

ENVIRONMENTAL, AGRICULTURAL, AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Council of the County of Maui

MINUTES

December 1, 2020

Online Only Via BlueJeans

CONVENE: 1:31 p.m.

PRESENT: VOTING MEMBERS:

Councilmember Shane M. Sinenci, Chair
Councilmember Tasha Kama, Vice-Chair (out 3:16 p.m.)
Councilmember Kelly Takaya King
Councilmember Alice L. Lee (in 2:02 p.m.)
Councilmember Michael J. Molina
Councilmember Tamara Paltin
Councilmember Yuki Lei K. Sugimura (in 1:42 p.m.)

STAFF:

Kasie Apo Takayama, Legislative Analyst
Nicole Siegel, Legislative Analyst
Wilton Leauanae, Legislative Analyst
David Raatz, Supervising Legislative Attorney
James Forrest, Legislative Attorney
Clarita Balala, Committee Secretary
Lenora Dineen, Council Services Assistant Clerk

Gina Young, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Shane M. Sinenci
Davideane Kama-Sickels, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Tasha Kama
Kate Griffiths, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Kelly Takaya King
Trinette, Furtado, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Rawlins-Fernandez

ADMIN.: Stephanie Chen, Deputy Corporation Counsel, Department of the Corporation Counsel

OTHERS:

Winsome Williams (EACP-55)
Keith Ranney (EACP-17(12))
Jenny Pell (EACP-17(12))
Albert Perez (EACP-55)
Faith Chase (EACP-17(12))
Autumn Ness, Vice President, Maui Food Hub Board (EACP-17(12))
Bobby Pahia, Chief Executive Officer, Hawai'i Taro Farm, LLC (EACP-55)
Annie Alvarado, Executive Director, Hawai'i Taro Farm, LLC (EACP-55)
(3) additional attendees

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

CHAIR SINENCI: . . .*(gavel)*. . . Aloha kākou, and will the Environmental, Agricultural, and Cultural Preservation Committee meeting of Tuesday, December 1st, 2020, please come to order. It's 1:31 p.m. I'm your Chair of the Committee, I'm Shane Sinenci. And before we get started, I just wanted to please ask that we silence all cell phones and noisemaking devices. Joining us today, mahalo for joining us, we have Committee Vice-Chair Ms. Tasha Kama. Aloha 'auinalā.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Aloha 'auinalā, Chair.

CHAIR SINENCI: Thank you for being here. Next, I don't see Member Sugimura, but I'm sure she'll be joining us soon. Next I see, from West Maui, Councilmember Tamara Paltin. Aloha 'auinalā.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Aloha 'auinalā, Chair. Live and direct from the Old Lahaina Center here in sunny Lahaina Town. We got light and variable winds, surf in the one to two foot range, and mostly sunny skies.

CHAIR SINENCI: Thank you for that update and it looks like you got the keikis all taken care of. And first of all I thought it was the Hāna Pier behind you but it does look like Mala Wharf, yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Yeah, Mala. I had to get those kids in line. You know, distance learning and everything. My husband went back to work on Monday, so a little bit difficult.

CHAIR SINENCI: 'Ae, pololei. Okay, mahalo. Next we have Councilmember Kelly Takaya King. Aloha 'auinalā.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Aloha 'auinalā, Chair. Hope you are doing well. And we don't have our grammatical language offering today, so I'll just say konnichiwa.

CHAIR SINENCI: Konnichiwa, 'ae. It's a good safe one, yeah. And next we have Mr. Mike Molina from his virtual bridge. Aloha, Mr. Molina.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Aloha 'auinalā, Mr. Chairman. From yes, under the virtual bridge in Makawao, and aloha to all of my colleagues and everyone else tuning in. And mahalo to Member Paltin for that beautiful update, I feel like going out to West Maui now.

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CHAIR SINENCI: Yeah, this brisk winter afternoon. Thank you. And of course, we have Council Chair Lee, and I'm sure she'll join us or let us know if she'll be absent today. Today Members, our non-voting Committee Members are Mr. Hokama and Ms. Rawlins-Fernandez, as usual they are always welcome to join us. From our Administration, we have Ms. Stephanie Chen, our Deputy Corporation Counsel. Aloha 'auinalā, Ms. Chen.

MS. CHEN: Aloha, Members. Nice to see you all.

CHAIR SINENCI: Hi, thanks for being here today.

MS. CHEN: Thank you.

CHAIR SINENCI: And our other resource people, we have Ms. Autumn Ness, she's the Vice-President of Maui Food Hub Board. And we also have Ms. Annie Alvarado, the Executive Director of Hawai'i Taro Farm, LLC, and also Mr. Bobby Pahia, Chief Executive Officer of Hawai'i Taro Farm, LLC. Aloha, Mr. Pahia, thank you for joining us today. Next...and for our Staff, we have Ms. Kasie Apo Takayama, Ms. Clarita Balala, James Forest, Ms. Nicole Siegel and Ms. Lei Dineen. Mahalo, Staff, for helping to organize this meeting today. Members, we have three items on the agenda today, EACP-17(12) on Food Hubs. We also have EACP-55 Hawai'i Taro Farm, LLC, and then we have items for referral at the end of the meeting. Staff, are there any testifiers signed up for today?

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: Chair, we currently have six testifiers signed up.

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay. Thank you. I'll go to the testimony. Let's begin with public testimony. Oral testimony via phone or teleconference will be accepted. Testifiers wanting to provide video testimony should have joined the online meeting via the BlueJeans meeting link, <https://bluejeans.com/840546502> as noted on today's agenda. Testifiers wanting to provide audio testimony should have participated via phone conference by dialing 1-408-915-6290 and entering meeting code 840546502. Written testimony is highly encouraged through the eComment link listed for today's agenda on mauicounty.us/agendas. Instructions on how to submit testimony via eComment can also be found at mauicounty.us/ecomment. Moving on to oral testimony, oral testimony is limited to three minutes per item. If you are still testifying beyond that time, I would kindly ask you to complete your testimony. When testifying, please state your name. If you are testifying on behalf of an organization or are a paid lobbyist, please inform the Committee. Please be mindful of the use of chat during the meeting. Chat should not be used to provide testimony or chat with other testifiers. If you are here to provide testimony, please be courteous to others by turning off your video and muting your microphone while waiting for your turn to testify. Once you are done testifying, you will be asked to disconnect you from the call. However, you are welcome to continue to view the remainder of the meeting on *Akakū* Channel 53 or mauicounty.us. Participants who wish to view the meeting only without providing testimony, please also disconnect at this time and instead view the meeting on *Akakū*

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Channel 53 or visit mauicounty.us/agendas. County Councilmembers, Staff and designated resource personnel will be connected to the video conference meeting once testimony concludes. I remind Committee Members, Administration, and the public to please be patient if we run into any technological issues. Members, I'd like to proceed with oral testimony. So Staff has been monitoring people joining today's meeting by phone and by video, and we will do our best to take each person up in an orderly fashion. So Ms. Apo Takayama, could you please call up the first testifier.

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: The first testifier is Winsome Williams, to be followed by Keith Ranney.

CHAIR SINENCI: Aloha, Mr. Williams. Can you hear us? Please unmute yourself.

. . . BEGIN PUBLIC TESTIMONY . . .

MS. WILLIAMS: Hi, I can hear you, can you hear me?

CHAIR SINENCI: Oh, yes.

MS. WILLIAMS: I'm a girl too.

CHAIR SINENCI: Oh, excuse me.

MS. WILLIAMS: It's okay.

CHAIR SINENCI: Go ahead.

MS. WILLIAMS: Yeah, thank you for having me. I just wanted to take a moment to testify on behalf of the project that we're working on down in the central valley with Annie and Bobby Pahia, Juanita Pahia. I'm part of the project down there. I work with the community members to get students involved, students and community members involved in the transition that we're doing on the landscape down there, planting food for the community. And I just want to say I think this is a wonderful project, and a great example for not only just other communities here on Maui, but across the island. So thank you so much.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Ms. Williams, for your testimony today. Are you part of Hawai'i Taro Farm or you're also...you have your own farm.

MS. WILLIAMS: I have my own farm down there, and I work alongside Hawai'i Taro Farm as well, and I will be becoming a board member with them in the upcoming months. And right now, my current focus with them is just assisting in the transition from kind of conventional practices to regenerative practices, and also working with the community members who are interested in participating in growing food, kind of helping organize those guys on projects as well.

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CHAIR SINENCI: Okay, great. Members, any clarification of the testimony? Okay, seeing none. Mahalo, Ms. Williams, for joining us today.

MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you, mahalo.

CHAIR SINENCI: Ms. Apo Takayama.

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: Chair, the next testifier is Keith Ranney, my apologies if I'm pronouncing your name incorrectly. He'll be testifying on EACP-17(12), to be followed by Jenny Pell.

CHAIR SINENCI: Aloha, Mr. Ranney. We can hear you, but we can't...I mean, we can see you, but we can't hear you. Kasie, is he unmuted on our end?

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: It looks like he's muted on our end.

CHAIR SINENCI: We still can't hear you. Mr. Ranney, is your volume up or...we still can't hear you.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Keith, can you hear us? You don't have your earphones plugged into your computer or something, do you?

CHAIR SINENCI: Mr. Ranney, did you...you're going to call in, okay. We'll circle back to you. Okay. Ms. Apo Takayama, we can come back to Mr. Ranney.

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: Okay. Thank you, Chair. The next testifier is Jenny Pell.

CHAIR SINENCI: Aloha, Ms. Pell.

MS. PELL: Aloha, Councilmembers. Aloha from Ha'ikū. Looking at your beautiful bridge pictures behind the Councilmembers, I wanted to share that I hiked out from La Perouse in the sunset out to watch the full moon rise through the lava fields. And a cloud bridge was all the way across from Kaho'olawe up to Ulupalakua, and it was raining all in the cloud bridge, and we were walking alongside. And I wanted to share with you how important it is for us to reforest Maui, and how important that small water cycle is here. And that's in native trees, and all different kinds of trees, and in windbreaks, and in watershed restoration, and it's also in planting trees in our backyard that are food-bearing trees. I'm here to talk about a quick update on Ohana Gardens, and also to reinforce the project that Winsome Williams and Bobby Pahia are working on, and of course, the Maui Food Hub. There's so many pathways that we need to really walk boldly down in this food security moment. We know, all of us, how reliant we are on imported food, and there are paths and roads and highways that get us to local food security, to resilience, and to abundance. And I think that the fact that the County did give proviso grants, for example, to our project, it's really excellent that you've done that. But here we are into December, and we still don't have funds from the County proviso. So it's been very challenging for us as an organization, but I

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will say that we have done an enormous amount of work in the interim while we're waiting for the funding to come in. The challenges with not getting our funding in is that we've had...we've engaged multiple amazing people that are passing through our project that we wanted to hire and contract to work with us, and we've had to just let them go because we aren't...we don't have our funding in. We have received money from other grants. We got an Atherton grant for capital equipment. We're buying farm equipment. We've bought a truck. We got money from the Community Foundation. We've had some private donations, but the \$75,000 from the grant that has not yet arrived has really, really been hard for us to advance the project. But meanwhile, we're partnering with everybody. We've partnered with the Rotary Clubs of Maui, and with George Kahumoku, Uncle George. And you may have seen the front page today in the *Maui News* about our launch for the gifting tree project, the La'au Ha'awi project, where we have a goal of...Rotary wants to do 500 trees by the end of January, Uncle George and I want to do at least a thousand, and he's on board for the 10,000 trees in the ground within a year. At Ohana Gardens, I've been doing consultations, helping people install gardens, we've been giving out seedlings, we've been doing all kinds of work to advance the Ohana Gardens project and with the Food Security of Hawai'i nonprofit. For the Food Hub Project, it's so important that we have aggregation, distribution, access for low-income people to get fresh food, and it's so important for us to support our local farmers. The Maui Hub is one excellent project that really needs to get its funding, and I'm not sure if they did get their funding through the CARES Act, but I think that we have to recognize that Bobby Pahia, Winsome at Hub, the Food Hub, we need hubs that are going to be able to be accessible to all kinds of farmers to drop off, to process, to value add, and to distribute out into the community. But I would say that it's just...like the starts and stops that we've had to go through in our own organization, you know, waiting for five months for the County grants to come in. And I understand that everything has slowed down because of COVID. . . .(timer sounds). . . So just to really quickly wrap up right there, it's that the IRS and the LNI and all the compliance documents, it took months for them to just approve documents that had been submitted, just because they wouldn't answer the phone or because they couldn't follow through. So I would love to hear from the County, like, when can the funding come in? So thanks for that, and I also just am so looking forward to working with the new Department of Ag. Mahalo.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Ms. Pell, for your testimony today. Before I take questions though, I'd like to recognize Member Sugimura.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Good afternoon. Thank you.

CHAIR SINENCI: Good afternoon. Thanks for joining us. We had a question from Member King and Member Sugimura.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Thank you, Chair. Thanks for being here, Jenny. It's good to see you. When did you guys...when did you put your application in for that funding that we have in the budget for Food Security Hawai'i?

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MS. PELL: We put it in mid...we got our final grant documents complete mid-September, and the OED said go ahead and submit it even though you don't have your compliance documents all in, and that they would get it through the process as far as they could get. And then we had to hound the compliance document end of things, and it just took forever. But all the compliance documents are in. So I know it has to go to the Mayor's office and all that stuff.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay. And also, did they tell you that we did put a provision in the budget to allow you folks to receive up to 25 percent of their grant funds upfront without having to be spent and then reimbursed?

MS. PELL: No.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: So you should ask them about that. Did they give you...so did they give you a reason why it's taking so long after you got the compliance documents in?

MS. PELL: No. The last email I had from OED was that...it was two to three weeks ago that said we should be looking at it and you'll hear back in a couple of weeks. But it was...there was no specific anything.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay. Because yeah, it's a little concerning because I know you folks have been starting on your projects and running out of money, but there is...so maybe you can send another email and inquire about the, you know, the provision that the Council put into the budget for groups like yours to receive 25 percent upfront.

MS. PELL: Thanks for that, Kelly. I didn't realize that we could get the 25 percent. I've never heard of that before right now.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Yeah, it was something new that we did...we put into this year's budget. So...okay. Well, keep us apprised, and we'll try to follow up with OED if you don't hear anything, but you're not the first ones to have this issue. So hopefully we can try to clear these things up. And I know...and I appreciate all the work that you folks are doing. And I appreciate you going ahead with a lot of it, and I know how much it hurts to see good people that you could be hiring have to walk away, so...

MS. PELL: Yeah, it's hard but, you know, fits and starts is really challenging, but...you know, and overall, it's been really exciting and inspiring to help get all this food planted, it's really a great project, I'm enjoying it besides those challenges.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay, great. Thank you. Thanks, Jenny. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Member King. Member Sugimura, you had a question for the testifier?

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COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Yeah, so what is the name of your organization again? I'm looking in the budget.

MS. PELL: Yeah, the nonprofit is Food Security Hawai'i, and the initiative is Maui Ohana Gardens.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: And 75,000.

MS. PELL: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Thank you.

CHAIR SINENCI: Thank you, Member Sugimura. Anyone else? Seeing none. Thank you, Ms. Pell, for being here today.

MS. PELL: You're welcome. Goodbye.

CHAIR SINENCI: Ms. Apo Takayama, is Mr. Ranney back?

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: Yes, it looks like he reconnected via video, and was able to get his audio working through phone.

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay, Mr. Ranney, can you unmute yourself and your video? There we go, we can see you.

MR. RANNEY: Can you hear me?

CHAIR SINENCI: Yes, we can hear you too.

MR. RANNEY: All right, very good. Thank you, Councilmembers. I'm Keith Ranney, Manager of Maui Food Hub, incorporated as Maui Hub at mauihub.org. The long talked about advantages of and need for a food hub as executed by the Maui Hub Team, has been embraced by the community, and has now grown through the early steep learning curve and through many obstacles, become a model of collaborative cooperation, and a beacon of community service, now serving over 240 households each week. In just seven short months, the Hub has been awarded start-up funding and grants from individual donors, nonprofit foundations, and Maui County through fiscal sponsorship by the Hawai'i Farmers Union Foundation. We've onboarded over 90 farmers and value added producers, in which an average of 30 producers are featured in the Hub store each week, representing over 275 local products. We've expanded our pick-up sites to five easily accessible locations: Central, Kihei, Upcountry, Lahaina, and Ha'ikū. We've qualified to provide our services to the Food and Secure via the USDA, SNAP, EBT program, and the Dub Bucks, the Double Up Food Bucks Program, and we've attained our 501(c)(3) nonprofit status in less than five months. The key to food hub viability involves a cooperative collaboration of three components. One is customers choosing local, which they are; two, farmers paid

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parity for their labor; and three, supplemental funding via Government and private resources. Providing local fresh produce and value added products to Maui families at an affordable price, while also overcoming the many financial hurdles faced by local producers, requires that all three of these components work together. With County support, the producers are sustainable. With County support, the consumer can receive affordable fresh local produce. Without the support of grants and donations from public and private stakeholders, fresh local produce and value added products are not affordable or sustainable. I said that. Food hubs take on a marketing and fulfillment role for farmers so that they have more predictable markets and more time to increase their capacity for production. A great advantage of this outside threat we've just have been enduring is it's really activated our political will and drawn the volunteer resources we've needed to make this service available. To date, Maui Hub has fulfilled over 4,600 orders averaging about \$50 per order. We've paid over \$180,000 to local farmers and producers. We've paid over \$65,000 in local labor costs. We've leveraged our Give a Gift to a Family Program to channel \$6,500 in donations to Maui's food insecure families, including kupuna, the American Heart Association, and homeless organizations. And in conclusion . . . *(timer sounds)* . . . our customer feedback is extremely enthusiastic, and the overall will being expressed by the community is to make Maui Hub a permanent resource, and that's what we intend to do with the help of these factors. I'm open for questions.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mr. Ranney, we have a question from Member Kama, and then Member Sugimura.

MR. RANNEY: Aloha, Kama.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Mr. Ranney, for being here. So you were running off some numbers, and I wasn't sure if I heard you correct, but you said that you served 240 families and...

MR. RANNEY: Per week.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Per week. Okay. Oh, oh. And are these families same families, different families, some mixed, some are, some aren't?

MR. RANNEY: Oh, that's...it's an overall number of orders. Some people are buying as an individual, some people, there's orders are for their ohana, or extended ohana.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Okay. And then you said you folks have 275 local products that is in this box.

MR. RANNEY: Yes, ma'am.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Okay.

MR. RANNEY: So, it's not like a regular CSA box, it's custom ordering.

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VICE-CHAIR KAMA: I see.

MR. RANNEY: So of the 275-plus products, you can order whatever you want, there's no limitation.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: So is there a menu or some...so do you have a menu of some sort that tells them what they can order?

MR. RANNEY: Yes, mauihub.org. It's basically an online farmer's market. We're just simply...we collect through our aggregation partner, Sun Fresh, and then we distribute to five pick up points every Saturday.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: So is the food you're serving only that that's grown on land, or do you have other foods too that might come from the ocean.

MR. RANNEY: We have an aquaponics producer, but that's not grown in the ocean, they're grown in aquaponic tanks, that's our fresh local rainbow trout at Kulahaven Farms. When we work out some of our refrigeration issues, we'll add more protein, right now it's a matter of coordinating. This fast growth that we've managed to accomplish...and we're growing intelligently and slowly. Right now our capacity is somewhat constrained by our aggregation partner at Sun Fresh, but it's working out really well.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Okay. So if I looked on your website and saw that there was something on there that...there was something that's not on there that I would like, would I call you and say hey, would you ever have this in, or is it something that you would tell me, well, we're not doing that right now, but we could in the future.

MR. RANNEY: Well, we are constantly onboarding new products and new services, so we are, you know, very open to requests, and receive them all the time.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Okay. Okay. I think that's exciting because, you know, when I think about...I mean, I was thinking about gee, is this the place where I could call if I wanted to eat raw crab or if I wanted to eat opihi, or hau wiki wiki or whatever, you know. So...but that's just something for the future. But thank you, Chair. Thank you, Mr. Ranney.

MR. RANNEY: You're welcome. We just have to follow the guidelines in terms of what we can sell, yeah.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Yeah. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Chair, point of order.

MR. RANNEY: Kelly King has...

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COUNCILMEMBER KING: Are we going to be having a presentation on this, so we'll have a chance to ask...

CHAIR SINENCI: A presentation was going to be given by Ms. Ness. So if Mr. Ranney...if he wants to stay as a resource person, we can go ahead and designate him as a resource person. And then Members, if you have more questions for Mr. Ranney, go ahead and do that. Ms. Sugimura, did you have a clarifying question for Mr. Ranney?

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Yeah, I do. So from what you're saying and what...well, maybe I don't understand enough, the Hawai'i Farmer's Union United...because I know the County was giving them money every week from the CARES Act money. So are you the same? I mean, it sounds like the product, the trout, is from that same organization. That's what made me think.

MR. RANNEY: Well, I was the Communications Director for the Farmer's Union for five years, until July, and then I was assigned to this project. And then we became an autonomous food hub, and so I now am fulfilling this role. I'm not working with the Farmer's Union except as a volunteer. So that's the affiliation. And at the very beginning, there was a grant that went through the foundation, the Farmer's Union Foundation, to help us get started. That's been fulfilled, and we haven't received any additional funds from the County. We did apply for CARES Act funding to the tune of about \$500,000, we didn't...were not selected.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Okay, so this is not Hawai'i Farmer's Union.

MR. RANNEY: No, this is Maui Hub. We are independent...

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: I know your organization, and I found where your food security...and the correction we made on the budget, Members, I found the \$75,000 the page before. So now I'm clear, but I was just curious about how it all goes together or it doesn't. So thank you. I'll wait for the presentation.

MR. RANNEY: Okay.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Member Sugimura. Mr. Ranney, you're able to stay on with us when we get to the item.

MR. RANNEY: Fine.

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay. Thank you. Ms. Apo Takayama.

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: Chair, the next testifier is Abigail Perrin, to be followed by someone calling with the last four digits 4200.

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CHAIR SINENCI: Ms. Perrin, are you...okay, it looks like she just left the call. We'll go back to her. Person ending with the numbers 4200, are you...4200 is Autumn. Okay. Our next testifier, please.

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: Our last testifier is Albert Perez.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mr. Perez, are you...please go ahead and unmute yourself.

MR. PEREZ: Hi. Aloha, everyone. It always catches me off guard when I didn't sign up, but I get called. Anyway, yes, I'm ready. Hope you're all doing well. Anyway, I just can't tell you how excited I am, and all of us at Maui Tomorrow are, about what Bobby Pahia has been doing on this land across from Maui Tropical Plantation. And it goes back to...you know, in 2016 we produced a conceptual report about what could be done with former sugar cane land. Bobby is putting it into action. And the proposed Hawai'i Taro Farm that he's talking about will significantly ramp up the already successful effort that he has going on there, basically on a shoestring. We are equally as excited by the fact that landowner Mike Atherton is supportive of this project on land that he is placing into an agricultural conservation easement as a result of our negotiations with him on the Waikapu Town Project. So 900 acres, and Bobby has 300, I believe the Pacific Bio-Diesel is on another couple hundred, and then they have some other stuff going on the other side. But anyway, Bobby used to be a conventional farmer, and my understanding is he used to work for CTAHR, so he knows about conventional farming. But in the last few years, he has been moving toward regenerative sustainable farming, all while keeping an eye on the practical bottom line. So the other thing that's really exciting, and I think I've mentioned it to the Council in the past, is the Lā Kāhea educational farm. And that is run by Winsome Williams, who testified earlier. So what they do, in addition to teaching people how to farm regeneratively, is they do experiments. And whatever works, Bobby takes those ideas that work, and he applies them on his production farm. The last I checked, he was putting out about 1,500 pounds of kalo every week, supplying different restaurants and Old Lahaina Luau. So...and then when the pandemic hit, he and the other farmers had to switch and supply to other people, and maybe he can give you some more details about that. But he's very quick, very nimble, and very practical. So we're excited about this project, and we're looking forward to writing letters in support of Bobby's upcoming applications for Federal, private and other funding. I urge this Council to do the same, to support this kind of application that he's going to be submitting. I also urge you folks to arrange a visit to this exciting spot that is a center of an emerging vision for Maui's farming future. And I'll be happy to join you and even make the arrangements because it's one of my favorite places to go on Maui. Mahalo.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Mr. Perez. We have a question from Member King. Oh, and Chair would like to recognize Chair Lee first. Aloha, Chair Lee.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Aloha. Sorry I'm late. Thank you.

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CHAIR SINENCI: Thanks for joining us. Ms. King.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Hi, Albert. Nice to see you. I wanted to clarify a couple of things. One is that the farm that we have the sunflowers on is not Pacific Bio-Diesel, it's actually Bob and Kelly King. Because when we got the hemp permit, the banks told us that we couldn't have our company name attached to it or we'd have to go find a new bank. So that's what happened there. So anyway, just to let you know it's under our personal...all the expenses are personal expenses. And then the other thing I wanted to ask you is, when you mentioned the ag conservation, is that not done yet, is that still in the works?

MR. PEREZ: I keep checking, and I keep hearing that it's going to be pau soon.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Oh, okay.

MR. PEREZ: I hope that it's pau, but last time I checked, it wasn't fully consummated. So sooner the better.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay. But they're in the process because...I thought it was done already, but sounded like it's still in the process. Okay. I'll follow up with Hill.

MR. PEREZ: Okay. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Thanks for all your support of farming. Thank you, Chair. I'm done. You're muted, Shane. You're muted.

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay. Mahalo, Mr. Perez for your testimony today. And it looks like we have one more testifier, Ms. Faith Chase. I know she's calling in from the boonies, so we'll see if we can connect with her. Ms. Faith, are you there?

MS. CHASE: Aloha, Chair.

CHAIR SINENCI: Aloha.

MS. CHASE: Aloha, Council. Thank you. I didn't think I had any comment when I first started to listen in, but I just need you guys to know that...I guess I'm proud to have this on record, you know. It's going to take a Hawaiian to resolve, handshake, be the intermediary, be that person who can lomi lomi, political timelines, business alliances, greedy intentions, dare I say, you know, tofer (*phonetic*), barren, stronghold. There is no doubt in my mind that whatever you do to support Bobby Pahia will just be shining like gold. And he's been put in a very difficult position time and time again. And I know I've joked with you guys before about don't make my farmer do anything technical, you know, just make it easy on his smartphone, don't expect my farmer to upload an Excel sheet, don't make him think too hard. And so every time I see my farmers have a hard time get on, you know, it only validates, let them be in the field, they shouldn't have to be protesting, testifying about what they need. Bobby Pahia

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has been able to hold this entire Maui community GMO, organic, conventional, A&B, lineal landholders. There is nothing more I can say to support this kane. And we all know that our community felt the loss of somebody we really loved that was also that cornerstone of the community, Vince Mina, we just can take a moment for that, I love that boy. So I just want to tell you that he...Bobby Pahia took the time it took to honor another farmer's son. We're a small community. He did beautifully in that, and he's been able to hold this community together and I...you know how I can say something negative or be bitchy...sorry Mom, bitchy. And I need you to know that I support this kane so wholeheartedly. And I'm so glad, and I hope he takes his vitamins and he does his yoga because we need him. And thank you for supporting everything he does. Mahalo for listening.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Ms. Chase, for your testimony today. Members, any questions for the testifier? Seeing none. Thank you for joining us today. Ms. Apo Takayama.

MS. CHASE: A hui hou.

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: Chair, there doesn't appear to be any other individuals wishing to testify.

CHAIR SINENCI: Is there anyone out there that's wishing to testify? Okay. Seeing or hearing none. Members, without objections, I'll now close oral testimony.

COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS.

CHAIR SINENCI: Thank you, Members. And then if there are no objections to receiving written testimony into the record.

COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS.

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay. Mahalo. So with that, I'll now close public testimony. Thank you.

. . . END OF PUBLIC TESTIMONY . . .

EACP-17(12): FOOD HUBS

CHAIR SINENCI: So, okay. Moving on with the agenda, Members. Our first item, EACP-17(12) Food Hubs. The Committee is in receipt of a 7(B) presentation from representatives of the Maui Food Hub relating to food security and food hubs in Maui County. Members, the COVID-19 pandemic has put families in dire straits, whether it be being unemployed or at home schooling children...home schooling children. We've seen a lot of the CARES Act funding utilized to help feed struggling families with food giveaways and food share programs during this last few months. So as we approach the holidays, I wanted to take a look at agriculture from the food accessibility

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perspective. Food security is the ability to feed our people, and today we'll learn about a major piece of the infrastructure needed to get agriculture into the hands of consumers. Food hubs are nothing new, though they are an invisible part of the local food system. By aggregating, storing, sometimes processing, marketing, and distributing locally grown food, hubs increase accessibility to healthy local grown food and benefit both the agriculture community, as well as the larger community of Maui Nui. To explain how food hubs work and their benefits, how Maui farmers and residents set up and operate their own food hubs, we have with us today, Ms. Autumn Ness, Vice President of Maui Food Hub Board, and you also heard from Mr. Keith Ranney earlier. So we did reach out to Maui Food Bank, but they were not available to attend at this time. So with that, Members, if there are no objections I'd like to designate Ms. Ness and Mr. Ranney as resource persons pursuant to 18A of Rules of the Council.

COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS.

CHAIR SINENCI: Thank you, Members. Okay. With that, Ms. Ness, did you want to go ahead and share your presentation? And I think, Members, it is on Granicus if you wanted to go ahead and access her presentation.

MS. NESS: Okay. Can you guys hear me?

CHAIR SINENCI: Yes, we can hear you.

MS. NESS: Okay, cool. I have some technical difficulties with BlueJeans for some reason, so I'm going to share my screen. But my signal goes in and out, so I'm actually talking to you through my phone. I hope this all goes well. Before I put my screen up...

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay, let's go ahead and try your screen first. Go ahead.

MS. NESS: Okay, cool. And yeah, it is in Granicus, I think, if things go south. So, hi everybody. I'm Autumn. I'm the Vice-President currently of the Maui Food...of the Maui Hub Board. I'm also...I've been involved in food security issues over the years in various ways, including the past lobbyist for State and Congress for small farming issues. I started out as someone who was organizing against unsustainable agriculture, against pesticide use, and against that kind of stuff, and I realized...a lot of us realized quickly that you can't argue against unsustainable farming without also supporting sustainable farmers, right. So I quickly became an organizer for small organic and traditional farmers, and that's actually what I do full-time with the organization called Beyond Pesticides. So what I bring to you today, I want to be really clear, is my research and the information that's come up with over the years. If you've heard me talk about the housing TIG before, you've heard me say the same thing. The ideas that I'm presenting right now are not mine, and that's actually why I'm really confident in them because I am just the voice that has the honor of bringing the ideas of the farmers and the needs of the farmers to you. Because like Faith said, they don't have time to be sitting here. They're in the farm, they're on the farm, they're

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producing the food. So I have the distinct honor of just bringing their voices to you. So that's where these ideas come from. What I will start with saying is food security is not just going to happen. It really needs to be supported. A sustainable food system depends on collaboration, farm support, and informed consumers, that they're really the piece of the puzzle. We've been really largely expecting our farmers to shoulder 100 percent of the burden of feeding our communities, and that's just not sustainable. You know, we expect them to get the land, get the water, get the equipment, manage the farm, grow the food, and then turning the food into a product is a whole 'nother thing. You've got to weigh it, wash it, sell it, invoice it, collect the money, deliver it, that's a whole 'nother thing. And until now, a lot of our farmers have been doing that whole job by themselves. So what we're trying to do collectively...not just with the Maui Hub, what I'm hoping we can do with the community is one at a time, take the pieces of those burdens off of their shoulders so their job can become easier, and we can grow and move more local food collectively. So if we can all agree that food security and the diversification of our economy is a huge priority, which I think we can, we also have to agree to weave it into the decisions we make across all sectors of what we do, and how do we remove those barriers. So I'm going...bear with me here, sharing the screen in BlueJeans. Okay, great. Here we go. Is it working? Oh, here we go. Okay, great. So let's start here. So how can we support increased food security. I'm going to go into the food hub specifics in just a second, but I want you to see how it fits. There's funding things we can do, and there's policy, right. Funding such as food hubs and supply chain, infrastructure...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Excuse me.

MS. NESS: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Your presentation is just...it's not...it's you and me on the screen.

MS. NESS: Oh.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I have it on Granicus, but I mean for the folks on *Akakū*.

MS. NESS: Can anybody see the slide. No? Let me try again. Thanks for that. Stop sharing. I'm going to share. Why is it only going to you? Let's try this again.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Chair?

MS. NESS: Can you guys see my screen?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: It says...yeah, but the screen, you see your screen, but yeah, we're seeing, I guess you, and whoever is talking and then everybody else is in the middle.

MS. NESS: Oh, and you don't see these slides here?

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COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: No.

MS. NESS: So what do we do here?

CHAIR SINENCI: You want Staff to share?

MS. NESS: When I push share screen on Granicus...when I push share screen on BlueJeans I mean, it gives me an option...share application, Google Chrome finder BlueJeans, is that where my problem is or no?

COUNCILMEMBER KING: You have your presentation open, Autumn, on your screen?

MS. NESS: I do, yeah. And I do right now, yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Because if it's open, then you press share screen, it should go to that presentation.

MS. NESS: Yeah, that's what I did. And so on my screen it looks like you guys can see it.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I can see it on my other computer on the Granicus link. Maybe the Staff could share screen of the Granicus link.

MS. NESS: That would be great, and I can just tell you when to flip the slides. Could you do that Kasie, that would be...

CHAIR SINENCI: Ms. Apo Takayama.

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: Yeah, Nicole and I are working on that.

MS. NESS: Oh, thanks, you guys are amazing.

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: Thank you.

MS. NESS: Sorry. For some reason, BlueJeans and my computer do not communicate very well. I don't know why. Choose screen to share. I'm getting hints from Sarah.

CHAIR SINENCI: Kasie, do we need a recess?

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: Chair, yeah, if we could take a brief recess, we can get the PowerPoint downloaded and share.

MS. NESS: What about this?

MS. APO TAKAYAMA: Oh, there we go.

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CHAIR SINENCI: Oh, yeah, just got to maximize.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Autumn, can you click on slide show on your presentation...oh, there we go, now you're on.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Yeah, there it is.

MS. NESS: Yay, okay cool. Sarah for the win. All right. Okay. So thanks for your patience, you guys. So we've got funding and policy stuff that I'm just going to run through, and then I'm going to get into food hub and how it works. Under funding, we have food hubs and supply chain infrastructure. I really want to just like take you guys back to the conversation we've had about housing repeatedly, and why the cost of housing is so important. It's because the burden of all the off-site infrastructure falls on the developer, and then that becomes a pass-through cost to the consumer, to the buyer of the house, right. It's really similar in our local food situation. If each farmer or producer is paying for every single bit of the infrastructure that it takes for them to get from a seed to a product, then that pass-through cost goes through to the consumer. But if we can collectively decide, just like we do with housing, that local food infrastructure is in the public good, and we can find out how to publicly fund pieces of this infrastructure that can be shared between not just one organization like the Maui Hub, but multiple organizations serving multiple farmers and multiple consumers, then the pass-through cost to the consumer comes down tremendously. So I just want to keep reminding you that this is lot like, you know, the housing conversation that we had. And this is also not a one-time funding thing. Like, if we think about how we fund tourism and how tourism became such a big economic driver in our County, it's because we continually put large amounts of money into keeping that economy, that part of our economy going. The grass is greener where you water it, right. So we're not going to get out of this food security thing with one grant, one year. It's got to be...we have to water that grass, just like we do with tourism. So yeah, I just want to kind of get you to understand that part. Microgrants were a really big deal. I will echo what Ms. Pell said, I am so grateful that you guys approved the microgrants for agriculture during the budget session. Nobody has seen a penny yet, and that is a real bummer. We missed a huge opportunity in...when we had all this downtime and not getting farmers the money that they need. The money is coming, from what we hear but, you know, it's December now. So that's a discussion for another day. Commercial kitchen projects, consumer education campaigns, all of these things are great sources of funding. For policy, we can impact all these later because these are all separate conversations on their own, but food policies that require entities or programs or parts of government to buy local first. Things like farm worker housing policies that allow...to make it easier for farmers to house their workforce on their land. Incentive tax breaks. Tackling the land and water access issues that doesn't put our producers into huge debt before they even get started. These are all things that we need to keep in mind through everything that we do. Let's see. If we're talking about food security, I just want to give a nod to the subsistence economy because we can't just be thinking about food that goes to and from markets. Uncle Walter Ritte talked about this all the time on Moloka'i, but it's also true on

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Maui. Proteins and a lot of our starches can be cultivated through a subsistence economy. And even when we were talking about microgrants, people who are working, who are hunting, and who are growing copious amounts of starches--which are a big part of our food security puzzle--in valleys, a lot of times have trouble qualifying for grants. They're feeding a lot of people...kalo, ulu, and their farming actually even has a positive impact on the systems below them, but do they qualify for grants. A lot of times not because a lot of their food doesn't make it to market. So just...we have to always keep them in mind, and are they getting the support that some of the other farmers are getting as well. Fishpond restoration, axis deer management, turning into food, all that kind of stuff needs to be considered. Okay. So now, I'm going to go into the food hub that I have. As an example...not the only piece, but an example of what collaborative local food infrastructure aims to increase not just food production, but access to that food for a resident looks like. Quick, how it works. So like Mr. Ranney said, it is largely like an online farmer's market. You go to mauihub.org. You click on the...our market, and you look at a bunch of really beautiful products. I won't even try to list them. Coffee, bread, nuts, jellies, so much produce, it's amazing, it's amazing. It floors me every week when I go on there and look. The store is open from Saturday at noon until Tuesday at 11:00. You can go in and fill your cart with whatever you want or don't, you know. It's totally à la carte. Then the farmer...the store closes on Tuesday night. The farmer, on Wednesday morning, gets a ticket about what we've sold of their product...or the producer, you know. A tomato farmer will get, hey, we sold 100 pounds of your tomatoes. We sold 60 bottles of your hot sauce. We sold 25 loaves of your bread. And they have Wednesday to fill that. Thursday, they bring their products to the central packing facility and drop it off, basically. And this is where we want to change the game. We don't want the farmer to have to do all that stuff, like packing and weighing. They come drop it off, and they can leave...and we pay them, and they're done. And so then we spend Friday--not we, our packers spend Friday putting all of those things into a shopping bag, and then those bags go onto pallets. And on Saturday morning, trucks go to Kahului, Kihei, Pukalani, Lahaina and Ha'ikū, and people can pick up their order with their name on it within the two-hour window that the truck is there. And it is incredible. Because the produce is harvested to order, they harvest it after you order it, right. And so the quality and the amount of produce that you get is like, hands down, way, way better than what you can get in a grocery store. We do have other options, like Mr. Ranney alluded to, there's a donate button that you can add to your order, like to give a gift to a family. You can sponsor a \$30 or \$40 or \$50 dollar bag so that we can give a credit to somebody who can't afford it, and we do...we have received funding to pay for programs like that, that I'm going to go into in just a second. So some of the things that the Maui Hub and organizations like this do: one, we serve farmers. We handle all the non-farming tasks, the things that you have to do between getting your food from the farm to a product, right, which gives farms or producers more time to do their job, and to produce more food. Another big part of what we do is consumer education. We have...for a new organization, we have a fairly substantial social media and email list that we get to speak to. And we highlight farm stories, we talk about when a farmer doesn't have cucumbers, we say it's because there was rain. Like, we want people to understanding what farming is, production methods, why it's

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important to shop local. We're really looking to change consumer habits because, like, we're asking people to do their shopping before Tuesday for something they can't pick up until Saturday. That requires a bit of commitment from our consumers. And so we're really educating them on why that's important, and they're doing it. We also pay producers fair prices, there's no haggling. Because we're a nonprofit, our markup is quite low, and we want as much money--we're not here to make money--as much money as possible needs to go to the producer, and we need to just make enough to pay for our operations, and that's it. We're creating increased access, obviously, by giving more opportunities for consumers to buy these products, and we market. We do all the marketing and advertising for various products for free through our social media and our email. We ask producers what they need to move, do you have excess of one thing, let's move that for you, and that's all...you know, it's all part of the deal. So the financial viability of...this is not...this part is specific to the Maui Hub, but the model is not. I think any successful food hub operation is going to look like this. We got startup costs from Healy Foundation and the Ceres Trust, and with the support of the Haleakala Chapter of the Farmer's Union at the very beginning, right. We got this really small set up grant, we'll go into numbers in the next slide. And then right now our operating costs, such as like the packers...the weighing, and the packing, and the delivering of stuff, that is now--it took a while for us to get here, but now it's being paid for currently with the mark up, the small markup we put on product. So our day-to-day operating costs are being covered, right. Our partnership with Sun Fresh because of the pandemic allowed us to kind of, I'm finger quoting here, to lease their staff, their warehouse, and their truck. Long term, in order for us to expand where we need to be, that's not going to be a viable plan; but for now, it's really working. For the future, our large upfront costs will need to be covered by grants. Like I said before, like similar to housing, so we don't have to put those pass-through costs onto the consumer, right. So again, if we decide that local food infrastructure is in the public good, we've got to figure out how to publicly fund it. The return on investment so far has been incredible. These numbers...we started with \$52,000. Like I said, through two foundations and through a grant that went from Maui County through the Haleakala Chapter of the Farmer's Union to the Maui Hub as our fiscal sponsor. From that \$52,000, we have spent, through our market \$180,000 to local farms and producers, and we've paid \$65,000 in staff wages, which is a big deal in this time. We kept people employed. Plus \$245,000 back into our community from a \$52,000 investment. And know that this is not like this \$245,000 went through a corporation that's owned offshore and then came back as a percent in local wages, these are all local companies, 100 percent. So that money is staying here. Okay. So let's see. Oh, the last thing I want to say about this is, is when we talk about funding, I don't think it is...the whole collaboration thing comes in here. I don't think it is the best idea to like fund one huge building for like the Maui Hub. We have to think about this smart, right. Like if there is a way for us to fund a facility that is refrigerated and has commercial kitchens in it that multiple organizations can use, that Bobby Pahia's organization can use, and that Maui Hub can use, and that many different farms can come in and out of, that's really a hub, you know. And I think that we're going to get a lot more bang for our buck if we think about how to do that instead of each organization fending for themselves, and funding these big facilities, and then having

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to figure out a way to pay for it. Okay. So I want to talk real quick about how we weave food security and these things into everything that we do. Currently, we tend to look at problems in their own silos and try to solve them separately. You know, we are providing food to unsheltered people. We have food security and supporting local business. We have resource protection and climate change solutions. But let's say we decide to address hunger. If we decide to feed people with imported and processed food, then we're actually contributing to climate change, and creating a health problem that we're going to have to deal with later, right. So what I'm really hoping that we can do more often is what I call intersectional problem solving. How do we find where one or two of these overlap, and solve one or two problems, or even three at once. I don't think we have the liberty of all the time and the resources to solve each one of these problems separately anymore. So I would like to offer, as an example, what intersectional aid looks like in the real world. The Maui Food Hub...the Maui Hub received a grant from the Nuestro Foundation. And they originally contacted us and said, hey, we want to feed people, and we want to contribute to a better food and ag model at the same time with the same resources. How do we do that? Okay. So we have three statements that are true on this slide. Many residents are struggling and falling through the cracks. True. We also need to create a more diverse economy and be more food secure. True. Also, industrial agriculture that's heavy on chemical input contributes to climate change, and organic agriculture actually solves it by sequestering carbon in the soil. So instead of picking one of these to tackle, they came to us and said, we want to work on all of these. And they gave us a grant that we could buy food for food insecure people, specifically the ones that are on the waiting list for SNAP, specifically the ones that are not in, you know, in line receiving wraparound services, that kind of stuff. They also specified...of course, if they're buying food through us, it's sourced locally, and they specified that it be organic, so that we're really raising up the kind of farmers that are doing the work that we need them to do by sequestering carbon. So probably, they would have been able to buy slightly more food for their grant if it was not all organic or all local, but if you're solving three systemic problems with the same time and effort and money, it's actually a pretty good bargain. And I'm really grateful to this foundation for seeing the big picture and wanting to tackle everything at once. Couple of last things. While we are talking about food security and food hubs and how to make food move more locally, access and costs are huge. And I can't say this enough, collaboration over competition every day. I don't see the Maui Hub...none of us from the Maui Hub team see the Maui Hub as in competition with farmer's market or with the food that's being sold at the grocery store. I think the more options for you to buy local food, the better. I mean, I shop, at times, Safeway and Costco, depending on what part of the island I'm in, or what I need, or what's on sale. So more options make people put that in their brain that they're just going to buy local. As an example, the Maui Hub uses our social media to advertise other farmer's markets too, and other local food restaurants that are not on the Hub because we want to change the culture, we're really trying to change consumer habits and costs, which we all know, pass-through costs have to be low, which I can't say that enough. And the one thing I want to say, this last line on here, Maui Hub and farmer's markets are cheaper than grocery stores because there's not very much of a markup, right. If you do go to a grocery store and you see that

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there's local food there, the quality is not great most of the time if there is any, and local and organic options are really, really scarce. And the demand for organic food, not just in Hawai'i or Maui, but across the nation, is growing astronomically. So we have to look at ways to make access and costs for local and organic food a thing. So I'm just going to put this up here again because I really want everyone to keep this in mind as we go into the next session. And I would be remiss if I didn't leave you with this last slide because it really, really matters. All of our habits matter, and there are so many different ways for all of us to buy local, and to support our farmers, and to encourage people around us. The Hāna Farmer's Market has been in existence for a while, but during the pandemic, along with Maui Hub, they found a way to put their farmer's market online and do something similar. So if you're in Hāna and you're watching this, you can order each week at hanafarmersmarket dot...I can't see what that says dot org right here...Friday to Tuesday, and you pick it up on Friday. The Maui Hub information is here, and there are three great resources down here at the bottom. Projectlocavore.com has a resource guide on it that was put together by an amazing team. You can find local eggs, produce, meats, all kinds of things on there, including a list of farmer's markets. And if you're on social media, Facebook and Instagram both have groups that are dedicated to sharing ideas and new things about how to eat and cook with local food. Eat Local Maui is on Facebook, and Project Locavore is on Instagram. And I think that's all I have to say.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Ms. Ness, for your presentation.

MS. NESS: Thanks, guys.

CHAIR SINENCI: We also have Mr. Ranney onboard. Did you want to add to anything that Ms. Ness had presented? You can go ahead and stop sharing. Thank you.

MS. NESS: I'm trying, I'm trying. Okay.

CHAIR SINENCI: Good job. Okay, if not, we can go with questions. We can start with Committee Vice-Chair Kama, did you have any questions from the presentation?

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Yes. I wanted to ask...you know, I was just perusing your website because I was...as Autumn was speaking, and I was looking at all the different types of products that they have, and jams, and jellies, and breads, and all of this. And I started to think...and I didn't find anything over there that...you know, I mean, I was looking for meats and hamburger and stuff like that. And I'm wondering, is this a vegan menu type menu?

MS. NESS: No. It's a great question. So absolutely, meat proteins are a huge part of the food security system, and this is not a vegan website. The reason you don't see meats on there right now is because in this interim, when we started the Maui Hub up in partnership with Sun Fresh, Sun Fresh is an existing operation that really aggregates and ships mostly vegetables. And so there's a whole health department puzzle, how do you bring in meat and fish, and store and transport them alongside vegetables. So

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I'm really glad you asked that. It's going to take...solving those problems, it's going to take facilities and funding, and right now we just don't have that. So for a little while, we have one farmer who raises rainbow trout Upcountry in an aquaponic system. And we had his...and even Uncle George has some animal products on the website. And you could pay on the website, but then that producer has to bring the cooler full of fish to where the Sun Fresh truck is, and set up next to it, and give it out separately. Because we can't have the fish in the truck with the vegetables currently, but as we expand and get facilities that allow us to do so, that is absolutely the goal.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: So that was part of the infrastructure...

MS. NESS: We're just working with what we have right now.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: That was part of the infrastructure that you're talking about in terms of what was needed to continue?

MS. NESS: Yeah. So eventually, for us...I see in my brain eventually a large area that includes a chilled...a large chilled warehouse facility, a washing-packing facility, a loading dock where the trucks come in, and there's forklifts and stuff. And you can like, you know, sign out little areas of it, or lease it by the square foot, different organizations can use it. And one part is certified for processing meat, one part is certified for fishermen to come in and turn...filet their fish and package them and stuff. But that takes money, you know. So yes, let's please hold that vision.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: So my last question is, so if I was an opihi picker and I wanted to become part of this, your hub, so that I don't have to go door to door and sell my opihi, what would I have to do to become a part of your hub?

MS. NESS: Well, so there's...if you're on the website, there's a sell with us tab. And that's really all the frequently asked questions about how to be...there's a little form that you fill out. So you go on there, you fill in your form and then our procurement team contacts you. And basically, all you have to do is be okay with our schedule, like can you make it here on Thursdays. And the cool thing too is it's producer owned, so the producer on the back end of that website puts in like, okay, this week I have 200 pounds of tomatoes coming up. Maybe one week he doesn't have any tomatoes, he just won't put his tomatoes on the site. So an opihi picker can be like, okay, this week I'm going to have five pounds of opihi in one pound bags, you know, or a fisherman or something like that. So, yeah, that's the goal.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Cool. Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Autumn.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo. Okay, we had a question from Member King, and then Member Lee.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Hi, Autumn. Well, you know you're singing to the choir, right. So, you know...

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MS. NESS: I do. Thanks.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: And I've had Autumn on my webinar before too, so she presented all this equipment...or this information. But just to follow up on what you just told Member Kama, is there like a quality control, especially for something like seafood? Because you don't want just putting anybody on there, and then whatever they caught that day they put on, and then someone gets food poisoning or something. So is there some kind of a quality control thing that maybe you can share with us?

MS. NESS: Yeah. So right now, because we don't have meats and fish, we don't deal with that at the moment. It's like a bag of worms that we can't even open right now because we don't have the facilities or the infrastructure to deal with it. So we mostly deal with prepackaged, like jellies and jams and hot sauces and produce. But yes, there is a produce manager onsite. So really, what happens...I'm oversimplifying a little bit, but we tell the farmer we just sold 200 pounds of lilikoi, or grapefruit, or something. And they pull up, the produce manager takes the 200 pounds of grapefruit into the back while the farmer waits. They weigh it, they cut it open, check the quality, and then the farmer is paid. So that's the whole...it's a whole process that's very professional. Once we do start dealing with meat and fish then, you know, obviously we're going to have to do everything according to Department of Health guidelines. But we're just not there yet.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay. I was sure you had a process, I just didn't...the way you described it, I didn't want people to think, oh, you know, I picked some opihis, just letting you know, and then I could just sell it, because...

MS. NESS: Oh, yes, thank you. Yeah, no, we're not there yet, no.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Yeah, okay. Well, yeah, I'm rooting for you to get there too because I think people are asking for proteins. And then I don't know if you guys ever hooked up with Hanalei over there on...I'm not sure if he's on Bobby's or Robert Mata's farm over there, but he's got all the...he's got the hog farm and he's been trying to distribute his pork in these pork boxes. But anyway, I just want to say that I think it's a great project for you to be involved with because your enthusiasm and everything you've brought to it. And I'm happy to be both a distributor on the food hub and a customer because now we buy all of our produce from the one that you set up in Kihei, and it's a great service. I think it's great, and it's nice to know we're supporting local. So thanks for everything you've done.

MS. NESS: I just need you to know that I am just one of an incredible team of people that put this together smack dab in the craziest time of the pandemic, hours and hours and hours stuck in our houses on Zoom. So I just happen to have the luck to be in this seat right now, but there are a lot of people and volunteers that made this thing work. It's been incredible.

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COUNCILMEMBER KING: Yeah, no, I know that because...I know that because they're trying to get my husband on the board too, and I think he's hesitant to do it. But the other, you know, I mean, getting the system set up involves also, you know, the, you know, insurance and things like that. So that's kind of what he's waiting on. And just...no, I understand there's a whole lot of people behind this, and I think that it just needs to be known that you're trying to set it up right with all these processes and so they can...people can expect that when they order their box, that every...that there's a process it goes through so that people don't just show up and leave some produce on your door, that there's actually quality control.

MS. NESS: Yeah, thanks for that.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: All right. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Member King. Member Lee.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hi, Autumn.

MS. NESS: Hi.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: I was wondering what size of a building would you need, or facility, and how much do you think that might cost?

MS. NESS: Okay, these are great questions that I can't give you specific numbers right now. Currently we're operating in...Keith, do you know, it's like 1,000 square foot? I'm really bad with square footage, I've been there a bunch, but I can't tell a square footage. Currently we're operating in a space that we are quickly about to outgrow. We are having problems, like onboarding more produce, more products, and we just don't have the space. So we didn't have a lot of brain space or time to go look for alternative areas because we didn't have any money. So it's a real...it's a real which comes first thing. Eventually we are going to need a, I would say, 2,000 square foot refrigerate...like mostly refrigerated area that can allow for a forklift to go in and out, and it has parking for trucks for delivery. But again, the question remains...here's the question. And I don't know what the answer is, but this is what we're all working out right now. Is it better for the Maui Hub to privately raise the money through County grants, and through foundation money, and buy our own packing facility, or--leasing is incredibly expensive--buy our own packing facility and operate on our own, or is it better for us to team up with people like Bobby and all these other places that are looking to do something similar and complementary, and collectively raise the money to do this, and be able to share that big resource. I don't know what the answer is because we talked about food hub pre-pandemic for years and years and years, right. This is a like a multi-year conversation. And it was always this big thing, a food hub and refrigeration space, and commercial kitchens. And I think that's why it never moved anywhere because it was just so massive. How do you get a project of that size off the ground? We started just as a hub, just as a distribution hub, so it made it

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easier to get off the ground. But yeah, that doesn't answer your question, Alice, I'm really sorry because it really depends on which route we decide to go, you know.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay, but it sounds like...sounds like you'll probably need something more like 10,000 square feet.

MR. RANNEY: We can go with that.

MS. NESS: Yeah, if we decide to go collectively. If...yeah, if something happened in the next six--I can't speak for the board, I'm just one person--if something happens in the next six months or a year where we got enough funding to buy a space that is big enough for the Maui Hub alone to function, I think we would probably jump on that. But that's going to take a lot more conversation with us and partners and stuff. So anytime, Alice or anybody, you have my number, I'm happy to brainstorm about what that's going to take.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. And one last question, Autumn. Why are the microgrants taking a long time to be disbursed?

MS. NESS: That is a great question. I don't know. I have been as probably annoying as I can be without being overly aggressive. I know that everything takes a long time right now and everybody is...everything is a priority. OED, there has been a problem with them receiving the money apparently, going from the Mayor's office to the OED, and being processed as a transferring grant. So last I heard last week, they were talking about cutting a check like in a week, but I also heard they were going to cut a check in two weeks a month and a half ago. So I don't know.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. We'll check on that.

MS. NESS: Okay. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Good luck to you.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Member Lee. And it looks like, you know, the last we heard from OED that it was going to Mr. Daly, David Daly, he was going to be helping to process those grants.

MS. NESS: Yeah, he is, and I don't want to put this on Mr. Daly.

CHAIR SINENCI: Right.

MS. NESS: I've been in contact with him a lot, and it was a waiting for the paperwork to happen between the Administration through OED to MEO, you know what I mean?

CHAIR SINENCI: Yeah. Okay. And next we have a question from Member Molina.

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COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Thank you, Chairman, and good afternoon, Autumn. And let me just first start off by saying you're not annoying, you're persistent. That's a good big difference.

MS. NESS: Okay, great. Okay, good.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Especially about this topic, it's a very important one. Let me just ask you in general, what is the level of our food security here amongst households in Maui County? Like I would guess a high food security would mean most households have access to adequate food, and then very low would be, of course, households not having enough access to adequate food, and so forth. Do we have any statistics on that with Maui County?

MS. NESS: You know, I wish the Food Bank were here to help because I'm sure they can speak way better to this topic. That's not at all my wheelhouse. Anecdotally, I can tell you that we receive a lot of people reaching out to us that they're in trouble. And people that have never applied for food stamps or SNAP before, people who have never applied for any kind of assistance because they're normally a two-income household who can pay their mortgage, and everything's fine. And all of a sudden, that fell apart. And so even if one of them...one of the people in the house retained their job, they still don't have...they can't make enough to pay for their existing lifestyle. So we have people...and what really struck me in the beginning, when we first, first started doing this, we weren't in a position to be able to give away food, we were just trying to sell food for the farmers. And I staffed...one Saturday morning, I staffed the pickup for the food hub truck, and that...there was a line of cars, and we were giving away this beautiful produce, you know, kale and basil and tomatoes pouring out of the paper bag. And it was all very great, and I got in my car and I drove home, and I drove past one of the food giveaways that was hosted by--I can't remember who it was hosted by--at one of the elementary schools. And I stopped and looked at what was in the bag. And it was food, but it was canned vegetables, and rice, and Spam, and macaroni and cheese...and my heart really sunk. I was like, this is not okay, you know, this is...we are feeding the haves our local organic produce, and we're feeding the struggling this processed food that came from who knows where. And I'm not...like, we are all doing our best right now. So it's not to knock whoever was doing those food giveaways, we all are doing our best. But we have to think collectively about how to unblur those lines, and that's why we started collecting foundation money and taking donations from our customers because we were getting anecdotally people that were just really struggling, you know.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Yeah. Yeah, those are some really good points because yeah, I agree, we need to make sure that what we give away out to our community to consume is healthy and nutritious at the same time.

MS. NESS: Yeah.

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COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: You know, with regards to your...where people come by and pick up the goods, do you folks also provide a delivery service because of COVID and no-contact delivery and so forth, like you see with restaurants? Is that service provided? Do you guys provide that service as well for, say, a nominal fee or a donation from anyone who requests that kind of service?

MS. NESS: It's definitely on one of our like very, very next steps. We've talked about the logistics of that. Right now, when you do pick up, it is a no-contact thing. You pull up, and you give us your order number, and we put the bag in the back of your car. And everybody has masks, and we sanitize, and all that kind of stuff. So...but delivery is the next thing. We get questions about it all the time from people who just can't leave their house as well. So it's definitely a next step.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Great. It's good to hear. All right, thanks for your responses, Autumn. Thank you, Chair.

MS. NESS: Yeah. Thank you.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Member Molina. Next we have a question from Member Sugimura, and then Member Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Thank you. Nice seeing you, Autumn. Always enthusiastic.

MS. NESS: Hi.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Hi. So I'm tying to the next question from Chair Lee's question is, what about tools and equipment? What kind of . . .(inaudible). . . more, do you have a plan for that?

MS. NESS: Well, we need to. I really want to give a big shout out to Sun Fresh again. The only reason that we were able to put this operation together so quickly is because we didn't have to go out and price forklifts and delivery trucks. Sun Fresh was a preexisting aggregation facility that services restaurants. So we kind of just like moved in...where the restaurant business had kind of collapsed, we moved in and took, you know, and they helped us with that part. But as we expand, we are going to need our own delivery trucks. Leasing a delivery truck every week is not sustainable. So we do need to buy one or two, upfront, forklifts, that kind of stuff. If we get a warehouse, we're going to have to fit it with cooling...cooling equipment and stuff. So yeah, that's all part of why we're going to need to raise more funding for this, yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: You have kind of a budget that you're working from or towards.

MS. NESS: We do, yeah. We do.

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COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: And then the name of the organization that has the grant that OED is who? Is it called Food Security Hawai'i?

MS. NESS: I'm not affiliated with them, but I think that's what she said, Food Security Hawai'i.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Oh, I'm sorry, Ohana Gardens. Ohana Gardens.

MS. NESS: The grants that I was talking about were the microgrants for the farmers.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Right. No, I'm just wondering about the OED grant that you expressed earlier. I see it's Ohana Garden Project, is that the name of the grant?

MS. NESS: Yeah. I was talking about...when I said OED, the grant coming through there, I was talking about the microgrants for farmers that I'm experiencing. The farmers are experiencing a similar problem as Ms. Pell with her Ohana grant, Ohana Garden grant, that it's been funded, but it's taking a really long time for the money to get where it needs to be.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Okay.

MS. NESS: So it's a different grant, same challenge. If that makes sense.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Yeah. Okay, thanks.

MS. NESS: Yeah, okay.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Member Sugimura. Next we have Member Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Ms. Ness. I had a question off of your presentation on the policy end about farmworker housing. You know, I'm supportive of it. My apprehension stems from, you know...like, you know, Launiupoko ag lots, a lot of them seem to have grown swimming pools and short-term rentals and gates and stuff like that. And it was, you know, I think when the idea for these ag lots for local people was to grow food for farms for people to eat. And so I'm, I don't feel like pulling the trigger without, like, assurances that these things that we designate as farmworker housing will actually house farmers and not...you know, like, I mean nothing against WWOOFers or anything like that, but they come and then, you know, they move on, and they're not grounded and ma'a to the area. And so I just was wondering if you've taken any further steps in that policy discussion as to how to ensure that these are like affordable and occupied by farmworkers and not...you know, like, I mean...because when you create housing on ag land, and it's a farm dwelling, it's supposed to be that. But it hasn't, in my experience, panned out that way. So I mean, I just was wondering your thoughts.

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MS. NESS: I'm so glad you asked about this. I actually spent two years at the State legislature and in Elle's office dissecting this piece of the puzzle. And so we passed a resolution in the State Senate two sessions ago to try to dissect this. And it's the only...it's the only ag initiative that I've ever worked on that had 100 percent support from the Farm Bureau, the Farmer's Union, everybody. And the crux of it was...and that was the entire thing. The crux of it was that, first of all, we really think that nonpermanent or modular housing is a big part of the puzzle for two reasons. One is because we don't...even if it's for farmworkers, we don't want to start permanently developing our ag land, we don't. Because if the farm changes hands and somebody else wants to do something different on that land, we want them to be able to move the buildings out of the way, right. So nonpermanent housing, modular housing, was a huge deal. And if you keep it small and modular, then it's not a huge investment for these gentlemen estate farmers, it's not really an option, it's not the attractive option for them if you keep them 200 to 300 square feet. So the problem with that, and the reason we had to go to the State is because there are questions about what to do with gray water, what kind of water hook ups they are allowed to, you know, to hook up to. So that has to be dissected. And if you want to take this up in your Committee next session, I am absolutely excited to do so because we've made a lot of headway on what the possibilities for this are. And the second thing I'll say is that's also kind of why I'm excited for more resources to be put toward the Department of Agriculture because then you can have someone show up at a farm and look at these modular houses and be like, oh, this is an actual farmworker dwelling, or no, this is a freakin' Airbnb, you know. So those two things together, I think, are really important. You can't just like allow housing and never go look at it, you know.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And just to follow up on that answer, are these intended to be off grid?

MS. NESS: Well, that depends. That largely depends on State and County policies. So the resolution that we passed at the State Senate was to put together a working group to look at where County and State policy...what it allows and what is the easiest to tweak for them to be either off grid or half grid, what part needs to be...what part of the infrastructure keeping these little homes alive needs to be self-contained, and what can connect to the grid. So there's a lot of questions in this, but I don't think they're prohibitive. I think they're easy to answer, and they're really worth it. Because all, you know, problems about WWOOFers aside, I did a statewide farming tour a couple of years ago, a statewide tour of small and medium farms. And my question to a lot of them--this is Kauai, O'ahu and Maui, I missed Big Island--I asked the successful farmers, what's the difference between you and somebody who can't make it? And a lot of them were using WWOOFers. And they were living in these shanty conditions in the back. And it's hard for you to keep good work around if your workers are living in a tent, you know. And most of the time, farmers subsidize what they can't pay in labor wages through housing. So if you can give a worker a clean space, small but respectable place to live, you can keep your workers around for a long time, you know. That's like how farming is done through the ages, you know. So yeah, we can figure it out if we just have the will to do so.

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COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: We have about 800 acres of DHHL ag land, and infrastructure is one of the main obstacles for that Honokowai 800 acres. And, you know, I was trying to throw out some ideas like, you know, off grid houses and like that, but it's difficult. And like would you think, like, yurts maybe, nonpermanent?

MS. NESS: Yeah, I mean if you...there's...the way I...I can send you the...what I'm going to do is after I'm done here, I'm going to send you the State resolution that we passed because we worded it very specifically. We called it nonpermanent, modular--I forget the words we put in there because I don't want to dictate...if one farmer wants to put a yurt and one farmer wants to buy a fifth wheel and not...you know, you can buy a fifth wheel for pretty cheap and just not hook it up to a septic pump and do something else with it, there's a lot of ways to do that, you know. So I don't want to dictate what that looks like. I think it's more useful if we just talk about the parameters under which, you know, like if they have a...if there's an independent gray water cleaning system that you can get, a composting toilet, and a solar hook up, and you can probably hook it up to the hose on the farm, and then they just have to haul their drinking water. That's perfectly okay, you know, that's something that people do all the time. So you've just got to set those in the parameter and then let the farmer figure out how they meet those...yeah, those rules. And oh, yeah, WWOOFers. Does everybody know what a WWOOFer is? It's called Willing Workers On Organic Farms. It's like if you're young or a student or you want to learn about organic farming, you can sign up on this website to go stay on an organic farm. And you either get like a really small daily stipend, or you get free room and board, and you get to learn farming. And a lot of farmers rely on that for their...for their labor, you know, especially seasonal during harvest season and stuff. Thanks, Shane, for...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And I guess if I may ask one more question?

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay. Go ahead.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thanks. You know for your food hub, are you...do you guys work with anyone?

MS. NESS: What do you mean?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I recently had a tour of this farming operation, and it sounded like they had all the things that you wanted, like, you know, the walk-in icebox, and the processing-packing place with the forklift.

MS. NESS: Okay. Can we talk about it after and find out...maybe we can connect with them and see if there is some overlap, that'll be great. Yes, we work with anyone. Yeah, collaboration is the name of the game right now, serious.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Okay, thank you. Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Ms. Ness.

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MS. NESS: Thank you.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Member Paltin. I just had a quick question. So when you talk about, say, what Member Paltin on the policy side, you know, your first two slides spoke about buying local. And I know that for our hotels here, a lot of them are involved in procurement contracts if they are a hotel chain. So my question was, how do we, you know, look at policy, I don't know if it's at the State level, to opening up some of those contracts so the hotels are buying more local. Do you have any comment on that?

MS. NESS: Yeah, there is a whole movement. I'm thinking that there's...it's like the Good Food account, or the...and there's a Good Food Program and...it's Cool Food Program, and I can...have you guys heard of it before? It's a whole nonprofit nationally that works with large entities, whether it's a school...a university system or a City Government or something to help them rewrite their procurement policies that center around local food and/or food that doesn't contribute...that has, like, a...doesn't contribute to climate change. So I actually...it's on one of my list to do, to send to the Council to see if there's an opportunity for the Council to adopt a policy like that. You know, for example, if you're giving a grant to "X" organization, to require that they source "X" percent local food. Or, you know, if the County is hosting a conference or something, that...that the County itself will spend "X" percent of...or you will buy local unless there is not a local alternative option, or something like that. So those are policies that we can set for yourself, for County operations, and for grantees as well.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Ms. Ness. Thank you. Members, any other questions for Ms. Ness? If not, we wanted to mahalo Ms. Ness for a great presentation, and for joining us today, and for sharing the work that you guys are doing in our communities. And hopefully, just with having you on, that we can get more people accessing the site and accessing this service, particularly during the holiday season and during this COVID shutdown time. So again, mahalo nui, and see you on the flipside.

MS. NESS: Thank you so much for allowing this conversation, and for everybody's questions. I appreciate you so much.

CHAIR SINENCI: Thank you. Aloha. And Members, just as a reminder, this was just a 7(B) item posted with no legislative action.

ACTION: DEFER PENDING FURTHER DISCUSSION.

CHAIR SINENCI: Members, we've meet...we've reached the mid-afternoon mark of our meeting. Did you guys want...we have just one...two more items. Did you guys want to take a quick break or power through and possibly finish early?

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Short break.

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COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Just a pause for the cause.

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay. It is 3:07 and this EACP meeting is in recess 'til 3:15. . . .(gavel). . .

RECESS: 3:08 p.m.

RECONVENE: 3:16 p.m.

CHAIR SINENCI: . . .(gavel). . . The EACP meeting of Tuesday, December 1st, please come back to order. It is 3:16 p.m. Thank you, Members. Just for the record, we did lose Member Kama to a doctor's appointment, just to let Members know.

EACP-55: HAWAII TARO FARM, LLC (CC 20-451)

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay. Moving right along. Next, Members, we have EACP-55 the Hawai'i Taro Farm, LLC. The Committee is in receipt of County Communication 20-451 from Councilmember Yuki Lei Sugimura relating to Hawai'i Taro Farm, LLC. As you know, County voters approved the County Level Department of Agriculture on this year's election. So we have roughly two years to work on formulating this Department and reaching out to our local farmers to get their input on how this Department can assist our local farmers and be successful. All right. This second agriculturally related item is a presentation on the Hawai'i Taro Farm. As many of you may remember, this is the farming project taken on by Bobby Pahia, located within the boundaries of the Waikapu Town Center Project. This is another example of creating much needed agriculture infrastructure that can take local crops grown in a sustainable manner and provide services similar to a food hub that get those products into the hands of consumers. This project is a little different than what we just heard about though, in that it's also seeking to creating agriculture innovation through access to technical and scientific methods. To explain more, we have with us today from Hawai'i Taro Farm, LLC, Mr. Bobby Pahia, the Chief Executive Officer, and Ms. Annie Alvarado, their Executive Director. So with that, Members, if there are no objections, I'd like to designate Mr. Pahia and Ms. Alvarado as resource persons pursuant to 18A of the Rules of the Council.

COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS.

CHAIR SINENCI: Thank you, Members. Okay. With that, I see Mr. Pahia and Ms. Alvarado. Aloha. Welcome today. Thank you for waiting and --

MS. ALVARADO: Aloha.

CHAIR SINENCI: -- and if you want to provide some opening remarks and then share your screen.

MR. PAHIA: Sure.

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CHAIR SINENCI: Okay.

MR. PAHIA: Aloha, everybody. And before we start, I just want to mahalo you guys for the commitment you guys have to the community. I mean, I don't get to see you guys much one on one or if at all, so I just wanted to let you guys know mahalos for that. It takes great leadership to step up to the plate and, you know, give up their time away from their families and, you know, it's just a sacrifice that, you know, I know that you guys do on your part, and I just want to prelude everything by just telling you guys mahalo...mahalo for your guys' commitment to Maui and our communities. What I'd like to do is, I'd like to just kind of give you guys a brief overview of what we're going...what we're trying to accomplish. And then after I speak, I believe my Executive Director, Annie Alvarado, will follow up and give you more detailed information about what we're trying to achieve. You know, basically, in a nutshell, we're trying to put a package together to address many things. One of them is bringing water and sewer infrastructure onto the property, which is huge, and I'm very...I appreciate the alliance that I have with Mike Atherton and his partners. He's given me a great latitude to do many things on the land. And I just want to, you know, address his cooperation that he's a big, big factor in all what we're trying to achieve. And basically, in a nutshell, we're just trying to put a package together that we can present to funders of what we're trying to achieve. And what we're really trying to do is build some capital improvements on the land so that we can facilitate some of those issues about food security. You know, food security, sustainability, those are always the hot topics, and my challenge is I...we feel that we play a part of addressing food security, but we need some capital improvements on the land. So we're putting a package together so we can really put some capital improvements on the land, which will address food security concerns. And not only food security, but the aspect of sustaining that food security model. Again, we're putting a package together to create some capital improvements. One of them is a slaughter facility. Specifically, I have a hog farmer down there. We don't know how long Nakasone is going to be in operation, he's our only slaughter facility that we have on Maui for hogs, you know, we have deep conversations with the owners there. They're like the third generation operators of this hog slaughter facility, and it doesn't seem like the grandchildren are going to be wanting to do this much longer. So securing a slaughter facility is crucial, not only for Ho'omana Farms, which is a farmer down there, Hanalei Colleado and his family, but it's going to be an issue for the rest of Maui County...well, especially the island of Maui. I'm not sure if Lānaʻi has a slaughter facility, you know, a USDA slaughter facility and/or Molokaʻi. So there's a shortcoming on my part, I should have did my homework to see if they have. But it may be addressing a need in our entire County. So that's one capital improvement that we want to bring to fruition. Of course, the other capital improvements, which everything is based upon, is sewer and water, getting it through the land, which we all know is a huge cost. And I brought up Mike Atherton is because he's give us...you know, as we all know, that he's building a sewer facility nearby. And what we're going to need is--and he's given the permission that we'll have access to tie into his sewer facility. Not only that, we need potable water for a number of reasons, especially for FSMA reasons, Food Safety Modernization Act.

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You know, currently we're off of a...you know, we're off of the Na Wai 'Eha system, which is surface water, but for us to grow and create a greater capacity, we need that potable water. So he's allowed us to tap into his feed that's going to be going there also. So that alone was a huge, huge step. The other huge step that we had to get over was...as you know, the land is currently in the process of the management going into Hawaiian Island Land Trust. So the other hurdle that we had to, you know, get over was the hurdle...those Hawaiian Island Land Trusts, right. Are they going to allow us to do what we got to do there to put in capital improvements? And the great thing is, it's really great working, you know, and it's been a learning process how this all works with conservation easements and this and that, but of course, we all know that's going to be great for our community, that 900 acres or 800-something, 900 acres that he's going to put in perpetuity in ag, great. But I need to have access to sewer and water. And the reason for that, number one, is the slaughter facility, which I think is going to bring value not only to our specific farm, but to the greater community. The other capital improvement that we plan to put in is a facility that a food hub operation can operate out of. That's the other capital improvement. And the other capital improvement is a multi-certified kitchen processing type of facility. Okay. So...and lastly, we want to bring Broadband, the technology to the farm. That's...I feel that if we're going to move up in technology and keep up with the times and be more efficient, we're going to have to have that access. So that's the other capital improvement. Now, when we talk about these capital improvements, I feel that each capital improvement is going to bring value to our community. Because right, we should all be striving to bring value to our community in some form. So having a food hub...well, we just listened to Autumn, you know, we heard about how that can bring value to the community. The kitchens, the certified kitchens, that has always been a stumbling block for farmers. Because as you know, the farmer has to create multiple streams of income, and value added products is one of the main ones, but we need to have access to certified kitchens. And of course, the food hub speaks for itself. We also have the latitude and opportunity to house a farmer's market there, and we also have the latitude to operate a food truck kind of area where they can gather and sell food. I think that this project is going to complement the Waikapu Town Project. We're going to have many households living close by and, you know, guys, I gotta tell you guys this. You know, people always ask me, Bobby, why are you so greedy? Why you went down there and grab about 300 acres, you know what I mean. But in my thinking process, it was never for me to go grab all that land just for me. My idea was always to put farmers on the land so that they can have opportunity to farm because I've been a farmer on Maui a long time. I've been farming all over this island from Kula, to even where Costco was. Before I had all taro where Costco was. You know, Maliko, Pulehu, down to Wailuku. So I know how tough it is for a farmer to get secure lands and secure water at affordable prices. And not only that, we gotta teach our farmers how to line up their ducks so they can access money. For example, I get 23 farmers on my farm, right, 90 percent of them have not positioned themselves to access monies that are available. So that whole, you know, that paradigm of them not having that knowledge, and to access, you know, that's another thing that, you know...well, I don't know what everybody else is doing, but I know I'm down there and, you know, Annie and I, we're teaching people, you know, how to set yourself up for

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success. You know, I lease the land to everybody else, same price that I get it for. They pay the same water that I pay. It's not about trying to make money off of the backs of other farmers. And recently because of this COVID thing...a shout out to the Mayor's Administration and office and OED and all of that, how they funneled money down to the farmers. I thought that was a great model about how monies was funneled by the CARES Act that allowed us farmers--and I'll use me as an example. I was allowed to buy my taro and donate it to the community. Now, this is another reason why we're pursuing the free enterprise form model of a nonprofit. Because it struck me that the responsibility, really, of the mahi'ai is to feed the people, right. It takes a village to feed a village, and the mahi'ai has a specific role. And I brought this up to the greater ag community that I'm involved with, and asked them, what are we doing on an individual basis? How are we addressing this? How are we feeding our community? And I took this to heart. And from that moment, we have pivoted and shifted our operations to do just that. I mean, my whole intention is to grow food and give it away to the...to our vulnerable communities. And I believe we can do that. I believe that if we can create this model and get other farmers on board, as long as they can make ends meet, but at the same time truly address food security, like we all collaboratively work together to lift up this type of farming, this model. That's what I'm about, that's what I'm committed to, and I just want to thank the Mayor's Office and the County Council for allowing this to happen. Because without that type of intervention, I probably would have folded as a farmer, and some other of my farmers probably would have folded too. So, you know, I take this to heart, and I really take it to heart about...I cannot speak for all farmers, but for me personally, I'm going to grow food for the community. One way or the other, I going do that. So that's just my deal. But I think if I can install these capital improvements, it's going to give the rest of those 23 farmers down there more opportunity to succeed. And not only to succeed and address the food security concern, but we can also address sustaining our vulnerable communities. And this is what this is about. This is helping my fellow farmers create an income so they can survive. But the certified kitchens, I mean, I believe that brings value to the community too because now they have the opportunity to have access to certified kitchens so they can make their value added products. You know, just as a side note, I'm a strong believer in small family farms being the backbone of food security in Hawai'i. Because if you think about it, most of the consumers in Hawai'i are all the village residents, right. So if each and every one of us could grow a banana tree, a mango tree, whatever it is, we're going to help move that needle, right, away from the 85 to 90 percent dependence on outside sources. So basically, in a nutshell, this is what I'm doing, guys. Annie can...you know, Annie fills...can fill you in with, you know, the more details. You know, I'm kind of the visionary kind of guy and she's the one that puts it all together and we're trying to do this. And I want to make sure that you guys understand this and know this. This project that we're pursuing, we don't plan on trying to tap into any type of County funds or State funds because I know how it is, everybody's having a hard time, you know, especially our nonprofit agencies out there. They're...to me, in my opinion, they're more needy of the funds that are going to be available. So I don't want to take away from that. But what I do want, and I what I do ask of the Council, is that if and

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when Federal monies flow down, I want you to consider our project. And that's really all I got to say. Annie is going to follow up with the details and stuff. Yeah, that's it.

MS. ALVARADO: All right. Thanks, Bobby.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Mr. Pahia.

MR. PAHIA: You're welcome.

CHAIR SINENCI: Annie, did you have a presentation for the Members?

MS. ALVARADO: Yes, I do. I'm going to hit the share button, and let's pray that it works. Uh-oh. Are you guys seeing it?

CHAIR SINENCI: We're seeing a blue...we see a blue screen.

MS. ALVARADO: Oh, no. I think I'm having the same problem that Autumn had.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: No, Autumn didn't get this far in the beginning.

MS. ALVARADO: Oh, really?

COUNCILMEMBER KING: You're a bit further ahead because you are sharing your screen, you just don't have your presentation up.

MS. ALVARADO: Oh, there it is. Is that it? That'll do it. Can everybody see it?

COUNCILMEMBER KING: No. Now it's on.

CHAIR SINENCI: There it is. Members, it's also on Granicus if you need to...

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Annie, if you can hit the...the slideshow presentation, it'll get rid of that sidebar that's got all the slides, the thumbnail pictures of the slides.

MS. ALVARADO: I hit the slideshow and it's not doing it. There it is. Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Now you got it.

MS. ALVARADO: All right, there we are. All right let me move this over and then I'll get started. So thank you, Bobby. Bobby has always the most wonderful words in sharing what his vision is for this incredible project I think we're working on. We are transitioning to include a nonprofit foundation, and we're hoping this is a nice, proposed model for development of agriculture. And we thank you for your time, and I'm very grateful. I'm also very happy about the Department of Ag and afterward, you know, I can share a few anecdotal things since I've been on a lot of webinars with USDA lately. So as Bobby suggested, we need to pivot to adjust to the new normal,

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and these are the actions that we want to take. Again, establish a nonprofit to serve a larger community. We still have to determine a name. We want to diminish the dependence of shipped in food, focus on food security, and support our farms of all sizes. Create new categories of jobs, retrain and utilize OTJ training. Install Broadband, innovate farm technology opportunities, develop water and sewer to allow efficient production and processing of farm produce, protein for value added products. And we want to create a place for rural farming prosperity and community, to create a sense of community destination, and really engage with our community. We want to ensure the future of canoe and indigenous crops and cultural practices. We're interested in implementing a business incubator and accelerator as well. We truly, as I think...I hope you see and you feel, we embrace, you know, the serving of our social economic business and community impacts for Maui and Hawai'i. But most importantly, we want to make nutritious food available for the community and the most vulnerable populations in Maui and Hawai'i. And I'm glad Bobby shared with you that he...that he gives away his food because he's done that from the get-go. That is not something new for him. So on November 18th, Maui United Way officially announced our partnership as our fiscal sponsor. Clearly we want to coordinate requests for...from social service agencies such as Feed My Sheep, the Maui Food Bank, and the Salvation Army, and we want to be able to produce protein and produce and other products, and we also want to help to raise funds to be able to serve this community, and to provide high quality nutritious food. We want to synchronize our farming because we want to be more efficient in terms of production and the farmers' ability to compete for contracts. And I have a great deal of experience in working with contracts and procurement processes in Government and other places, so I'm really going to focus in on that--and the hotel industry, I understand that through my training at the culinary arts program. Creating value added on the farm itself allows a farmer to earn a larger portion of the profit. Certified processing facilities on site would help to reduce food spoilage as profit loss experienced by the farmers. Creating new products for sale made on Maui can possibly be shipped between islands in the future. So what are we growing today? We have 23 specialty farmers, you can read the list, it's quite lengthy. And that's not everything that we grow, but you can see there's a diversity. We also do composting, including worm castings. And livestock include a hog farm and a new goat farm for regenerative farming practices. Future production includes items such as cattle, poultry, aquaponic agriculture, and of course, value added agriculture. So I wanted to highlight Ho'omana because this just kind of tells you that with Bobby, you know, as a leader, a very powerful leader for these farmers, you know, you have other farmers there that are right there with him, head and shoulder with him, and one of those is, to me, in my opinion, is Hanalei Colleado. You know, when this first...when the pandemic first happened, he was feeding beautiful purple sweet potatoes to his pigs. And when he saw people struggling, he readjusted the feed and started giving it to the people. So to me...and he does this in silence, you know, he doesn't do it for show, but I happened to notice, and I wanted to share that with you. That's kind of the way these guys, these farmers roll. We have a really, really dynamic group, and they're very caring. So here we have Winsome Williams, and she's the one that said I'm a girl. She's quite a young lady, let me tell you. These are the three farmers, the three farmers. We have Jake and we

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also have Whitney. The three of them are also very much immersed in the cultural aspects of the kalo and pounding poi. And I'll tell you, you can go into the farm virtually any day, and Winsome will have a group of people there doing volunteer work, whether it's a church, a school, whatever, just because she's just...she's just so dynamic and just so, so neat to work with. And she's very smart, and very dedicated. So I also wanted to show you that, you know, this is not like just in the future, the things and actions we can take today. We have a Shovel Ready Piggery Project, and it is for the Korean Natural Farming Dry Litter Systems. If you ever come to the farm, I really beg you to come and stand by this, by this existing Korean Natural Farm Dry Litter System. It's basically the building that I showed you when...we had the picture with United Way. It's about 75 [sic] in square feet, and it holds about 500 farms...I'm sorry, 500 hogs, my apologies. It's odorless. I'm just in awe of this. I mean, and you know the pigs look happy, they are just in there, they're well housed and it's a natural way, you know, they call indigenous microorganisms and solutions to eliminate the needs to dispose of manure and wastewater. It's just unbelievable to behold. It's really a wonder of science, it really is amazing. So we want to talk about job creation and use of technology on small family farms. So this is our short list of initial job sectors. And of course, this has to be with your support initially, but we will, you know, as Bobby said, we're very dedicated to really kind of sourcing things that we can on our own. I'm a pretty...I am former national policy writer at both treasury, the Treasury Department and USDA. And so I have learned a lot of tricks in terms of, you know, the grant writing process. And we have such great farmers that also are very experienced and already utilizing that funding that that's a real running start, as far as I'm concerned. So if you look at the list, we have food and soil scientists. We have...you know, with the technology and the example that I highlighted here is things that are available, like robots, temperature and moisture sensors, aerial images, and GPS technologies. These technologies alone allow the business to become more profitable, efficient, safer, and more environmentally friendly. This is a group that cares very much about rebuilding the soil, about using conventional methods, but also, having dedication to protecting our environment. So go back to the list of the job sectors; construction, transportation, think about all the jobs associated with value added processing facilities, kitchens. We're hiring accountants, legal, engineering, architecture design. We need farm business planning, food safety inspections, slaughterhouse processing. We need marketing. We need to make sure that we're, you know, protecting the preservation of canoe crops and indigenous plants. Hire web development, IT services, graphic arts, farm incubator accelerator activities, worker training and/or retraining, we're sourcing containers, fencing...we need chefs, food trucks, food, you know, courts and then possibly, even retail. As Bobby already mentioned, farmer's market possibly. We also want to do what's called the You Pick Event, where we can invite the community in to choose their own selection of produce, maybe a pumpkin patch, I mean, that's the most popular thing, but you know, we'll consider other things and that's Winsome's area of expertise, she's just amazing and very creative. So here we get to the crux of a very important opportunity to build momentum for our economy. We're right next to this Waikapu Town Development. I took this out of the paper. Look at all the housing and I know you guys know this chapter and verse because you approve everything. But I want to remind you that this

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is the synergy that the farm is going to build on as well in terms of job creation, and create a sense of place for our community to be welcomed, you know. A lot of times developments happen, and it's like exclusive. Well, having a farm next to this is a place for our community to participate and to feel like they belong, and that's really important, you know, for us to create that sense of place for our community. Bobby's already explained the Hawaiian Islands Land Trust and how it's going go through the Trust. The farming will take place on this land in perpetuity, and Mr. Atherton remains the owner of the lease land that is the Hawai'i Taro Farm, extremely supportive. And we all know HILT, I think that everybody is pretty familiar with what they do and look at that beautiful scene of that farmland. And I think that's some of your land too, Councilwoman King. So we're talking about board members, and the kinds of people that we're choosing, and we're not through with the process. Steven Walder will serve as our Chief Financial Officer, and will assist with the analysis of financing and income streams for new activities on the farm. We do have to think about being sustainable, but as Bobby said, we won't want it to do...to be totally on the backs, you know, of the farmers. But...so if we have income-producing opportunities, Steven will definitely help us. Now, Steven is from Los Angeles, and the connection here is that when he and I...I was on a startup team for an international development bank that just focused on environmental infrastructure. What we did was we went into some of the poorest communities in both the U.S. and Mexico, and we built infrastructure that was sustainable. And it was environmentally...it was innovatively...innovative environmental infrastructure, and he did most of the financing, both...he did financing both in Mexico and the United States. And so that is a very unique set of skills that we want to make sure that we bring to the table so that we're making...helping to make good decisions. Now, Hugh Starr, obviously I think most people are familiar with him, and he's a character. He's critical for our ag lands, and we're looking at improved ag...it's important ag lands, forgive me. He's very well versed in those things, and he's very familiar with a slaughterhouse. So board members like this, and our other farmers that are joining us, and United Way will help us to be the good stewards of operation and ensure effective execution of all activities. So here we have our wonderful...you know, all of our farmers are dedicated to...and board members are dedicated to the cultural heritage because that's what Bobby preaches, that's what Bobby represents. But I want to highlight these two right now because they're just really amazing. You know, Norman...and the reason I know about the details now, I'm learning the details of each of these farmers because I'm helping with their grant applications. And you know, Norman is on Hawaiian Homelands, I believe, or...and that's where he farms; is that correct, Bobby? Am I saying that right? Hello. Is everybody hearing me? Yes. Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: We can hear you.

MS. ALVARADO: All right. So anyway, so Norman has a construction background, and he's also, you know, a practitioner, a Native Hawaiian practitioner for cultivating indigenous crops. And obviously, this is the silent partner of the Pahia family, but Juanita serves...she's our President, and she co-owns the Hawai'i Taro Farm, and she farms and supports a Hawai'i cultural heritage, you know, of indigenous crops. She's

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out there every day with Bobby, holding up the kalo and working so hard. She's just an amazing woman, just an amazing woman. And so here's at the end of our, you know, to the point where we're asking for our request. This is a draft proposal for a startup budget request. It's big, but honestly, for what we're going to accomplish, and what we're going to use this and leverage, I think it's still a great opportunity. I think that, you know, there's some things that we just can't get started without help. One of the triggers on getting all this stuff, all these proposals and...accomplished, is the environmental assessment, you know, that is the trigger for most Federal and other private fundings in some cases. And so that, the studies are really the ground...the ground floor of how, after this, we can jump off and start pursuing other types of funding. And, you know, we're developing relationships with the Native American Agriculture Fund. Obviously with USDA, we have been invited to do a lot of things, and they're already jumping on, you know, helping us with the businesses and other things. We're coordinating with Workforce Development at the Mayor's Office, but there's such a need for workforce on the farm today that it's really crucial that we include this here. Again, the piggery, I wanted to highlight that, that...each...each Korean Natural Farming System costs \$350,000, and Hanalei is going to have to build four more. And so we know that this is not the only place that we can have money, but if we can get started here, then we have a leverage, and then we have...what's really important that the County...that shows to the other funders that this has been...this is a priority for us, as our local Government and for our local community. I have the community involvement in food purchases, which in the future, we really want to help in raising funds, both from Federal agencies and private places, such as, like the Kellogg Foundation to supplement these things. So that not only are we asking for funding, but we're willing to do all the legwork and all the technical, you know, work that is required, which is very complicated, but we believe that we do have the capacity. I know I've done major development projects and worked with farmers and ranchers in many different roles. And with all the farming that we know in that area, and with a really well put together board, and with your kind guidance and tutelage in helping to set priorities, I just know that this can be something that's very powerful for our community. Now, we...other...our other request is we're...we were wondering about the clarification of the budget process with the Maui's CARES Act or stimulus funding, and the procurement process because I've looked at the Federal CARES Act handbook, and it's not very detailed. And so we certainly want to make sure that we start out on the right foot, and are following all the right procedures. Now, on a side note, you know, before I go to the feedback and we can ask questions, I want to make sure and let you know that there's a couple of things that I really learned recently as I'm on these webinars with all these different funders all the time. And one is that I found a very unique approach to community gardens and bringing people together, in that they actually created a cooperative for community gardens. And, you know, to me, we have a wonderful opportunity with the Department of Agriculture, that might be a good thing to explore, you know, how do you bring together and how you coalesce all the people that are growing on their own private lands or in a garden, you know, and how does it become a sharing opportunity. And the other thing is, I did do some research because I wanted to understand for myself what a department could do, and there's examples in California, and really all over the

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country. And so I really applaud you for...for being open about it, and I know it was a very tough decision, and there was some, you know, maybe not everybody was totally there, but we're here now, I guess, and let's just really make it work for all of us, and I think do what we can to make it successful. But, you know, so there's other models out there that can be used. But, you know, if ever...you know, not that...because I'm certainly not an expert in many things, but I do have a little bit of knowledge, and if there is any way that I can help, I'm certainly willing to do that. And so now I'm going to stop sharing and ask for your questions and feedback and next steps.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Ms. Alvarado, for your presentation. And so Members, we've got Mr. Pahia and Annie available for questions. I'll go ahead and open it up for questions for the Members. Ms. King, you had a question.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Thank you, Chair. Nice presentation, Annie, and it's always an inspiring talk. Bobby, it's always great to hear you speak. And we...we're sharing some of the same farmers now, so I wanted to . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

MS. ALVARADO: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Danny has been amazing, and he's...he's just gone and planted stuff on our property. All of a sudden we come back and there's 50 banana trees, so --

MS. ALVARADO: That's nice.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: -- he's been really nice. He's definitely feeding a lot of people on our farm as well. I had a couple of questions. One is, when you're talking about the food hub site and the commercial kitchen, are you working with the food hub folks, you know, Autumn Ness and them? Is that the food hub you're talking about, or are you doing something in addition to what they're trying to do.

MS. ALVARADO: Well, you know, what we want to do is have...have things available for our farmers obviously, but I don't think that we want to limit it. If we can cooperate with other farmers and help to make it a success, I think that's the goal.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay, because they are looking for a site and so, you know, it would be a shame to have two within the same area that are --

MS. ALVARADO: Yeah,...

COUNCILMEMBER KING: -- spending this...these large amounts of money. I did want to share with Autumn, and I don't know if you talked to Bob about this...Bobby, but that 4,000 square foot warehouse that we have, you know, the tented warehouse was about \$200,000. So, you know, much cheaper than building a solid building if you want to go that route. But I'm really...I'm excited about the slaughterhouse...is that...is that slaughter facility for more than just Hanalei's pigs, or is it just for...

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MS. ALVARADO: No, it's just the...the slaughter facility is going to be designed for hog processing but, you know, we also have a consultant right now, Joseph Realdine, that is helping us with a grant of inspections. So, you know, because we have so many knowledgeable farmers that understand food safety and understand regulations for how to handle produce and protein and things like that, it's making it a lot easier for us, but Joseph is really guiding us on what the correct process is, you know, and steps in the slaughterhouse development.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay. Because you know...you know that we have all those farm...those farmers/hunters who are...who are hunting axis deer. And so if that could be worked into the slaughter facility, I think that would be awesome. And then the other thing that would be awesome, I mean, I don't even know if it exists anywhere in the island, certainly not on the neighbor islands, but would be a rendering. Have you thought about doing a rendering operation with the slaughterhouse? Because, you know, after you slaughter you have all that offal and it has nowhere to go because we have no rendering operations, you know. The Big Island has one that they built incorrectly, and they've been trying to...they've been actually begging my husband to run it and it's just not put together correctly. So he...you know, it's just sitting there. But that's the one thing that's missing, and it's such an environmental hazard to just throw all this stuff in lava tubes or in ditches. So is that...have you guys ever talked about that?

MS. ALVARADO: Well I think that--and Bobby, correct me if I'm wrong, please--but what we're going to have to build with the slaughterhouse is a pre-sewage treatment facility that is attached to the slaughterhouse. So nothing that comes from the slaughterhouse would not be, you know, something...it would be reduced to something that is acceptable to normal sewer discharges, you know, or things that are included in the sewer discharge. So it's really going to be like a system, a two-step system of pre-treatment of sewage directly connected to the slaughterhouse, and then connecting to the wastewater.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay. But...but what are you going to do with like the bone in, you know, all the...

MS. ALVARADO: Yeah, that's a good question.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: You know, that's what...that's what the rendering operations...I mean, I've...I've been talking about this for a long time, and I think that would be something that would be extremely beneficial to the entire County to have because...and environmentally, it would be amazing to keep that stuff, you know, out of the ground and, you know, from just decaying on the ground and in the ditches. And I know a lot of it on the Big Island just went into lava tubes. In years past, when we were...when we first started the bio-diesel over there, we were asking about what happened to all the slaughter. And basically, they just told us, the people who asked that question don't have jobs anymore.

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MS. ALVARADO: Oh, my goodness.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: And so, you know, so this has been happening for a long time, and it's something that's needed statewide. But, you know, that...to me, that's something that the County and State should fund together.

MS. ALVARADO: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Because it's so beneficial for beyond...beyond just your operation, but every hunter's operation on the island, the other slaughterhouse that exists right now, and all the other--even the other islands could send their stuff over here. But, you know, if you're interested in that, I would be happy to hook you up with some resources. And probably the first thing is to talk to Bob because he knows how those things operate. And we could keep a lot of really nasty stuff from going into the environment if we had that facility. So anyway, just something to think about.

MS. ALVARADO: Yeah, thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: I'd love to help you guys work on funding for that. And I think the Healy Foundation might be able to help as well. So other than that, I was going to ask you, when you get hooked up to the wastewater treatment facility at...that Mike Atherton is putting in, and hopefully all the farms will have water from there. Is the water unit...have you talked to him about costs of water to the farmers? Is it going to be cheaper than what you're paying Wailuku Water Company now, do you know that?

MR. PAHIA: Because I don't know what the deal is made because, you know, the wells we got up there up on the land that he has, I think he has like five wells. Now, I'm not sure how the negotiations went with County accessing that water. So to put a price on that might be premature at this time because I don't think those details have been worked out yet.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay. But that's going to be a consideration for all the farmers, right, because everyone is looking forward to having access to that water because of what's happening now with Wailuku Water Company. You know, it flows, it doesn't flow, they opened the flood gates and it gets wasted, it goes down to Kealia Pond, but...but the cost is going to be, I think, the big...and so when you're talking about hooking up to it, is that going to take another pump station to hook up to it or is it close enough to...

MR. PAHIA: Yeah, because what he's going to have to...I'm not sure how his distribution system works from the wells, all the way out, because that's his last point of distribution, is out to that wastewater facility...I mean, you know, the sewage facility.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Right.

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MR. PAHIA: But...so we will have to tap into that water source right there, where that ends, and then bring it over to the farm.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay. Because I know when Maalaea was considered, I don't know if they still are, but they were looking at two pump stations to get it from the Maalaea condos to his...you know, take their waste up to his wastewater treatment facility. And then I wasn't sure how the water was...what the...but the cost...you're anticipating that the cost to get it from the wastewater treatment facility to the farm is going to be borne by the farmers?

MR. PAHIA: Correct.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay. So you're going to need some kind of system...

MS. ALVARADO: And also, Councilwoman King, the reason that we're bringing that project finance expert is that he's had to solve problems like this, and had to...we've been able to identify sources of revenue, you know. And there's going to be so many constraints that where, for us we want to, of course, cover our costs because we also have to consider operation and maintenance. So we're thinking about the long term, and that...that...our chief financial officer will help us with those things. One thing that we did that that was very creative is when we were at the international development bank is we did something called transition assistance, where we bought...when we were paying for the infrastructure for different cities and different other entities along the U.S.-Mexico border, we had grant funding that was subsidizing it over a period of years so that it wasn't an impact shock in all, you know, for the cost. And so we may probably pursue something like that, but I'm not sure. You know, we have to look at what the costs are, and what our sources and uses of funds are. And unfortunately, in the era of COVID, much more difficult to expect people to take money out of their pocket when they have no cash flow. So we have to like really front end it, you know, from as cheap as possible, and I have to be very good at coalescing, you know, international, you know, funds, and you know, grant funds from, you know, investors and things like that. So we're looking at a wide variety of how we finance this to try make it as inexpensive as possible, especially in the initial years of operation.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Right. So the 3 million...the budget you showed us was to get started.

MS. ALVARADO: That's right.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: It doesn't include, like, building your food hub and a commercial kitchen and all that.

MS. ALVARADO: Well, it's a study. Really, it's just a study, and we want to start like, you know, for us, hiring the local accountants and lawyers and architects and engineers, you know, that starts to infuse money into our economy. Also, the farmers are in desperate need of workforce. And so again, we can put some farm hands, you know,

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and you know, maybe help farmers with the cost of production to hiring people. And I'll tell you, Bobby and...and...and Juanita are doing this all by themselves. They have a huge farm. They could certainly use some labor. And so we want to start to put people back to work by doing this, and then just build in that synergy. So yes, this will get us started. The toughest thing to do with infrastructure and capital improvements are getting the feasibility studies. The first roadblock is the environmental assessment because nobody else will look at our project until we have that environmental assessment done. Now, we're lucky, I have all the studies that Mike Atherton did, so that's a start. We're not starting from ground zero, but we still have to have the same analysis, you know, not as deep as an environmental impact statement, but an EA/community planning process has to be done first. And then that's like the dam that breaks open and helps us to start to leverage whatever money we get from Maui County, showing that there is other investment besides other funders. So that's what we have to show.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay, I just have one more question.

MS. ALVARADO: Yes, ma'am.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: You know those plants you have on your property.. that are...they're in rows that divide up sections, they look kind of purplish? Everybody keeps asking me what they are, and I have to keep telling them they're not on our land. So can you tell me once and for all what those are so I can tell people?

MR. PAHIA: Sure, that was brought in by HC&S, I don't know, for some studies they were doing with different varieties of cane. So that...the name of that is called Bana grass.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Oh, that's Bana grass. Oh, okay.

MR. PAHIA: B-A-N-A...Bana grass and it's part of the Napier grass family.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay. Now I know what to tell people when they ask me what those purple things are.

MS. ALVARADO: What are those purple plants?

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Well, good luck on everything, and I'm really...I'm serious, if you guys want help...if you're even thinking that maybe you could fit a rendering operation in there, I would love to talk to you about that because I think that's one major environmental issue that we're missing.

MS. ALVARADO: Okay. Well, I mean, you know, again, I just...I'm like the side...the side act, and Bobby's the principal, and he makes those decisions. So I'll say yes if he says yes, you know.

MR. PAHIA: If it's something well needed, we'll...

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MS. ALVARADO: I'm the technical person that helps him to put these things together, but he's really the brains of the group, okay.

MR. PAHIA: You know, I just want to address that a little further, Kelly. You know, that kind of...that kind of issue that needs to be addressed, it is something that we got to tackle because it definitely brings a value to the community, right, environmentally. And if we can learn how to repurpose these renderings --

MS. ALVARADO: That would be amazing.

MR. PAHIA: -- if we can leverage that to our benefit, I think that would be very beneficial for the community, and as well as the farmers. Because as you know, a lot of the...the innards, the bone, everything, you can repurpose that by composting it and making it useful to grow more food.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: That's right. Local fertilizer. Okay, let's talk later.

MR. PAHIA: Okay, thanks.

MS. ALVARADO: Great.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Member King. Members, any other questions for our panelists?

MS. ALVARADO: I just want to mention one other...oh, my apologies. Can I just mention one thing?

CHAIR SINENCI: Yeah, we want to...okay. We're going to...we've got a couple more questions and then Annie you can...so we'll have Mr. Molina, Chair Lee, and then Member Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess first for Mr. Pahia, thank you for, you know, sharing your mana'o with us. And you bring back, conjure up so much good memories for me when you talk about kalo because I can remember for many of us, when we were younger, kalo was so commonplace around the household, you know, poi. But now, as times changed, as Hawai'i became more connected to the rest of the world, a lot of folks' diets changed to more processed foods. And I don't know, if maybe because kalo became a little bit more expensive, that may have been some reasons why people are not eating as much kalo. Because the food benefit from kalo, as you know, is so beneficial. And any thoughts as how we can expand the production of kalo to the point where we can, you know, feed a lot of other folks as well, and making it somewhat, I guess, affordable. Because, you know, over the years, poi sure went up in price, yeah. So I know at the same time too, you want the farmers to make some money too, to keep them in that business. So it's kind of a difficult balancing act. Any thoughts on that, Mr. Pahia?

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MR. PAHIA: Yes. You know, that was always been my goal, is when we first starting growing kalo, that was the very reason why I really got into it, because poi was too expensive. Our local people cannot even afford to eat poi. Our native food, we cannot even afford to eat that? Now that's nuts. So when...okay, so we've got to look at the price of the commodity, right. Now, when you break it down to people like, you know, my deal is trying to get poi on your table as least expensive as possible. And the only way that we can sustain a farmer, right...like okay, I'll use taro, for example. The only way you can sustain my price per pound, right, is that if you want to eat poi, you're going to have to put a little effort into it. You either going to have to kui it, make it yourself, or get a grinder, grind it yourself. Because if I sell you a taro for \$3 a pound, okay, guys will flip out because like, whoa, brah, that's too expensive. But the deal is, you've gotta...we have to have the ability not to shortchange the farmer because the cost of production is not the same as it was long time ago, okay. So what the pivot is to teach people how to make your own. Because if you buy a pound of taro from me for \$3, I know that if you process it you going make at least one and a half to two pounds of poi. That means that bag poi you bought was \$1.50, but you had to throw a little bit sweat inside there. So that's the only way we can offset that without robbing the farmer. It's just a matter of educating people, right. Bringing them into the fold, and letting them know how it all pans out, and how I can get poi to your table. Because when I was growing up, everywhere I went, Tutu's house, Uncle's house, Auntie's house, everybody, you go to the kitchen get a big bowl poi, that's automatic. Now, you don't see that no more. You're lucky if you get poi when you go to one party or something. Because of the cost, what you're saying. And I'm a big advocate of getting poi or taro on your table at a lowest cost possible.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: I really appreciate that. And, you know, of course, I remember the taro with butter, and it was like candy to add on top of that so, yeah. But yeah, you know, it's the sweat equity, if you will...if it can save you some money, I think that's a good approach, and probably tastes more ono when you make it yourself too, or maybe, you know, more appreciation for it, yeah. Thank you.

MR. PAHIA: Guarantee, yeah. Yeah, more fresh.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: More fresh.

MR. PAHIA: You put your sweat inside there, more ono. And you know what, if you want to take it further, if I can help you grow your own, right. If you no more land, you come down my farm, you can plant so you can go feed your family. So that's the other aspect I didn't talk about in what we're doing down there, we're creating a huge community farm where we're going to include all the community to come down, participate, grow food, take home food, you know, get dirty, and be a part of the solution, that's the biggest thing. That you are a part of the solution now, right, and that's where we're going to bring value to our community, I feel.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Great. Mahalo, Mr. Pahia. Mr. Chair, if I can ask Ms. Alvarado just one quick question?

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CHAIR SINENCI: Sure.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Ms. Alvarado, thank you for your insight. And I know in a past conversation you and I had--now, correct me if I'm wrong--you were in Arizona, and you were an appointee--was it of the Obama Administration in some Federal capacity?

MS. ALVARADO: Yeah, I worked as a national policy writer for Bill Clinton.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Oh, okay.

MS. ALVARADO: I was offered the opportunity to work for Obama at the Treasury Department, but I didn't want to go back to Washington. It was terrible, right. But you know, we had already purchased our house in Maui, we were like already driving over the ocean to come to Maui, and so it was just...the timing wasn't good. But I also served for Governor Napolitano and also, very early in my career, I served with...for Mark White, which was one of the last democratic governors...governors in Texas. It was quite a while ago.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Okay. Well, thank you. I appreciate your ideas and your insight on all of this on how we can make this happen here in Maui County. So definitely, I appreciate your presentation.

MS. ALVARADO: Well, I'm learning a lot. I learn a lot from everybody here, let me tell you. Because it's...you really...people are very resourceful here, and they improvise in an amazing way. So it goes both ways, let me tell you.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Great. Okay, thank you very much. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Member Molina. Chair Lee, you had a question.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Question for Annie. On the budget, you talked about...it was about a \$3 million budget, right?

MS. ALVARADO: Um-hum.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: The \$3 million, I think I heard you say, that this was just like a start-up budget, right?

MS. ALVARADO: Right.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: And...but most of that budget, I think it was like \$2.3 million, would be consumed by payment for studies?

MS. ALVARADO: Correct.

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COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Like an EIS or something like that.

MS. ALVARADO: Right. It's an environmental...there are environmental assessment studies we have to do, water and sewer studies, we have to do studies for the Broadband. Because everything has to be engineered and designed before we can pursue funding. And for the slaughterhouse, there is...there is also a study that needs to be done for the sewer, that is the pre-treatment. There's also a need for an architect to design the kitchens. And again, you know, every special capital improvement has...requires a study. And so that's the way...and the good news is that we're starting to get people...we have one that...offer from USDA to come to visit with us and possibly do a feasibility study for the slaughterhouse. So we're already starting, but nobody is going to touch this until we have the environmental assessment done. That's really the cornerstone. And the other ones, you know, it's...it'll give us a leg up in terms of how quick we can move if we can get the studies going. But I also don't want to say that we can do this all at once. I mean, especially if we're looking at CARES Act or stimulus funding, we have to look at the bites that make sense for us to complete within the time frame that we have to spend the funds. And so I've already thought about that plan. I've got it phased, but honestly, it would be nice if we could just have it all, and just get it done in the next two or three years, you know, because the studies will take some time, especially...

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. So would you also...would you also need any kind of land use approvals, like a conditional use permit, or a special use permit?

MS. ALVARADO: Yes. You know, and for the...I think we will need probably permits for conducting business there, and the community planning process and architect would be the ones that could help us, the EA, the community planning process, are the ones that actually pull the permits because they have all the information. So all that is already built into all this. And yes...so the answer is yes...probably, I'm sure, because we're changing the uses. We're creating manufacturing where it doesn't exist. Now, we have the ability to do agriculture, so that's the most liberal capability, but I don't want to tell you that I'm confident we don't need permits because that's...as soon as I say that, you know it's not true.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay. So I'm not sure who said this, whether it was Bobby or you, but did you say earlier that you're converting your business into a nonprofit organization?

MS. ALVARADO: No, we're having both...Bobby's...the goal here is to make the farmer successful, right, and to help serve our community, address food security. Now, we don't want the farmers to lose their profitability, you know. Hopefully what we're doing by selling both to the social service agencies, that increases their...their market, right. Right there, right away, by serving our community, we'll raise the funds eventually, you know, with United Way, everybody, we could probably hold events, fundraiser events that are at the farm at that time, you know, outdoor, whatever, whatever we have to do, we'll figure it out. But we want the farmers to be farmers.

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And when the economy comes back, we want them to have the ability to go and work for the private sector, and then also have this, no matter in what economy there is. There is this protection of feeding our community nutritious food, and also having a constant market for these farmers. And how it looks, you know, to incorporate other things, all I can say is that I don't have the crystal ball today, but to me, I've said...we've said all over our proposal that we want to collaborate, and we want to engage with the community.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Okay, one last question, Annie. Did you see the previous presentation by the hub, Maui Hub?

MS. ALVARADO: Yes. Yes. Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Are you building something similar to that, or like will you be in competition with that group, or are you building something separate.

MS. ALVARADO: Well, I think that...go ahead, Bobby. You want to answer that, Bobby?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: You're going to build your own hub, right?

MR. PAHIA: Yeah. The reason the facility to house a food hub came up because I knew there was a need, number one. Now, I'm personally not trying to create this food hub because I want to manage it. I know there's a need in the community. And someone like maybe...perhaps the Maui Food Hub, they're looking for something. It just seems that it's...it's an appropriate time to leverage the resources that are available, which will benefit the greater community, whether it be Maui Food Hub, whether it be someone else who operates a food hub aggregating distributing system. I'm not doing this to, like, I want to run a food hub business. I know there's a need in the community. We have the resources, let's leverage these resources, and make it happen. Now, whether Maui Food Hub at that time needs a place, I don't know. We've got to cross that bridge when that happens. But I know there's that need.

MS. ALVARADO: And I know that our farmers...our farmers have also expressed the desire to have a food hub for their own processes as well. So I mean, I don't know why it wouldn't be possible to aggregate from different places, right?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: No, that's good. Yeah. Collaboration, right.

MS. ALVARADO: That's right.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Thank you very much. Good luck to you.

MS. ALVARADO: Thank you.

MR. PAHIA: Thank you.

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CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Chair Lee. Next we have a question from Member Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Couple if it's okay, Chair. So my first question, I know we...we went over the slaughterhouse a lot. I just was wondering, is it mobile or stationary?

MS. ALVARADO: No...Bobby, you want to answer that?

MR. PAHIA: Sure. You know, when we first went down this road, we were thinking of something what they call a permanent mobile form model of slaughter facility. But for the capacity that we are trying to address, it's no sense we invest in a permanent mobile facility. We might as well go for a brick and mortar facility because we'll have greater capacity. And when I say greater capacity, I know a question came up...came up earlier. Are we going to have the capacity to include bringing value to the community, meaning that the community will have access to a slaughter facility? So we're taking everything into account, and that's why we need the engineering, that's why we got Joseph Realdine on, and he's really our guiding light. He's a former USDA health inspector, you know, so he knows all the rules. And so it's just a matter of us figuring out, okay, how much do I need to slaughter every week. And then now, if we add the capacity of the community, then that's the size of the facility that we got to...we got to build. Because it's no sense we do something that is going to be temporary when we're already beyond that capacity.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And then I guess a follow up to that is would you only be slaughtering hogs, or are you...does it matter if you only slaughter one species, or...

MR. PAHIA: Yes, it does. It does. And we've investigated and did that homework in that area. You cannot do like hogs and beef, cattle. There are certain parameters you've got to work within, depending on what you're slaughtering. So let's say we wanted to take care of the axis deer problem, and we need hunters to have a place to come and legally do it. Well, then we got to take that into consideration, and consider the capacity we're going to need to address that. Because really, yeah, we want to address our concerns, you know, within our farm, but again, we always keep that at the forefront that whatever we're doing has to build value in our community, and that's being inclusive. So as we go down this road, we design our program, you know, using larger parameters to address community concerns because we need that. I mean, you know, we've got Maui Cattle Company, hey, that's great, but I don't know if they're taking outside guys to slaughter. You know what I mean. So then you've got Decoite's. And, you know, talk about rendering, they've got rendering issues crazy. But yeah, that's something that, you know, it's...it's just an opportunity to leverage this, the location of this property for the benefit of the community. If we can keep and maintain that mindset, then I think we'll be going down the right road together, hand in hand.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And my last question is kind of just a for me personal question. You know, when you were speaking about sourcing, I used to have worms, but there was this dry period and they died. And I just was wondering if you had any ideas like,

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you know, selling worm kits or just worms, Christmas is coming up, you know, like promote the whole composting idea, low smell.

MR. PAHIA: Yeah, that's a...that's great. You know, we're really excited about the kind of farmers we've got there. I got a bunch of young farmers over there, they're just like, you know, they're totally...they're different. This new young breed of farmers. They're more conscious.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Give worms to couple of your friends for Christmas.

MR. PAHIA: Yeah, they're way more conscious environmentally, you know, because of the information age.

MS. ALVARADO: Yes.

MR. PAHIA: So I'm excited about how our youth is coming up and how they're thinking, right. So it's great. We have a guy down there that does...that's...what he does is just strictly composting and worm casting. Then, you know, we have another person that just specializes in making compost teas. You know, it's just a good group of people specializing in areas that bring forth life in the land. And you know, I always say this guys, Ua Mau ke Ea o ka 'Āina i ka Pono, right. May the life of the land be perpetuated. I literally take that. May the life of the land, the 'āina, right, the life, the microbiology, the biology in our 'āina, which I'm trying to bring back on all these cane lands. As we all know, man, these lands have been decimated by, you know, their practices. So it's a challenge for me, but also, it's a model that I can bring forth to the greater community that perhaps maybe farming or one day farm on, you know, destitute lands that have been basically raped. You know, it's like okay, here, here's the land that was...for 144 years got nailed, and this is what we got to do to bring it back. So it's like, it gives us so much opportunity, the diversity, the areas of concern, it can be basically aggregated on this piece of property to address all of these concerns. So yeah...

MS. ALVARADO: If I may also...excuse me, Bobby. You know, I always think about all these people that are going to be driving by, you know, using that road to get to and from, you know, across the island. And I think retail opportunities are pretty, you know, going to be pretty strong there. And what a great place to focus on selling our local products, right. Our value added products that other people on the island are creating. So, you know, I don't know how much space we can dedicate to that, but it sure can be like an open farmer's market or fashioned like a You-Pick, so...you know. As Bobby mentioned, these young kids that are farmers have all these brilliant ideas about how to sell and market and just...I mean, I think they just bring an energy that's really going to do something. It's going to make this a really special place where everybody will feel welcomed.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: And if the kits could be made out of like repurposed materials, even better.

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MS. ALVARADO: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Let me know, I'm down to buy your first worms.

MS. ALVARADO: Well, you know what, you should come down and visit with Winsome, you know, because you should see her repurposed hale, it's amazing. You know, all of you, you should come down and see because it's just really special.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Like visit.

MS. ALVARADO: Yeah. It really is, it's an amazing place. I love going to the farm. Love it. Absolutely love it. It's a pure joy. It really is.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Mr. Pahia and Ms. Alvarado.

MS. ALVARADO: Thank you.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Member Paltin. And yes, Member...oh, we have Member Sugimura.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: I guess one obvious question, but in all of this...because you're trying to do all the infrastructure. So where is Michael Atherton on that? Because he sounds...I mean, he used to do the same thing as you, right?

MR. PAHIA: Yeah. You know, I was real fortunate. It took me about ten years to create a relationship with him, you know, get to know him well, and him get to know me well. And one thing I noticed about Mr. Atherton, Mike, he'll give you a chance to kind of reveal your character and your integrity. And if you blow it one time, you're out of the picture. And, you know, I was fortunate enough that I created a great rapport with him. Him and I get along great. I brought this project to him before I even talked to anybody because I needed his support. And, you know, he's in full support. I'm just so thankful that, you know, he believes...he believes in me and he believes in the project and lately, he told me, Bobby, whatever you need from me to make things happen, I'm there. So, you know, that's saying a lot from him, you know, let's just say he's unique. I won't use the word peculiar, I'll say unique.

MS. ALVARADO: Oh, you just used it.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: One of a kind, right? Coach.

MR. PAHIA: Yeah. So we're very fortunate. The other alliance that has bent over backwards to work with us to make this happen was, of course, the Executive Director of, you know, Hawaiian Island Land Trust. And, you know, I told him about the project, what we want to do and, you know, they told me okay. The Land Trust needs to operate within certain parameters, that means you do. So as long as you...you have proper

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protocols in place as you move forward then, you know, it's just about a communication, confirming and, you know, if you have that kind of dialogue, things can happen. So I'm really thankful for those.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Yeah.

MR. PAHIA: I got Councilmember Kelly King and Bob King over there next to me, I mean, you know, they come over and help us when we need help and, you know, likewise, whenever I can help them, you know, I'll go over, you know, bend over whatever I can do, and it's a great working relationship. It's a great agricultural community we've got down there. It's something special. And I think we need to leverage that land, especially it's going to be, you know, managed by the Hawaiian Island Land Trust. We need to leverage that. We need to leverage our natural resources, water especially, and it's going to take all of us to...to leverage this, this effort. Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Exciting. So good job.

MR. PAHIA: I want to thank you, Councilmember Sugimura, for bringing our...you know, what we're trying to do to the rest of the Council. I thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: And I will tell you, Bobby, the day that your project popped up on my computer, it was a Saturday, and I downloaded it, I read it, and I think I called you and Annie. And I will tell you that because your name was on it, I thought, this has a lot of credibility to start. So thank you very much.

MR. PAHIA: Oh, thank you. Thank you so much.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: I'm very sincere about that. Thank you.

MR. PAHIA: Thank you.

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay. Mahalo, Member Sugimura. Members, we have one more item to consider before the day's meeting over. Ms. King, did you have a...

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Yeah, I have a quick question, and thank you for invoking me, Bobby. I always call it Roberts of Maui, because there's Bob King, Bobby Pahia, and Robert Mata on the other side. So...but no, I just wondered if you...since you brought up Mike Atherton, are you going to be able to extend your...have an extended lease, like a 30-year lease go from the ten years? Because what you're talking about is, I think, a long-term proposition.

MR. PAHIA: Yes. I'm glad you brought that up. Thank you. Currently, you know, I...they gave me a 30-year lease. And what I've been...what I've learned through this process is being patient because I have to wait for that right opportunity. When that window opens, that's when I need to move. And that window is going to be...is going to be paramount on when the Hawaiian Island Land Trust takes over as far as management.

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Because now, my plan is to go and see Mike and Albert and, you know, the owners and ask for a 100-year lease.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Oh, okay.

MR. PAHIA: The reason I feel that...that that's...that could be appropriate, and I know I brought this up in the first meeting that I got before the Council and, you know, Councilmember Hokama, he commented on that, and he said, you know, good luck. And I thank him for saying that because it's all about timing, you know, to go in for that...that extended lease. Because we've got to eliminate the risk factor, the liability factor away from, you know, Mike and Larry and Albert. And if I can prove to them that they have no risk and their...the liability is very low, and if we have the community behind this project, then I think I can paint a picture of low risk for them and liability wise. And I'm...

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Okay. Well, that's great because, yeah, I think it's going to be critical for funding too. So it's good to know that you have longevity. So good plan.

MR. PAHIA: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: I'll vouch for me. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo, Member King. Okay, Members, we did want to mahalo Mr. Pahia and Ms. Alvarado for joining us today --

MR. PAHIA: Thank you.

CHAIR SINENCI: -- and presenting their agriculture plans. You know, when we consider Mr. Pahia, you know, he has dedicated his life to...to mahi'ai. And so I'd like to continue to access his mana'o and his experience, as well as Ms. Alvarado's experience with funding opportunities as we move forward to expanding our agriculture sector. So with that, the Chair will entertain a motion to recommend Hawai'i Taro Farm, LLC and County Communication 20-451 be referred to the Council Chair for the term beginning January 2nd, 2021 pursuant to Rule 23 of the Rules of the Council.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: So moved.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: Second.

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay. So it's been moved by Member Sugimura and seconded by Member King. Okay. All in favor, please raise your right hand and say "aye".

COUNCILMEMBER KING: It has to be your right hand?

CHAIR SINENCI: Any hand. Okay, it looks...okay, so we've got six "ayes", no "noes", and one excused. Thank you, the motion passes.

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VOTE: AYES: Chair Sinenci, Councilmembers King, Lee, Molina, Paltin, and Sugimura.

NOES: None.

ABSTAIN: None.

ABSENT: None.

EXC.: Vice-Chair Kama.

MOTION CARRIED.

ACTION: REFERRAL of communication to the Council Chair for the term beginning January 2, 2021.

CHAIR SINENCI: Thank you, Members. And mahalo, Mr. Pahia and Ms. Alvarado again for being here and we look forward to working with you in 2021.

MR. PAHIA: Thank you.

MS. ALVARADO: Thank you so much for everything, so appreciative. And especially, thank you for what you guys do, it's amazing. Okay, all of you.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo.

MS. ALVARADO: Thank you.

MR. PAHIA: Mahalo nui. Aloha.

CHAIR SINENCI: Aloha.

**COMMUNICATIONS FOR REFERRAL TO THE COUNCIL CHAIR
FOR THE 2021-2023 COUNCIL TERM**

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay, Members, we have one more item. The Chair has posted two communications for referral to the Council Chair for the term beginning January 2nd, 2021 in accordance with Rule 23 of the Rules of the Council. As a reminder, a request can be made to remove items from the discretionary referral list, but at this point, no items can be added. If you have an item on the discretionary referral list, I welcome a discussion of what your plan is for the item, and we'll work to schedule it at your convenience. If there is an EACP item that will auto-file at the end of the term you would like to instead be referred to the new Council, please submit a PAF to OCS, and they will assist you in posting the item or items on the December 18th, 2020 Council

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meeting agenda for consideration. Please keep in mind that any filed item can be reintroduced in the next term. With that, so we have EACP-35 Review of Special Management Area Permit Enforcement, and EACP-57 the Water Use and Development Plan for Maui. So if there are no questions, the Chair will entertain a motion to recommend the two of the Committee Communications listed on the agenda be referred to the Council Chair for the term beginning January 2nd, 2021 pursuant to Rule 23 of the Rules of the Council.

COUNCILMEMBER KING: So moved.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: . . .*(raised hand)*. . .

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Second.

CHAIR SINENCI: So it's been moved by Member King, seconded by Member Sugimura. All in favor raise your hand and say "aye".

COUNCILMEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR SINENCI: Okay, so I see six "ayes", no "noes", and one excused, Member Kama. Motion passes.

VOTE: **AYES:** **Chair Sinenci, Councilmembers King, Lee, Molina, Paltin, and Sugimura.**

NOES: **None.**

ABSTAIN: **None.**

ABSENT: **None.**

EXC.: **Vice-Chair Kama.**

MOTION CARRIED.

ACTION: **REFERRAL of communications to the Council Chair for the term beginning January 2, 2021.**

CHAIR SINENCI: Thank you, Members.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: So Mr. Sinenci, I have a question.

CHAIR SINENCI: 'Ae, yes.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: The item number that's the Water Use Development Plan, of course, is also in the WIT Committee for Maui.

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CHAIR SINENCI: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: So your aspect of it is going to relate to...you're going to talk about it for the cultural aspect of it, right? Because it's passing out of my Committee, correct?

CHAIR SINENCI: Correct.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Okay. I just wanted to be sure.

CHAIR SINENCI: Thank you, Member Sugimura.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Thank you.

CHAIR SINENCI: Oh, we have one more question from Member Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I just had a question, like if we talk about the cultural aspect in this Committee, and the...I guess the other aspects in the other Committee, are the two of you guys gonna hui up together at some point --

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: I think...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: -- to come back to it?

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: If I could?

CHAIR SINENCI: Go ahead, Member Sugimura.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: I think the way that...because that question came up. And the way that it'll come together is that things from this Committee, the cultural aspect, will be sent over to the...to my Committee because it has the whole water use development plan in it, and then that's how it'll merge, but he needs to refer it over. So just recently, like this...I asked him where is he on his because I want us to kind of be in sync, you know. Maybe it's not that important, but I think at some point, we are going to have to do exactly what you said. So he and I are keeping in touch just so that we can, you know, work together.

CHAIR SINENCI: And we also...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: So would I...oh.

CHAIR SINENCI: Oh, go ahead.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: What I did so far, I got like maybe 20, 30 pages deep. And then I bundled all my questions, and I sent it to both of your Committees, and then I got

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response back from Ms. Blumenstein. I don't know if she sent the response to your Committee, but it satisfied my purposes.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Oh, thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: She said if...they were mostly, I think, like kind of surface level for my own understanding, but she said if I go like deep into it, then I might need to route it through the Department or someone else. But it was just mostly kind of not really deep kind of questioning, just for my own understanding. And I didn't finish through the whole Lahaina section...Lahaina aquifer sector yet.

COUNCILMEMBER SUGIMURA: Okay, so that...you sent it over to WIT and...as well as the EACP, this item. Okay. Thank you. Thank you very much.

CHAIR SINENCI: Mahalo for that, Member Paltin. Any other questions? Members, thank you for staying on with us a little longer than expected, but with that, that brings us to the end of our agenda. Thank you, Members. Mahalo to the Administration and resource people today. It is 4:43 p.m., Tuesday, December 1st, and this EACP meeting is now adjourned. . . .(gavel). . .

ADJOURN: 4:43 p.m.

APPROVED:



SHANE M. SINENCI, Chair
Environmental, Agricultural, and Cultural
Preservation Committee

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CERTIFICATION

I, Terianne Arreola, hereby certify that pages 1 through 60 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 28th day of December 2020, in Wailuku, Hawai'i

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terianne Arreola', is written over a horizontal line.

Terianne Arreola