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**Minutes of the Board of Agriculture
January 23, 2024**

A video recording of this meeting can be found online by visiting this website:
<https://hdoa.hawaii.gov/meetings-reports/>

CALL TO ORDER – The meeting of the Board of Agriculture was called to order on January 23, 2024 at 9:06 am by Board of Agriculture Chairperson, Sharon Hurd. The meeting was conducted virtually via Zoom and in-person from:

*State of Hawaii, Department of Agriculture
Plant Quarantine Branch
1849 Auiki Street*

Members Present In-Person:

Sharon Hurd, Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

Members Virtually Present: Roll call/alone

Ryan Kanaka'ole, Board of Land and Natural Resources, Ex Officio Member

Mary Alice Evans, Ex-Officio Member

Diane Ley, Hawaii Member

Vincent Mina, Maui Member

Randy Cabral, Member-at-Large

James Gomes, Member-at-Large

Excused:

Dr. Ania Wieczorek, Interim Dean CTAHR, Ex Officio Member

Fred Cowell, Kauai Member

En Young, Member-at-Large

Deputy Attorney General Present In-Person: DAG Bryan Yee

Others Present In-Person:

Janelle Saneishi, HDOA/Chair

Marci Clingan, HDOA/Chair

Stephen Dalton, HDOA/IT

1 Others Virtually Present:¹

2 HDOA IT, HDOA

3 KoriK, HDOA/ARM

4 Dexter Kishida, HDOA, HDOA, Office of the Chairperson

5 Rae Gee, HDOA/Office of the Chairperson

6 Thomas Heaton

7 Kelcie Nagata, Esq.

8 Roy Hasegawa, HDOA/ARM

9 AGR – Murai, Linda, HDOA/ARM

10 Mark Ladao

11 Brandi Ah Yo, HDOA/ARM

12 Robert Danna

13 Mariah Williams

14 Janet

15
16
17 II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM 12/5/24 MEETING

18
19 Deputy Attorney General Bryan Yee said on page 8, line 31 after the term “discussion:”,
20 he’d like to add “confirmed that the ROE primarily involves installation and camera
21 checking.”

22
23 Motion to Approve: Gomes/Ley

24
25 Vote: Approved; unanimously

26
27 III. INTRODUCTIONS

28
29 IV. COMMUNICATIONS FROM DIVISIONS AND ADMINISTRATION

30
31 A. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- 32
33 1. Request for Consent to Assign General Lease No. S-4803; Robert G.
34 D’Anna and James C. Downing, Lessee/Assignor; Robert G. D’Anna and
35 Deborah J. D’Anna Co-Trustees of the D’Anna Family Joint Revocable
36 Trust, Dated June 21, 1994, Assignee; TMK: 3rd DIV/1-5-116:039, Lot 12,
37 Paho Agricultural Park, Puna District, Island of Hawaii, Hawaii

38
39 Brandi Ah Yo, Agricultural Resource Management Division, presented testimony as
40 submitted.

¹ The identification of the public members is based on their sign-in name but are not verified.

1
2 Motion to Approve: Gomes/Ley

3
4 Discussion:
5 Board Member Gomes said that the pictures mean a lot and it looks like they are very
6 good stewards of the farm. It's very well-manicured and he added that he is in total
7 support of this.

8
9 Board Member Mina asked if all the lots are in production.

10
11 Ms. Ah Yo responded that not all of them are in production. They have a few vacancies
12 in the Pahoia Ag Park that they are working towards getting leased hopefully in the
13 beginning of the first quarter of this year.

14
15 Board Member Mina asked what the average size of these lots are.

16
17 Ms. Ah Yo said they have a large amount of them that are 10 acres or more and others
18 are 5 acres or more so it's a bit of a split.

19
20 Board Member Ley said she is assuming that all parties sign off on the transfers of
21 these leases.

22
23 Ms. Ah Yo said yes, and that they were partners that are now going their separate
24 ways.

25
26 Vote: Approved; 7-7

27
28
29 2. Request to approve Sublease Between the Hamakua Agricultural
30 Cooperative, Lessee/Sublessor, and William Beach, Sublessee; General
31 Lease S-5551, TMK: 3rd DIV/4-6-003:020, Lot No's 2B and 2D, Honokaia,
32 Hamakua, Island of Hawaii, Hawaii

33
34 Brandi Ah Yo, Agricultural Resource Management Division, presented testimony as
35 submitted.

36
37 Motion to Approve: Ley/Gomes

38
39 Discussion:
40 Board Member Mina asked what is the status of the road as far as maintenance and
41 who is responsible? Is it the cooperative that is responsible for that road?

42
43 Ms. Ah Yo said she is not sure but will check on it and get back to the board.

1
2 Vote: Approved; 7-7

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4
5 V. OLD BUSINESS
6 None

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8
9 VI. NEW BUSINESS
10 None

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12
13 VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

14
15 1. Intent to employ a collection agency to address delinquencies in
16 payments by lessees of HDOA for delivery of water for agricultural
17 operations.

18
19 Discussion:
20 Chairperson Hurd said that there has been discussion for quite some time on the
21 delinquencies and I decided that it's time to move forward with a plan so we can
22 postpone an increase in the water rates. She added that this will be coming up in a
23 future meeting.

24
25 2. Administration Bills for 2024 Session – 4 bills
26 i. AGR-01 Relating to Agricultural Loans
27 ii. AGR-02 Relating to Hemp
28 iii. AGR-04 Relating to Pesticides
29 iv. AGR-14 Relating to the Strategic Plan to Increase Food Production
30 and Food Security

31 Discussion:
32 Chairperson Hurd discussed item i. relates to agricultural loans. The request is to cap
33 the interest rate at either 3% or 4% depending on the type of loan so as not to incur a
34 surprising rate.

35
36 Chairperson Hurd discussed item ii. which relates to hemp and is a clean-up bill that
37 allows the Department to oversee other than just transportation inspect for different
38 regulatory things.

39
40 Chairperson Hurd discussed item iii. She added that this bill relates to pesticides and
41 DOA is asking to replace 2 members on the pesticide council board. The two positions
42 were allocated, one to sugar and one to pineapple. We're changing that to be one for
43 diversified ag and one for coffee.

44

1 Chairperson Hurd discussed item iv. and said that we are seeking funding to do more
2 investigation and to update the baseline map that was done in two previous years. She
3 added that we'd like another baseline study that is helpful in tracking our progress.

- 4
5 3. Beginning consideration to participate in an MOU between ADC, HTDC
6 and NELHA to further develop and grow the aquaculture industry in
7 Hawaii through improved coordination and increased collaboration. The
8 focus of participation will be to increase food production.

9
10 Chairperson Hurd said we are beginning to consider participation in an MOU. She
11 added that we've started a discussion between ADC, HTDC, and NELHA to further
12 develop and grow the aquaculture industry in Hawaii to improve coordination and
13 increase collaboration. The focus of the participation of HDOA would be to increase
14 food production.

- 15
16 4. Presentation to Housing, Sustainability and Health Committee, City &
17 County of Honolulu included discussion of a coordinated rapid response
18 to reports of CRB, LFA, and Coqui frogs on city properties.

19
20 Chairperson Hurd said DOA did a presentation to Housing, Sustainability and Health
21 Committee of the City and County of Honolulu and they asked for an update on invasive
22 species. During that meeting, we asked for coordination of a rapid response to any invasive
23 species outbreak and implementing an MOU between DOA and the City and County of
24 Honolulu for a rapid response should the outbreak or detection be reported on a park or
25 beach. The delays in receiving the ROE could be impactful if it's a week. The MOU would
26 allow us to go in and confirm that the detection is a confirmed invasive.

27
28 Discussion:

29 Board Member Mina responded to item 1 and said that he feels that chasing after farmers
30 for delinquencies with their water bill is "shooting at the wrong target". He added that he is
31 looking for other ways for farmers being able to get rid of the expense of farming so they
32 can make a living at it. He also mentioned that it's a big challenge in Hawaii.

33
34 Chairperson Hurd said we go for education before regulation and there have been several
35 bills coming through. She added that our role is to deliver the water and the department has
36 tried different things and going to a collection agency was last on the list. When it became
37 necessary to raise the water rates to support the system, we had pushback from the
38 industry. She added that this is one of the tools in our toolbox to try to keep the water rates
39 as they are. If we move forward and this is not the way we want to go, we can always
40 change.

41
42 Board Member Mina asked if we could go out and ask the legislature to support policy to
43 invite in a private sector to support to pay for whatever infrastructure to deliver the water
44 and that person can have their name on it.

1
2 Board Member Evans said that one of the points raised in the greenhouse gas
3 sequestration task force was that farmers should not be burdened with the cost of mitigating
4 greenhouse gases for the planet. She added if you spoke to water infrastructure, our report
5 indicates that if farmers are going to be charged with sequestration carbon to mitigate
6 greenhouse gasses, there should be some support for them.

7
8 Board Member Ley said that we do need to take a holistic approach to this but in the
9 meantime, as policy and concepts develop, we need to have equitable application of the
10 laws and rules that exist.

11
12 Board Member Cabral said that we all know that DOA is not funded properly by the state.
13 He added that if we are dependent on water leases to fund the department, we'll never
14 going to be able to reduce the cost of farmers. He said the only way to overcome this would
15 be if the funding came from the general fund. He added that the extension service has been
16 cut back substantially over the years, so it's been a complete failure to support ag at the
17 state level with funding from the legislature.

18
19 Board Member Ley asked if Chairperson Hurd can elaborate on the iv. AGR-14 Relating to
20 the Strategic Plan to Increase Food Production and Food Security.

21
22 Chairperson Hurd said we are trying to increase economic profitability for the farmers as
23 well as providing the resources that are needed. Through the provisions of this bill, we are
24 trying to feel out a lot of the areas where the Hawaii Farm Bill will try to resolve. This bill has
25 funding to do a 2024 baseline to try to see where we are in the next 4 years after Covid.

26
27 Board Member Mina added that one of the biggest challenges is to not overproduce the
28 land. He added that working with what we have is important so where your land is able to
29 produce at a level where your inputs aren't overamping the farm.

30
31
32 Motion to adjourn: Mina/Ley

33
34 The meeting was adjourned at 9:42 am

35
36 Respectfully submitted,

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38
39
40 Marci Clingan

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