

**BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**
Council of the County of Maui

MINUTES

April 15, 2026

Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

CONVENE: 6:02 p.m.

PRESENT: Councilmember Yuki Lei K. Sugimura, Chair
Councilmember Kauano Batangan, Vice-Chair
Councilmember Tom Cook, Member
Councilmember Gabe Johnson, Member
Councilmember Tamara Paltin, Member
Councilmember Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez, Member
Councilmember Shane M. Sinenci, Member
Councilmember Nohelani Uʻu-Hodgins, Member

EXCUSED: Councilmember Alice L. Lee, Member

STAFF: Kasie Apo Takayama, Senior Legislative Analyst
Jennifer Yamashita, Committee Secretary

OTHERS: Neal Tamashiro
Michele Weinhouse
Natalie Ropa
David Embrey
Butch Gima
Rose Jane Ancheta
Stan Ruidas
Fran Odoshi Waite

Others (25+) additional attendees

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

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . .*(gavel)*. . . Welcome everybody to the Lānaʻi Residency Area. Thank you for being here. The Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee, we're very grateful to be here. My name is Yuki Lei Sugimura; I'm the Chair of this Committee. And I will let Member Johnson introduce the Members.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Yeah. Thank you, Chair. And aloha, everyone. So happy to see Lānaʻi community coming out and speaking to us about what your...what your budget priorities are. I'll introduce everybody from our left. So from my left here we have Councilmember Shane Sinenci from Hāna. Aloha, Councilmember. Following up, we have Councilmember Keani Rawlins-Fernandez from Molokai. Aloha,

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

April 15, 2026
Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

Councilmember. To my left here, we have Councilmember Paltin from West Maui. Aloha, Councilmember. You met the Budget Chair, Councilmember Sugimura from Upcountry. Aloha. We have from Kahului, Councilmember Batangan. Aloha, Councilmember. And then from the Pāʻia-Haʻikū-Makawao District area, we have Uʻu...Councilmember Uʻu-Hodgins. Aloha, Councilmember. And last but not least, we have Councilmember Cook from South Maui. Aloha, Councilmember. And I'll turn it back to the Chair. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you, Member Johnson. So, assisting us with today's meeting is Office of Council Services Staff...oh, they are there or there. Sorry, they're there. Oh, maybe that's your staff.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Oh, yeah.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Maybe there.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Also, with us from my staff, we have Axel Beers, and then we have Kate Griffiths, and, in the back, we have Roxanne Morita. Okay. Oh, and then we have Uncle Don here also with Staff members. He's a mean bowler, so be careful with the man in the hat.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: We also want to thank Vini from *Akakū*, who is filming this, and it'll be live. Thank you very much. And whoever's helping you on...at the Kahului office to make it live, appreciate their help too. Thank you, Jen. Thank you Kasie from the Office of Council Services.

ITEM 1: PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2026 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), and RESOLUTION 26-63)

CHAIR SUGIMURA: We have one item on the agenda, which is BFED-1, which is the entire proposed fiscal year budget as given to us by the Mayor of the County of Maui. And any of you who would like to testify, please identify yourself by name, and you will have...and the organization you're from. You will have three minutes to testify, and if you're not done, you'll have another 30 seconds to complete. We...we call this our listening session. So we're anxious to hear from you for what you may think of as concerns for your community that we as the County needs to take into consideration. So your voices are very important to us. Some of the Councilmembers may have questions just to clarify what you testified on, but it'll all be taken into consideration as we go through decisions, which is next week. So at this time, can you please call the first testifier?

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: Yes, Chair, the first testifier is Neal Tamashiro, to be followed by Aunty Heather Durham.

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

April 15, 2026
Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

. . . BEGIN PUBLIC TESTIMONY . . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you.

MR. TAMASHIRO: I'm here representing Dr. Coop DeRenne, retired professor and assistant baseball coach for the University of Hawai'i Manoa. Subject, sports program proposal for Lānaʻi Field House. Lānaʻi's community and high school coaches have asked me to represent them tonight at the annual Maui County...Maui Council Budget Committee meeting to be held on Lānaʻi. First, we would like to thank you for the...thank the Committee for last year's support for the Lānaʻi Field House...houses architectural design appropriation to construct an extended roof and gutters to the existing facility. Second, we believe, in Mayor Bissen's 2027 budget, he may include an appropriation for the construction of the facilities' extended roof and gutters. Please support this coming construction appropriation. Lastly, by proxy, me, will provide the committee with our field house, sports programs proposals. Last year, 2025, Maui County's Park and Recreation Department only approved two sports, baseball and softball, to be conducted in the facility. This limited program usage for our facility was not the intent of Mayor Alan Arakawa and Lānaʻi Councilmember Riki Hokama. Please see...thank you for your consideration.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Any questions, Members? Member...Member Paltin.

MR. TAMASHIRO: I'm not sure I can answer it. He couldn't be here tonight, Coop, because he's on O'ahu attending personal business.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Mr. Tamashiro. I just was wondering, the other sports, was...was wrestling one of them?

MR. TAMASHIRO: I'm not sure, but the two sports that are prominent in my mind are archery and golf.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, archery and golf, but you don't know about wrestling?

MR. TAMASHIRO: No. I don't think it's really...well, I shouldn't say anything about that.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay.

MR. TAMASHIRO: But I know archery in sports.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Archery, golf, baseball, and...

MR. TAMASHIRO: And softball.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh. Okay.

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

April 15, 2026
Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

MR. TAMASHIRO: Have you been to the field house?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: One time, I think a few years ago, some Mr., probably Coop, showed us the flaws. I think somebody.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much. I'm going to share this with Staff, and then everybody can have a copy of it for your extensive research. Next testifier, please.

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: The next testifier is Heather Durham, to be followed by Michele Weinhouse.

MS. DURHAM: Good evening. Thank you for coming to Lānaʻi. My name is Heather Durham, and I'm here representing the kūpuna. I wanted to speak on behalf of MEO and what a godsend it is to the people of Lānaʻi. We really appreciate because there is not enough places for assisted living on Lānaʻi. The budget figure that you are proposing is a drop in the bucket compared to putting someone in a nursing home, the cost of it. If I add together the things that you've given to Kinā 'ole and, you know, other things that you have on here and MEO and the Community Health Center. That would barely support one or two people in a nursing home. But these organizations in town do a tremendous amount to help the kūpuna. I just wanted to put in my two cents for that. So, thank you so much for funding these programs and please dig a little deeper because we could really use it, especially, I would say, Kinā 'ole really needs your help because it allows people to age in their own home with just that little bit of help that they need. And plus, it's training the young people graduating from the high schools to be...to get careers in health care. It's the first leg up, and it's helping their own community. So, thank you so much.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much. Any questions? Seeing none. Thank you. Next testifier.

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: The next testifier is Michele Winehouse, to be followed by Natalie Ropa.

MS. WEINHOUSE: Hello, Councilmembers and welcome to Lānaʻi. I know it's always hard to get here, so I appreciate the efforts you guys took to get here. Again, my name is Michele Weinhouse, and I'm the owner of Kapua's Farm Lānaʻi. I have given testimony in the past about the programs that I was in as a new farmer. Some of those include FAM, Maui Farmers Support Network, MEDB, HFU, MEO, and then Maui County Department of Ag, of course, and, most recently, the Lānaʻi Food Stimulus Program. So I would not be as successful a farmer without all these programs. So, thank you for that. Thank you for supporting those. And although I wish the...and I also want to thank you especially with the most recent one, the Lānaʻi Food Stimulus Program. Although I wish the program did pay us more frequently than six months because that's a really long time for a farmer to wait, to the end of the program. So maybe have an interim payment in there. I can't tell you how vital the Lānaʻi's Farmers Market has been as well as that stimulus program. I saw 900 percent growth in...in my business sales. In 2024, 2025 and then...and then in the...yeah. From 2024 to 2025 had a 900 percent increase in

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

April 15, 2026
Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

sales, and then I went from producing a 100 pounds of squash, and I have more than just squash in my crops, but just looking at the squash in 2025 to over 700 pounds in just quarter one of 2026, because part of that is I now have customers through the farmer's market, right? And so, when the storm...I don't know. Anyway, I've gone through feeding about a hundred families in 2025 to over 500...400 families in 2026 because I also work with the Lānaʻi Food Pantry, and I'm the only farmer currently doing that on Lānaʻi. So I'm very proud of that. And then most importantly I was able to hire my first part-time worker. My success is because of your decisions to the...for the programs that you fund. That has been huge, put me ahead a year or six months at least. And so, I'm really tired because she's...she's an animal, and I got to keep up with her. So I...I was part of the Maui County Department of Ag's food nutrition security plan in...in...you know, putting that together just with my input from Lānaʻi. And I...I truly believe that it is going to help us with our food security issues or food insecurity issues, however you want to look at that, and I am so proud to be a part of the solution. And...but we need more money to go into that security plan, right? So I think the agriculture budget, if we looked at the percentage over the overall budget, is .2 percent. You know, that's one way of looking at it. It just . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . basically needs a little more money. So one of the programs that we didn't...we didn't apply to was the grant, the farm-to-family grant that the MDOA had offered last year, and that's because we weren't ready for it, but I think we have proof of content (ph.) that we can farm and that we can grow food, and now I would like to try to apply for that. So I hope that's going to be something in the future. But thank you. Thank you so much, you guys. I am...I love being a farmer, so you've given me that. So, thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Oh, Member Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Ms. Weinhouse. I really loved your ziti last year. I'm wondering on what you had said about the interim payment for the stimulus. Would...do you think quarterly would be better?

MS. WEINHOUSE: Yeah. I mean, anything would be better. Monthly would be even better, but I understand that, you know, you got to balance the...yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And then what was the...what was the program called, again?

MS. WEINHOUSE: The Lānaʻi Food Stimulus Program.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh. Lānaʻi Food Stimulus.

MS. WEINHOUSE: Yeah, so they give coupons to the kūpuna and families and --

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And they reimburse quarterly or monthly?

MS. WEINHOUSE: --they reimburse us for that, and we take it in as money, which is great.

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

April 15, 2026
Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay.

MS. WEINHOUSE: The aunties don't haggle us. . . .*(laughing)*. . . because, you know, when they haggle I gotta go, okay, auntie.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So the coupon, they don't ask for one extra squash.

MS. WEINHOUSE: No. They don't cut the price, they don't do anything. Yeah, it's really...it helps, it really does help the farmers.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Now I know where to go for squash soup, then.

MS. WEINHOUSE: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: One question. So what organization gives you the coupons?

MS. WEINHOUSE: MEO is the one who facilitates it, yes.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Yeah. They do that on Maui, too. All right. Thank you very much for your enthusiastic testimony. Next...next testifier.

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: Next testifier is Natalie Ropa, to be followed by David Embrey.

MS. ROPA: Hi. Thank you guys so much for coming to Lānaʻi. My name is Natalie Ropa, and I work at UH Maui College. And so, today I'm here not to ask for funding but because of an opportunity that I see, and the opportunity is our Lānaʻi Youth Center has a new facility. And so, the people there are going to move to their new building, and the old building will be vacant. And so, we have a building that's right across the street over there, but it's very small, and we're outgrowing our building. And so, our strongest program with...at UH Maui Colleges are early college enrollment program. We have a very successful and strong partnership with Lānaʻi High and Elementary School and Pulama Lānaʻi, and our program has, like, grown tremendously over the past ten years. So I have some data. So just as an example, the class of 2026, that's this graduating class, we have 50 students in the class, and 30 students have come through our program. Out of those 30 people, 7 have gotten their associate's degree. And they gotten it in December or before. So, like, they've already gotten it, so it's...it's done. So I have seven more next year, possibly ten, so the program is just growing. So right now, the students have to cross the street, and they get an off-campus pass, and they go there, and they do their work, and they're free from 12:00. The youth center is right across the street. I would like our program to be more embedded into the school day so I can serve not just...just the high-achieving students but our midway students so that they can rotate through the school day. So right now, you know, some of our kids need more supervision, more crossing that road I guess allows them more access than just crossing over the...I'm hoping, you know, the parking lot. So that's our current college program.

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

April 15, 2026
Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

Another very strong program that we have is our CNA program. So we've given a lot of certified nursing assistants who, like, in Kinā'ole into our hospital, but every semester we have to work with Pulama Lānaʻi to rent a facility to have a nursing lab. So if we move to the Lānaʻi Youth Center, they have a back building that I could turn into a CNA lab. We're also bringing in the LPN program, so the licensed practical nurse program, we're going to start that for the first time in January 2027. I have on-island teachers who are willing to teach and, you know, if we could just have a lab all the time that would be in our best interest, and we don't have to keep moving around. I know there's plans for each UH Maui college to have building eventually, but our program is booming right now. Our partnership is super strong with the different organizations. We've become an educational resource, a hub for our community. I would really like to extend it to more adult education, get, like, workshops going, but I need more space. So I have three rooms in there. One can house 10 people, one can house 15, and the other can house, like, six, but they're not all one, so it's, like, different rooms. I need a bigger space. We can...we have the technological capabilities to zoom and to have teachers online. It would be such a great fit because the County weight room is right there, we could offer, like, adult education classes to say, like, HVAC or electric...electrical stuff. But we just need a bigger building, and honestly, there aren't a lot of buildings on Lānaʻi. That building is made to serve people and youth. I would hate for it to be converted into an office. It needs to be a hub where people can come, do education, and take advantage of opportunities that we now have within all of our partnerships. So, thank you very much.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Any questions, Members? So there'll be...one question. So the building that you're pointing to is a County building? It's the former youth, the old youth center. And the one across the street was also County, right?

MS. ROPA: It's owned by Pulama Lānaʻi, and I believe our lease is up. But, you know, Pulama Lānaʻi is a very strong partner of ours, so they're not, like, kicking us out, per se, right now. But we do want to get a better facility.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: I...I hear you. Great the work that you're doing. So have you talked to somebody from the State?

MS. ROPA: No. I...I just the reason that I'm bringing it here is because I really don't know how to approach it yet, so I'm just, like, wanting to get my voice out. I recently stepped into this position. And so, before I was kind of like the early college person, but now I'm actually in charge. So the main thing is for us to grow is I need a bigger building. And so, even if we were only in it for, like, five years, like that five years, like we've already grown so much. Like, it would really just take us to the next level. I want...you know, I want the students who are going to stay on Lānaʻi to be in our programs because then they'll come to our programs after they graduate from high school. The kids that I have now they're gonna...they're going to the mainland, they're going to O'ahu, you know, getting master's degrees, and we don't know if they're going to come back. But if we could educate the ones that are going to be here, that is the type of programs that I'm looking to extend it to.

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

April 15, 2026
Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

CHAIR SUGIMURA: I'm going to ask for your contact information, and we can talk story.

MS. ROPA: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Member Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Ms. Ropa. I was wondering, is engineering one of those because, you know, the County needs plenty engineers. I mean, if...if you want to...

MS. ROPA: With today's technology, we can do, like, Zoom everything. You know, that's the future of education.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: We give a supplement if you come work for the County as an engineer, and then you can be, like, hey you're working in the County building, want to join...

MS. ROPA: It's like for . . . *(inaudible)*. . . dual enrollment we set the bar so high. Like, get your associates degree. We have 14 kids who've gotten their associate's degree so far since 2021.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Before graduating high school.

MS. ROPA: We just got to set the bar high. Our people will do it, but we need...we need to come together, put our resources together, take advantage of the opportunities that we have right now. You know, we have a...we have a landowner who's, like, funding education. Like, that's the most sustainable way to, you know...yeah. So anyway, I'm just very passionate about this, and I know there's a lot of people who probably are wanting, you know, I don't know, even City and County. And so, I'm just...Like, I need to get the word out, and that's why I'm here today.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much. Anybody else? Seeing none. Thank you. Next testifier.

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: Next testifier is David Embrey, to be followed by Butch Gima.

MR. EMBREY: Aloha, everybody. My name is David Embrey. I'm a farmer for 50 years in the State of Hawai'i. This paper has nothing on it about farming. Number-one priority should be about farming. I am tired of small money coming in, and we don't get anything out of it. Farming needs to change. We got...we got to sustain our farmers. You do not sustain the farmers; the people are going to starve. Come on, I was just in Maui, \$10 a

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

April 15, 2026
Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

pound for potato leaves. Come on people, we need to wake up, we really need to wake up. This is serious, this is very serious. My own daughter that's the number one agricultural biologist in USA; she works in the mainland. She's telling me 20...by 2050 there is no more food for USA. You guys understand that? You guys...you guys need to really think about this. We got eight people here, and who...who's going to protect the people of Hawai'i, who's going to feed the people of Hawai'i. If we don't feed the people of Hawai'i, our children can't even learn. This got to be number-one priority. Number-one priority. I'm tired of us being the last priority because that's what we are, we're always the last priority. The farmers, the small farmers are dying out. Come on, the last two weeks, all our farms have been destroyed. What did we get? Yeah. They sent us something. Okay, you guys got \$1,500. Whoopee, what does that do to us? We are...we're in desperate times, people, we need to wake up. And if the State of Hawai'i doesn't wake up, it's going to be some big problems. Come on, look at her. You guys go in the store, you see the food prices going up. Come on, let's be real. This should be number-one priority, and I will keep pushing on this, but you guys represent us. This is not only about Lānaʻi, this is about everybody, all of you guys' communities, Molokai, and Lānaʻi, and Maui, come on. So that's about all I can say. It's...it's...you guys really need to think about this. You know, you can sustain parks and sustain all these other things, and what does the farmer get? Come on, 50 years, I have never seen nothing for the farmer. Nothing. Yeah, I'm done.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Member U'u-Hodgins has a question.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: What paper do you have there, Mr. Embrey?

MR. EMBREY: I don't know. Something that they told me to put on, like, top priorities and...

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. Did you get this paper here?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: You can have my paper.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: You're welcome to have my paper here, this is what's included in Lānaʻi's budget proposed item for the...

MR. EMBREY: Well, and I did look at that.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay.

MR. EMBREY: I did look at that.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay.

MR. EMBREY: And there's money.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Yeah.

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

April 15, 2026
Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

MR. EMBREY: That's nothing; that don't sustain us.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay.

MR. EMBREY: Do you understand?

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: No. I hear you.

MR. EMBREY: That does not sustain the farmer.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: So we have...

MR. EMBREY: We got to be real.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. So we have \$80,000 --

MR. EMBREY: What is \$80,000?

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: So I'm going to ask you what you...what you would prefer?
That's my question.

MR. EMBREY: Well tax the hotel for us --

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay.

MR. EMBREY: --to sustainable tax for farmers.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay.

MR. EMBREY: We feed the tourists.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay.

MR. EMBREY: And we don't get nothing out of that. We get zero out of that.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay. And then for, like, the stimulus programs that
Ms. Weinhouse was talking about, that \$70,000, what do you think would be better for
the . . .(inaudible). . .

MR. EMBREY: The program...what I'm trying to get to is --

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Yeah.

MR. EMBREY: -- programs work for maybe a backyard farmer.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Okay.

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

April 15, 2026
Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

MR. EMBREY: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER UʻU-HODGINS: Okay. Yes, please explain.

MR. EMBREY: It doesn't work for me; it doesn't work for is commercial farmers.

COUNCILMEMBER UʻU-HODGINS: Okay.

MR. EMBREY: Okay. It doesn't feed the hotel, doesn't feed the stores, they don't feed the 3,000 people that's over here, okay?

COUNCILMEMBER UʻU-HODGINS: Okay.

MR. EMBREY: You know, that's a small percentage.

COUNCILMEMBER UʻU-HODGINS: Okay.

MR. EMBREY: I've been in Lānaʻi for 20 years. We've been doing the same things over and over, over and over. During the COVID period, we fed the whole Lānaʻi, us farmers. What did we get for it, really nothing.

COUNCILMEMBER UʻU-HODGINS: And then for the micro grants, have you done that before? From MEO?

MR. EMBREY: The microgrants are so small --

COUNCILMEMBER UʻU-HODGINS: Okay.

MR. EMBREY: -- it doesn't do anything.

COUNCILMEMBER UʻU-HODGINS: Okay.

MR. EMBREY: You see, we...we --

COUNCILMEMBER UʻU-HODGINS: As a commercial farmer...

MR. EMBREY: -- old school kind of things, you know what I mean? This...this is today, this is...times are changing now and they're changing fast.

COUNCILMEMBER UʻU-HODGINS: Okay. As a commercial farmer, what do you think would work best for you? Because I don't know; so I need you to tell us.

MR. EMBREY: Somehow you would have to work a program amount to sustain farmers.

COUNCILMEMBER UʻU-HODGINS: Okay.

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

April 15, 2026
Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

MR. EMBREY: I mean...I mean, four years ago, I went to the King Kamehameha school program, they did a farming program. They sustain their farmers; they pay their farmers ahead of time to grow those crops.

COUNCILMEMBER UʻU-HODGINS: Okay. Okay.

MR. EMBREY: You understand what I mean?

COUNCILMEMBER UʻU-HODGINS: Sure. Thank you. Thank you for the specifics, I appreciate it.

MR. EMBREY: Okay. Oh, one more thing. There is one more thing. We had a commercial kitchen once upon a time, you know, for Lānaʻi, and where is it now? We have nothing. The farmers in Lānaʻi are going backwards, okay?

COUNCILMEMBER UʻU-HODGINS: Thank you. I appreciate that.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you very much. True to his word, he said he was going to testify. I saw him at the ferry. Next testifier...oh, it's Mr. Gima.

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: Next testifier is Butch Gima followed by John Janikowski.

MR. GIMA: Good evening. My name is Butch Gima. Glad to see all of you here on Lānaʻi. I think it's important for you to be on Lānaʻi so you can govern not only Maui Island, you can govern Lānaʻi too. So I'm going to testify on five things, if I have enough time. Number one has to do with the First Hawaiian Bank. I know you folks passed the reso so that you can accept the property from First Hawaiian Bank so if you could put this on the Council parking lot when the time comes that you guys actually get the deed, put in some money for planning and permitting, and then renovating with the goal of using that as a multipurpose facility so agencies could come over once a month, twice a month, maybe need to stay overnight, can use...can use that building. We don't have a...we don't have a facility like that. So I can probably rattle off six or seven different agencies that would benefit from a multiuse facility such as that. Number two: I testified to this last year. Please put in some targeted funds for the Planning Department so they can provide hybrid Planning Commission meetings. Right now, it's all Zoom. It's tough...it's tough to have Zoom meetings. The hybrid meetings would mean that we would have in-person and in Zoom. If you're putting targeted funds, that will help in terms of transportation, housing, and...and per diem. Number three: if and when Pulama provides the land to expand the...our County cemetery or gives all of the cemetery to...to the County, please put in some funds to beef up Public Works so they can take care of our cemetery. They're doing a bang-up job on our veterans' cemetery. In fact, I was there yesterday, and they just passed the inspection, and they did it quite well. Number four: Please put in some funds for INB. The boards and commissions process is the pits. They...they...you have to change the code. The code makes it very difficult to adequately implement boards and commissions and to recruit properly. Five:

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

April 15, 2026
Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

I want to thank the Council. You guys...you guys are working as a team with the Administration for our affordable housing project and that doesn't happen very often with the Council and the Administration working as a team. So our community very much appreciates that. Let's see. Number six: to kind of follow up on what Dave said, the Department of Ag for the County I don't think is doing a good job because in Victorino's Administration the goal was to come here, survey all the stores, restaurants, and find out what type of produce do they bring in, and once you do that survey, then you can go to the farmers and say...tell the farmers, okay, we need 10 pounds of this, 15...15 pounds of that, and so on. And that way we...we can sustain . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . our community with produce, and fruits, and whatever grown on our island. And, I mean, that...that helps with the economic diversification for our community. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Member Batangan.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you. You mentioned that the Planning Commission only meets virtually. They don't have a physical location when the Lānaʻi Planning Commission meets?

MR. GIMA: Not since COVID. I've been...I've been banging away at Planning Department for three years now to get back here and you basically got to go through the Planning Director and haven't had that conversation with Jacky yet. I've had it with Kate, and Kate was hesitant about doing in person. She was willing to consider hybrid.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Okay. And pre-COVID, where was the physical location here on Lānaʻi?

MR. GIMA: Senior Center.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Okay. So as of COVID, it's only been virtual, and you're pushing for a hybrid option with...and would you want it back at the Senior Center?

MR. GIMA: Yeah. It worked there before.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Okay.

MR. GIMA: It's...it's hard. I've been chairing for the last three years --

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you for your service.

MR. GIMA: -- and to scroll through the screen looking for who's raising their hand and trying to find --

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: We understand.

MR. GIMA: Yeah.

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

April 15, 2026
Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you.

MR. GIMA: Yeah.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Thank you very much.

MR. GIMA: But you guys get paid for that; I'm doing it as a volunteer.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . .*(laughing)*. . . Thank you. Member Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Mr. Gima. I just wanted to clarify on your first point about the multipurpose facility at First Hawaiian Bank. Would that include the commercial kitchen there or a different location?

MR. GIMA: Well, there's more than enough room on that property to...to build, you know, a commercial kitchen. But my first...my first priority would be used as a multipurpose facility. For example, I mean, the Director of the VA, was just here yesterday, and it'd be great if there's three or four different veterans' organizations that serve our community. And the meeting yesterday was at lunchtime. And so, some of the vets couldn't come. So if...if, like, the Office of Veteran Services for the State comes over, and they can stay overnight, they can meet with veterans who are working during the day. So that's an example of how best to use a multipurpose facility.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So not in the existing building but on the land build another thing has a commercial kitchen or have the commercial kitchen as part of the multipurpose facility in that existing building?

MR. GIMA: I haven't given that much thought. But when I said monies for planning and permitting was to retrofit the bank so it can be used as a meeting site and then retrofit the old residence or expand the residence so people can stay overnight and not have to worry about whether they gonna stay at Sensei, Mānele, or Hotel Lānaʻi.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay. Do you...do you know about how much square foot the bank building is?

MR. GIMA: It's probably...it's probably under 2,000 square feet.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And the residence?

MR. GIMA: No, that includes the residence.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, that include...okay. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much, Mr. Gima. No other questions.

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

April 15, 2026
Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

MR. GIMA: You're welcome.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, wait. There's...

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: I just have a point of information that he's the Chair of our Planning...our Lānaʻi Planning Commission. So now you guys know.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Okay.

MR. GIMA: If you listened, I said I've been doing it three years now.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: We want to thank you. Thank you very much. Next testifier.

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: Thank you, Chair. The next testifier is John Janikowski, to be followed by Rose Jane Ancheta.

MR. JANIKOWSKI: Hi. I'm John Janikowski, a family physician here on Lānaʻi for the past 16 years or a little more. And I'm testifying on behalf of Lānaʻi Kinā 'ole, the home health agency. I'm sure you're all aware of what home health agencies do. And our agency, especially, has been limited in the fact that they have a wait-list of people that they're trying to take care of. And, of course, we just had one cancer patient come back and of course she went to the top of the list. But quite a long list. In addition to them taking care of their home health patients, that organization has spearheaded the medical assistant program here over the last several years, and they turned out a number of medical assistants that are working in the hospital and at home health agency and other agencies. And one good thing that came out of that is one of those MAs went on to nursing school, and she will graduate next month and hopefully come back. So I know you all know and you have on the list of appropriations, and we thank you for that, and we hope you'll continue to help us out. Thanks.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you for the work you do. Any questions? Thank you. Next testifier.

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: The next testifier is Rose Jane Ancheta, to be followed by Stan Ruidas.

MS. ANCHETA: Good evening, everybody. Thank you for coming to Lānaʻi. I'm Rose Jane Ancheta, the branch manager here for Lānaʻi. Michele and David, sorry for the stimulus payment. I am only the admin, everything, transportation, I don't have any assistance on Lānaʻi. So I do scheduling for transportation, but I'm here tonight to not ask for anything, but I do want you guys to continue supporting MEO. We are only the transport, the Handivan, here on Lānaʻi. We do bring out all the seniors that...that's what they are always looking forward to every day. A good thing that we didn't get any affected by the...the weather wise here, but we still wanted to still go out and because of, you know, there was still debris on the road we were able to still continue to bring them out because, like, seniors still don't want to stay in the home, they just want to go

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

April 15, 2026
Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

for a ride, and that's what they do they like to enjoy and go to the senior centers. And then also, we also support them on bringing them to their...their dental appointments, their medical appointments, bring them to the airport, to the harbor, and, of course, with the Maui shopping wise, with the food wise on Lānaʻi, with the barge prices here, they look forward to that. So we'd like you folks to continue funding, of course, MEO for the transportation here on Lānaʻi. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Any questions? Seeing none. Next testifier.

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: The next testifier is Stan Ruidas, to be followed by Fran Odoshi Waite.

COUNCILMEMBER U'U-HODGINS: Hello.

MR. RUIDAS: Good evening, Councilmembers. Welcome back to Lānaʻi.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Thank you.

MR. RUIDAS: The main one I wanted to testify on is we need a community center. Our community has been neglected for all these years. A site for that would be below the Skate Park, and when the Mayor came and I showed him where it was, you know, and I...I spoke to this problem with Gabe, and you know, I know funding is a problem. So, like I said, from the other time the...the other time, you guys like to do feasibility studies, so at least that would be, you know, a foot in the door. Monies are available from the Feds and the State but, you know, we need you guys to push the issue. In that commercial area, I mean, for the community center, we would have transient housing for, like, you guys so you don't have to stay at the hotel, which you guys probably like . . . *(laughing)* . . . and for other services, you know, like first aid, somebody want to do the class, come over, we have a place for you to stay, you can charge 'em, you know, minimum, unless you're a County worker, then it'll be free. But, you know, we need something that would help the community as far as a place to gather, place to meet. And also, an emergency shelter, we need an emergency shelter, you know, in light of what happened in the last three weeks. You know, if something really bad was to happen here we all have mostly, like, 80 percent of wooden houses. Hurricanes would wipe everything out. Then where would we be? So I'm putting you guys on notice right now if something happens, I'm putting you guys on notice, okay? And I support everybody that came before me. Agriculture is the main thing on Lānaʻi, we're the last to get support services. You know, resources we're the last; we always the last. The State has known for over 20 years that we got a two-week supply of food in the State. What has been done this last 20 years? Oh, we going put funding here, funding here, but it doesn't reach the people that actually does the work. You know, it looks good on paper, but it doesn't reach the people. You know, that's my main one, is we need a community center. The second one, like I said before, you know, vehicle maintenance, we need a base yard to take care of equipment. You guys, you know, spend millions of dollars on equipment, but there's no place to fix them. And like our landfill, you know, they got big kind dozers and stuff like that. You know, we had problems one time where because of the mechanic couldn't come over, they couldn't pick up our trash. You know,

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

April 15, 2026
Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

that's a sanitary problem. Look at our landfill now, it's like over the top almost. We didn't think it would build up that high. Yeah. So, you know, I support everyone that came before me, Kinā 'ole, the Ag, Butch with the vets, . . .*(timer sounds)*. . . time's up --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: 30 seconds.

MR. RUIDAS: 30 seconds. Thank you very much. Okay. Bye. . . .*(laughing)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Member Johnson.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you, Chair. Just to following up on some of your concerns, and I wonder if you're aware. You know, you probably saw the military come over here, and I gave them a tour of the County land and the IRT, the training. They're looking at a parcel of land to build a Category 5 shelter. A Category 5 shelter is like a bunker; right?

MR. RUIDAS: Uh-huh.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: So hopefully, you know, we're in talks. Hopefully, they come back and actually do the thing. So I just want to give you an update that we're trying to get the military to come build on County land.

MR. RUIDAS: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: The second thing is, you know, are you aware that the Ikaika 'Ohana, the new affordable housing project, does have a community center in there, and it will be open for all the community, not just the residents in the new affordable housing project. So, working on that. The additional things you're adding to the community center, I'd love to...let's talk, let's see if we can find...fit that in there. So just letting you know we're working on some of the things that your concerns are.

MR. RUIDAS: You know, it's always small. Even the roads, you build it small so you're going to build a community center, but just do the bare minimum. We don't need the bare minimum; we want the maximum so that we can house 3,000 people in it.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: I totally hear where you're coming from. So I'd invite you to come look at what Ikaika 'Ohana did in West Maui and their community center, and those are the folks that we brought here to do that type of project, and it's A...A...I think it's A-plus. But, you know, definitely, if you have the time, Stan, I know you're on Maui often, maybe you can check out that project and see what those guys can do, so.

MR. RUIDAS: Yeah. And so, you mentioned the category. In the community plan we put in there --

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Yeah.

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

April 15, 2026
Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

MR. RUIDAS: -- new buildings shall have, I think, was the category...minimum two structure, three, category three. Yeah. So we put it in there. I don't know if it's being followed. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER JOHNSON: Thanks, Stan.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Any more questions? Seeing none. Thank you very much. Next testifier.

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: Chair, the next and currently last testifier signed up is Fran Odoshi Waite.

MS. ODOSHI WAITE: Aloha.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Aloha.

MS. ODOSHI WAITE: My name is Fran Odoshi Waite. I am here on behalf of the Lānaʻi Farmers Market and Hawaiʻi Farmers Union United. First, I, too, support what all...everybody else has been saying. In Natalie we trust. Give her her building. She's going to build our kids up for real. Give this lady anything she like. Okay. Having said that, Natalie helped to facilitate the youth and student travel program, and she has been a key component in keeping that going. And so, we totally support getting our kids out there into the world, traveling and doing things that make them feel good, so that they can come home and do things that make them feel good, right? We also support...I also support the youth center as well. They've been real crucial in keeping middle school and all of our kids going. So, thank you for your support of them. MEO, Rose Jane is...I swear she...she help. She's everywhere, she does everything, she drives, she does paperwork, but she does need the help to help us farmers and to help the kūpunas who rely on our farmers. Rose Jane organizes the transportation that takes them from where they're getting picked up down to where the Farmers Market is, which is at the beginning of town, yeah, at the entryway part, so right where the farm the firehouse is, right? And so, I know that the kūpuna that come down appreciate the transfer, and I know that we love having her do the MEO vouchers. We also support shortening the timeline that our farmers can get paid because, you know, they put the money out there, they put the effort out there to get things started and provide for our community. And so, we want to make sure that they getting paid on time. We are thankful for the Lānaʻi Food Stimulus Program that has brought our community together to come and sit buy her squash, and Gabe's . . . *(inaudible)*. . . jelly, and the marmalades and all the things. Yeah. And we would like to see that continue so that we can continue the momentum that we've started. We've got a couple of plans out there already about bringing in more classes to help our farmers on their business end and on their growth cycle. We're talking to them as the Farmer's Union about what they need at their farms, and one of the big things we need is soil that is like compost that works for us, right, 'cause the soil composting machine right now with Pulama is not working, so it's kind of a bummer for us. That's a big thing there. And then we are also in support of the commercial kitchen. I don't know if the bunker gonna have a commercial kitchen, but it should, right? But on top of that we would love to have a commercial kitchen within a processing

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

April 15, 2026
Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

center for our farmers. So we started to look into things of that nature, to do a processing center, and we'd love to figure out how to get that funded. The First Hawaiian Bank building, totally agree, multiuse facility all the way. And mahalo...mahalo for the push for affordable housing here on Lānaʻi. I used all my three minutes at once. So I hope that works for everybody else. Keep the funding coming, small island like us and Molokai and, you know, the Upcountry side, and Hāna side farmers and all of them, like, you know, we...we keep it clean, we try and bring our communities together and that's, you know, what you guys do too. So, mahalo again for coming over to Lānaʻi.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much. Any questions? Member Sinenci has a question.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Have you spoken with Koa Hewahewa at the Department of Ag?

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Start again.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Have you spoken with Koa Hewahewa at the Department of Ag?

MS. ODOSHI WAITE: I have reached out, and I'm waiting for a call-back on that.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Because we were happy that the Department helped to get a agro...aggregation center in East Maui with a kitchen. So hopefully, I mean, maybe help speaking with the Department because they were instrumental in getting that in.

MS. ODOSHI WAITE: Fantastic. Thank you so much.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, sorry. Member Paltin has a question.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Ms. Odoshi Waite. I wasn't clear on the soil compost ask. What was the ask?

MS. ODOSHI WAITE: Our composting machine has been down for probably about three years now, two, three years now. It constantly gets rebar in it and chews up the teeth, and I think the quote was 30,000 to get the repair done. I...I...and, you know, and that's Pulama's machine and Pulama's green waste, but it affects us so heavily that I'm trying...we're all trying to figure out how can we do it on our own, you know, so.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So to clarify, the ask is not to fix Pulama's machine but to --

MS. ODOSHI WAITE: It was just to put it out there that I going throw something at you guys pretty soon enough.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh okay. Yeah. So stay tuned.

MS. ODOSHI WAITE: Stay tuned. Yeah.

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

April 15, 2026
Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Got it. Got it. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Any other questions? Seeing none. Thank you very much.
All right. So do we have any more testifiers?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I had a question on the compost ask.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Wait. After.

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: Chair, there's currently no other individuals signed up to testify.

VICE-CHAIR BATANGAN: Chair, I think I see Roxanne making her way down to the podium,
wishing to testify at this time.

COUNCILMEMBER SINENCI: No objections.

COUNCILMEMBERS: . . .*(laughing)*. . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. That was the last testifier. I'm going to close.

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: Last call. If there's no individuals wishing to testify, three...two...one.
Chair, seeing no individuals wishing to testify.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So, I'm going to close public testimony, and we will definitely be
here to talk story with you. I just want to thank police for being here. Thank you very
much for all that you do for our community. I see Pulama Lānaʻi here, thank you very
much for all that you do for our community on Lānaʻi, and I want to say the whole
County is jealous because your gas is only \$4.97. I think that's a sign I saw, the
cheapest in the County of Maui. Good job.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah. But our milk is like \$18.25.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: That's relevant.

. . . CLOSE PUBLIC TESTIMONY . . .

COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS. (Excused: AL)

ACTION: DEFER pending further discussion.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So I wanted to thank all of you for allowing us to be here. We're going to
spend the evening at your beautiful Hotel Lānaʻi, Hotel...Hotel Lānaʻi and enjoy the
beautiful Lānaʻi town, and I can hardly wait to check out the bowling alley. All right.
Thank you. And this meeting is now adjourned. . . .*(gavel)*. . .

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

April 15, 2026
Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

ADJOURN: 6:52 p.m.

bfed:min:260415-Lānaʻi:jay:cav

Transcribed by: Cheryl von Kugler

BUDGET, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Council of the County of Maui

April 15, 2026
Lānaʻi High & Elementary School Cafeteria

CERTIFICATION

I, Cheryl von Kugler, hereby certify that pages 1 through 21 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 24th day of April 2026, in Wailuku, Hawaii



Cheryl von Kugler