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3 **Minutes of the Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity**
4 **December 23, 2025**
5

6 A video recording of this meeting can be found online by visiting this website:
7 <https://dab.hawaii.gov/meetings-reports/>
8

9 CALL TO ORDER – The meeting of the Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity was called
10 to order on December 23, 2025, at 9:01 am by Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity
11 Chairperson, Sharon Hurd. The meeting was conducted virtually via Zoom and in-
12 person from:
13

14 *State of Hawaii, Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity*
15 *Plant Quarantine Branch*
16 *1849 Auiki Street*
17

18 Members Present In-Person:

19 Sharon Hurd, Chairperson, Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity
20

21 Members Virtually Present: Roll call/alone

22 Robert Hauff, DLNR, Ex-Officio Member
23 Dr. Parwinder Grewal, Dean CTAHR, Ex-Officio Member
24 Mark Takemoto, DBEDT, Ex-Officio Member
25 Diane Ley, Hawaii Member
26 Nathaniel Oswald, Maui County Member
27 Dr. Jason Moniz, Member-at-Large
28 James Gomes, Member-at-Large
29

30 Excused:

31 En Young, Member-at-Large
32 Vacant, Kauai Member
33

34 Deputy Attorney General Present In-Person:

35 DAG Jennifer Waihee-Polk
36

37 Others Present In-Person:

38 Cey Murakami, NAVFAC HI
39 Jason Christensen, NAVFAC HI
40 Benjamin Dunn, NAVFAC HI
41 Diane Yukumoto, NAVFAC HI
42 Isaac Maeda, AI-DAB
43 Kevin Moore, ARM-DAB

1 Jonathan Ho, PQ-DAB
2 Andrew Robinson, AG Loan-DAB
3 Jason Azus-Richardson, IT-DAB
4 Marci Clingan, Office of the Chair-DAB

5

6 Others Virtually Present:¹

7 ClouetC

8 Julia Kemp

9 Michael Schutte

10 Ryan Kagimoto

11 Cory Chun

12 J Ferrer, HDAB

13 Richard Kim - HDAB

14 Jill Scheibe

15 Jonathan Ho, DAB Plant Quarantine Branch

16 Lesley H

17 yeong.h.lau

18 Maria McCarthy

19 Kori Koike - DAB

20 BTM B.I.

21 janet

22 lindsey.ancog

23 Stephanie

24

25

26 II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM 11/25/25 MEETING

27

28 Motion to Approve: Ley/Gomes

29

30 Public Testimony:

31 None

32

33 Board Discussion:

34 Member Hauff said that he would abstain from the vote as he was not present at the
35 meeting.

36

37 Vote: Approved; 6-2 (Abstained - Hauff, Moniz)

38

39 III. INTRODUCTIONS

40

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

1 IV. COMMUNICATIONS FROM DIVISIONS AND ADMINISTRATION

2
3 A. AGRICULTURAL LOAN DIVISION

4
5 1. Request for Approval of one (1) Class A Loan for Jeramiah Blackhat.

6
7 Jillian Scheibe, Agricultural Loan Division, presented testimony as submitted.

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9 Motion to Approve: Ley/Gomes

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11 Public Testimony:
12 None

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14 Board Discussion:
15 None

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17 Vote: Approved; Unanimously

18
19
20 2. Request for Approval of one (1) Loan Guaranty for Michael James
21 Kawohikukapulani Schutte.

22
23 Jillian Scheibe, Agricultural Loan Division, presented testimony as submitted.

24
25 Motion to Approve: Gomes/Ley

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27 Public Testimony:
28 None

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30 Board Discussion:

31 Member Gomes asked if Mr. Schutte was online. He asked Mr. Shutte what the average
32 age of his cows is.

33
34 Mr. Shutte said about six years old.

35
36 Member Gomes asked how infested he is with the fireweed.

37
38 Mr. Shutte said they did wet-blade mowing and noticed the fireweed was not able to
39 return for about a year. He said with the drones, he believes they can maintain and
40 continue to spray the fireweed and suppress it from coming back up.

41
42 Member Gomes asked whether pastures had been affected by Two-Lined Spittlebug.

43

1 Mr. Shutte reported no current impact; noted contact with Palani Ranch to explore drone
2 service trials for spittlebug spraying; drones can access lava rock and hilly terrain
3 beyond roads where bikes/side-by-sides are limited.

4
5 Board Member Gomes asked about horse inventory breakdown

6
7 Mr. Shutte stated having three geldings and one mare.

8
9 Member Moniz asked follow-up questions on asset valuations.

10
11 Mr. Shutte explained potential buyers include local ranchers expanding herds; worst-
12 case scenario they go to a packer plant; six-year-old cows have productive years
13 remaining.

14
15 Member Moniz noted valuation may be high for Hawaii market; asked about recent
16 horse purchase timing and value.

17
18 Mr. Shutte said the most recent horse purchased last year; value \$25,000.

19
20 Member Moniz expressed caution regarding liquidation values for horses and breeding
21 cows; noted potential difficulty achieving stated values in Hawaii; stated he likes the
22 project and hopes it succeeds.

23
24 Member Gomes agreed with Jason; added that Michael's point relates to the cow's
25 average age of six years, affecting the longevity and number of times the cow can get
26 calves over time before culling them. Acknowledged Jason's perspective and clarified it
27 was his note.

28
29 Vote: Approved; Unanimously

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31

32 B. ANIMAL INDUSTRY DIVISION

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34 1. Request for Approval of Use Occupancy Agreement ("UOA") in favor of
35 the United States Navy to Install and Use a Gate on the Animal
36 Quarantine Station Property.

37
38 Dr. Isaac Maeda, Animal Industry Division, presented testimony as submitted.

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40 Motion to Approve: Moniz/Gomes

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43 Public Testimony:
44 None

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Board Discussion:

Member Ley asked if the quarantine station has a gate at the entrance from the public roadway and also asked about emergency situations.

Dr. Maeda confirmed there is a front gate; use of the new gate will coincide with regular station hours; special arrangements possible with notification; staff live on property to open off-hours if needed. Dr. Maeda noted that members from the U.S. Navy were also available for questions.

Member Hauff asked if public access to Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) property or operations would be impacted by Navy usage.

Dr. Maeda said impacts would be minimal and only short delays when vehicles enter and turn toward the gate; no anticipated negative effects on operations or traffic.

Vote: Approved; Unanimously

A. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT DIVISION

1. Request for Approval for the Transfer of Public Lands from the Department of Land & Natural Resources to the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity, Pursuant to Act 90, SLH 2003, Codified as Chapter 166E, Hawaii Revised Statutes; TMK No.: (2) 1-8-001:003 (por.), Nakula, Kaupō, Hāna, Island of Maui, Hawai'i

Kevin Moore, Agricultural Resource Management Division, presented testimony as submitted.

Motion to Approve: Gomes/Moniz

Public Testimony:

None

Board Discussion:

Member Gomes asked who will be responsible for fencing and roads for the two resulting parcels given the carve-out; whether existing roads suffice; asked about compensation to the lessee for destocking due to reduced carrying capacity; asked whether the existing lease term will be honored for the remaining DLNR portion.

Mr. Moore said he'd need to review Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) approved action for road and fencing responsibility; subdivision approval is at DLNR's

1 expense, so road impacts might be DLNR's responsibility; fencing uncertain pending
2 review; on compensation, referenced statute requiring payment if withdrawal incurs
3 lessee expenses—likely DLNR's responsibility or to be negotiated; confirmed the
4 lessee's DLNR portion continues through its current lease termination.

5

6 Member Ley noted the submittal did not address several issues raised; stated DLNR
7 intends to retain a portion for future addition to the Forest Reserve (DLNR's kuleana);
8 asked the term remaining on the lease for the portion coming to DAB and whether
9 conditions or process would return to the board.

10

11 Mr. Moore explained the parcel must be subdivided before transfer to DAB subject to
12 the lease; once 702 acres transfer, staff will return to the board for an extension or new
13 disposition.

14

15 Member Ley confirmed with Mr. Moore that this is a preliminary step leading to a new
16 lease with the lessee.

17

18 Chairperson Hurd expressed satisfaction a portion is moving over; stated Act 90 is
19 working.

20

21 Member Moniz expressed strict stance on lease transfers; cited working group
22 recommendations that predominantly agricultural leases should transfer to DAB; asked
23 if the DLNR-retained section is predominantly in agricultural production.

24

25 Mr. Moore said based on staff inspection, it is being used agriculturally.

26

27 Member Hauff said he's not familiar with the details of this specific transfer; but from the
28 topography maps, the DLNR portion appears steep and likely adjacent to Forest
29 Reserve; could not say definitively, but it does not look like it would be in agricultural
30 production.

31

32 Mr. Moniz requested a definitive answer; raised concerns from lessee Brandon Baltazar
33 about boundary issues with the road and a potential walking trail near a gulch; noted
34 Brandon's prior fire department experience recovering bodies from that gulch; asked
35 whether any trail easement would be on DAB's lease or DLNR's and who bears liability
36 for public use and potential injuries.

37

38 Mr. Moore said DLNR's submittal did not mention such an easement; would consult
39 DLNR staff to answer.

40

1 Member Oswald asked whether, upon transfer to DAB, there will be an assessment
2 affecting lease rent.

3

4 Mr. Moore confirmed there will be a pro rata reduction in rent based on acreage upon
5 transfer; later, when a new lease is considered by the board, an appraisal will be
6 conducted.

7 Member Oswald asked to ensure the board has opportunity to discuss rent changes,
8 noting past transfers saw large rent increases.

9

10 Chairperson Hurd affirmed the board will have that opportunity.

11

12 Vote: Approved; Unanimously

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15 V. OLD BUSINESS

16

17 1. Approval of October 28, 2025, Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity Meeting
18 Minutes.

19

20 Motion to Approve: Ley/Gomes

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22 Public Testimony:

23 None

24

25 Board Discussion:

26 None

27

28 Vote: Approved; Unanimously

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31 VI. NEW BUSINESS

32

33 1. NON-ACTION ITEM: Discussion and Demonstration of the Pest Dashboard,
34 Enacted Pursuant to Act 236, Session Laws Hawai'i (SLH) 2025.

35

36 Craig Cluet, Plant Industry Division, presented new business item as submitted and
37 showed the Board the Pest Dashboard accessible at <https://biosecurity.hawaii.gov/>.

38

39 Public Testimony:

40 None

41

42 Board Discussion:

1 Member Grewal inquired if the dashboard's data included contributions from College of
2 Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience (CTAHR) and O'ahu Invasive Species
3 Committee (OISC), or if it was solely from DAB.

4
5 Mr. Cluet confirmed that the data is currently from DAB only, but discussions are
6 ongoing with partners to integrate their data for a comprehensive statewide picture. He
7 stated that his role as GIS program manager will involve working across all DAB
8 divisions, not just biosecurity and plant industry.

9
10 Member Ley asked about opportunities for the public to report incidents or ask
11 questions through the website.

12
13 Mr. Cluet indicated plans to add features for public interaction, including potential
14 chatbots and AI for reporting incidents.

15
16 Member Moniz emphasized the importance of a prominent "report an incident" feature
17 on the website's front page, citing a personal anecdote about reporting difficulty.

18
19 Chairperson Hurd thanked the Governor and legislature for Act 236 and praised Craig
20 Cluet's efforts in launching the dashboard by the December 1st deadline.

21
22 Member Hauff welcomed the dashboard as a significant step for improving biosecurity
23 and inter-agency collaboration in Hawaii.

24
25 Chairperson Hurd stated the intent is to expand the website to include more publicly
26 funded data from various divisions like Agricultural Resource Management, Animal
27 Industry, and Quality Assurance.

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29
30 2. NON-ACTION ITEM: Presentation And Discussion on Hawai'i Biosecurity Efforts
31 Resulting from the Passing of Act 231, SLH 2024, and Act 236, SLH 2025.

32
33 Jonathan Ho, Plant Quarantine Branch, presented new business item as submitted.

34
35 Public Testimony:

36 None

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38 Board Discussion:

39 Board Member Gomes inquired about staffing and funding issues, and whether funds
40 would be properly allocated to continue the biosecurity process.

41
42 Chairperson Hurd explained that Act 250 provides recurring funding through fiscal year

1 2027, but staffing was covered by a separate bill, and there are challenges with
2 compensation levels to attract and retain expertise.

3

4 Mr. Ho detailed efforts to revise minimum qualifications for inspector positions and
5 explore compensation schedules that match federal partners to address recruitment
6 difficulties.

7

8 Member Moniz asked about recent skunk incidents in Hilo and if they could be pinned to
9 specific vessels to focus enforcement.

10

11 Member Hauff questioned the "green" status of inter-island movement regulations for
12 nurseries, noting that current regulations primarily apply to nurseries exporting to the
13 mainland, and suggested it should be a different color.

14

15 Member Hauff also raised concerns about the lengthy regulatory process for permitting
16 biocontrol agents for release, advocating for a faster process once research confirms
17 safety

18

19 Mr. Ho agreed with the need to streamline the biocontrol permitting process and
20 suggested exploring a specific system for biocontrol agents within the rules.

21

22 Chairperson Hurd discussed implementing "transitional facilities" and Government
23 Industry Agreements (GIAs) to engage industry, starting with the Hawaii Floriculture and
24 Nursery Association (HFNA), to increase "boots on the ground" for pest detection and
25 response.

26

27 Member Ley suggested posting the biosecurity framework slide deck to the PEST
28 dashboard to help the public understand the ongoing work, fostering advocacy and
29 participation.

30

31 Motion to adjourn: Hauff/Ley

32

33 The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 am

34

35 Respectfully submitted,

36

37

38

39 Marci Clingan

40