always deserving. I don't have anything for you today.

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

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: I...is Councilmember Shane Sinenci on yet? Okay. He will also be joining us shortly. And then online, I see Councilmember Nohelani U'u-Hodgins.

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COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Aloha, Chair. Aloha, everyone. I see Member Rawlins-Fernandez has her prize over there with M&Ms. I am at my private residence, and I do have a adult child, Makoa U'u-Hodgins, with me at home. I will be home for a bit, and then I'm going to take my meeting on the road, just FYI. Thank you.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you. Assisting with today's meeting are the BFED Committee Staff, and our invited resource persons from the Administration include the Budget Director, Chief of Police, members of the Police Department, and Deputy Corporation Counsel Wrigglesworth. Everybody, please see the last page of the agenda for information on the meeting connectivity. Thank you, Members, we...for attending today's BFED Committee meeting. We have one item on today's agenda. That item is BFED-1, the Proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Budget for the County of Maui. Members, I will be taking testimony after opening comments today. Before we begin, I'd like to recognize Councilmember Rawlins-Fernandez for comments on the Molokai residency area meeting.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: I have my...my award in my mouth. Sorry. One moment. . . .*(laughing)*. . . Mahalo for the M&Ms, Gabe. Okay. Sorry, let me pull it up. Do we have anything else to talk about while I'm pulling...okay. I got it. Okay. Mahalo, everyone who were able to make it. Member Cook and Member Paltin weren't able to make it because Mokulele struck again. So, six Councilmembers were able to make it, and we heard from 31 individuals who testified. This includes the three fifth graders who did not sign up to testify, but we heard about their film project that will appear at the Wailuku Film Festival on STEM, on incorporating ulu maika. And we received some written testimony. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. and adjourned at 7:50. We heard testifiers express gratitude and support for a variety of Molokai programs, including the value of Molokai Rural Health Community Association's Kūpuna Program, staff, and services, including social activities, yard service, lomi, podiatry, haircuts, and foot care for diabetes. MEDB STEMworks, including a resulting opportunity for Molokai students to present at a conference today on O'ahu, the STEM conference, and present their film on bullying at the Hawai'i International Film Festival. We heard testimony supporting MEO, the Transportation, Community Service, and Head Start programs, Family Life Center on Molokai, Molokai Community Health Center, Molokai...oh sorry, Maui Family Support Services on Molokai, Papa Makua Program. The first time being funded is Hale Makua Adult Daycare...oh, Day Health on Molokai. We heard testimony to support MOMISC, which is a Molokai committee under the Maui Invasive Species Control Program, or organization, especially in light of the recent coconut rhinoceros beetle finding on Molokai. Support for the matching fund under Open Space for Hui Wa'a o Molokai, and continued support for the Maui Film Commission, its first Wailuku Film Festival, and its pilot program to empower local filmmakers to tell the stories from the community. And finally, support for Sust'ainable Molokai and Molokai Heritage Trust. So, mahalo again to all of the community who came out last night, who testified and who did not testify, and who continue to do the good work on the ground. And mahalo again, Vice-Chair and my colleagues who were able to make it there and back safely. Mahalo.

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VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Mahalo, Member Rawlins-Fernandez, both for that report and for the amazing hospitality you provided us while on your 'āina. Members who were not able to make it, you really missed out on both the dinner she provided and the reception from our wonderful family and friends on Molokai. Okay. Members, we will...today we will continue our deliberations on the FY 2027 Budget. We will begin with comments from the Department of Police. At this time, I would like to invite the Department of Police to provide their opening remarks.

MR. PELLETIER: Aloha. Appreciate it, Chair. The...the reward or the prize is money. So...so, when Councilmember Rawlins-Fernandez was talking about it, I was sitting here thinking we...we...we have an opportunity here, right? Problems are opportunities. We know the problems. We...we know that there's financial crisis. We know we have tariffs. We have \$7 gas. We've got things that we didn't expect. Well, let me tell you, it's my fifth year coming in front of the Commission [sic]. It's the fifth time I've come here, and there's been no better friend in Maui PD's arsenal than the County Council. Let me be clear on that. We've come here and we've asked for help. We've looked to be a vision. We've tried to say, hey, here's where we are, and here's where we're going to go. And you guys saw that. We're having a little banter back and forth about the ability to send somebody over to one of our other islands, and we can do that now. It's telecommunications week. We have amazing individuals that answer 911 calls day in, day out, 24/7/365. They don't get a break. It doesn't stop, and they do remarkable work. They would be here today except they're answering the 911 calls. I want to make sure to recognize the incredible men and women of this Department that day in, day out, put their life on the line for those they've never met. We've got from POs all the way to chiefs in the back. We've got incredible people that are just absolute true heroes and...and professionals, and they do the...they do the policing profession very proud, and I...and I could not...I could not be, and my team could not be more thankful for what we've got. My Deputy Chief Wade Maeda is here, as well as our accountants, Cheyenne Jarnesky, and we have Melanie Rodriguez, and we will go through the different questions that we've got, but I wanted to highlight a few things. The first thing I want to highlight is, as we talk about the monies for the radio systems, the infrastructure, the CIP projects, it's not lost on me, and I...and I feel like it really does get lost, that the Police Department has bore [sic] the weight of all of this for the entire County in our budget. It's not in Fire's budget. It's not in Public Works' budget. It's not in communications' budget. It's ours, and so we maintain all that, and we're talking about the repeaters, the towers, the software, the different infrastructure that takes place. And as we go through the budget, and as we talk about and we have these questions, one of the things I really want to mention is, you want a mediocre Department? You want...you want a laissez faire? You want...there are some people who want to defund the police. I don't know, asinine. Or do you want an elite department? Do you want a department right now that's the tip of the spear in the State, because that's...that's what they are, the tip of the spear. They have more positive forward momentum than the other three counties, and it's not me talking ill of them. It's because of the work that they've done. It takes time to get to there, and we've had the ability to do that. And so, when we talk about where we want to go for the next five years, we want to strive for excellence. Maui County does not deserve to have a mediocre department. They deserve to have the finest police services available, period. To that

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end, there are six pillars of 21st Century policing, and it's in our strategic plan if you haven't got to see it, but the pillars of 21st Century policing came out of the Barack Obama Administration and have been codified in each presidential administration since. They were rededicated under President Biden in his executive order, and they haven't gone away, but one of the pillars is technology. And as we talk about technology and the different advancements in technology, there's so much out there. And so, as you...I don't think anybody has a flip phone. I think everybody's got something that's got the ability to have some apps and do some different things. And so, as we talk about that, and we talk about a real-time operations center...Councilmember Cook, you helped add this as like an amendment last year, and we were able to at least start that, but what we want to do is we want to complete that, and in there, we...we...we have the equipment. We've got the software. We've got the technology. We've got the infrastructure to get that, and this allows us to see certain things in real time. And so, for the...for the room, the...the software technology allows for AI anomalies to cause alerts. What does that look like? If it's in a crowded area, we could use...we could use Kīhei. We could use the...the Triangle, if you will. We could use Kā'anapali. We could use Lāna'i City, different...just different parts where there's...where there's a population. If you see certain gatherings, it'll...it'll...it'll trigger. You can point it toward the mountain, and smoke is an anomaly. Smoke is an anomaly, and we could actually see that in real time. And so, HECO, that you know, 20 percent...20 percent cost, right, because of gas, HECO's got a system that they three-party contract out, and then they give us washed-down data. It's not our data, it's the data they give us, right? It's not ours, but we could have our own data in real time, and we could integrate this eventually with Fire, with Emergency Management, with other factors, but we know if we build it the way we want it, we know we're going to get what we'd like to see. Some people are like, oh, well, there's cameras. Well, we don't write tickets based on cameras. I don't believe in that, my team doesn't believe in that. But if you think that we aren't going to look at was there an accident at this intersection, and who was the vehicle that caused the accident? Yeah. Because you know what? People lie. They lie to the police. Whoa. You know, and I say it like that because, you know, we've...we've kid-gloved public safety so much that everybody here--if I...if I'm wrong on this, then please tell me right now--but I'm going to bet in the last six months when you're at an intersection and it turns green, you wait at least a half a second because somebody's going to run a red light, or that's at least happened in the last six months. I see everybody nodding their head because it happens. Why? Because we don't have the stick, right? There's the carrot and the stick. We don't have the stick strong enough. So, why would we not utilize technology to make sure that we're as safe as we possibly can be? We can utilize these things at high crime areas such as the airports, different things like that. And so, for the money that it costs, we will save money, we will save lives. It's...it's not that much. It's 1.7. We can talk about how we break that down. Those incredible people back there did something that's never been done in the State's history. They created the first patrol canine unit in the State, period. These canine...these canine officers and their...and their animals, they will save lives, no doubt. One could argue that they already have. We've had de-escalation situations where known offenders that have been violent, that were acting in a certain aggressive manner, complied when they knew that dog was coming. The...the second...the day we...we signed the...the general order having them come in, Tuesday night into Wednesday morning, we briefed the Police

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Commission Wednesday, and then Thursday they got a successful apprehension on a burglary in progress. We know it's a tactic. I want to say we had a citizen write in, I guess write in, saying that they didn't see lethal tools in another state on a...on a critical incident. A canine is a less lethal tool. It's not deadly force, and it's a...it is a de-escalation tactic. There's a little...in the memo that we sent over, just a clerical error, we've got two full-time canines right now ready to deploy. We've got two more that are in training on the mainland right now with their handlers out there. We've got two narcotic canines, and then we're looking to gain four more additional patrol, which will give us 24/7/365 canine coverage for Maui County. We'd look to expand that at the outer islands as well. That's something in the . . . *(inaudible)*. . . we'll look to see how we want to do that, but that's what the...the goal is to do that, and we want to make sure that we have that available. Because when we briefed this out to the other counties, they couldn't believe where we are. And they're here, and I know that they're going to...they're going to be reluctant to say anything, but Maui County, Maui PD has surpassed HPD in its patrol canine capability. They don't even have it in their policy. They don't even have them. They haven't even figured out what they want to do with that yet. I'm not talking ill of them, but it's just because we're...we...we're not waiting. You know, we're not waiting for somebody else to show us the way. We're trying to be wayfinders ourselves and to go do it the best that we possibly can. We also want to make sure that we talk about the morgue. You know, it's not lost on anybody here that we lost 102 of our loved ones not even three years ago. You know, the fact that people want to sit here, and they want to talk false narratives, and they want to sit here and basically lie to you guys about what we do or what we don't do, or what MOUs we have, or whatever the case may be, whatever. I don't got time or the inclination to listen to lies and falsehoods, but you know what I do have? I'm going to talk about the incredible work that these folks do, because they're the ones that made all those notifications and identifications. They're the ones...60 days after, every single person was identified. That's never happened in American history, okay? Never. And so, at four months out from the campfire in California where there was 80 people lost, they had 80 percent at the four-month mark. We had 100 percent at the two-month mark. The reason I mention this is when we asked for stuff for the morgue, it was ignored for the better part of a quarter of a century. And we're talking about a building that doesn't have certain...just so you guys know, during the fire, they didn't have AC. So...really? So, we can...we can get into this, but Maui County's loved ones that are housed in the morgue deserve the best. The forensic facility that does the investigations deserves the best. So, we're not asking...and what we asked for, we were cognizant of the tax structure coming in and these different things. And so, I know that the...Chair Lee had said, go bold last time. And...and we...we did the best that we could under the financial constraints that we were in. And I wanted to make sure that we were respectful to each and every, you know, one of you here, because we know that you...it's your money that you represent. It's your budget. You know, it's...it's the Police Department's...we work with the commission. The commission approves our budget, ultimately sends it to Mayor. The Mayor then decides what parts of the budget they want to include when they give it to you guys, but it's your budget. And so, as we make these asks for you, we want to make sure that we're as transparent as we possibly can be. And nothing that we asked for, we felt was....was just a luxury item. We...we have a justification for each and every thing that...that we put in here. Happy to discuss them. I'll leave the

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comments there, because I do know we're on the clock. And I just want to say mahalo for all that you guys do for us.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Chief. Okay. Before we...before we continue, I'd like to recognize two more of our Members who have since logged on. Chair Lee.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Good afternoon. Sorry for the tardiness, but we were having problems...technical problems. Thank you.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Chair.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: I'm in my office. I'm...excuse me. Sorry. I'm in my office alone in the building.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Chair. And Councilmember Shane Sinenci.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Aloha and good afternoon. I'm here at my home office. No testifiers in Hāna. Thank you.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Member Sinenci. And then OCS Staff, just a heads up. My connection keeps going in and out. Every couple seconds or so, I get a disconnection notification, but it doesn't seem to be impacting me on the public screen, just on my personal keyboard. So, I'm going to continue to preside over the meeting. And if there are any issues, let me know, because I don't always catch it. Okay. That being the case, we can now begin to receive public testimony. Testifiers wanting to provide testimony should sign up with Staff, join the online meeting via the Teams link, or call in to the phone number noted on today's agenda. Testimony on the budget is not limited to the department scheduled today. Written testimony is encouraged and can be submitted via the eComment link at mauicounty.us/agendas as well. Under the Sunshine Law, the Chair will receive oral testimony for agenda items at the beginning of the meeting, as well as the item as...called up. For individuals wishing to testify via Teams, please raise your hand by clicking on the raise-your-hand button. If calling in, please follow the prompts to your phone, star-5 to raise and lower your hand, star-6 to mute and unmute. Staff will add names to the testifier list in the order testifiers sign up or raise their hands. For those on Teams, Staff will lower your hand once your name is added. Staff will then call the name you're logged in under or the last four digits of the phone number when it is your time to testify. At that time, Staff will also enable your microphone and video. Please ensure your name appears on Microsoft Teams as the name you prefer to be referred to, or as anonymous if you wish to testify anonymously. If you're in person, please notify Staff that you would like to testify anonymously. Otherwise, please state your name for the record at the beginning of your testimony. Oral testimony is limited to three minutes per item. If you're still testifying beyond that time, I will kindly ask you to complete your testimony. Once you're done testifying, or if you do not wish to testify, you can also view the meeting on *Akakū* Channel 53, Facebook Live, or mauicounty.us/agendas. We'll do our best to take each person up in an orderly fashion. Now, we'll call on testifiers wishing to testify. Staff, please call the first testifier.

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MR. PASCUAL: Thank you, Vice-Chair. The first testifier is Kay Anderson, to be followed by Travis Liggett. *(pause)*

. . . OPEN PUBLIC TESTIMONY . . .

MS. ANDERSON: Aloha. My name is Kay Anderson, and thank you for allowing me to speak today on the Fiscal Year 2027 Maui County Budget. My comments focus on one critical addition to the Maui Department of Water Supply's budget. First, I want to acknowledge and support the Department's aggressive budget and overall direction. They are...they are taking Maui's...Maui's water challenges seriously, and that is appreciated. We are asking you to add one specific investment that will make all those efforts more effective. Maui is heavily dependent on over-pumped groundwater. Precipitation is decreasing, supplemental surface water is erratic and diminishing, and we are already seeing water quality and quantity declining in many areas. Without reliable water, no new housing can be built, and no additional potable supply is available without either more rain or desalination. Every major decision you make on this budget about housing, agriculture, tourism, and wildfire resilience depends on knowing how much water we have, where it is, and what level of use is sustainable. How can we responsibly reallocate water, set pumping limits, or prioritize infrastructure if we do not fully understand our aquifer conditions? Right now, our methods are inadequate. We do not have enough data, and what data we do have is too sparse and uneven to confidently guide long-term management. More wells are needed, but we cannot simply drill our way to understanding. We need a smarter way to decide where and how to invest. This is why we are asking you to fund airborne electronic magnetic imaging, AEM, and the associated geophysics modeling and analytics. AEM, combined with existing well data, is the best available tool to map our subsurface freshwater resources at the island scale. It provides the key missing information about aquifer structure, salinity, and freshwater distribution, which other conventional methods cannot. When we can combine well data with AE...AEM modeling, the County and the Department of Water can establish scientifically grounded, sustainable, and adaptive pumping limits for each aquifer, identify the best and worst locations for future wells and other water infrastructure, and support ongoing monitoring, modeling, and data-driven decision-making over time rather than one-off studies. This investment has important co-benefits. Implementing AEM and related modeling will create professional opportunities for Maui's young people in hydrology, geophysics, data science, and environmental management, education, training, and local employment in a field directly tied to our island survival. Finally, AEM will enable the Department of Water to work more effectively with Commission...CWRM, Commission...Water Resource Management, University of Hawai'i, and USGS to create a truly adaptive science-based . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . water plan for Maui with high-quality AEM and well data. The County can better estimate real sustainable yields in each aquifer, decide where it is most responsible to drill for new water supply, support informed land-based decisions about where it is safest and most sustainable to build affordable and workforce housing. In short, this one addition to the FY 2027 Budget funding, AEM imaging, and the associated modeling and analysis would cost less than \$4 million and give Maui the

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information we need to manage our water, our housing, and our future responsibly.
...*(timer sounds)*... Compared to the cost of a single misplaced well --

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you. Can you please wrap up?

MS. ANDERSON: -- or an uninformed infrastructure decision, this is a modest investment with outsized returns. I respectfully ask that you include this investment in the final budget for the Department of Water Supply. Mahalo.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you for your testimony. Member Johnson?

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Ms. Anderson, for your testimony. I'm glad you printed it out for all of us to read. You...one paragraph you mentioned was the County working with CWRM. Have you guys from...and I assume you're representing Maui Tomorrow, have you guys reached out to the State or CWRM about AEM?

MS. ANDERSON: I believe they have. I was not in that meeting. It's actually, we call this project AEM. So, it'll be a...it's kind of a partnership with us, CWRM, USGS, and we would have two University of Hawai'i post-grads working full-time to do the modeling and mapping. This technology hovers over the aquifers. Oh, by the way, this is island-wide --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Right.

MS. ANDERSON: -- all the aquifers, not just one or two. So, we would have the data, and it's a one-time cost, by the way, with operating costs of these analysts that...that do these modeling and mapping.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Yeah.

MS. ANDERSON: And...

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: I just want to double check that you guys have reached out to the State, CWRM guys. And I mean, obviously, this was in my Committee. I totally support this. We'll...you know, and I want to keep moving forward on it. It's just partnering with CWRM, I'd...I'd, you know, I'd like to hear if you guys have done that or spoken with them.

MS. ANDERSON: I can get back with you on that --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay.

MS. ANDERSON: -- but I'm pretty sure they have. And I also have a relationship with CWRM, too --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Great.

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MS. ANDERSON: -- as you know.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: All right. Thanks for your testimony. Thank you, Chair.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Member Johnson. Member Cook?

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you, Ms. Anderson. So, do you know if any of the other islands have utilized this yet?

MS. ANDERSON: They have not, but Kauaʻi is also wanting to move forward with this along with us. And by doing the whole island, we are saving money by the mobilization cost. If we do it piecemeal, it costs us more each time we bring the heavy helicopter and that heavy AEM tool to hover over the different aquifers. So, there is cost savings in doing it all at once.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you very much for your efforts and your testimony.

MS. ANDERSON: Thank you.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Member Cook.

MS. ANDERSON: And I know this had a lot to do with police work, too, so thank you.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Any other Members have any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Staff, can you please call up the next testifier?

MR. PASCUAL: The next individual signed up to testify is Travis Liggett, to be followed by Keolamau Tengan.

MR. LIGGETT: Good morning, Chair and Councilmembers. Thank you for investing your time in these hearings. I really appreciate it. I wish Chair Sugimura were here. I just want to commend her for her grace in handling that passionate testifier. That was a class act. Even if I sometimes disagree with her, that's what I like to see. And, you know, the testifier, write it up into actionable solutions to your concerns, and I'm sure they'll listen. But here I'm talking...you know, it's so neat that the police commissioner is here today because my testimony is, again, about accelerating wastewater disinfection in Kahului. And I just want to be heard out on this, that crime may have systemic contributions. And what I've learned through personally experiencing this is that infections can affect directly the function of the nervous system. That can present very easily as something like mental illness, or it can drive things like addiction processes, and that it's just been like uncovering a whole world to delve into this because I almost passed away from an infection. I'm three treatments into IVIG, so hear me out. UV disinfection is like a Ghostbusters machine. Light bulbs in a tube that you pass your water through, and then people don't get infections. What did people used to think infections were? Spirits. That metaphor still has a lot of legs because it has effectively zero mass. It can take over mind, body, soul, family, community. And here's an interesting word. The medical

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word for a hidden infection is, in fact, occult. So, we see these videos of these homeless people, and, you know, they're...they're like, oh, mental illness. But there's maybe something behind it, which is that disinfection was actually ceased illegally at the Kahului facility. And so, I placed testimony. If you want to investigate crimes that may actually reduce crime rates, look at the behavior that I've shared in my testimony, because it's actually quite scary...because in 2018, it effectively went from treated to not treated with respect to disinfection. And there's no evidence that any sitting Councilmembers, including Tasha Kama, who took office a few days later, were ever informed, at least in writing, that's discoverable. Don't think that sits well if you're out enforcing on people that may actually have infections from illegal action by the County, and no elected officials were informed. So, I just encourage you to look at the systemic level, pass 1.8 million to accelerate the design work at Kahului, and if you're brave, see if crime rates went up around December 2018. That might be like something you could statistically look at, because some of these infections...I read about it, they . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . may actually just decrease cognitive function by 15 percent. They may just make you 15 percent more irritable, or maybe more checked out. And you may never know you have an infection. You just went swimming at the beach. So, it's just you know, 42 years, 10 years at NASA, Sandia National Lab researcher. It's called sanitation. It's not that hard. And maybe if you rename it the sanitation department, and not the reclamation department, people'll understand the job. And by the...by the way, they're not reclaiming it either. . . *(timer sounds)*. . . I hope you understand that --

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Can you please wrap up?

MR. LIGGETT: -- have a sense of humor, but this is real serious stuff. And it's a trim tab. Just cut the disease off at the source. Thank you for all your hard work and keeping us safe. I really appreciate it.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you very much. Members, any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Can you please call the next testifier?

MR. PASCUAL: Thank you, Vice-Chair. The next testifier and last...last individual currently signed up is Keolamau Tengan.

MR. TENGAN: Aloha, one and all, Vice-Chair, County Councilmembers. I just want to say mahalo for holding this open forum for us to be able to come forward from community to converse and communicate things that are happening on our 'āina. I want to first and foremost just thank the County overall for the support that Ka'ehu has received. I'm testifying today as Executive Director of the nonprofit organization Ka'ehu and testifying on behalf of really supporting our involvement in the upcoming budget. I want to give you just sort of an overview of what we've seen in 2025 to give a little bit more context for 2026 and moving into the next fiscal year. Last year was jamming. I mean, we definitely were able to do a lot in terms of service from expanding our services to include a farmers' market and creating a space for our community to gather, having over 5,000 participants overall between all the different programs. On average, Ka'ehu usually has about 12 to 1,800 on an annual basis, so we saw almost a 250 percent increase in terms of those that we're able to support. Did a lot in terms of being able to

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really kokua with schools, doing a lot in terms of our huaka'i (*phonetic*) with over 40 schools that were served, even hosting over the summertime a Native Hawaiian storytelling project on 'āina. In terms of restoration, we really kicked things into gear with our fire mitigation. In the past two years, we've had fires out at Rivermouth, and so we really wanted to get ahead of that, especially with our awai and stream flow going dry last year for about four months. Overall, just in all the different areas, even, you know, since we're talking about crime and incidences, saw a stark decrease of instances down on Ka'ae Road, down at Nehe Point as well. And so, we've really been working hard, which says a lot because we are a very lean team. Now having just a more solid base moving into this year, going through the effects of the Kona low storms, everything is pooled and swamped, but thankfully not as bad because we did a bunch in terms of flood mitigation, being able to open up and remove debris. Yet on our shoreline, it's by far the most marine debris I have seen ever. And so, we've started the process of cleaning, but it is a job that is way more than our small team of three can handle. So, as we look at the next fiscal year, we're asking for \$500,000 to be able to grow our team because we are stretched...not just thinly, we're stretched beyond what we're capable of. And it's my intention to increase the capacity to be able to match the level of service that we are providing to our community, from food distribution, into restoration, to cultural resource, to an outdoors classroom, and much, much more. And so, I mahalo the County Council for your support, Chair Lee's office really helping in getting us on . . . (*timer sounds*). . . as a proviso line item, and looking forward to that same level of kokua as we move forward into the next fiscal year to support us in remaining agile and very much like the a'ali'i to be able to move with the currents as they come. Mahalo.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you very much. Members, any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Staff, is there anybody else wishing to testify?

MR. PASCUAL: No, Chair, that's all the individuals signed up to testify. Would you like me to do a last call?

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: . . . (*inaudible*). . .

MR. PASCUAL: I do see one individual approaching the podium.

MR. LAW: Thank you, Jarret. Thank you.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Mr. Law, you have three minutes.

MR. LAW: Thank you, Luna Ho'omalulu...put my bat watch on. You go ahead. Thank you. Ka'aha O Ke Kalana. It's Jasee Law from Kula Uka, Waiakoa Ahupua'a. Thank you. Luna Ho'omalulu Batangan...oh, how do you say? Hope Luna...Hope, Luna Ho'omalulu Batangan, for inviting the Chief and the Deputy Chief and all the...the...the Maui 5-0 crew. And the Hawaiian word for policeman is makai. They used to have it on the front of the police station, but the sign, I don't know why they took it off. I won't scrutinize the amount of money. This is one of the larger departments because I think it will give me more and more pilikia than I need right now. I'm pretty sure some of the Councilmembers are going to ask some of the hard questions, especially about the

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United States leadership. And I...I...I think I'm on safe ground when I hope that someone...I suggest that someone asks about your recycling and trash removal there at the police station. And side note, the meals at the...at the jail could probably improve a little bit. So, if you guys are throwing away anything, maybe you can recycle some of that back to the jail. Mr. Batangan, I'd like to speak about a sensitive issue with the Chief. I don't know how many of the people in this room here were accused of something before, but it really...it really sucks a lot to be accused of something and then you don't get to...you don't really get to defend yourself to the people that are accusing. And yeah, I won't mention any names up there in Kula. I read an article a little bit about the...that little amount of nasty business that happened last year. And I read that Mayor Bissen said that he won't apologize. And he...I think he's watching too many John Wayne movies because in one of the movies, there's something stuck in my head that John Wayne said. It wasn't John Wayne, it was his character, or one of those guys. He said, don't apologize, boy, it's a sign of weakness. So, yeah, we need a strong Mayor. So...but I will apologize. I will...I will say I'm sorry for that, that you had to go through that, Chief, because I know what it's like. And that's all. I save the rest of my time for the Hawaiian peoples.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you for that testimony. Members, any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Staff, is there anybody else wishing to testify at this time?

MR. PASCUAL: No, Chair, not at this time. Would you like me to do a last call?

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Yes, please.

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

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you. Members, if there are no objections, I'd like to close public testimony at this time. We can still receive written testimony.

COUNCILMEMBERS: No objections.

. . . CLOSE PUBLIC TESTIMONY . . .

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you very much. Okay. So we can now entertain comments and questions from the Members. I'm going to propose two rounds of questions with three minutes for the first round. We can evaluate how we are on time after that. Member Paltin, since your DRIP Committee has oversight jurisdiction for the Police Department, would you like us...would you like to kick us off? If not, I can start at the end of the row.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Sure, that sounds great. Before you start my time, my disclaimer is that I might cut you off because we only have as much minutes as he said, and if I got the answer or if it's taking too long, I might move on, not meaning to be rude. Okay.

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I got the response that the Fiscal Year '25 ACFR was \$5,004,736.10. Do you have that broken down in how much was in Category A and how much was in Category B/C?

MR. PELLETIER: We don't. We can get it to you.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Sounds great. Thanks. The next...oh.

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

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mic for those online please.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: The next question I have, maybe you can start getting ready. In one of your answers to PD-1, it says you have 106 sworn vacancies, but 25 of them are filled and unfunded. Could you provide that to us in writing, which 25 position IDs are filled but unfunded? The other question I had was the vacancy list. I counted 78 vacancies and 13 in expansion, so that's like 91 vacancies. But there's...says 53 civilian, 21 noncivilian, 106 sworn vacancies, so it doesn't add up to the entire amount of vacancies. On April 9th, we received from Personnel their list of inactive vacancies, and I counted 49 inactive vacancies that weren't on your vacancy list that are scheduled to be fully funded for Fiscal Year '27. So, my understanding of inactive vacancies is, they're not posted for recruitment, even though the position is created. And so, like the first one is P26270 on Budget Details 20-14 for 130...oh, I'm sorry, for a large amount, but there's no recruitment going on for it. It's an inactive vacancy, but you're requesting full funding. So, the numbers and the details are not adding up. I was wondering if you could provide a full list of vacancies, which ones are filled and unfunded, which ones are active, which ones are inactive, which ones are civilian and noncivilian...and maybe explain why we're asking for 12 months of funding for an inactive vacancy. Or even on the answers to question 3C, I can understand possibly requesting nine months of funding for a position that's currently in recruitment . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . but there's positions that haven't been created yet that we're asking for 12 months of funding for. So, just trying to get a handle on the data. Thank you.

MS. MILNER: Thank you, Chair. And I know the timer sounded, so I will be quick. But for the A budget, it was 3,627,030. For the B budget, it was 1,377,706. And I'll let Police answer more. And also, obviously, I think a lot of that will have to be in writing. But I will just add, because I had a conversation with the Department earlier today, those filled unfunded positions, it's similar to what the Fire Department does, where they have sort of a holding position that they can fill until they get people through training. So, that's why they're filled but unfunded. Thank you.

MR. PELLETIER: That's exactly it. Some of what you asked for, you gave me a lot, it wasn't like a yes or no. So, we'll send you what we need to send you as far as that goes. Assistant Chief Medeiros, if you could give me...I want to say, if we don't do the holding with the numbers, and we're actually talking about how many open positions we have

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for PO Is to come in, we're like at 11 or like 17. It's not that many. Could you give me that number? Am I kind of in the right ballpark?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No, you're about in the right ballpark.

MR. PELLETIER: So...so...

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

MR. PELLETIER: So, if you think about...we can all do math. And then when I was a new parent, they did new math. And I asked, where do you carry the one? And I didn't know where to carry the one. I got yelled at because I can't carry the one because you're supposed to pull it apart. And so, some of what you asked me is a little bit of new math. But I will say this. Because the way DPS works, and if you noticed in like my answer, kind of like I'd love to do a pilot program at some point and maybe pull out of that. But at some point, I can't hire people because we move quicker than the rest of the system works. And if we don't do this, then we're behind the ballpark totally. And so, if we're talking 3 million that we're giving back at salaries--and I know that 3 million is a lot, don't get me wrong--but it's also showing that we...we did a really good job managing the overtime, the cost. Because if we don't have some of these things filled, we have to use some of the overtime in order to make that happen. And there is a level of police service and a level of public safety that the public does expect. And we've had to manage that because prior to the...the...the group, the leadership group here, there wasn't a strategic plan, there wasn't a recruiting plan. And so, we went from 28 percent vacancy to 18 percent total commission or 11 percent if we're talking about the recruit positions. And so, that...that's huge. I do want to mention really quick, our recruiting team has now been asked to go to two different county police departments to teach or coach mentor them as to why we're successful here in the state. So, it means we're doing something right. But there are a lot of barriers to your point, and we've got to cut through that tape.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Just...I think this might be a follow-up question for the Budget Director, unless you guys know. If it's an inactive vacancy or a vacancy, do we still provide the full fringe amount, if it's...especially if it's inactive?

MS. MILNER: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Councilmember Paltin. Yes, I believe we calculate the full fringe amount on all of the salaries and wages section of the budget.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: All vacancies?

MS. MILNER: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. Thank you.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Member Paltin. Okay. There was a lot to her question, and I know the Department responded to some of it, but not all of it. Can I confirm that Staff has what they need to transmit in writing for the rest of the...to get the rest of her

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answers? Thank you very much. All right. Member Johnson. Oh, sorry. Before we move on, I did forget to read from my notes that the Department did provide responses to our questions. Their initial letter and response, PD-1, is item 42 in Granicus. And then the Department questions, but not answers, PD-2 is item 90. Okay. Wait, I can't remember if I just read that. So, PD-1 is 42, PD-2 is item 90. Item 1 has the letter and response, item 2 is just the questions.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, I got item 2 questions printed off of. That's where I got mine from.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Oh, we did receive the answers.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Uh-huh.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Okay. So then my notes must have been printed prior. Thank you very much, Member Paltin. Okay. With that, Member Johnson.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: It's item 90, Granicus item 90.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: PD-2.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Member Rawlins-Fernandez. Member Johnson.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Chief and the Department, for joining us today. I know you guys are busy and we're...it's just important that you're here, so thank you. Your opening remarks, Chief, I'm not going to...I really like a straight shooter. When you come...when you come before us and you're a straight shooter, and I really appreciate your honesty. Now, sometimes I don't always agree. That's...that's life, right? You said funding the police is...you know, when you were talking about equipment, in my mind, there's so much more than just the equipment when we come to funding our departments. I mean, like training. I mean, like the bodies, the number of people we have in the seats. Community policing. Livable wages. Those are things in my mind that it's a yes and. I'm sure the radios and some of the equipment is so important, but so is the training, so is the...the wages. And that brings me to my question. I want to talk about the recruitment incentive offered by MPD for a Police Officer I. Has it been effective? That's really what I want to hear from you.

MR. PELLETIER: You know, I think we agree on a lot more than...than people give credit for. I think...I think we all do. You know, and if I...if I made it seem like it was just the equipment, that's not what I intended. It's the whole public safety package, which is...look, everybody's going to come in front of you guys and they're going to say that they're the most important. I totally get it. If you don't have us or Fire, you don't have anything. So, public safety, it...it really is training the men and women doing the job. The...the...the \$30,000, the recruiting incentive, the incentive for the dispatchers, it's been huge because we have to stay competitive. I've been telling folks, and...and I don't

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know how this happened, and I think that this is really something we got to look at. Santa Clara...not San Francisco PD, Santa Clara, it's...it's a mid-sized agency. They are paying their dispatchers \$161,000.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: You brought that point up last time you were here.

MR. PELLETIER: And well, the reason I'm bringing it up is because I had people not believe me.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Yeah.

MR. PELLETIER: And then they said, oh, I can't find it. And I sent it to them. And so, I know right now there are two people that the recruiting team and myself...myself personally tried to recruit. Lieutenant in the back, he knows who some of these folks are. They're going to North Las Vegas PD, not...not where I came from, it's a sister agency, because they're paying 40,000 a year. We pay 30...thanks to the leadership of...of Councilmember Paltin, who wanted to make sure that we were more than HPD with their 25.

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

MR. PELLETIER: And so, the reason I'm saying that is, it does matter. Because they are literally packing up and moving for an extra 10 grand, and that...that's telling us things. And so, when we're talking to these folks--and believe me, the other counties are doing this too now--and it's you're trying to get these folks here because it's an investment, right? The beauty is, we've been able to do it by...with the...the funding that we have.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay. Chief, I'm on three minutes.

MR. PELLETIER: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: So, I...I hear you. Can I go on to the next one? The next one is about the recruitment center. I'm curious of what the total costs are for the recruitment center...the rent, the lease, utilities. And are we getting recruits out of that recruitment center?

MR. PELLETIER: We use it every day. . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . It's \$3,000 a month. It's that times 12. It's paid itself in dividends. The County's also used it as well. And the total annual cost is \$53,000 and change.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: And you think it's worth it?

MR. PELLETIER: Absolutely, no doubt. No doubt because we use it every day. And there's people in there every day because they can go and do the training for the test prep. We do test prep Tuesdays.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Oh, okay.

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MR. PELLETIER: And we do workout Wednesdays. And they...we do the testing in there. And it gives them...

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Taco Tuesdays?

MR. PELLETIER: Not taco Tuesdays, test prep Tuesdays.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: All right.

MR. PELLETIER: You know, if you feel like that might work, we can --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: There you go.

MR. PELLETIER: -- ask for more.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: There you go.

MR. PELLETIER: Okay. Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Bring that up. All right. Thanks so much, Chief. Thank you, Chair.

MR. PELLETIER: Yes, yes. Yes.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Member Johnson. Councilmember Rawlins-Fernandez?

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. May I suggest test and taco Tuesdays?

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

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. My questions are regarding my priorities for FY '26. So, one of my first priorities was 100,000 for the Molokai cottages, which I see is...has been reduced in FY '27. And I'm really excited for Hāna that there's \$3 million slated for the police cottages in Hāna, but none for Molokai. Could you share some of your thought process behind that? If the funding for the Molokai cottages was used, if there's plans in the future for the Molokai cottages?

MR. MAEDA: Hi, Councilmember Rawlins-Fernandez. I'll answer that. So, the...I don't know if you've seen the Hāna cottages, but they're in very bad shape. And they take precedence over anything. I mean, it's...it's actually become a liability.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: I support it. I don't not support it.

MR. MAEDA: Yeah.

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COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: But I also am advocating for Molokai's cottages.

MR. MAEDA: Us too.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: I know they're livable, but --

MR. MAEDA: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: -- they're not in that great condition.

MR. MAEDA: Yeah. So, our...our priority would be Hāna, of course, but Molokai and Lānaʻi do also need improvements. We also recognize that they do need improvements, and we do want to put money into those too...

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: I put 100,000 for Molokai last year, this...FY '26.

MR. MAEDA: Yeah, we're working on that right now with the...with the 100,000 put in the budget.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Oh, okay. Was that...did that...encumbered?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. And that's going to move forward. And then maybe FY '28 or something?

MR. MAEDA: Oh, before that, I believe.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Oh, okay.

MR. MAEDA: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Because we're in FY '27 --

MR. MAEDA: Yeah, yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: -- and no more money for Molokai.

MR. MAEDA: Well, no, I think we already did the...

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We're working on it now. We could probably add more for FY '28.

MR. MAEDA: Yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

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COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Great. Thank you. Okay. My next Molokai priority is something that Chief comes over for every year, is the Molokai Youth Leadership Program. And that was a priority I put in for 30,000 to support our recruits so that we can continue...especially on Molokai, we like to have our Molokai people be our officers.

MR. PELLETIER: 100 percent. We...we love it. It's a great event. It's been one of the flagship events that we do for the youth, period.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Is there funding for it?

MR. PELLETIER: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Because I see it was reduced. But if...if there's going to be funding...

MR. PELLETIER: It shouldn't have been reduced.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: That's what I'm saying.

MR. PELLETIER: And if it was, then somebody should put that back.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Yes.

MR. PELLETIER: You know, absolutely. You know, no, 100 percent. It matters so much to those folks, and we get people going back. And that's a home run, so...

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. My next question, while I think you're looking for that. If you need the page number, I can get it for you. Sorry. Okay. The new police station. I see that on the cover page of the CIP section that it does have a CBS number. That's really exciting. CBS . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . 5536. I do see it's slated for FY '28, and I believe that's 45 million. And at the same time, an Upcountry substation for \$60 million. So, my question is, why would a substation be projected to cost more than Molokai's station?

MR. PELLETIER: Because as of right now, Molokai is a conversion of the existing armory, and some of the infrastructure for that's already been done, where we've got to do all new stuff at the Upcountry.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. Because I thought we were going to build a new station.

MR. PELLETIER: We were. But then we were told that that deal was dead in the water, that they weren't going to move forward. We actually asked to break off from the County to purchase the parcels by ourselves, and they told us, absolutely not. They wouldn't let us do it. So, then we were, okay, we get nothing, or we can build this. And if we build this, and at some point we know the other thing is going to go, we'll give that over to

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MEMA because they're wanting to have it. I haven't had this conversation fully with Amos yet, but the plan was to do that with then the armory. So, now you've got an Emergency Management facility, and we could build a really, really great police station. But if I didn't spend the money, we would lose the money. And so, we were like, okay, what do we do?

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Do we have a lease for the armory?

MR. PELLETIER: We...they have some hurdles they have to jump through because it's National Guard. There's an existing model that's already being done at HPD.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: On O'ahu?

MR. PELLETIER: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Yeah.

MR. PELLETIER: Yes, yes. By Diamond Head.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Yeah.

MR. PELLETIER: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. I heard the timer.

MR. PELLETIER: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Member Rawlins-Fernandez. Member Paltin, these kind of policy changes feel like something that we should be looped in on before the budget cycle. Can I ask that you consider taking it up in your Committee?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Sure, I can. Was there a County Communication about the change or no?

MR. PELLETIER: There wasn't a County...there wasn't a County Communication about the initial change. So, you're like...I...we never...what we had agreed to with the armory is what we had agreed to officially. The other thing came up as, hey, this might be able to happen. What occurred last summer was, last summer, Mayor Bissen was over on Molokai. He said he didn't support the armory. I wasn't there. I wasn't consulted about that. And then I was told that that wasn't going to happen. And then all of a sudden, that fell through. But I...I didn't know about that. So, we decided that we would still go through with the first plan since the other thing fell through. So, if all of a sudden, we couldn't buy the parcels of land, and here...what was...what we were always worried about was, now, nobody's got nothing. And I'm sick of the cops not having anything, and the community gets nothing. And they get bent because nobody's...I got...she's

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fighting for them, and we're fighting for them, and then there's nobody else in between. So, we didn't want the music to stop, and nobody got a chair. So...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So, that's the way I would know to have it, is if there is a County Communication?

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Communication...but since it didn't happen --

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: If not --

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: -- there was no trigger.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: -- I don't know. Yeah, I don't know.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: So, I guess...I guess I should apologize first. I didn't mean to just add something to your list of legislation. I should have request...put it as a request. But I...I would like to ask that it be something that the Council can consider --

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Yeah, if...if...

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: -- if the Department's willing to transmit something to that effect so that we can add it to one of our agendas.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: If there's things you want me to know, just email me, or whatever, or if you want to have something. But otherwise, I won't know.

MR. PELLETIER: Whatever you want, no problem.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Chief. Thank you, Member Paltin. Member Cook?

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you, Chair. Aloha to all of you. Great having you here, and the progress. Policing is expensive, but it's important. In my community, I hear about it a lot. It...one, an improvement; and two, the need. So, I'm excited about the K-9 units. They look like sort of like almost cloning the police officers so that instead of it...you still have a team, but it's a little different. One of the things that I am concerned about and I see a lot, I can say Kalama Park, is drug dealing. So, I'm asking and hoping that possibly...I don't know if you could have the undercover beach crew, the guy and his dog and his jams and a...and a surf shirt cruising around. But I see people that I assume are dealing drugs because they're sitting in the same place every day, pretty much doing nothing. And I did see a guy one day, he kind of like holds up his hand like that, and then a Tacoma pulls up behind me. And the high...the high school told a friend of mine that...be careful with your kids going to Kalama Park because there's rampant drug dealing and you can get pretty much any drug you want. It is cleaned up now that we have nighttime security, but it's still an event. So, I'm...I'm asking for my district, put those dogs to use. I assume that they're for drug sniffing, explosives, as well as nondeadly, letting people know, just cooperate.

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MR. PELLETIER: So, the dogs are...they're all...the patrol are dual purpose. So, they're either narco or explosive. You don't do both because then you don't know what you've got. We're going to have a firearms coming with the next...with the next ones that come here in the fall...the next two that come. And we will absolutely put some more enforcement. But that's also part of the real-time ops center. What's great about that is we can actually put the cameras in there and we could see this occurring in real time. It's a phenomenal assist for the officers.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Yeah. Thank you.

MR. PELLETIER: I...I think that'll help tremendously.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Yeah, we really need that. So, I just...people are asking for and grateful for security and oversight for their children and people going to the park. So, just thanks for what's happening. And is...and it has improved.

MR. PELLETIER: May I...may I...will you just indulge me really quick so the Council understands the gravity of this? We have record number, record number of cocaine seizures in Maui County last year. More than all the counties combined. Pounds, pounds of fentanyl coming in. So, we want to sit here and pretend that something's not really happening because I got, you know, some people misusing a word that means indivisible. Then they want to create a false narrative. We're combating narco-terrorism. We're combating . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . violent crime. And those people back there are the ones doing it.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you, Chief. Thank you, Chair. Time's up.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Member Cook. I can't see if Member U'u-Hodgins is on. Staff, can you let me know if...is she available for her turn?

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: I'm here.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Okay. Member U'u-Hodgins.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Can you hear me? I'm here.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Yes, we can.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. Great.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: You have three minutes.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Thank you. Is it okay if I leave my camera off? As you know, this is the Police Department. I'm pretty sure they would give me a ticket if my video was on. So...

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Staff is nodding yes. You can't see them, but they're saying yes.

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COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. Good. . . .*(laughing)*. . . Okay. Great. Thank you. So, happy...thank you so much for all that you guys do for our community. And thank you for being with us today. I did look through your folks' budget, obviously. And we saw a couple of things for repairs and maintenance, both to . . .*(inaudible)*. . . Kula station, Hāna . . .*(inaudible)*. . . to use those funds. How are you guys doing in the permitting system? And if so, do you think they're going to be permitted and constructed and done within this fiscal year?

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Chief, did you get that question? Because her audio was in and out. I didn't quite catch it.

MR. PELLETIER: I didn't. If --

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Member U'u...can you repeat the question?

MR. PELLETIER: -- you were asking about the stations, I think that's what you meant. But if it wasn't, we didn't hear.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. Can you hear me better now, maybe?

MR. PELLETIER: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. So, yeah, you guys have a lot of money in repairs and maintenance, which happy to support. But how are your guys' permitting? Are you ready to use those funds for repairs and maintenance? I see some for like Wailuku station was a carryover of some of your funds.

MR. PELLETIER: Yeah. So, we have...in our budget that we sent in, we broke out the CIP projects over the...a six-year time frame. And we would be prepared to use that...for instance, the 16 million for the radio, we're only going to ask for 600,000 on that. But we would be ready for what we asked for to use on the CIP.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. Okay. Great. Thank you. And Chief, thank you so much for always answering my calls. Anytime we have some weird stuff usually happening in my community, usually in Ha'ikū...we had the Ha'ikū Creeper, we had the escapee that was in Ha'ikū. So, what in the budget can help you folks prevent that or, you know, help stop them quicker?

MR. PELLETIER: So, Councilmember, you're welcome. You're supposed to keep some of that between us --

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Thank you. . . .*(laughing)*. . .

MR. PELLETIER: -- because then I got all these other folks know that we're going to prom too. You know, and so, I need all of them, right? But, you know, you're all my favorites, you know. But no, I think that's a great question. And so, I think what we need to do...and

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here's the...here's the best answer I'll give you. Let's have a real discussion about what the real problems are. Let's really do that. Let's really talk about making sentences tougher. You know, let's...let's really not have where we just arrest somebody, put all this work in to have nothing happen on the back end. If we really want to...and that's why I made the joke about the traffic at the four-way, because there is no...there's no repercussions for these things. And so, we're seeing it's a revolving door. And that's frustrating for every single person here. We've got so many repeat offenders that are constantly doing this. And what we really are desirous of doing is solving and...and preventing this violent crime. We are trying...we are reactive for the most part. Police, you call us after the problem. When we have...and here's...when you guys cut the...the budgets and...and the overtime, and we don't have the guys out there, or the gals out there, that means my captains that are right there, they can't deploy . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . their guys proactively. Proactively means they're actually hunting, looking for the bad guys. And that's what we need to do. So, the more that we can do that, the more successful we're going to be. Real time ops center helps with that. My vice helps with that. Narcotic investigations helps with that. It's all connected. But we can have a more robust discussion on it at any time you want.

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

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Member U'u-Hodgins. Okay. Before moving on to Member Sinenci, I'd like to recognize Committee Chair Yuki Lei Sugimura.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Apologies for being so late. The truth is, I thought I was leaving...sorry, Keani, this is about Mokulele. I thought I was going to be leaving at 7:00 in the morning, so I woke up 5:00 or 6:00, went to the airport. The reservation was canceled. I didn't even exist, so I had to...

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Welcome to my life.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, my God. And then there's a whole other part of the story, but that's my long story for why I had to go home, get ready, so at least I could be presentable to the Chief, so...

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

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: The prom date.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: The prom date.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: They're going prom, too.

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

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, yay, I'm your favorite.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: We're all his favorite.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, okay.

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

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: And for the record, I was previously scheduled to be presiding over today's meeting. It wasn't because of Mokulele.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Chair, for providing me the opportunity to practice presiding over these Council...these Committee meetings. I really appreciate that.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: You're so good. Thank you.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Okay. Next up, we have Member Sinenci.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Mahalo, Chair. And apologies for the hot mic earlier. And mahalo, Chief, Assistant Chief, and Police Department. The Councilmembers got to meet Lieutenant Bonacorsi in Hāna last Monday, so it was nice for the Police Department to be present at our budget hearing in...at the Helene Hall. Again, my...my main question would be the request from the community for an additional officer in Hāna. I wasn't sure if that was feasible. We always get, like, hey, we don't have the population numbers to justify an additional police officer. However, we do get substantial visitors that kind of take on a lot of our emergency resources in East Maui. So, I wasn't sure if that was a possibility of --

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, Member Sinenci, and...

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: -- adding an additional officer. I know...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: To clarify, they wanted a community resource one, right? Not just a police officer.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Correct. And oftentimes, when there's calls out in either Ke'anae or out in Kaupō, and...and if two officers are going in different directions, there's the person back at the station was probably on call or...or is off duty with a radio just in case anything happens in...in Hāna Town. But having...having just a set number of police officers also increases our overtime at the Hāna station. So, I was just curious if this was something that the Department was open to.

MR. MAEDA: Thanks for the question, Councilmember Sinenci. The answer is no.

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

MR. MAEDA: No, I'm just kidding. . . .*(laughing)*. . .

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

MR. MAEDA: The...the Police Department --

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: It's like that.

MR. MAEDA: -- we'll...we will look into it. And it all depends on our manpower. So, we do a study in all the districts with the crime rates and the availability of the manpower, and we make the determination in there. But that...but by all means, if we can get you that CPO, and we can...if it's feasible, we will do it, especially since we're getting the recruitment numbers coming up. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Oh, okay. Yeah. And...and I...thank you, Assistant Chief. And I do get a lot of requests to...to join the Police Department. So, I'll...I'll be sending...sending you guys some new recruits, hopefully.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We'll take them. . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Chief.

MR. PELLETIER: I said thank you so much. We'll take it, and we'll see if we couldn't get you too. \$30,000 a year signing bonus.

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

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Thank you. Thanks, Chair.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Member Sinenci. Council Chair Alice Lee.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Thank you, Chair. Chief Pelletier, I am replacing you as my...my date going forward. Can you hear me? And you can go bowl with somebody else.

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

COUNCILMEMBER LEE? Deputy, are you free?

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

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. Chief...Chief, you know, our main complaint is Wailuku Town. Market Street, Pi'ihana, do we have anything new to report to our community? Anything, any progress?

MR. MAEDA: Thank you for the question. I don't know if you guys have seen recently, but we've been having the officers do shifts walking through Wailuku Town. We have two at a time during the busy parts of the evening. We think it's been helping to curb crime, but you guys are the ones that can decide. We'll do...we'll do a study at the end of the

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two weeks as well and see. But so far, it's been pretty successful in the areas of Market Street, Vineyard, those high-traffic areas that we've been seeing less crime since.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. Thank...thank you, Deputy. Appreciate that. I'm happy to hear of the progress. Do you work closely with the...the Homeless Coordinator in the Mayor's Office? I think that would be very helpful if there was some kind of coordinated effort.

MR. MAEDA: I personally don't, but we...we have a group that does. That's their specialty, our CORE Division.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. Yeah. And what about Pi'ihana?

MR. MAEDA: Pi'ihana, we're working with...well...oh, I think you were in that thread, but we're working with the counterparts as well as the Fire Department, Public Works to try to clean that area up as well.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Um-hum. Are the cameras working? Are they...are they helpful?

MR. MAEDA: The...the cameras are working, but the thing is, nobody monitors them all the time, right? We have to go back after the crime and try to see.

MR. PELLETIER: And those aren't ours. Those aren't ours.

MR. MAEDA: And are not...yeah, and the Chief pointed out too, it's not our cameras.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. Well, if there's anything we can do, I can do in the budget, please let me know, you know. We're here to help you, and however we can do that, we...we certainly want to do that. So, thank you, Deputy. Thank you, Chief and the whole Department. Appreciate all that you do. Thank you. I have no more questions.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Chair. Committee Chair Yuki Lei Sugimura?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Ah, one of my favorite departments. Thank you. Yeah, so as you can guess, I'm going to ask you about 911 dispatchers. So, where are we? And you don't have to make it long. Just tell me we're going to solve it.

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

MR. PELLETIER: It's Telecommunications Week, and so we're, you know, making sure they give them the respect that they deserve, you know, because they work so much. Your leadership, really, with DPS and helping bring them to the table has been huge. For the room that doesn't know, we were able to raise them to be an SR-17. They were a 16. We're the only County that wasn't because we...we held them to the fire, and we're trying to do some more. But then again, that's also part of the issue is, we're moving faster than...than DPS will move, and so we've got to kind of figure that out. And...and we can come up with some different solutions, but we're waiting...we're waiting on them,

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unfortunately, for some of these reclassifications. We have folks that we hired. They're going through...Joy, when are the dispatchers, the new...are they starting with the next class?

MS. MEDEIROS: Yes.

MR. PELLETIER: Yes. So, we've hired some new dispatchers that'll be starting with the next class that'll be coming out...yeah, so very soon.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you.

MR. PELLETIER: And we're just going to continue to drive that point home. And we'll discuss the possibility of the paramedic and the AMR contracts with those folks because for the...for the Council...this is a really important part, actually. When they...when they put AMR here, they paid the Department for six dispatchers and a supervisor, which was never filled. Like a dozen years ago, they did this. So, they said, well, here's your 160-something thousand because it was a base salary for six dispatchers and supervisors, never filled, but here you go. And in that, we dispatch them. The problem is it was never filled, but where's your fair share when it comes to the repeaters, the equipment, the CAD/RMS? So, they're getting by really cheap, and we are going to need to have a conversation of what's the best thing because the dispatcher should be making the monies, not just having this kind of go on the cheap for them because they're...it's a profit company, too. But --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: True.

MR. PELLETIER: -- thank you for your help.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah. So, I hope that we can solve that. That's a whole new problem, hope we can work together on. That's a State issue with Department of Health, and I've been in touch with them.

MR. PELLETIER: Yeah, we will.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

MR. PELLETIER: We'll make it work.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. And appreciate that you're putting in their retention, the dispatchers.

MR. PELLETIER: Well, no, thanks for...the Council is so generous getting us that retention and helping us stay competitive, and so it...it really...it really matters. You know, and that's the point is, at some point, we'd like to convert that to being pensionable, but that's...that's part of the process.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Exactly why we're fighting for it, right?

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MR. PELLETIER: Amen, yeah.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah. So, appreciate that. What about your cars for your...this is another retention thing. So, the cars for your police officers, how are we...and how can we move that forward faster?

MR. PELLETIER: So, you know, we asked for more subsidized cars and some of that...that got cut, and then, you know, we got ten replacement cars that got cut out of the budget. And so, I...I would just say, as you guys look at that, you know, we're not asking for...we have bad guys ramming our police cars. I mean, we just had this happen a week ago in Kihei. And so, they total a car, if I don't get a replacement car, I . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . you know, so that would help.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. We'll talk.

MR. PELLETIER: Yeah.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Committee Chair. My turn. So, last year, one of Councilmember Kama's big priorities was to get a 4x4 truck for the CORE team. I don't have a whole lot of background on that, but I do want to ask if it's a departmental priority because I didn't see it in this year's budget. And so, I'm trying to figure out if it's something that I should be pushing for on my end, or if it's something that you guys asked...or said it doesn't need to be included.

MR. PELLETIER: My understanding is that we procured it, but let me...let me just say this. When we ask for these things, it's not like we...we just pull this out. You know, one of the things cut is a transport van, a morgue transport van. And so, it's cut. And the reason I'm saying that is, so we have our loved ones...because AMR doesn't transport people that are deceased. They drop them off at the police station, where they might wait for hours. And if we've got our contracted services and they're busy picking up in Hāna or wherever, we've got nothing. And so, we're asking for decency, for us to be able to go pick up our loved ones and not have them baking out in the sun. And so, the reason I'm saying that is, I have to say it like that because nobody's...you know, nobody else is saying it. And so, for the CORE, for the vans, for the canines, we're making these asks because we need these. These...these cans keep getting kicked down the road and then everybody suffers. And we sit here and go, oh, gee, how'd that happen? Because we came up and we begged for this stuff years ago and then somebody decides with a stroke of a pen to just get rid of it and nobody asked any of those things. And so, we're not asking for anything other than necessary police items, and it is important.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Okay. And in relation to the 4x4, you guys are in the process of procuring?

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MR. PELLETIER: My understanding is they're telling me that we've got that and we're in the process of procuring. And if that is different, we will get that over to you ASAP.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Yeah. Can I just ask that you follow up in writing to confirm?

MR. PELLETIER: You will have it in writing.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Perfect, thank you very much.

MR. PELLETIER: Yes.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: My office will probably follow up with you guys on that van. Can I ask if it's possible to do in Kahului what you mentioned you were doing in Wailuku with Member...or Council Chair Lee? One of the big requests that...or complaints that my office gets is because of the Kahului Transit Hub, there's an increase in illicit activity in the area at night. And so, we've asked the Department of Transportation if they can increase their private security in that area. But if we can work with your Department to also have a presence, I think that would move the needle a lot more.

MR. PELLETIER: The answer is yes. And let me just be kind of...just so you know, we start to do these projects starting around February, when we usually go through June or July, because that's when we know we've got the end fund balance and it's going there because we've had the ability to do that. If we start cutting these funded positions and we don't have that, all that stuff goes away. So . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . the answer is yes, but realize how I'm trying to do it too.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Understood. Thank you very much, Chief. Okay. Members, that concludes our first round of questions for the Department. By a show of hands, can I get a sense of who has second round questions? Okay. So, that's almost everybody. If we do another three minutes, that's roughly half an hour, and would take us to about 3:00. Are you guys comfortable with a two-minute second round? I see nodded heads. Anybody disagree with that proposal? Okay. So, let's do a two-minute second round. I will again begin with Member Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you. I just was wondering, it says helicopter pilots are currently on call from dusk until dawn, but it also says that Windward Aviation is currently undergoing training for night flight. So, question is, why are we on call from dusk to dawn if they're still undergoing training for night flight? And second question is, if you can explain a little bit about the pilot program to conduct your own hiring process separate from the County. Those are my two questions.

MR. PELLETIER: No way I can answer the second one in two minutes. That's a whole 'nother conversation. And...and...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Well, I only have two minutes. You have however much.

MR. PELLETIER: Oh. Oh, perfect.

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

MR. PELLETIER: All right. . . .*(laughing)*. . . So, some of the pilots have the night flight capability, some of them don't. It's newer for them. It's the synthetic vision. We've got the equipment. We're working through it. And so, it's...it's a process in place. You know, if there's an emergency or something really bad, can we do it? Yes. But that's a case-by-case bail with a conversation with Assistant Chief Tom, Team Leader Gantala, the Deputy and myself, as well as...as...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So, can sometimes.

MR. PELLETIER: As well...yeah, yeah. On that.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. Recruitment.

MR. PELLETIER: And then...okay. So, here's, Chair Lee's, you want to go bold? You know, like you had me at hello. Let's do a...let's do a pilot program where let me break away from DPS for five years. Let me break away completely from DPS for five years and see how effective I am. That means totally break off. Let me negotiate the contracts. Let me do all that stuff. Let me do all the recruiting. Let me do the SRs. Let me...let me...I'll increase my...my Staff and add services. And the reason I'm saying that is, we can do a better job. We can go faster. And I'm sick of asking for basic permission for somebody to read a paragraph to tell me somebody's either working or not. And if we're not successful, hey, we can go back. But if we are, then maybe we just saved the County hundreds of millions moving forward.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Is that allowed under HRS, or did you talk to Corp. Counsel?

MR. PELLETIER: Well, we can...we can rewrite the law that way too. There's a lot we can do. So, go big or go home.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Might as well let everyone break away in that case.

MR. PELLETIER: Can.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I heard the bell.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Member Paltin. Member Johnson.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you, Chair. I'm going to kind of focus on the rising costs of professional services. That was one of my questions, and I saw that you didn't respond to it. And basically, I'll let you respond to it now, but I only have two minutes. I'm just going to add on to, do you shop around for professional services? Because I see the prices, they're going up. Do you...is...do you bid out, or can you explain that one? I only have two minutes, so I'm done.

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MR. MAEDA: Yeah, Councilmember Johnson, I'll cover that. So, a lot of those professional services have...went out to bid. So, they're the winning bid, so like Karey Kapoi, our psychologists, and so forth, those...those are the rising costs of the professional services. So, you know, I would...I would love for them to have a flat rate the rest of their...their life, but they...they...it is rising costs with...with, of course, the cost of living and competitiveness. So, we have to pay those costs.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: You don't have to convince me on the importance of making your officers well. I get it, like I'm here for it. But it's just I keep seeing the rising in costs, and I wanted to find out if you guys are able to shop around. Sounds like you did do a bidding process, and that's just the way the price of business is, huh?

MR. MAEDA: Yeah. None of these contracts are under 25,000, so they all have to go out for a bidding...bidding --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Right.

MR. MAEDA: -- process. And then, of course, if we do the IFB, the lowest bidder always wins, right?

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Yeah. Okay. Thanks for your response. No more questions. Thank you, Chair.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Member Johnson. Member Rawlins-Fernandez?

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. Okay. Let's see, I want...I wanted to follow up on the Molokai Youth Leadership Program. And I understand now that Councilmembers' priorities are generally deleted from the Department in the new fiscal year, unless the Department requests to keep them on. And so, the 30,000 for the Molokai Youth Leadership Program was, in fact, deleted. And you all came to Molokai, and you heard how many people want to be one of the priorities that we only have two for. So, that's on page 672 of the Program Budget, 20-10 in the Budget Details. So, yeah, I guess I'm going to have to figure out how to get that back in, if it's something that you're supportive of.

MR. PELLETIER: We're 100 percent supportive. Actually, that...that's news to us. We were under the assumption that it kind of was an institutional rollover. It should be. Are you kidding me? Like those...those kids, they look forward all year for that. So, you know, that needs to happen. We can get creative with some different things, but that's...there's no excuse. I mean, our kids are our most precious resource.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Um-hum. They're so cute and excited about that program. For the professional services, let's see, and...okay. So, back a few years ago, before you were Chief, one of my priorities was creating a position for an on-staff psychologist, so it looks like Psychologist II, and it was removed in FY '24. And then pre-employment psych evaluation, leadership development, Guardian Alliance (*phonetic*) psychologist. I might be saying it wrong, but it looks like there's like

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professional services, psychologists work under the professional services. And since the Psychologist II position was removed in FY '24, was that like not working out for the Department?

MR. PELLETIER: It is a great question, very insightful. I remember coming . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . here going, what the heck is this for? Am I still good because that bell went? Okay. So, it was...I want to say it was like \$80-something thousand, which is way less than a psychologist would make during the year. And so, there'd be...like it would have to be their full-time job. And so, no psychologist would take that for just \$80,000. That being said, they couldn't treat our employees on a day-by-day thing, and then also do our psych tests and some different things because there is a conflict from that, as well as the wellness for duties, the different things that'll come up from officer-involved shootings. So, because of that, we kind of had to de-contract out. And if I may, and everybody's going to appreciate this, the former psychologist that was doing the psych evals for dispatchers--I'll use this one, it's going to make you so mad when you hear this--they actually said that all the dispatchers owing...that 75 percent of all dispatch folks putting in were either unacceptable or failed, 75 percent. So, I'm like, what are you talking about? And so, that number to me was totally unacceptable. So, we ended up going to a different service. That service allows us to do final review. They're more of a professional service. They...they operate on the mainland, although they're also licensed here. They have...they have deep roots here. And it costs a little bit more, but we get a better product for it. But then because of the events of the fire, the different things, the wellness, the psychologist that we have is kind of like what you were intending, but we have to contract it out. And she does a great job in that capacity. And she sees folks every month. And we get a lot of value out of that.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. And just a quick follow up. So, when folks see them, that's required, or is that discretionary?

MR. PELLETIER: So, they only see them if there's a critical use of force or we...we find a situation that the chain recognized based on like a difficult call, like a...like a dead baby, some tragic type of thing like that, that we recognize, hey, we need to get them to talk to somebody, or like an OIS type of thing. That's, hey, you need to talk to a doctor or a doctor needs to meet with you and then we'll get you cleared with the other stuff. And what we are encouraging--and I know you...I know you all appreciate this--is that the wellness component, that talking to folks, that it's okay not to be okay. That stuff that we as a Department are really pushing, the holistic employee, and we really want to make that, and it's in a profession that it wasn't necessarily as encouraged, but we're doing that.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Perfect. Because the on-staff psychologist was to try to get around the whole stigma about people not being okay to see, you know, psychologists. It's still two minutes, Member Cook. . . . *(laughing)*. . . No, I'm kidding, I'm kidding, I'm kidding. But mahalo for creating a healthier culture at the Department to seek help...or, you know, just wellness.

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MR. PELLETIER: Really quick, super-fast indulgence [sic]. When...when the Deputy was the president of the FBINAA and Assistant Chief Medeiros, she's the second Vice President as of tomorrow, because she'll host it, his whole conference he did last year, the whole theme was wellness, and we brought everybody from the State and all we talked about was wellness, and it was phenomenal.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Good job, Chief. Members, before we move on to Member Cook...sorry, I was trying to get your attention for this. So, I've lost connectivity like several dozen times at this point, and have twice been booted from the meeting. Do you guys mind if we take a ten-minute recess so I can try to get reestablished here? And I think it's, you know, been about an hour and a half, and generally around the time we take a break anyway. Would you guys be open to a ten-minute? Okay. So it is 2:37. Can I ask if we come back at 2:47, and ask that Staff come assist with my docket . . .(inaudible). . . Thank you. . .(gavel). . .

RECESS: 2:37 p.m.
RECONVENE: 2:49 p.m.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: . . .(gavel). . . Will the Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee meeting of April 14, 2026, please come back to order. The time is now 2:49. And Members, did I leave off on Councilmember Cook? Okay. All right. Councilmember Cook, you have two minutes.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Okay. I'll talk fast. I...I don't . . .(inaudible). . . Basically, I'm curious about the...when you said about the car, does the...how does the Department...what...how does auto insurance work with the Police Department with the County of Maui? Are we self-insured, or is there a policy? Go ahead.

MR. MAEDA: We're self-insured to the County.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Okay.

MR. MAEDA: Through the County.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: So, you...you indicated that there's a couple of cuts in vehicles. Did they cut some of them, all of them, or what?

MR. PELLETIER: So, the...because we...we were asked to provide some...some of this list, but in our...I'll let them get the page number specifically that we...we put this in our response, but, you know, some of the vehicles that were cut that we feel are critical are the transport van and the ten replacement patrol vehicles. Those...we can't kick those cans down the road. There's a further list in the document that we gave you. I think it's document 90, if I remember, Councilmember Rawlins-Fernandez, but if I'm off on that number, but it's...it's listed in there. It's on page 10, but you'll see that there's a pickup truck, a tactical full-size crew vehicle, two SUVs, two BMR trucks. So, that's our...the BMRs are, hey, if we're going to rebuild the stuff in Hāna, these are the guys going out there to do it. So, if we don't have the trucks to do it. You know, so it's like

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we...we keep just cutting these, and we didn't ask unless we...we needed them. So, I really...if we could at least look at that.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Okay. We'll review that. And then as far as for the...I forgot the terminology, but the new department that you have for technology.

MR. PELLETIER: Technology and Support Bureau.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Yeah, and that's in the Kihei office.

MR. PELLETIER: So, yeah...well, that's the real-time crime...the real-time ops center, the real-time ops center. And that's what we were talking about, the 1.7 million as like one of the asks that we were making at the beginning of the statement.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Yeah. I did have the opportunity with my aide . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . to go on a tour of that, and was like super impressed and encouraged because of the...it just seemed a really appropriate oversight without invasiveness to be able to assist. And there again, using technology to not replace but to augment the human factor so that...and recording is a big factor. I was just sharing that I know when people would call, Kalama Park or other areas and they would complain to me about, well, the policemen didn't come, and I'd talk, and then I would talk to them later. I'd say, well, a policeman came, but you weren't there. If you're going to file a complaint, you have to stay put. They have to have somebody to get a complaint from. You know, you could take a picture and give it...whatever. So, anyway, so the technology aspect was cut?

MR. PELLETIER: There...there...the...there is some technology that was cut as far as the contracts. There was some GIS management services, some body-worn camera certificates, some remote admin. That was 2.8 million that was cut. And then our NCIC, our National Crime Information Center, and our inlets *(phonetic)*, the computer license software, that was cut by 1.1 million. And so, these are renewing licenses to run bad guys and kind of make the bad go away, and that was cut.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: So, when you...when you don't renew a license, is there a grace period or something or just the guy goes to the keyboard and it's like ahh *(makes buzzer sound)*, you don't have authority to do this?

MR. PELLETIER: It's a combination of the two, but the problem is, is you don't have the licenses. So, just imagine this, if NCIC...I just...this is what if, but we get cut out of that, or...which...so the guy's got a warrant on the mainland and we...we don't get that information because we don't have that. But then you lose your certification, and now it may take you a year to gain that back. And so, it just doesn't make any sense for us to be asking for these subscriptions, these licenses, and then these just to be cut. I get it, we're all trying to cut from places, but when you're cutting this, it doesn't really make a lot of sense to me.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you. Thank you. I'll keep my time short.

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VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Member Cook. Member U'u-Hodgins.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Thank you, Chair. For such and all purposes, I am now at home, and I do have one minor in the house with me. I wanted to ask about the grants that MPD receives, specifically the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Grant and the high-intensity drug trafficking areas. How are those funds expended? What kind of benefits do we see? I know earlier, you said that you folks have pounds and pounds of cocaine and fentanyl, and so does that help? And if...where does this money supplement, and where does it go?

MR. PELLETIER: So, as they're pulling up some of these numbers, and I'm stalling for time by answering it this way, but the high...the high-intensity drug trafficking, that is absolutely, that comes from ONDCP, the Office of Drug and National Control Policy [sic]. That is huge for us because that really helps us build these Federal narco cases, and that's how we get the most bang for the buck or the juice worth the squeeze. And so, we --

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay.

MR. PELLETIER: -- use those all the time, and they absolutely matter. With the Edward JAG Byrne grant, we're looking for enhanced cameras for our real-time op center, and we're in the process --

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay.

MR. PELLETIER: -- to see if we can get those. And those...that rotates --

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay.

MR. PELLETIER: -- between us and the Prosecuting Attorney, depending on the year.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay, cool. When you said, you know, that you folks were able to seize all these drugs, more than the other counties, is it because we have more, or you guys just caught it earlier, or...I mean, it's...it's a scary thing to think about, like pounds and pounds of illicit substances.

MR. PELLETIER: So, I'll...I'll tell you something, because I can tell...I can say this. We've got pounds that literally have the stamp of the cartel when we recover them. So...so, what that means is, it's coming directly from the cartel here. And so, that means there's not a whole lot of people cutting the stuff out. It means it's coming directly here. And the reason why we are successful, in part, is because the vice team that we have, the leadership of that vice team, the partnerships that we've made, and the hard work. . . .(timer sounds). . . We put some of our absolute best officers, and this was a...this was a thing that was not being filled because of the vacancies with patrol and things like that. And so, we ended up filling it...two years ago, Deputy? We ended up filling it with...a couple years ago, and that helped tremendously. But it's just very good work. It's very good proactive police work in spite of all the challenges that we have.

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COUNCILMEMBER U‘U-HODGINS: Thank you. I love to hear it. Thanks.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Member U‘u-Hodgins. Member Sinenci?

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Mahalo, Chair. Chief, my follow-up question was, we had this discussion about the JTTF agreement, and so I was just curious if, with the cancellation of the agreement, is that reflected in this year’s budget as far as if there was any travel time to meet with FBI, anything like that?

MR. PELLETIER: So, let’s...there’s a couple things. One, just because you guys voted for it doesn’t mean that we actually even ever had a...we never had a full-time JTTF officer ever in the entire time I’ve been here. So, that’s fake news for likes and views. So, I just...I say that because that was a false narrative. And there may be some travel time that we go and discuss things with members of the JTTF, but that’s investigations and operations, and that’s not going to stop. And we’re talking a couple plane tickets to and from and some rental cars. And so, that’s very, very small, but we don’t have any full-time JTTF officers, and we haven’t. I talked to Tom Phillips about this. When this was created, part of why this was created, we didn’t have the clearances back then. There’s few people that have them on the Department. They were going to land...they were going to land 747s from 9/11 here at Maui Airport, which meant once they landed them, they could never get them up. And because of Tom Phillips and his connections with the Feds at the time is the only reason we didn’t have that fiasco happen. And so, when we...we talk about these pounds and kilos coming from the cartels directly, that’s part of what I’m talking about too. So, I’m trying to give you the answer, but I’m trying to be very real. And, you know, we’ve...we’ve changed our policy, by the way, since that meeting. We’ve added perceived . . . *(timer sounds)* . . . immigration status as a protected class, just like race, religion, ethnicity. And we’ve also put in our policy that we will not participate in a 287(g), which is the immigration enforcement programs. So, that’s in our policy, which supersedes any MOU. We also put in there that if you’re a member of a taskforce, that you are excused from participating in any 287(g) or immigration enforcement. So, that...that argument is actually now so null and void and...and manini because now our policy prohibits it. I hope that answers it, but, you know, we’ve got a great Department, and by doing that, we...we protected everybody. We protected our community. You know, we’ve worked very hard to establish those relationships. And I think that was a bunch of scare tactic.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Thank you, Chief, for that clarification. Thank you, Chair.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Member Sinenci. Chair Lee, are you still on?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: I have no questions. Thank you.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Chair. Committee Chair Sugimura?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah, I have no questions.

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VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Then it comes to me. Chief, so I've looked through most of your line items in the Budget Details, and we transmitted some. Admittedly, I haven't been able to read the responses that you gave us because I haven't had connection to be able to download them throughout this meeting. But I did have one...one of the questions I wanted to ask about was office equipment for the Police Commission. \$10,000 for ten chairs. Do the police commissioners need bulletproof chairs, or are we able to get a more economic...or more economic furniture for our Police Commission?

MR. MAEDA: Thank you, Chair, for that question. So, the...the chairs that they picked out, it has a minimum five...five-year warranty. We project that chair's going to last 15 to 20 years, though, and it comes in at 965. It's a solid chair. To put in perspective, our dispatchers sit on \$3,500 chairs because it's a 24-hour operation, so that chair is sat in. But it needs...you know, and when we fund these...if we do fund these chairs, it's something that we're not going to fund for the next 15 to 20 years. So, these chairs should last. And in addition, the commission, they don't meet daily, so the wear and tear is going to be really minimal on...on those chairs. So, they're built to last.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you. I guess the chair was more symbolic of the Police Commission furnishing budget in general. You're...you're arguing that everything that you guys are asking for regarding their furnishing is...has been thought through, and that you guys stand by the...the recommendations.

MR. PELLETIER: If I may? Yeah. So, the answer, quick is yes, but...but let me explain why. They have not had a meeting room of their own. I don't know if before I ever got here they did. I don't...I don't under...I don't think they did. And so, they were in different...beg, borrowing, and stealing different rooms. We got them office space, and they were trying to do something that would reflect the standard of Maui County when people came in and actually had a presentation. Occasionally, we happen to find ourselves on TV, most often for some nonsense, but . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . occasionally. And so, we wanted to at least have something that if it was a little higher profile, that it...it looked in the style that Maui County deserves.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Okay. And I do appreciate that you thought about longevity for the equipment that you guys are buying as well. So, thank you, Chief. Okay. That's all for me. Members, did anybody else have any last questions? Okay. Wait, I should check online. Yes, Member Cook.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: I don't have any last questions, but before you adjourn, I'd like to just have a little statement about this afternoon.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Sure. You can do that now while I go look up the...what I'm supposed to say about this afternoon as well.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Well, thank you. I want to remind...go ahead.

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COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, before he goes, is it okay...that part in the beginning of your opening comments about the K-9 with the little bit different, could we get that in writing? Thank you.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Sorry, Chief, I didn't...sitting behind you, I can't understand the...the nonverbal communication that sometimes happens. Thank you, Chief. Okay. So, I did recognize Member Cook, and then I'll go to Member Rawlins-Fernandez.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Oh, no. That's okay.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Oh.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: I just wanted to commend the Department for reducing the vacancies, because that's incredible. Like, I don't think that was said, so I just wanted to reiterate that. It's huge. Mahalo.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Member Rawlins-Fernandez.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: In a very short amount of time.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: And I --

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Member Cook?

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: -- I second all of that. You've been a wonderful...you're continuing to do a good job. You're very forthright and transparent, and we appreciate that. Appreciate it very much.

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

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: . . .*(laughing)*. . . So, anyway, I want to remind everybody that the South Maui Community Council Budget Committee is this evening. We're going to have dinner at 5:00. The meeting is at 6:00. I want to welcome everybody. It looks like the weather is going to be good, which is awesome. And I was sorry I missed Molokai's yesterday due to the airlines. But that's it. And I just wanted to commend you, Chair, for today. Yeah.

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

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Pardon?

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

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Yeah, it's in Kihei Community Center on Lipoa Street. And there again, dinner's at 5:00.

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

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COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Yeah, everybody's at...everybody else come at 6:00, and we will be ready for the meeting. 6:00 to 8:00 is the meeting. Okay.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you, Member Cook.

COUNCILMEMBER COOK: Thank you.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Okay. Members, if there are no objections, I would like to defer this item.

COUNCILMEMBERS: No objections.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Okay. Thank you, Members.

COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS.

ACTION: DEFER.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: So, as Member Cook just said, we have the South Maui residency area meeting this evening, 6:00 p.m. in Kihei. Tomorrow, we have the Lānaʻi residency area meeting in Lānaʻi, also at 6:00 p.m. Our next in-Chamber meeting is Thursday, April 16, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. I will also be presiding over that meeting. Thank you again, Chair Sugimura. And that will be with the Department of Environmental Management. We may also be discussing additional legislation that was submitted to be considered with the FY 2027 proposed budget. Also, if you have any additional questions for the Police Department that were not addressed today, please send them to staff.bfed@mauicounty.us by 9:00 a.m. tomorrow. We're still waiting for some responses, but as we approach decisions week, time is limited. So, for departments that have not yet submitted responses, please send all follow-up questions to staff.bfed@mauicounty.us by noon tomorrow. If a follow-up question is not submitted by that deadline, the individual Member will need to work directly with the department to get their responses. Did I get that correct, Staff? Okay. Did I miss anything, Staff?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Chair, I got a follow-up question for you.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: For me? Okay. I might have to lean on Staff, but please.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So, we don't got to come here tomorrow because you said the next Chamber thing is on Thursday.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Correct. So, the --

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Stay home.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: -- the...well, we got to go to Lānaʻi.

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COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, okay.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: But the calendar originally had --

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I'm not coming to Wailuku.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: -- the morning reserved for Members to develop their proposals and for travel. It was...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: But we can't because West Maui...

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Yeah, so it was available if I wanted to recess this meeting to continue discussions tomorrow, since we weren't sure what kind of testimony we were going to get.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, okay. So, we don't have to come here tomorrow.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: But you do not have to come here tomorrow. You are welcome to go directly to Lānaʻi, collect \$200 --

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

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: -- go bowling with Member Johnson. Any other questions, Members?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: No.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Okay. Making sure that I did everything that I'm supposed to on the administrative end. Staff, anything? Okay. So, that being the case, thank you, Members. Thank you, MPD. We appreciate your time. The time is now 3:08. This meeting is adjourned. ...*(gavel)*...

ADJOURN: 3:08 p.m.

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CERTIFICATION

I, Daniel Schoenbeck, hereby certify that pages 1 through 42 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 22nd day of May 2026, in Wailuku, Hawai'i



Daniel Schoenbeck