

GET Committee

From: Na Hale O Maui (NHOM) <cassandra@nahaleomaui.org>
Sent: Tuesday, January 29, 2019 6:41 AM
To: GET Committee
Subject: GET-1(9) Support Nomination of William Spence as Director of Housing and Human Concerns.
Attachments: 2019-01-19 W Spence Testimony.pdf

Aloha,

Attached please find our testimony in support of William Spence as Director of the Department of Housing and Human Concerns. He is qualified and has demonstrated his understanding of and ability to improve the delivery of critically needed affordable housing in Maui County.

Mahalo,

Cassandra

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Changing lives, one home at a time.

Mission Statement: "To secure and preserve a permanent supply of affordable housing alternatives for low and moderate income households in Maui County."

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January 29, 2019

Honorable Michael J. Molina, Chair
Governance, Ethics and Transparency Committee
200 High Street,
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

Subject: Appointment of Director of Housing and Human Concerns (GET-1(9))

Dear Chair Molina and Committee Members,

Housing and Land Enterprise of Maui, dba Na Hale O Maui is a Nonprofit 501 (c) 3 Community Land Trust formed to provide affordable housing in Maui County in perpetuity. Our Mission: "To secure and preserve a permanent supply of affordable housing alternatives for low and moderate income households in Maui County." The current beneficiaries of NHOM's program are 33 island families earning between 80 – 140% of the area median income (AMI.) We will shortly place one additional family in a Waikapu home; an in-kind grant from the County. We are also completing negotiations with a lender and contractor to begin construction of 12 truly affordable workforce homes in Kahoma.

We realize that our success as an organization – the 33 homes in the Na Hale O Maui portfolio - is the direct result of the collaboration and partnership with the Administration and County Council. We are deeply appreciative and honored to be one of the County's 'tools' in the affordable housing tool kit, and of the island families we have placed in in CLT homes together.

I was delighted to be appointed the Executive Director of Na Hale O Maui approximately three years ago, allowing me to return to my first passion of affordable housing, with a new twist: the Community Land Trust model that creates truly affordable housing in perpetuity.

As a developer of affordable housing, Na Hale O Maui partners with the County of Maui to deliver truly affordable housing that will never go to market prices. We work directly with a number of County departments, including but not limited to the Departments of Housing and Human Concerns, Planning, Public Works and Water Supply.

Na Hale O Maui has had the great fortune to work with those departments and their Directors to develop, rehabilitate and build affordable, workforce housing. These Departments can make it easy or hard to accomplish.

Today we write in support of William Spence, as Director of the Department of Housing and Human Concerns (DHHC.) Mr. Spence has instituted a number of innovations and improvements in first the Planning Department and most recently DHHC. We already see changes in the time, effort and resources needed to obtain Design Registration of plans and permits for the construction of homes. We were absolutely delighted to be able to receive approves in just

about a month for each of these important milestones in the development of the 12 Kahoma homes!

We also received an in-kind grant of a Waikapu residence that DHHC had the foresight to exercise its option to purchase during the deed restricted period. Further, the department supported our in-kind grant request of the home, and the Council approved the grant. This was the first time, to my knowledge, that the County was not just able to preserve the affordability of the home, but to ensure that affordability in perpetuity. Mahalo for a real milestone in affordable housing!

In my experience, businesses find it advantageous to recruit and promote from within. The applicants' training, knowledge, experience and work ethic are known qualities. Resumes alone do not convey all of this important information. New hires are unknown quantities in many respect and have a steep learning curve. It takes them much longer to "get up to speed," before their work is productive, efficient and effective.

The first consideration: are they qualified for the position? I know of, have experience with and respect William Spence, and fully support his nomination as the Director of the Department of Housing and Human Concerns. Interacting with Mr. Spence in his prior position as Planning Director and his current position as Director of Housing and Human Concerns, I can personally attest to his broad knowledge and experience with development, affordable and workforce housing. We have witnessed his interaction with the Council at numerous hearings in both capacities, and find that he is thoughtful and able to 'think outside the box' in offering improvement to our current processes. Mr. Spence has already demonstrated his ability to improve and increase the affordable and workforce housing our community needs.

We respectfully request that the Governance, Ethics and Transparency Committee approve Mr. Spence's appointment as the Director of Housing and Human Concerns. We need more good people like Mr. Spence to conquer our affordable housing deficit. His appointment will allow us to continue to develop and construct more affordable housing for island families here in Maui County.

Mahalo for all you do to support and create affordable and workforce housing for our Community.



Executive Director