

INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
Council of the County of Maui

MINUTES

June 27, 2022

Online Via BlueJeans

CONVENE: 9:02 a.m.

PRESENT: VOTING MEMBERS:

Councilmember Yuki Lei K. Sugimura, Chair
Councilmember Tasha Kama, Vice-Chair
Councilmember Alice L. Lee
Councilmember Michael J. Molina
Councilmember Tamara Paltin
Councilmember Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez (in 9:13 a.m.)

EXCUSED: VOTING MEMBERS:

Councilmember Kelly Takaya King

STAFF:

Laksmi Abraham, Legislative Analyst
Lesley Milner, Legislative Analyst
James Forrest, Legislative Attorney
Jocelyn Moniz, Committee Secretary
Lenora Dinneen, Council Services Assistant Clerk
Jean Pokipala, Council Services Assistant Clerk

Mavis Oliveira-Medeiros, Council Aide, Hana District Office.
Denise Fernandez, Council Aide, Lanai District Office
Zhantell Lindo, Council Aide, Molokai District Office
Daniel Kanahele, Council Aide, South Maui District Office

Evan Dust, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Tasha Kama
Davideane Kama-Sickels, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Tasha Kama
Lois Whitney, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Tasha Kama
Axel Beers, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Kelly Takaya King
Ellen McKinley, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Kelly Takaya King
Sarah Sexton, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Kelly Takaya King
Laura McDowell, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Michael J. Molina
Kainoa Kaumeheiwa-Rego, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez
Sarah Pajimola, Executive Assistant to Councilmember Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez

ADMIN.:

Stephanie Chen, Deputy Corporation Counsel, Department of the Corporation Counsel
Lori Tsuhako, Deputy Director, Department of Housing and Human

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Concerns

OTHERS: Dr. Kyle Caires, University of Hawaii Maui Campus and Maui County Farm Bureau
Susie Thieman, Executive Director, Lokahi Pacific

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

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . .*(gavel)*. . . Good morning, everybody. Welcome to the Infrastructure and Transportation Committee meeting. Today is June 27th, and it is now 9:02 a.m. Welcome to the meeting today. And I look forward to this meeting because we're going to be talking about one of my favorite subjects which is the axis deer, feral animal, Kula Ag Park, and how we're finding solutions, which is the exciting part. Welcome. And I want to first call on our Chair Alice Lee to give us our greeting. Good morning, Chair Lee.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Good morning, Chair Sugimura. Yes, I know it's one of your favorite subjects that we're going to be discussing today, and that's why I could barely sleep last night. I was so excited. Looking forward to talking about feral animals and deer. By the way, the deer leave all their droppings all over the golf course, you know? So anyway, this morning, the greeting is salaam alaikum, salaam alaikum from West Africa, and it means peace be upon you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: I'm home alone in my workspace for your meeting, and then I'll be back in the building this afternoon. Looking forward to your meeting. Thanks.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Salaam alaikum. Wow, okay. They're at the golf course too?

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Oh.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: I don't know how you clean up that. Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: No, you just step over it.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . .*(laughing)*. . . Gross. They're at the Makawao Mortuary, Veterans Mortuary too. I got a concern from a veteran. Good morning. So next we have Vice-Chair for this Committee, Tasha Kama. Good morning, Tasha.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Aloha kakahiaka, Chair, and salaam alaikum to all of my...oh...alaikum.

COUNCILMEMBER LEE: Kum.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Oh, thank you, Chair. And peace be upon you, my colleagues, and all those out in *Akakū* land. I am here in my workplace in my home, and Lena and her

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caregiver are in the other room. And good morning, everyone. And, yes, I'm looking forward to this...our topics for today that are very endearing to my heart. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Very good. Next, we have from Upcountry, my neighbor, Councilmember Mike Molina. Was nice seeing you at the Korean War Veteran Candlelight Service yesterday, the true veteran that was there. Good morning, Mr. Molina.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Good morning, and aloha, and salaam alaikum, Madam Chair, and my colleagues, and everyone else tuning in for our meeting today. Yes, looking forward to a very exciting meeting. And, of course, I'd like to find out what the latest count is courtesy of you, Madam Chair, how many deer are patrolling our fields and everywhere else here on Maui. But anyway, I'm here at the Pā'ia District Office accompanied by District Office Specialist Anabelle Hernandez, and there are no testifiers. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you, Member Molina. Next, we have from West Maui, Tamara Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Salaam alaikum kākou and aloha kakahiaka. Broadcasting live and direct from rainy old Hilo town where it's raining. No surprise. With me I have my parents eating breakfast, Mildred and Samuel Paltin. And we have no testifiers at the district office. And big mahalo to Makawao District Office Staff, Anabelle, for the drink at the airport. Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: The what at the airport? I'm sorry.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I ran into them at the airport.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh. . . .*(laughing)*. . . Nice seeing you and thank you for making the time. And I'm glad you're there taking care of your parents, Tamara. It is always the right thing to do, so appreciate, you know, your good values. We have excused...Kelly King is not here, I guess she's still on her family trip. And I...Keani Rawlins-Fernandez is excused from the meeting...or she will be coming. All right. So we have quorum to continue. Non-Voting Members who are welcome to join us are Shane Sinenci and Gabe Johnson. And from the Department of Corporation Counsel, Stephanie Chen is my Corp. Counsel person. Office of the Mayor, I'm expecting JoAnn Inamasu, Director of Economic Development, which she has input for both items on the agenda. Director of Housing and Human Concerns Lori Tshako, who is the Director, and who took care of the grants that ran through her Department, and I would like to hear an update if she has any. Other outside resource persons, we have Susie Thieman--and she's actually here with us in person, so thank you, Susie--from Lokahi Pacific. And she'll be talking to us about the \$1.5 million grant and what's...oh, about it in general and its launch. Jeff Bagshaw, Information Specialist, State of Hawai'i, Department of Land and Natural Resources was invited. Dr. Kyle Caires, Extension Animal Scientist, University of Hawai'i Maui College and President of the Maui County Farm Bureau, as well as...and watching over the Kula Ag Park, and he's a Committee Chair for that. Lance De Silva,

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who is not going to be with us today, Maui Division of Forestry Wildlife Manager, State Department of Land and Natural Resources. He was designated as the resource person for us by Dr. Scott Fretz, but Lance De Silva informed me over the weekend that he is not feeling well and will not join us. But he did send a lot of detailed information about the Kula Ag Park fencing project, which I sent over to JoAnn Inamasu, and she must already have it. Committee Staff, thank you very much for your hard work. I guess we have Jocelyn Moniz today as Clarita Balala is on vacation; Laks Abraham, Lesley Milner, James Forrest, Lei Dinneen is Council Services Assistant Clerk; thank you very much, all of you, for making today's meeting possible, all the hard work that you do. Do we have any testifiers?

. . . BEGIN PUBLIC TESTIMONY . . .

MS. ABRAHAM: Chair, we have no testifiers at the moment.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you. So I'm going to skip that portion, but I will say that we will receive any written testimony that has been submitted. And I think we've gotten written testimony from Susie Thieman from Lokahi Pacific, which...Members, you may be interested in when we talk about it. And so we're going to close public testimony, receive any written testimony, and...without any objections, Members.

COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS. (Excused: KTK and KRF)

. . . END OF PUBLIC TESTIMONY . . .

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much. So the first item...I have two items on my agenda today, and both of them I will be deferring because I'm...it's basically to provide us more information on the subject area. Feral Animal Management on Maui, IT-52; and Ag...Kula Ag Park Overview and Expansion, IT-32, on the...the Committee may receive an update related to potential solutions for axis deer management in Maui County and discuss related matters, and no legislative action will be taken.

IT-52 FERAL ANIMAL MANAGEMENT ON MAUI (CC 20-140)

CHAIR SUGIMURA: And so at this time, I would like to know if I could...oh, I'll give you some introduction. Members, at our September 13, 2021, we began discussion on how the axis deer overpopulation has become a growing concern in our community. Axis deer are overwhelming residential and business properties, destroying crops, and damaging property and landscape. At the urging of State and local legislators, the Governor offered an emergency proclamation to continue to enable Government agencies to provide emergency relief, engage in emergency management functions, and implement deer management strategies...that is currently set to expire on July 22nd. Emergency proclamations...I think this is his third emergency proclamation to assist with this growing problem. Also, the Axis Deer Task Force was formed last September in partnership with Mayor Victorino, bringing together representatives from County, State,

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and Federal Governments, as well as the farming and ranching communities. The Task Force has been working to manage and control the axis deer problem while working to find additional funding and other resources to assist in addressing the issue. The Task Force has been working on short and long-term mitigation efforts, and conducted research to foster a better understanding of the myriad problems caused by deer overpopulation. Today we'll receive updates from the Office of Economic Development, Director JoAnn Inamasu; Housing and Human Concerns Director Lori Tsuhako; Mr. Jeff Bagshaw, State Department of Land and Natural Resources; and Ms. Susie Thieman of Lokahi Pacific, who is managing the \$1.5 million grant...or budget amendment that was done through Mayor Victorino in this current budget year, and so we'll get an update on where that grant process is. I think this is probably going to be one of the highlights of this meeting because we're going to get everybody ready to start applying. So if there are no objections, I would like to designate Mr. Bagshaw, Ms. Thieman as resource personnel in accordance with Rule 18(A) of the Rules of the Council.

COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS. (Excused: KTK and KRF)

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much. So...do we have JoAnn Inamasu on the line? Who do we have on the line? Dr. Caires? Is JoAnn not on? I don't...when I called JoAnn, she was in the middle of a meeting.

MR. CAIRES: Kyle on deck.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Kyle, are you there? Dr. Caires?

MR. CAIRES: Yes.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So I wonder if you could give us an...I'm going to do this, get an update from you on what you see out there in the field because definitely, with CTAHR and your work with ranchers and farmers, you really see firsthand what we only read in words. So, Dr. Caires, thank you very much. If you could give us an update of the axis deer and feral animal out there.

MR. CAIRES: Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Chair. Thank you everyone. We've had a little bit of rain, and there's a little bit more forage being produced, but it's not out there for very long. It's still really bad. You know, the droughts are becoming maybe shorter in duration, but they keep becoming more and more frequent, so...which actually may be more of a...which may be more of a detriment. In a nutshell, while there are some green areas on the island, the pasture inventory is relatively low. Ranchers have been resting pastures the best they can, and the axis deer are getting in front of the cattle and basically benefiting from whatever rested forage is there. We're heading into a dry period, traditionally the first week of July is, a lot of times, when it starts. We're having kind of some later showers in June, which we normally see in April and May, which are good. But what we are seeing is these pastures that are well managed, even the most well managed pastures, there's less of a mat, there's more chinks in the armor as a result of overgrazing by the deer, and there's a natural succession where weeds are filling in those holes, the chinks in the armor, so that's really bad. From an animal

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productivity standpoint, it's getting tougher and tougher. Ranchers are weaning their calves early to give their cows more time to, you know, bounce back. This results in less value for the calves, more supplemental feed costs to build the cows back up, but also to take the calves through on pasture, wean them, and get them on a good plane of nutrition that's, you know, more dollars spent. It's a bad deal. We had a planting at the research station in Pi'iholo, another 3.8 acres, and it all came up very good. And this particular crop is a little toxic to anything grazing it until about 28 days to 30 days after planting. On day 31, you know, we had some encouraging growth and results. By day 33, it looked like somebody had tilled the fields.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Wow.

MR. CAIRES: There was no...nothing left whatsoever. A bigger concern of these axis deer to me also is the public health. Not necessarily just them being on the road and, you know, increased vehicular accidents, but these axis deer, you know, they carry parasites, they carry ailments, many of which are of...many of which that can infect cattle, and again, lead to decreased animal health. But, you know, anaplasmosis, something that was once thought to be a tick-born pathogen, can also be spread via flies. We know that deer in the mainland harbor anaplasmosis, and that anaplas [sic] can affect humans, it can affect cattle and other species. So as these deer continue to proliferate in number, there are some far-reaching and indirect effects, ramifications on human health, as well as negative effects on the agricultural industries. One of the things that we have to understand too is, you know, a lot of the survey work that's done, it's important stuff, but you know, we're not in Texas. In the mainland, you know, axis deer, the young typically don't start grazing until like five-and-a-half to six weeks of age, a month-and-a-half. Here, they're grazing at three-and-a-half, four weeks of age. Many times, you know, the axis deer in the mainland, they don't get their permanent teeth until about 3 years of age; 18 months they have their permanent teeth here. Usually the does, the females, don't even begin breeding until they're two or three and, you know, Oklahoma, Texas, and some of the places where they are. You know, we have axis deer here that are conceiving in year one of life, and giving birth between January and May as two year olds. In the mainland, you see a lot of single-born offspring. Here, especially in following, like, the fall and winter flushes that we've had following the periods of dry, we have a lot of twinning. So it's a bad thing. There's probably about 30 things to say, and 27 of them are really bad. The benefit is, you know, it is a nutritious protein supply that can, you know, go into the food system. But the effects on agriculture are really detrimental. They're denuding the landscape when we have the heavy rains as a result of their proliferating numbers and grazing activity. There's more surface erosion, you know, more of that ends up in the ocean. So we've got native flora, fauna being affected as well. Fencing seems to be working. Where the fencing is...it's not solving the problem, it is at least preventing the detrimental effects in certain areas. I'm speaking just on my own here based on what I see, but their numbers are proliferating in Ha'ikū, in Pe'ahi, West Maui, they're, you know, on the other side now. What's concerning to me is like near Camp Maluhia. And that's, like, the last line of defense going into Kahakuloa. You know, the old phrase of, you know, cutting them off at the pass, you know, I think it's really cool we have these microgrants available and, you know, farmers and ranchers can apply and maybe help, you know, install fencing,

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but a key priority area I see, for me, in terms of protecting the watershed would be fencing that Camp Maluhia area to prevent those deer from getting any deeper in Kahakuloa. Because once they get into those valleys, with the terrain, coupled with the tree legumes and the cover there, I mean, it'll literally be trying to remove needles from a haystack once they...once they get past...once they get past that. Kaupō is another hot area, and the ranches...the ranchers are beginning to do more deer fencing, which again, helps them protect their interests and their cattle and sheep operations, but I wouldn't...I mean, I wouldn't be surprised if you see some people decide, hey, we can't afford to do cattle here, and they might go to shift to do more sheep just because of the axis deer impacts.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So we're trying to challenge that. So --

MR. CAIRES: I...

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- Kyle, thank you...okay.

MR. CAIRES: The last thing that I'll add is, what's happening is these ranchers are reducing herd numbers just to get by. The generation interval on a cow is four to five years. So for them to keep a heifer, retain her, feed her, have her pregnant to where she has her first calf, that's over 24 months invested already, plus the nine months in gestation, so that's 33 months. Then it takes you another seven months to get a merchandisable calf, so that's a 40-month window in order to produce one calf off of a replacement that is retained to be a heifer. That's 40 months. If she even breeds again, you have four years invested, and you've only hit about two-thirds of the breakeven of retaining that female. So if that cow takes four calves to pay for herself, you're now looking at a 72- to 76-month window. We're getting really close to seven years...seven years to begin breaking out into profit territory for an animal that's retained today. So if you think about, you know, these farmers and ranchers, they're some of the most fiscally conservative people you can imagine, and they're operating in the biggest boom or bust, feast or famine climate we have. The infrequency of rains and the increased frequency of drought onset, coupled with the amount of groceries that these deer are consuming, I mean, it's a problem to our natural resources, it's a problem for our ranchers, and, you know, all these...for the most part...now, I've been all throughout the United States, about 40...44 states, and I've been to other countries, I've seen how agricultural practices work. Our ranchers here using so many conservation principles to build soil health, reduce erosion, improve the 'āina, manage these natural resources. And in many cases, also providing, like, really, really good wildlife habitat. Not because someone is telling them they got to do it. It's not...you know, they're just living pono already. They were doing this before that became cool, and this deer population is making it very, very hard for these individuals to make a living and perpetuate that lifestyle that keeps our islands green, keeps our soil covered, keeps our invasive species under wraps. And they're using all the practices. Yeah, something needs to...something needs to be done. I think fencing in the short-term, but there's no one silver bullet, yeah. It's got to be an integrated model where you need, you know, probably the harvesting, the depopulation, you know, fencing, and really...the wildlife management areas. There's a lot of things that maybe DLNR can speak to better than me, but it's a

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bad deal when you got the improved grazing practices being utilized, and these ranchers are running one-fifth to one-eighth of the cattle they used to 80, 90, 100 years ago. That's...to say that's a problem would be like saying a nuclear bomb was a match strike somewhere. It's really bad --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . . *(inaudible)*. . .

MR. CAIRES: -- and our farmers and ranchers are so resilient, and just...we have a few rains and things green up. When that happens it looks good, but you got to understand, there's more water now as a percentage of that forage, which means that bite for bite, there's less nutrition. It's really bad. And I want to thank the County, the Mayor's Office, the Council for helping to improve some of those programs that have been administered unto the ranchers because if it wasn't for you guys and that support, we'd be even down more individuals in the industry than we are now. So, yeah, thank you guys for all of your support.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Thank you, Kyle, for what you do too, and thank you for saying that. Before we go on, I wanted to introduce...or welcome Keani Rawlins-Fernandez from Moloka'i, who joined the meeting right when Kyle started talking. So good morning, Keani.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Aloha kakahiaka, Chair, mai Moloka'i Nui Ahina. I'm at the Moloka'i District Office alone on my side of the office, and we have our Community Outreach Specialist Zhantell Lindo back in the office. Welcome back, Zhan. Aloha.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Aloha. Welcome. Nice to see you here. So, Dr. Caires, thank you very much for the work you do. Because everything you say, I know that you are out there with the ranchers and farmers trying to solve their problems. So I hope that the financial support that the Council has provided CTAHR, as well as your work with Maui County Farm Bureau, can address some of the concerns you have. And I know you're a member of the Maui County Farm Bureau, you're Kula Ag Park Chair, as well as you're on the Axis Deer Task Force. So let's continue working to, you know, solve some of these problems. Yeah, we do want to conquer it so...Dr. Caires.

MR. CAIRES: I will say too...yeah, thank you. Thank you for that. I mean, you know, we're going to...you guys support us and, you know, we're going to play and make sure we do as much as we can to get the bang out of those funds. But we have run some forage variety trials, so we have identified certain grass and legume species that the deer have less of a preference for. So like the...basically, the cattle love it, it's highly palatable, but the deer find it more undesirable for a variety of other reasons. So, I mean, we actually have some test spots...and I apologize for doing this. Typically what we do is we do the research, the basic, and then other people do it blah, blah, blah, and then you publish papers, and then maybe six years after the fact you get it...six to ten years later it's in the ranchers' hands. We don't have that luxury here. So when we find that...when we get stuff done, usually within the year, we're already into field trials. And looks bad, I don't have publications to show for it, but I go straight to the clientele,

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and we get this thing planted and out there because we don't have the luxury of time. But if you guys are interested in any of that work, I can meet with you one-on-one.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Is that the seeds we helped purchase for you? One of your projects?

MR. CAIRES: Yep, one of them, yep, was that. And then we've also done some...we've been strategic about mixing...like, so I guess in a...to wrap it up real fast, with the . . .*(inaudible)*. . . system, you have from mauka to makai, potentially year-round feeds supported by microclimates and different elevations. But sometimes, within a given region, you know, the feed or the forage resource is really seasonal. We've tried to find really, really effective mixes of forages and legumes that can provide year-round feedstocks in different climates and zones. So we...you know, we have everywhere from Hāna to West Maui covered in some of these. So we're coming up with, like, tailor-made solutions for microclimate soil types, you know, spatial and temporal things that we know are going to work in certain...just to try and improve the feed stocks for seasonal...not just seasonal, but year-round nutrition. And I think once...as we're doing that, the trajectory is going this way. And once the axis deer numbers come down, the food system should be better than it ever was. But until those deer are gone, you know, we got issues. It's probably worth mentioning that the goat population...while we're working on...while we're focused on the deer, the goat populations are exploding as well.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, my God.

MR. CAIRES: In Kaupō, it's getting ridiculous. Between the Pe'ahi and Māliko Gulch, there's a population there residing on those cliffs, that number...those numbers have been going down. But in Kahakuloa, there's a population of goats over there that are also on the rise. But I understand DLNR has some of those areas already in their sights and...yeah, so the goat issue is magnifying.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Right.

MR. CAIRES: We have another pasture pest. This isn't ready for prime time, but the Bermudagrass Stem Rot [*sic*] Maggot is here, and it has been doing some work for, like, the last...I'd say the last year. And we're working on controlling it, and you haven't heard anything really bad in the news or, like, the Spittlebug on the Big Island where there's hundreds of thousands of acres. But we're doing crop scouting weekly, and we take care of those things so it doesn't...we're not trying to...we're not in the information-gathering stage for us to put together a huge grant to try and tackle a problem that'll never be solved. We're trying to cut it off at the pass in preventing it from becoming an issue so you don't have to see me telling you, oh, this is so bad, we're losing...so we're working on that as well. So we've pretty much...we haven't seen any Bermudagrass Stem Rot [*sic*] Maggot. It looks a lot like Armyworms, where they come out of the ground and two to three weeks later there's nothing left in terms of forage. You know, we've been combating that. We've been about five weeks into the clear where there isn't a single sighting anywhere on the island. So just like Brunswick Grass four years before this, if we can't...we're not generating the publications, and that's my fault,

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but I'd rather have less paper and, you know, more --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: More action.

MR. CAIRES: -- of a solution in the field.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you. Thank you for your passion. Anybody have questions for Dr. Caires? Ms. Tamara...Tamara Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Dr. Caires. Can I do two questions?

MR. CAIRES: No problem.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: The first one is small, and then the second one is kind of big. You know, when you said about the deer population going up and like that, what is the plan to get the deer population down besides the fencing?

MR. CAIRES: I think it's got to be to...my personal opinion is we need a wildlife management plan at the State level that would allow DLNR to enforce the rules. I guess that's the basis for it. I mean, on a State by...State level, you know, without a wildlife management plan, you're kind of dead in the water because nobody knows who is supposed to do what, right? But I think having a wildlife management plan on a State level is absolutely essential. Then the wildlife management areas can be identified for the deer to, you know, have as habitat year round. And for...in the case of axis deer, outside of that habitat, well, they're not...they're supposed to be in this area, they're not supposed to be in this area. Then it becomes a lot simpler in terms of control. If a ranch wanted to manage a population of axis deer, then they would have that ability. But then it would also become their kuleana to manage that as a protein source as well, right. So I think a wildlife management plan is essential. Fencing is part of it. Identifying the best way to mitigate the problem in terms of processing. It might be a combination of mobile slaughterhouses and brick-and-mortar facilities that are already here, along with some new MSUs closer to where the large herds are. That's another great avenue to go. You know, fencing in those areas to facilitate larger scale trapping of those animals so they can be harvested in larger amounts in shorter periods of times to improve the logistical efficiencies would be another one.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I think you're going into my second question, and I just wanted to know about your thoughts as to the feasibility...like, you know, we're trying so hard...or not we, you guys, are trying so hard to make this cattle work, and in some of the conservation work I do, the slogan is eat the invasives. And I just was wondering, like, if one area where it's really prevalent and during a drought, you make the pasture, like, a trap, high fences and bring them in...bring in like one whole herd. And then I think I heard that you need a veterinarian to certify the meat when you kill it. And then, you know, just do that continually until you cull the herd down to practical numbers, and then switch back to ranching cattle or something like that? Or, I mean, if you don't need to sell the meat, I think you can do it without a veterinarian, but it would probably

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be in the best interest of all of our healths [sic] to do the veterinary route, I guess, if it's possible. So I just was wondering, like, is there any...is that viable? And is there any consensus to do that? Like focus it for maybe a couple years until we get the herds down, and then...I mean, it's...it can be a resource or it can be a --

MR. CAIRES: Well...

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: -- big problem.

MR. CAIRES: Yeah, I think...to answer, I think I know where you're going with this. So, like, to finish the other response and wrap it all...kind of put it all together would be, the wildlife management plan is essential. You need strategic fencing to allow the other industries to survive. You're strategic in terms of how you going to plan the trap pens for these animals. We've identified the warm season annual species that could be planted for quick, emergency pasture to facilitate...we've already done that work. We already know, like, how to establish the emergency pasture for warm season annuals to make those trap pens. Another thing at the State level that would be really, really essential--and I'm sure Councilmember Molina, through his experience and family experience knows this too--but for years, Hawai'i, like many other states, had allowed State inspection to occur for processing...for slaughter and processing animals. We always had State and Federal inspection. And then in the '90s, that aloha meant goodbye, and State inspection went away, we were just left with Federal inspection here. State inspection in many states is a very, very viable option, and it's a lot more economical that would allow, in this case, deer, cattle, sheep, goats, pigs to be harvested...to be harvested here, processed here, and be merchandised within the state, to be donated to food banks, to be donated to food aggregators, to be sold to food aggregators. Whatever. So bringing back State inspection on a legislative level through the Department of Ag, where they would work with the Feds to allow for food safety to be at its highest level, would be a major game changer to help the industries as well. Not just the deer, not just the goats. I mean, all the livestock and, in this case, wildlife management. That would be a major win. So, like, we had great opportunities with these emergency proclamations, right? There's money that comes down the pipe. Now we're going to have the opportunity for people to use fencing. That's just one part of it. There's no silver bullet. So wildlife management plan at the State level, game changer. Restoring State inspection for harvesting of livestock and wildlife, game changer. Now, will that...while those products wouldn't be allowed for export out of the state, we have plenty of mouths to feed and retail merchandising values within the state. There's a supply chain here. There's a value chain here. But those are two things in the State level that need to happen, and that would allow DLNR and Department of Ag to kind of have their own little kuleana to basically grease the wheel and make this big thing work. Grazing management, we got that down. We got forage and legume species to restore the pastures. We got that down. We know the best management practices on how to trap these deer. So an integrative approach is definitely next. And hunting is fine. Hunting is another good...a good thing. But, again, if you have the wildlife management plan, and you have these wildlife management areas, now hunters have designated areas where they can go and harvest and take game using good practices. And with State inspection, guess what? There's an opportunity for even the products that hunters

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may take, they could take it to a processing plant, whether it's mobile or brick-and-mortar, and ask for custom processing. There's more food safety being produced. So these are all symptoms of a very, very functional DLNR, Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Department of Ag, regardless of what state you're in. We just don't have...we don't have those things well defined. So the wildlife management plan, that helps DLNR go. The...restoring State inspection, that helps Department of Ag become more effective. That reduces the dependency on Federal graders, you know, which, in a state like Hawai'i, where our numbers are very, very paltry in comparison to a state like Texas, we just don't have the critical mass of those Federal employees here. And they can't be in two places at once. If you have one entity up in Ulupalakua doing some work, another entity harvesting pigs in Pukalani, another entity harvesting cattle in Makawao, Ha'ikū, another one in the Central Valley. I mean...and there's two or three people for the entire island? And, guess what, Moloka'i has a slaughterhouse too. I mean, you don't have to be a mathematician to figure out that that doesn't pencil out very well. Even if your pencil is as sharp as a samurai sword, it's tough for Federal inspection right now. We have facilities that are getting old, repairs and maintenance deferred for two to three decades in many cases. And we don't have enough processing capacity or harvest capacity for the cattle or the pig populations here, let alone the deer. So we need a...probably a combination of private and public investment as well. But it's a very multifaceted problem, and it's going to require a solution with even more facets.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

MR. CAIRES: And at the end of the day that means more jobs, you know, agriculture success can be counted on to move forward the next decade or two, but all hands on deck are needed.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yes. Thank you, Dr. Caires.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I just...

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Sorry, Tamara, go ahead.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I just was wondering, you know, with the County Department of Ag, does it have to be State inspectors? Like, could we make the move towards County inspectors?

MR. CAIRES: That wouldn't...okay, that's a really good question. The way the State inspection program would work, without getting too crazy with an explanation, would be the Federal regulatory agency would work to get our State agency compliant so...such that they could be assured that the State inspection process matched the Federal inspection process. Then the Feds would basically have a handshake with our State level, and the inspection would be basically synonymous. The only difference would be you can't export outside of your state. There's no...there's nothing at the Federal level that allows for the duties and responsibilities for Federal inspection to ensure food safety with livestock or wildlife to a County-based entity, so it would have to be...go through the

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State...State level. We wouldn't have...what I'm saying is we wouldn't have the ability to make that handshake work between County and Federal. It would have to go between Federal and State. And you know what? It worked well here for...I mean, 50 years, more or less, without a major food safety issue or recalls and whatnot. And the other thing that's really nice is we're helping to build local capacity, we're getting highly trained individuals, presumably Maui County residents born and bred, into very, very solid positions where the pay is good, the benefits are great, and they're helping to support local agriculture. I mean, that's a win-win.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah. These are excellent questions. And Tamara, just so you know, this legislative session, Dr. Caires probably knows that we tried to get this--we meaning Representative Kyle Yamashita and Lynn DeCoite on the Senate side--but we're trying to get this wildlife management plan in motion, but it didn't pass all the votes that you need in both houses, as well as looking at the State inspector. And the way you described it is perfect, so it's a step that we are going to be taking and trying to educate the community with a grant with Office of Economic Development and Maui Chamber of Commerce. Pam Tumpap is doing this in terms of education, and then getting us ready so that we can go back again and ask for the State inspector, because that is a huge need. And until we get that solved, we aren't going to be able to feed the hungry and do all those programs that we read about in, you know, that...the mainland does, and they kind of look at us like why not? So, you know, you explained why not, and I think it's something that as a County, and as a...we need to educate the public so that they can see that there's benefits...there's not only axis deer, but it's greater than that, as you described. So, Dr. Caires, you have something to add?

MR. CAIRES: I really feel...yeah. I mean, without the wildlife management plan and restoring State inspection, the axis deer problem is going to be like one of those like...one of those hugs where your 'ōkole is about 27 feet away from the person, yeah? You never going to be able to, like, get a handle on this thing unless those two things happen. And it's not just, like, little...I mean, to say that those are key cogs, again, would be a gross understatement. We've got to...those...if the wildlife management plan happens first, okay, we can start shoring up some other things, DLNR can do some enforcement, we can get some depopulation efforts, hopefully that stuff ends in...into the food chain. But I mean, like, for everyone on this call right now, you know this stuff affects you in your backyard. What are you going to do with all the waste if you're going to harvest these deer? You know, we got to get people who are making compost on board, you know, we got to get environmental waste management plans going. We have to manage those nutrients. How can we take this that would be considered a waste product, get it in the hands of these other guys, they can add value, and now we get more vegetables in the supermarket. So it takes...this is all very integrated type...I didn't have anything prepared for you guys, but there's no one answer to this. I mean, you got to be real flexible, you got to be nimble, and then you got to be ready to build the capacity. And the capacity can't be built, unfortunately, in my opinion, unless we get those...to control this population at the same time while keeping our agricultural industries on the upswing. But I'd like to suggest that we take a break for a little while. We're going to be in the room looking around, and it's going to be real lonely. There isn't going to be those people involved in agriculture, yeah. So we got to somehow do these things at the

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same time because the viability won't be there, you know. Cost of everything is rising, fuel is up, fertilizer is up, amendments are up. The shipping industry--Matson, YB--both had rate increases. The trucking industry in the mainland, there's a shortage. You know, we need...I mean, it's...

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Critical.

MR. CAIRES: The sky hasn't fallen yet, but I do think this axis deer problem will be easier than figuring out how to move the Pacific Ocean. But I tell you what, when we...if we can get the wildlife management plan at the State level and some legislation to restore State inspection here, I think we can move the ocean back just a little bit and prevent erosion for everybody.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you, Dr. Caires. Mr. Molina.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Thank you, Madam Chair. Good morning, Dr. Caires. I'm going to change gears a little bit from deer to wild pigs.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: I guess recently there was, I guess, a story that was published about, I guess, non-toxic birth control. It's called something...I think it was called HogStop for wild pigs on O'ahu. Has that discussion come up here on Maui? And if I could add into my question also, you know, as a young man yourself, I'm sure you did some hunting before you went off to school on the mainland. Any discussion about youth hunting programs to kind of help keep the population down? Just your thoughts on those two issues.

MR. CAIRES: Okay. Let's...that's good. So basically, HogStop is a...it's an orally available contraceptive. So the idea with that is, like, it's a...in a nutshell, it's like chemical castration to an extent, right. The effectiveness on females versus males need to be probably evaluated a little bit more here. The other issue would be what are the effects of putting something like that out there. You know, if you did have a...if it's water soluble you have a rain, you know, that leaches out into a local stream and there is 'o'opu. I mean, like, I try and think of...like okay, all the...like the stakeholders and all of the far-reaching effects. So I think HogStop, yeah, it's a tool. It's a tool, it's birth control, it's orally done so it requires some sort of a feeding or feeder to get it out there, which is good in a sense, but you still have these pigs running around in the case of, like, diseases, they could still spread diseases, yeah? And, you know, we think about oh, my God, tuberculosis, you know, that's bad. That's really bad. And I feel for our brothers and sisters on Moloka'i right now because the fear of not knowing something can be as bad as actually knowing, yeah. But there's so many other things that these critters can...spread isn't necessarily the word I want, but I think you know what I mean. There's some other...there's some non-oral products that could allow for...what's the best way to say this? Okay. So, like, think about getting the vaccine. There are vaccines available. The one I'm most familiar with...I guess there's two. One is based out of the Northeast. Killian did the work at Penn State, and they used that because they were

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having, like, tremendous amount of vehicular accidents on the road. They needed to set back the whitetail deer population, so they'd go out with a tranquilizer dart type situation and shoot these deer with this, like, the vaccine. And the vaccine is against one of the main reproductive hormones produced in the hypothalamus. So the idea is, like, the hypothalamus, the brain, communicates with the pituitary. In response to that, the pituitary produces two hormones, and that regulates basically the formation of the follicle and the ovulation of the egg into the ova duct. And if you cut it off at the top, you eliminate the whole cascade. That's how it works. Another vaccine...and this is some work out of Washington State, has now been licensed under Amplicon Express LLC. That's a GnRH LHRH fusion vaccine. They have two versions. One's a DNA vaccine, the other one's a ovalbumin fusion protein vaccine. They both work really, really well. HogStop may be easier from a logistic standpoint of putting the stuff out there and having it be fed. How their agent is going to affect wildlife or...I would recommend that it not be put too close to a waterway, for me, I mean, right off the bat. So there's some environmental like, hey, that's important. Hey, we're in a subtropical environment. The heat, the humidity index, may affect the decay rate of that substance a little bit more than anywhere else where they tested it. You know, this isn't Texas. Although the 4th of July rodeo is coming and the Portuguese are going to be out with flatbed trucks. Although the vaccine route, while it may be a little bit more of a logistical curve because it would require, you know, the shooting of a tranquilizer dart, would be a lower environmental impact way to not necessarily chemically castrate, but would help sterilize the livestock, or in this case...excuse me, the pigs more effectively than that...because again, with the HogStop, females and males can consume it, right. The effects are probably going to be a little bit different. Whereas with the LHRH or GnRH fusion vaccines that are available, if you tag a female with it or a male, you're going to have the effective contraceptive, and it's not reversible so to speak, right. So if you're asking...I can't tell you which one is better. I think the vaccine would be more effective than the HogStop, but I can tell you, environmentally speaking, the vaccine would be less worse potentially than some of the metabolites that come from breakdown of that compound.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Oh good.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Oh, good. Thank you for that very detailed answer. That's why you deserve that title of doctor. Thank you.

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

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: You're on it. Just quickly, your thoughts on the youth hunting program, if that discussion's ever come up.

MR. CAIRES: Okay, yeah. So we have...we don't have formal youth hunting programs through 4-H in the State. It's not something that's in our charter in terms of programs that we do run. But something that has, in the last few years, seen a little bit of an increase is shooting sports through 4-H. And so that's kind of like a combination building upon

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like the gun safety, hunter safety from DLNR, with a little bit more, like, firearm awareness safety. It's just a longer program. So, like, you know, the more you do anything, the better you get kind of a deal. The shooting sports program is on the rise statewide, and that tracks really well to hunting. On the flip side, while this is happening and the 4-H shooting sports is being seen, the Hawai'i High School Rodeo Association has also adopted some shooting sports and archery into some of their programs. So now, like, you know, the high school kids who are involved in rodeo are also being exposed to, you know, some additional training. And, you know, that tracks very well, like, hunting, agriculture, and whatnot. So we are seeing those youth measures being put into, like, you know, not just, like, talking about. There's some action steps, and there's some performance measures. There's no shooting sports club on Maui that I am aware of. There's a call every year. The interest hasn't necessarily been there, and I think that's probably as a result of a couple of things. One, the High School Rodeo Association is doing some of that as well, right? So there's more capacity there. And we have some of the hunting clubs and gun clubs on Maui that are going to...doing a pretty good job of taking care of their kuleana and mentoring youth as well. So I think it's happening. Some of those things are happening here. It may not be formally marketed very well, but I would say the demonstrated need for that within the youth on Maui is less than what has been seen on O'ahu or the Big Island. And that's probably because we already have the capacity built here versus on the Big Island and O'ahu, the capacity wasn't built, so that's why there was a huge call for those programs. So from county to county, there's some differences in terms of the 4-H deployment. We haven't...you know, we do needs assessment pretty often just to make sure that we're not missing something. But there hasn't been an overwhelming call for us to get into the shooting sports world because, you know, the gun clubs, the hunting clubs, and the rodeo association, Hawai'i Youth Rodeo Association, you know, they're already meeting that demand.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Okay. All right. Well, thank you very much for your very detailed answers. And someday I'd like to sit down and talk story with you about the...back in your...you know, your youthful days in Upcountry Maui with hunting and everything else. I'm sure you got a lot of interesting stories to share. Thank you very much, Dr. Caires. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MR. CAIRES: Mahalo.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you, Member Molina. And I will tell you that on the chat, Tamara Paltin said about your discussion that it looks like we're taking a college-level class today from Dr. Caires. So thank you. I...

MR. CAIRES: I apologize.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So interesting. But I think I saw Keani Rawlins' hand go up also.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. And then...yeah, I don't want to take up too much time, so I don't know if you want to put me on a timer. So I just have a couple follow ups. So aloha, Dr. Caires. Mahalo for being with us today and answering

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our questions. My question is regarding the grass that you spoke about earlier. So a lot of grass that were introduced by the ranching industry, like the California grass, and Guinea grass, and all these other grasses end up spreading a lot to non-ranching areas and become problematic. Do you know what the, like, potential spread rate of this grass that you're talking about? And, like, what it...what could be the impacts of it.

MR. CAIRES: Yeah, so...well, Guinea grass got here...there's actually evidence of that even before the cane came, yeah. So Guinea grass has been here a very, very, very long time. And as we all know, Guinea grass has outlived the sugar industry in the State. Is that...

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay.

MR. CAIRES: Is that...

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: I rescind the Guinea grass part. I just want to hear about the other grass.

MR. CAIRES: Okay, I will say this. So legume-wise, we have identified several legumes that have the ability to provide the extra protein without the climbing habit that we see with the Glycine and the Tinaroo that's taken over fences and buildings. So, yeah, we've identified those already. In terms of the pasture grasses I was speaking of, many of those have very, very discreet...well, the warm season annuals are all annuals. So they're meant to be, like, short-lived and they can reseed themselves within an area, but they're not one of those things like Guinea grass that pretty much, like, when they're here, they're here forever. So the invasiveness potential of a lot of what we screen is being identified. Stylo, that's another one. It's a legume, it's high protein, it's a cousin of alfalfa, and it's very, very drought tolerant. It puts, like, a 12-foot taproot down so it can handle the droughts. Very, very little invasive potential as well. The...like, some of the hybrid Star grass that we're working with does not produce by seed. So that's only stoloniferous planting, so you'd have to take cuttings and sprig those cuttings into the ground. So, yeah, there is a balance. You want a pasture grass to be persistent, right, but you don't necessarily want it to be, like, one of those things that just takes over, right? Like, you want it to take over your pasture, but you don't want this to cause, like, unintended consequences elsewhere. So, yeah, we do evaluate a lot of those things. So, like...for example, like the...there's several varieties of Star grass. The Mealani Station on the Big Island has, like, the Puerto Rican Star grass. That's the common name here in Hawai'i. There's some other varieties here that we don't have names for, but they appear to work better. They tend to be higher in terms of nutrition value . . . *(timer sounds)*. . . grass. But they don't produce viable seed, so there isn't --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you.

MR. CAIRES: -- there isn't necessarily that concern. I will tell you, your question is a very good one, Keani, because some of the varieties that have been advertised in the past to be, like, male sterile, I have seen plants planted actually produce viable seed. And a big part of that is the seed that was brought in in the first place wasn't of the high enough purity. So you might get, you know, 3 percent of something else, and that 3 percent of

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something else in the bag is...looks like just like what you were supposed to plant, and it grows the same way because it's a cousin, but it doesn't mean it's what you planted, right. So the other thing, certified weed-free seed speaks to your question very well. We don't bring in anything that isn't certified weed free. We have some home users that have brought in some Paspalum seed from some online retailers, and that Paspalum seed has been contaminated by Brunswick grass or Brownseed Paspalum, and that's a major invasive weed of the Southwest U.S. seed industry, and now it's here. It took literally two years of going out there and like eradicating the stuff myself and I had an intern for, like, four months, just to prevent this thing from taking over the whole island. And that's because somebody with a, you know --

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Yeah.

MR. CAIRES: -- half an acre yard decided to bring in some seed. So I think the seed sources are very important. And when we work with the ranchers...

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: I think my time...I think my timer went off, but I would love to talk story with you more about how to control the sales of, you know, those kinds of seeds that don't hold the same standard of purity that end up spreading across and having that unintended effect. And then I don't know if we can maybe work on policy or something to prevent that from happening, and that way you and your intern won't have to --

MR. CAIRES: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: -- travel across the island to control.

MR. CAIRES: Yeah, it was crazy. And like literally on Moloka'i...like actually, when you going from the Kualapu'u...the Cookhouse, towards like the Ho'olehua...the Coffees of Hawai'i...I mean, I was driving, and I was like [*makes screeching sound*] with the rent-a-car on the side, I saw stuff there that shouldn't...should not have been growing. And you start looking just along that...the edge of the bank. So the next thing you know, you're at Napa, and you're buying a pick, and you pick axing the stuff off the side of the road. And that's...that was a common...that was Johnson grass, a common seed contaminant that was brought in in somebody's cover crop. And so I think that the State Department of Ag is doing a good job with inspecting what they get their hands on. It's just when somebody sends, like, a little package in a priority envelope, that's what scares me a little bit more. But no, to your point taken. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you, Dr. Caires.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: -- Dr. Caires. And then mahalo for your updates, Chair, on the wildlife plan and the inspector. And we do have riflery programs in the high school...at least when I was in high school there were. I just wanted to add to that. And that the community is super eager to help control the population. So I think

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working with the community to allow them to hunt would be really helpful in managing the populations. Mahalo, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Thank you very much. Anybody else have questions for Dr. Caires? And then I have Lori Tsuhako, who is standing by, and just about the Fiscal Year '22 grants that they administered, and...think this June 30th is the end of it, so I'm not sure if they...you know, she has an update. But if Lori Tsuhako, you want to come on a little bit?

MS. TSUHAKE: Hi, good morning, Madam Chair, Members.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Good morning, Lori.

MS. TSUHAKE: Good morning.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So I was wondering if you could just give us an update of the...you know, the grants that were being administered through your Department. And of course, June 30th is right around the corner when the, you know, grant deadlines are, and you probably have a more comprehensive report at that time, but do you have anything that we'll ask in writing for a report of --

MS. TSUHAKE: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- the grants?

MS. TSUHAKE: Yes. Thank you, Madam Chair. So the Department issued a request for proposals for the Fiscal Year '22 Feral Animal Management funding. We had to issue a second procurement because we did not receive any viable applications for all three islands in the first round. We recently executed a grant contract with the Moloka'i Humane Society...I mean, excuse me, with the Moloka'i Hunting Club, pardon me, with the fiscal agent of the Moloka'i Community Service Council. And that will take us to about a year from now. Some of the earlier grants that were executed will have an ending before then. And then it's the Department's intention to provide the Council with a follow up of all of the objectives achieved by the various funding that has gone to address the Feral Animal Management on Moloka'i, Lāna'i, and on *(audio interference)*. So I will have a written update for the Committee, as you requested, with the current situation. And then as we cycle through the end of the Fiscal Year '22 grants and their outcomes, we'll issue another update for the Committee.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much.

MS. TSUHAKE: Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Appreciate that. So Lāna'i got their grant application squared away? I think Lāna'i --

MS. TSUHAKE: Yeah --

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- they did.

MS. TSUHAKE: -- I believe that there might have been one grantee on Lānaʻi, and the second procurement did not result in additional grantees being selected. So I believe Lānaʻi didn't spend the entirety of the appropriation for that island. But I will make sure that when the Department issues our written update to the Committee that we have that financial information for you as well --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

MS. TSUHAKE: -- regarding how much each of the contracts was worth and what, if anything, was left in the island by island allocation.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you very much, Lori, for coming today, and appreciate the report once it's ready. I know this is a little bit premature, but always appreciate the good work that your Department does. Does anybody have questions for Lori Tsuhako? Oh, Keani's saying thank you. I see no questions for you. So we'll send a letter requesting the final report when you're ready. Appreciate. Thank you very much, Lori.

MS. TSUHAKE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Have a good day.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah, have a good day. Thank you very much. All right. So as I said, the important part about today is if you talk...if the axis deer or feral animal concerns have been forefront in my life through the Axis Deer Task Force, which is co-chaired by Mayor Victorino, and a slew of what I call the alphabet soup members of the community as it comes from...Kai Kahele's office is one, as well as USDA, FDA...I mean, we have a lot of the Federal and State organizations who are part of this task force. The last time we met was last year, and I do want to meet again. We took a pause because we wanted to get through the budget process and figure out where we were with different allocations of funds that were...that came from Fiscal Year '23, as well as...today I'm asking Susie Thieman from Lokahi Pacific to talk about the Fiscal Year '22 Budget Amendment that Mayor Victorino submitted, and Lokahi Pacific is administering that grant. But as you know, the Axis Deer Task Force mission was to manage and control and to find funding because that was some of the...by reading the task force or working groups that came up in the past, one of their big challenges was they didn't have enough funding to see them through all their great ideas. So today I'm having Susie Thieman from Lokahi Pacific talk about the \$1.5 million grant that was submitted for a budget amendment in the Fiscal Year '22 funds. And Lokahi Pacific is going to administer this grant, so she can talk about the grant. There's information about it in Granicus for you to see. And because the grant is going to be available on July 1, we withdrew the grant application so people wouldn't apply now because they wouldn't be able to apply until July 1. So at this time, I'd like to introduce Susie Thieman. She's a friend to many of us, and is a nonprofit, well respected in the community, who is administering this \$1.5 million grant. So, Susie, take it away.

MS. THIEMAN: Good morning. Thank you, Chair Sugiyama [sic]. It's a pleasure to be here.

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I came to the Council's Chambers hoping to see a lot of you here. You know, we've all been looking at these little square boxes on our TV screens for so long, and I thought, wow, this is a great opportunity to get to renew our old friendships. But, hello, we're back to the screen, and maybe one of these days in the near future we can all be together again. I hope that you have had a chance to take a look at what we put up on Granicus. It's basically the overall purpose of this grant and who can apply, what they can use it for, some of the additional attachments that the folks are going to have to attach to the application. We're trying to make it as easy as possible for the farmers and ranchers, but yet, there are certain things that we have to know that are real. It's easy to write that you've lost your ability to have your income because of the deer. We all feel that that's true, but we need proof before we can do funding. That's the piece that we play the part in, is making sure that the money goes to the right people for the right purpose. It's...you know, we've done work with farmers and given grants to farmers for many, many years at Lokahi. This is a little bit bigger than most of the grants that we've had, I will say that up front, but the \$30,000 limit per farmer or rancher is well within the scope of what we're used to. We're talking about farmers or ranchers who have...are farming more than 12 acres, but not more than 40 acres. This is kind of the intermediate size farm and ranch. We've been working with Dr. Caires also to come up with these guidelines and what we should be looking at. There was one provision in the grant budget piece that you folks put together and that was that the grant funds must be awarded with efforts to ensure equitable distribution among applicants in Maui, Moloka'i, and Lāna'i, with preference given to socially disadvantaged farming applicants, such as women and Native Hawaiians. I just want to assure you that that is included in that first page of information that there's...that you're looking at, and we intend to live up to that. We also are going to be asking people for things to, as I said earlier, prove their losses. We're looking at, like, two years of tax returns to show before that axis deer really hit, kind of all of our minds and thoughts, and then after that what was the reduction in what you were able to produce. The funds that we're talking about, what they can be used for, for those out there who are listening to this presentation, they're for Maui County resident farmers and ranchers with sustained economic losses resulting from the loss of pasture forage for cattle, death of cattle, destruction of farms, reduced crop yields, and other agricultural property damages arising directly from the excess axis deer population since July 1 of '21. I'm going to throw this in. You know, Saturday afternoon I was sitting at my dining room table working on some notes as we were getting ready to download this application onto our website, and I got a text from my neighbor, he says look out your back window. And so I turned around and I looked out, and we have a gully that goes behind our houses, and across the gully is ranchland. There's a plateau on that hillside about the size of this lower part here of the chamber where you all sit. And there must have been 35 deer congregated there, all sizes, all ages. I have never seen that before. We've had the deer running down the gully, and usually in the early evening into the evening you can hear them kind of talking to each other, and maybe 6 or 7, maybe 10, but we've never had 30 gather. And I thought, what kind of meeting are they having? Where are they going? Where's the attack going to take place? But it was just astounding...I mean, it was so astounding to me that I grabbed my cell phone and took a couple pictures. It was just interesting. It really was a gathering. Anyway, so I...you know, before...I've listened to what everybody has said, I've watched the pictures, I've watched comments about how bad it is. I've been to some

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of the places where we do definitely see the devastation. This was the first time I've seen so many so close. My backyard is like a hillside, so I don't have them eating anything in my yard, but just to see them over there like that...and, you know, as quickly as they got there, they dispersed. So I don't know what was going on, but if they elected officers, they didn't have any confusion over who was going to run the show. I wanted to be sure that the...everybody understands we do want to get this going. We had talked about releasing this on July 1st. We've backed that up to June...oh, hello. We're in June. I can't...I'm stuck in May for some reason. The application is going to go live on our website on the morning of June 29th, so that's Wednesday. We did not include the application, as Yuki Lei said in what we gave you, because we didn't want anybody trying to download that or trying to fill that out. It is a fillable application. They will fill that out and then print it, sign it, and attach all the things that are mentioned in this piece that we gave you, and submit it either by mail or by email, or they can drop it off, whichever works for them. The thing that I want to emphasize, there's an...a one-page article that we want everyone who is applying to write. They've told the story now for almost a year about what has happened to them, all they have to do is put that in writing. If you can confine it to one page, great. If it takes two, that's fine. But let's not write a book. This is something that tells me it's coming from the heart. If you can write it, it's real. That's going to be...if there are any ties or any decisions to be made about how much any particular rancher or farmer deserves, I think it's going to be in that article as the judges review it. All things being equal, somebody may come out further ahead because they told the details of what this meant. We also comment that pictures...you know, a picture is worth 1,000 words, right? So if you've got...if they've got pictures of the crops before, or the cattle before, and then the lack of crops and a lack of cattle afterwards, the barren fields, the barren...as Dr. Cairns was talking about, no foliage, that's also important, if you've got some good pictures to show us. What can they spend the \$30,000 on? We mention here that we're talking about seeds, replanting efforts, livestock replacement, fencing, fuel, labor, and rental equipment as necessary to restore the producer's agricultural operation to functioning status. This is meant primarily for food-producing farmers and ranchers. I'm going to emphasize that again. Food-producing farmers and ranchers. That's pretty much what we're talking about. We did put an application deadline on here. However, we also state these will be judged on an as they come in. We could run out of money long before that, so do not let anybody wait until that deadline to get this in. Once the application is up there live this Wednesday, I recommend that people start filling them out and getting them in to us. We've got lots of places on these...on this form where we have our phone numbers, our website--by the way, the website is lokahipacific.org, very simple--and my email, my phone number at the office, call us. We'll work with you. This, for some of you, may be a first-time effort. For others, you're getting...you've gotten used to it, I'm sad to say. But it's there. And we want to get this money out. We want to see something happening. We have to have relief and recovery. Any questions?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, great. Thank you very much for taking this on. I know that you had a short period of time to run to this finish line, and appreciate Lokahi Pacific a lot.

MS. THIEMAN: Thank you, Yuki Lei.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: So, thank you, Susie. And your reputation for getting things done is certainly true. So this is...that's new information, so this will be launched then on Wednesday, which is June 29th?

MS. THIEMAN: Right, right. It will be up on the website before noon. I can't say that it'll be there at 8:00, but I think the Mayor has a signing appointment with us.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . . *(inaudible)*. . .

MS. THIEMAN: So kind of simultaneous to the closing of that, this will appear.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay.

MS. THIEMAN: And it's just a click on the piece on the home page of our website, and you go straight to the application, and download these first three pages, which have all the details of what you're going to need as attachments, and then the application is the last two pages.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Very good. Thank you for trying to get the application process minimized, I guess.

MS. THIEMAN: Right.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: And to try to make it easier. Because we heard from some of the farmers and ranchers that filling out Government forms is not their favorite thing to do, so they didn't apply for previous opportunities.

MS. THIEMAN: Right.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So appreciate that. And I'll now turn it over to the Members, if you have any questions.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Chair?

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Anybody have questions? Oh, I don't see you. Oh, is that Tasha Kama?

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Yes, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Go ahead, sorry.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: If I may? Thank you. So, thank you for being here, Susie. And thank you for always being the fiscal sponsor for so many of our entities out there that don't know how to do what you're doing for them. So thank you. So, do we know how many ranchers are...fall within the more than 12 but less than 40 acres? Do we have a listing of them or anything like that?

MS. THIEMAN: Yeah, I don't believe that we do, and it's going to be interesting to see how it

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turns out now because this is the first time that this group has been offered --

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Yes.

MS. THIEMAN: -- a County grant.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Yes.

MS. THIEMAN: The grants before this were for 12 acres or less, as my understanding.

VICE-CHAIR KAMA: Right, right. Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

MS. THIEMAN: Thank you, Councilmember.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. That's a good question, Member Kama. Keani Rawlins-Fernandez has a question.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. Aloha, Ms. Thieman. Mahalo for your update on this program. My question is will there be a press release that we can share so that we can help spread the word?

MS. THIEMAN: Yes, I'm assuming we'll have that finished up for Wednesday morning as well.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Awesome. Mahalo. Mahalo, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Any other questions for Susie Thieman? I don't see any more questions. I'm thrilled that we are here. As you know, this is fulfilling one of the main things from the Task Force that was created about finding funding so that we can start doing the steps we need to mitigate this and control the feral animal problem that's growing here on Maui County. So, thank you, Susie. You have anything else you want to share with us?

MS. THIEMAN: I don't. Thank you. So, again, I want to thank the Council for their due diligence and work being...on getting this money available to the farmers and ranchers. And we will certainly do everything we can to get it out as quickly, but as fiscally responsible, as possible. Thank you very much.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So do they have to spend the money by a certain time?

MS. THIEMAN: It's a year's grant, but we don't want to go anywhere near there. We know from the number of phone calls we've gotten from the first time the Council had this on their agenda, we know that there are a lot of people out there waiting for it. And I've got a list of--I'm not even going to begin to tell you how long it is--of emails and phone numbers that I'm supposed to call as soon as it's available, so we'll probably have somebody doing that full time in the next day or so, telling them to be on the alert. And I just hope we don't crash our system with all the people logging on on Wednesday.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh. We've heard that happen, right?

MS. THIEMAN: Right.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So...fantastic, I'm thrilled. Thank you very much. I know that when we had this before the Budget Committee with Keani, and we were just talking about this, I think you fulfilled all the wishes that we had about a website, and being accessible, and the grant being, you know, something that would be easier for the farm...ag community --

MS. THIEMAN: Right.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- to fill out.

MS. THIEMAN: Basically...yeah, basically it's everything that...all the forms they filled out as a result of being in business. All they got to do is make copies and submit them to us.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. So this is not for me having my landscaping in my yard getting eaten, right?

MS. THIEMAN: No.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Because there are people who wanted to know if our grant would provide them relief for that. Is not, right?

MS. THIEMAN: No, no. It's the 12 acres minimum, 40 acres maximum, and it's food-producing farmers and ranchers.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. Thank you for making that clear.

MS. THIEMAN: Yeah.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Keani.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. Yeah, I do. I have a quick follow up. I think Ms. Thieman did already state it, but if you don't mind repeating. When is the deadline to apply?

MS. THIEMAN: The deadline is, I think, August 15th.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay.

MS. THIEMAN: So we made it, like, a six-week application period. Again, we're assuming that the money is going to go pretty quickly, but if...you know, I mean there's always the opportunity that that could be extended if something happens and people don't get their applications in. But we will be having a meeting of the judging committee as soon as we have the first 20 applications, so we're going to jump on this and get this money out

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as quick as possible. We know they need it.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Okay. So for the first 20, those will be vetted, and then awarded, and then whatever else is left after that 20?

MS. THIEMAN: Well, there's still going to be money left because even if everybody got \$30,000, there would be 50 grants given, so we know that's the case. The process...once...what...one of the things that we're asking everybody to do, and I failed to mention this, and this is really important, is in their packet, we're going to ask them to have quotes from whoever is going to be supplying the fencing, or the seeds, or the whatever they're going to be buying with this money. And once we make the determination as a committee as to how much they're going to get, we will notify them of the award that they're going to be getting. And if it's different from what they've asked for, they're going to need to go back to those suppliers and decide who is most important, and come back with actual invoices so that we can pay directly to the provider.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Ms. Thieman --

MS. THIEMAN: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: -- for those details. And I like that process. So of the 30 that will be remaining if all 20 applicants were to receive the max amount of 30,000 would leave 30, you know, max 30,000 awards after that. And so with that 30, you would ensure that there would be some kind of equity for Moloka'i and Lāna'i if all 20, say, were to go to those on Maui?

MS. THIEMAN: Right. And then what we're going to have to do is we're going to have to gauge when we do that first 20 where they're coming from so that we continue the equity of...right from the start.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: And then as far as providing preference to women and minority-owned businesses, how would that happen in the first 20, and then the last tranche of applicants?

MS. THIEMAN: The same way. On our judging sheet, we will be allocating a certain percentage for that, as well as the location of the farm and ranch. And so that at some point might be a determining factor in who gets an award and maybe who doesn't. So, you know, it's going to be a challenge, and you're asking good questions because it would be very easy just to take the first 20 and give it to them, but that's not what you asked for, and so that's what we have to do.

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Excellent. You're always so on it. Mahalo, Ms. Thieman. Mahalo, Chair.

MS. THIEMAN: Thank you, Keani.

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CHAIR SUGIMURA: I agree. Thank you very much for taking this on and rushing to the finish line, as I said. Any other questions for her? Thank you. So now we know the magic deadline is June 29th at noonish that this will be launched. And if you don't mind, Susie, at some point when you say it's, you know, a good time after the August 15th date, when you...when the application deadline, if you wouldn't mind coming back and giving us an update. Or if you're too busy, you can, you know, tell us what day that would be in the latter part of the year.

MS. THIEMAN: Never too busy to talk to you all.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh. Thank you. Thank you very much, Susie. Okay.

MS. THIEMAN: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Thank you very much. And so we'll look forward to the application, and I want to...I'm looking at the application that you put together, and appreciate how you have it, so that check the box and all the answers...you know, all the possible answers are there so the applicant would not have difficulty. But I do want to say that because this is a government grant, there are forms that they still need to submit, right, to prove that they're a commercial entity --

MS. THIEMAN: Right.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- and pay taxes and general excise tax. I mean, those things are a given, right?

MS. THIEMAN: Right. Well, they're also on the checklist. We've made that very clear what we...what paperwork we do need. And in the past we have always...if somebody has not turned in any in one of those, we have contacted them to find out if it was an oversight. And in some cases, it is...I mean, you're putting together a package. And so if it is an oversight, hey, well, send it to us, we'll put it in the package. If it's not an oversight, and you don't qualify, and you try to get one by us...oops, you got caught.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah.

MS. THIEMAN: Yeah.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Okay. This is not free money, it's taxpayers' --

MS. THIEMAN: Exactly.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- funds.

MS. THIEMAN: Taxpayers' money.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So we have to watch it very carefully. And it's our responsibility, and

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thank you for being our watchdog --

MS. THIEMAN: Right.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- on that. Appreciate it. Thank you very much.

MS. THIEMAN: Just one last comment. You know, I remember back, I don't know, 10, 11 years ago when we got back into working with farmers, everybody would say, well, why do you care who you give the money to, as long as it's going into a farm. And we said, no, no, no, you don't understand, this is tax dollars. If you aren't paying your taxes, why should they pay you? And then the report that we turned in that first year, I think...I can't remember who was the head of the Office of Economic Development at the time, but they said one of the most startling numbers in our report, our final report, was how many people we had become legitimate business people as a result of asking these questions and working with them. Some of them have been going for years and just ignoring it. But then working with us, they found out it really wasn't that big a deal, and there were advantages to being legitimate. So anyway, that's just my comment, and that's what we're going to do.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Very good. Hand in hand for our economic development, right?

MS. THIEMAN: Right.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: That's great. Okay.

MS. THIEMAN: Thank you all.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you. Thank you again, Susie. We'll see you again, and I'm sure you're going to be really super busy in addition to all the other things that you do.

MS. THIEMAN: Right.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So, Members, before I close this...thank you, Susie --

MS. THIEMAN: Thank you.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: -- for making the time to be here. I wanted to just...I'm going to take a recess after I just make these brief statements. Jeff Bagshaw is on vacation, and I wanted him to come and tell you what he said in May. Hawai'i Public Television had a bunch of us on a roundtable. And one of the things he said, representing the Department of Land and Natural Resources...so when I saw that he was going to be a resource for this, I thought, oh, my God, I wonder what he's going to say about axis deer. Because he always comes before us about preserving and conserving, right? And here, we're trying to talk about trying to manage the overpopulation of deer. And what he said that night--I'm going to repeat it because I was hoping he would come, but he's on vacation--and tell you what he said. And I was shocked to get this number because I was waiting for a Government entity, especially DLNR is a perfect...DLNR or

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Department of Ag, but through his research, and what the Department found out, is that there are 200,000...up to 200,000 axis deer roaming around on Maui, and that he estimated that we need to cull or control 20,000 a year just to keep the mitigation and population to where it is. So we have a big job...Government has a big job assisting to get the numbers down because the first speaker, Dr. Caires, and you could hear his passion about how important it is for food safety, food control, our ranchers and farmers so that they can do their work as these axis deer are invading their ability to earn money, and to become viable members in the community to feed our population, or feed our community. And so I believe that when I heard that number of 20,000...because I always thought it's probably closer to 10,000 is what I heard earlier when we first started this, but Jeff Bagshaw said that that night in May that it's actually 20,000 to cull to just get a control now, control, over this overpopulation. And he has a wealth of information in behalf of the Department and what they're doing. And there are some agreements that they are coming up with so that we can have more hunters that can go and hunt. So that, they are working on. I appreciate it because as you know, the large landowners in Upcountry are primarily private ranchers, or private land, and they have their own hunters that go out and hunt. I know that Keani Rawlins on Moloka'i has that Moloka'i Hunting Club, and they have been doing something similar in terms of trying to, you know, cull the numbers and get a...get control over that. So at this time, I'm going to call a short recess. It is now 10:34, and I'm going to come back at 10:45 and just talk about briefly the Kula Ag Park. Keani, you have a question?

COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: No objection to deferring.

COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS. (Excused: KTK)

ACTION: DEFER PENDING FURTHER DISCUSSION.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Oh, okay. Oh, thank you. Yeah, I'm going to defer this item, and then go into a recess, and see you back at 10:45. Thank you. . . .(gavel). . .

RECESS: 10:34 a.m.

RECONVENE: 10:50 a.m.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . .(gavel). . . Thank you, everybody. Welcome back to Infrastructure and Transportation Committee meeting.

IT-32 KULA AGRICULTURAL PARK OVERVIEW AND EXPANSION
(CC 20-66)

CHAIR SUGIMURA: So this portion of the meeting is for Kula Ag Park overview and expansion, IT-32. And who I had invited and is not able to attend is Dr. Scott Fretz, who is DLNR here on Maui. And he had asked Lance De Silva, who's actually the one doing the Kula Ag Park fencing project, as well as he has created an Axis Deer Feral Animal Action Plan which will take us, I think, into the management wildlife plan, which we want to see for

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next year, so...at the Legislature. So appreciate the work that he's doing on that. So just as a summary, I'm going to give you what information Lance De Silva provided for me over the weekend. And on the Ag Park fencing, as you may remember, there was \$2.8 million allocated by the Legislature last legislative session by Representative Kyle Yamashita. And the money was put in there for fencing for the Kula Ag Park, as well as the newer Upcountry Maui Ag Park...it's called two different names. And so the purpose of the \$2.8 million was to fence both park areas. He is...he did say that fence construction contracts for both fence lines have been solicited, awarded, and signed by all necessary parties, and we will submit purchase order approval for the selected contractor once we have a more definitive arrival date on materials. And so, as you can imagine, he, as well as a lot of other organizations, are having issues with supply chain, but he did think that they would...the supplies would be arriving about August of this year. He said a month-and-a-half to two-and-a-half months. So he is looking at that, and will be moving once he has the materials. He'll be meeting with OED and Public Works in the next couple of weeks to plan for the fence line vegetation clearing work in preparation for the start of construction. And he's also looking towards OED regarding information and updates on the Kula Ag Park tenants. So the tenants have already been made aware that this fencing project will begin, and will happen. And at the right time, when we have more definitive numbers on when the supplies come, it sounds like the contractor has been selected. And so when that happens, then they're going to have these meetings with the Kula Ag Park, with Patrick Ornellas from OED, JoAnn Inamasu and...to get that done. They are going to put up the fencing first at the Kula Ag Park, the original one, before they start construction on the second ag park. And that's going to be the sequence of the work to be done for the fencing project. And the other part that I was glad to hear is that Lance De Silva set up the \$2.8 million after they costed out the fencing, and the contractor, and the coordination of that is that he has some money to create an action plan. And as part of the Kula...as part of the Axis Deer Task Force...and you heard Kyle Caires talking about the need to have a wildlife master plan to be the next step with legislature, that he has created, and he has contract and purchase order to hire a planning consultant to draft the action plan, and that part has been completed. So he has an action plan for this in motion. And he did work with them about a month ago for a timeline, plan concept, and deliverables, and he does plan to schedule meetings with various landowners to discuss all things axis deer, however it's affecting them...oh, how it's affecting them, and what current action is being taken and possible solutions to reduce herd population. And he says, goal is to be able to use this plan to help steer individual landowners, government agencies, through a process that identifies best practices, control methods for reducing the deer population. Each landowner, land manager, farmer, rancher, and homeowner is faced with difficult circumstances that require different control methods. This plan will help to also prioritize funding opportunities, and he expects it to be...the timeline for this to be approximately four to six months, which will take him to the latter part of this year. And I'm not Lance De Silva, so I really can't answer questions, but if you have questions, if you give it to us, we can send it to him. Appreciate Lance doing this because as we can tell from the Department of Land and Natural Resources to get this fencing project done for the Kula Ag Park, as well as...do you remember the December 5th and 6th Kona low storm that happened that really affected us Upcountry, it was Lance De Silva and John Medeiros who went up into the mountains to help control some of the

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problems that were happening during that storm. And here he is at the forefront for trying to be a solution for our Kula Ag Park and fencing problem for our tenants. So, Members, you have any questions you would like us to send to DLNR regarding this? Ms. Paltin.

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: I guess just if they were onboard with the things that Dr. Caires said that we needed, and if they could offer any assistance in getting those State inspectors at the County level and that wildlife management plan. Because it seems that we need to enlist all the folks we need to get there. And I know the tail doesn't wag the dog, but maybe the more people saying what we need, the more that it can get through to the dog's brain.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . .*(laughing)*. . . Agreed. So it is one of our focal points. Hopefully this next legislative session we can get it passed. But I think as many people, like you're saying, you know, can talk about it, and Pam Tumpap with her grant that she'll have with the subcommittee of Economic Development in the Axis Deer Task Force, and she's picking up this education component, that we can start taking the steps forward to get the wildlife management plan passed and get State inspectors. Because it's almost a no-brainer for us, but I'm not too sure why we weren't able to get it done through the legislature, but we will. We will work on it, so thank you. Any other questions? We will put that in a question to DLNR and Lance De Silva, so thank you very much for that. No other questions, Members? Okay. So at this time, before I close on this, I just want to say that many of you may have heard and read about the airport having axis deer...one axis deer on the runway. And this whole group...a whole action went into effect ending part of last year to fix the fence, or increase fencing at the airport. And they did a great job with, you know, all branches of government with the meetings that I went to with Marvin Moniz and the Fire...State Fire personnel and everybody else. They put in \$300,000 for the effort. But I will say that I just recently saw Marvin Moniz, and he said...and I was surprised, but he said that they are continuing to try to control the axis deer around the airport, and they were able to control, or cull, 500 of them. And I was surprised because when you drive around the airport, you see no axis deer. But they're in there, you know, hiding in what used to be the sugar plantation or sugar fields that are now, you know, play fields for the axis deer that are, you know, around the airport. So I wanted to publicly thank Marvin Moniz and that group that are continuing to try to control and mitigate the axis deer problem around the airport. Because as you can guess, that if there were any disruptions with the airlines, that would be a...you know, a big accident waiting to happen. So appreciate that work, but that just exemplifies how important it is that we get control over the axis deer problems. I want to thank the Police Department, who gave us numbers that in comparison to last year, the number of axis deer accidents have increased on Maui, and it's kind of startling to think that...you know, that people are experiencing accidents, which are probably up, you know, over...I think it was over 90 percent. So it's a growing problem, and we are experiencing the impact of axis deer not only impacting our food, but...and the safety of our employees...or not employees, safety of our residents as they're driving on our roads. So they're all around us. At this time, any other questions? If not, I'm going to adjourn this meeting. Thank you very much, Members. Oh, Keani, you have a question?

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COUNCILMEMBER RAWLINS-FERNANDEZ: Mahalo, Chair. Yeah. Deer are food for us, but yeah, so around the airport, there's a lot of, like, overgrown kiawe and other invasive trees that provide habitat and hiding for deer. And so if that habitat is no longer there, then the deer won't go there because they don't want to be in open space. They only congregate there because they're able to hide. And so if that could be addressed, then that would help prevent deer from going onto the runway. Mahalo, Chair.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: I just want to say that what the Department of Transportation did was--when the incident happened--was that they fortified, you know, their fencing, and I think they're going to get...I think they're going to get State funding to also, you know, do the fencing again all around the whole airport. I'm speaking out of turn because I'm not positively sure. We can ask Marvin Moniz. But you're right, you know, there's a lot of opportunities for the deer to hide, and we will let...pass over that information and see, even with Parks, if we can work with them too. So...but I appreciate all of you...oh, Tamara Paltin, you have a question?

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: Oh, I didn't mean to interrupt, but maybe in addition to DLNR, we can also enlist Department of Transportation in that State wildlife management plan, as we see that it's affecting them as well. I don't know why the political will didn't pass through this past session, but if they see that it's affecting them --

CHAIR SUGIMURA: . . .*(inaudible)*. . .

COUNCILMEMBER PALTIN: -- and it could...I mean, the State Department of Transportation, DLNR is a State agency, and, you know, if an airplane were to...I've seen bird strikes at Kapalua, but I haven't...and hopefully never see a deer strike, but that could be catastrophic loss of life, you know, if it hit in a bad way. And preventable if the State legislature would have taken action, you know. So I think in this thing, these State agencies, to highlight the effects of the State's inaction and possible, you know...I mean, basically we're being asked for economic diversification, and the reason why economic diversification is important is not for economic development alone, but it's for purposes of resilience, so that we're able to weather the things that happen. And, you know, they have this thing in their lap where we could turn a waste product into a value-added product and solve so many problems, and they didn't pass it. So I'm just...I think it's, like, to the next level already, where we have to say, okay, State Department of Transportation, your testimony. Okay, DLNR, your testimony. Okay, County of Maui, your testimony. Like everybody pool together because it's...you know, Dr. Caires is one of the smartest guys I know, and they not listening to him.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Yeah, he's amazing. You're right, we felt like we were in college listening to him go through. But he's passionate, and all of us can help, you know, move this forward. So thank you for, you know, doing this meeting, and I really believe that we can get this done. So we will forge forward, and we'll get letters out as requested from this Committee. And thank you very much, everyone. So at this time, I'm going to defer this item so we can get an update and see the actual fence when it goes up at the Kula Ag Park, as well as...I want to hear about the action plan. And hopefully we can hear from Lance De Silva because he is, like, so enthused...he sounds like Dr. Caires if you've

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ever talked to him. He's...they're...one of the same mold. And John Medeiros, they work together. And as you know, everybody who has...goes hunting gets a permit from John Medeiros, so they all hold the keys to the solution. So appreciate it. At this time I'm going to defer this, I'm going to adjourn this meeting.

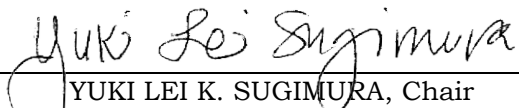
COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS. (Excused: KTK)

ACTION: DEFER PENDING FURTHER DISCUSSION.

CHAIR SUGIMURA: Thank you very much. And the IT Committee now is adjourned, and it is 11:05 a.m. Meeting adjourned. . . .*(gavel)*. . .

ADJOURN: 11:05 a.m.

APPROVED:



YUKI LEI K. SUGIMURA, Chair
Infrastructure and Transportation Committee

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Transcribed by: Crystal Sakai

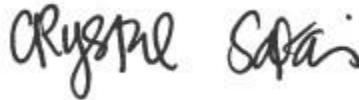
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CERTIFICATION

I, Crystal Sakai, hereby certify that pages 1 through 34 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 July 2022, in Wailuku, Hawai'i



Crystal Sakai