



**MINUTES
FOR THE MEETING OF THE
HAWAI'I BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES**

DATE: January 16, 2014
TIME: 1:00 pm
PLACE: Leiopapa A. Kamehameha Building
Office of Planning, 6th Floor Conference Room
235 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

AGENDA ITEM 1: Call to Order

Mr. Kamañao Mills, Chairperson of the Hawai'i Board on Geographic Names (HBGN or Board), called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

The following were in attendance:

MEMBERS: Kalani Akana (Office of Hawaiian Affairs), Joan Delos Santos (Office of Planning), Betty Kam (Bernice P. Bishop Museum), Holly McEldowney (Department of Land and Natural Resources), Kamañao Mills (Department of Hawaiian Home Lands), Ryan Morales (Land Survey Division), and Noenoe Silva (University of Hawai'i)

ADVISOR: Renee Louis, PhD., Naomi Losch (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, retired)

OTHERS: Dennis Kim (Office of Planning), Nick Belluzzo (State Historic Preservation Division), and Melia Lane-Kamahele (National Park Service)

AGENDA ITEM 2: Approval of Meeting Minutes of November 21, 2013

Ms. Holly McEldowney, HBGN Secretary, explained that the minutes were not ready for distribution although a draft was completed and will be distributed for comment shortly.

AGENDA ITEM 3: Status of HBGN Names Database Organization and Publication Initiative

Ms. Joan Delos Santos reported that she and Ms. Renee Louis were developing a new coding scheme for the names database. This should make it easier to find the status of a given place name and the decisions made. Once done, the spreadsheets will be posted on the HBGN website. They are in the process of converting the spreadsheets to include these new codes. This should be ready by the next meeting. During this process, they determined that in May of 2012 the HBGN submitted 1,400 names to the U.S. Board of Geographic Names (BGN) for consideration. They also realized that 40 names were missed at the time so those will be submitted today. The next step will be comparing names on the

spreadsheets with those entered in the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS) to determine which submitted names were officially changed in the GNIS and which were not. If a name has not been changed, they will try to find out why. It may be that the BGN has not gotten to it yet. Once this is done, the revised spreadsheet will be posted on the HGBN website along with descriptions of what the HGBN does, its methodology, and the place name initiative that has been underway for the last 10 or 12 years. Hopefully this will be posted in February or March.

AGENDA ITEM 4: Request from National Park Service to Reconsider HGBN Decision on ‘Ohe‘o

Ms. Delos Santos provided some background on previous decisions made pertaining to the series of pools, once called Seven Sacred Pools, in the Kīpahulu District, which is part of Haleakalā National Park. The initial request to change the name of these pools dates to the 1970s and the issue was raised again in the 1990s. The issue was not entirely resolved. At its meeting of February 28, 2013, the HGBN decided to recommend the name ‘Ohe‘o. The National Park Service (NPS) was not officially notified of this decision. The BGN contacted NPS before officially considering the HGBN recommendation and discovered that NPS did not support the change. The BGN did not act on the recommendation and is now asking if the HGBN is willing to reconsider its recommendations. Ms. Melia Lane-Kamahele, NPS, explained that opinions on this name have evolved over the years with changes in park management.

Ms. Natalie Gates, Haleakalā National Park Superintendent, and Ms. Polly Angelakis, Chief of Interpretation, joined the discussion by conference call. Mr. Mills began by asking if Haleakalā National Park has a proposed name it recommends. Ms. Angelakis responded that they prefer the name “Pools of ‘Ohe‘o”. Ms. Delos Santos said that she talked to Ms. Jennifer Runyon at BGN who advised HGBN to determine exactly which feature the name is referencing when making this decision. Is it ‘Ohe‘o Gulch, valley, pools, or an area? Ms. Naomi Losch replied that it is the vicinity or the area of the pools. She added that she looked up the name in *Sites of Maui* (Sterling 1978) and found one source saying that the full name of the gulch was “Ohe-o-Kapo” and that each pool has a name. As written, it means bamboo of Kapo.

Ms. Delos Santos asked Board members to explain how they decided ‘Ohe‘o was the appropriate name. Ms. Betty Kam remembers the board discussing whether the name applied to the pools, the gulch, or the area. They decided on ‘Ohe‘o because the name appeared to be a geography area encompassing these and other features. Ms. Losch noted that the Board did not include “Pools” because that would not be a Hawaiian name. To clarify the board’s intent, Ms. McEldowney pulled out the meeting minutes for February 28, 2013. The minutes show the Board believing that the name applies the area. Ms. Louis felt the BGN is confused because they are accustomed to names being applied to specific features. When BGN staff saw the agenda item referencing “Pools”, they expected the HGBN decision to apply to pools and not to the area in which the pools are located.

Ms. Noenoe Silva reviewed more closely the article in *Sites of Maui*. The excerpt is from a 1964 to 1965 newspaper series in the *Maui News*. The full name of the gulch is said to be “Ohe-o-Kapo” for the goddess Kapo and ‘ohe is bamboo. It also gives each pool a name. It is unfortunate that the Board did not have this reference at hand during the previous discussions. Ms. McEldowney asked if NPS could just use “Pools” as a descriptive term in its materials without having to include it in the official place name of ‘Ohe‘o. This would be similar to saying a trail at Haleakalā. Does the name need to be changed to tell people where the pools are? Ms. Lane-Kamahele explained that Haleakalā park staff wanted it to be officially listed as “Pools of ‘Ohe‘o” so that it could be easily identified in publications such as maps and brochures. Without the capacity to identify where the pools are, people drive all over the neighborhood getting lost, park in inappropriate places, and ask for directions. If it were on the map, people would be directed specifically to that location. It is a directional issue. Ms. Gates confirmed Ms. Lane-Kamahele’s explanation but added that having readily understandable directions is very important given the number visitors they have, about 800,000 a year, and the fact that many do not speak English. Many also do not check the website ahead of time or do any research. Park staff needs to reduce the amount of time spent providing visitors with already available information and answering relatively simple questions. If this information is not on the map, visitors will not understand where to go. The best option for NPS is to have “Pools of ‘Ohe‘o” on its publications because that is what people look for.

Mr. Kalani Akana asked if NPS was concerned because all its materials and signs currently say “Pools of ‘Ohe‘o”. Ms. Gates confirmed that this name is on current park signs and materials. Ms. Kam asked if these need to be reprinted if the HBGN decides the name should be just ‘Ohe‘o. Ms. Angelakis confirmed that they would. Ms. Gates clarified that reprinting these materials is not the main issue. The primary concern is that they would be putting something on a map that is not familiar to people. It was called “Seven Pools of ‘Ohe‘o and then “Pools of ‘Ohe‘o because these names are somewhat descriptive. Getting people to say they want to go to ‘Ohe‘o Gulch, or just ‘Ohe‘o, will take another seven to ten years of effort.

In her discussion with Ms. Runyon, Ms. Delos Santos asked what weight the BGN gives to local usage as opposed to what a state board thinks is culturally correct. This also includes weighing other factors during the decision making process. Ms. Runyon called it local preference instead of local usage and said that this is generally BGN’s priority. This reflects what people of an area want a place to be called. This is usually the community and not, for example, NPS. Do people of the area want to change it because it has always been printed in a certain way or do they want to change it so it will be correct going forward? If it is on a map, people will start using that name. Sometimes they want to keep it the way it is even if it is incorrect. If a decision is controversial or considered a major change, some state boards will hold public hearings, send out surveys, or write newspaper articles on the pending decision. It is the responsibility of state boards is to find out what people want places to be called. Sometimes decisions are simple and sometimes not. This is the guidance the BGN gives state boards. Ms. Silva suggested that it may be more complicated in Hawai‘i because of the cultural aspect. Ms. Delos Santos said Ms. Runyon

acknowledged the importance of the cultural aspect for Hawai‘i and pointed out that the HBGN does not need to rush its decision.

Ms. Louis announced that she has been contracted by Ala Kuku‘i/Hāna Retreat to work on a community outreach for the East Maui Watershed Partnership. She will be part of an ethnographic project to address water concerns in East Maui. Her role will be mapping place names with the different partners in the area, including the cultural practitioners. One objective is to see if they can better understanding water management from a traditional Hawaiian perspective. Examining place names is part of this exercise. She is hoping to use the approach devised for the previous HBGN place names project which is now being housed at the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. In February she will be giving people involved in the project an overview of names currently on the USGS maps and in databases at the state and national levels. She will encourage the community to help expand our understanding of place names if they are comfortable doing so. Meetings with the community will be set up for the rest of the year. Hopefully this can contribute to HBGN’s ongoing efforts. This project might be a vehicle to solicit community input on ‘Ohe‘o.

Mr. Mills suggested that the board consider a motion for more research before a decision is made on the name ‘Ohe‘o or “Pools of ‘Ohe‘o”. This could be pending the results of Ms. Louis’s discussions with the East Maui community. Ms. Louis noted that NPS will be included in these discussions because they are part of East Maui Watershed Partnership. Ms. Gates said that they do not need a decision immediately.

Motion: To defer reconsideration of the HBGN’s decision on the name ‘Ohe‘o pending the results of Ms. Louis’s discussions with the East Maui community
(Kam/Silva)

Vote: Approved unanimously by voice vote.

Ms. Kam found it interesting that the BGN considers it the objective of state boards to identify names that the community wants. Since she has been on the HBGN, the Board’s focus has been finding original or accurate names and often these are not ones the community knows. This is particularly true when community members are new to an area. Ms. Louis pointed out that many in a community know a name because they learned it from maps. Asking the community about a name is not necessarily a way to confirm the validity of names on maps. Ms. Delos Santos clarified that she was the one that used the term local usage when she asked Ms. Runyon the question. Local usage is not the BGN’s top priority because communities may be using names incorrectly. The question is whether a community is interested in using names in the correct way. Mr. Mills pointed to the example of Barber’s Point becoming Kalaeloa. Everyone now calls the area Kalaeloa. During the transition, many in the community protested the change. Some native Hawaiians wanted it to remain Barbers Point because there was history behind that name and they did not want to lose that history. It marked the event when Captain Henry Barber’s ship ran aground at the point.

Ms. Delos Santos clarified that community preference is one of the BGN's primary considerations when reviewing a state board recommendation. It will ask for further research if there is a concern instead of rejecting the recommendation. The BGN does not expect high levels of community outreach for all state board decisions. This would only be appropriate if the state board anticipates a decision being controversial. Ms. Louis points out that most HBGN actions have been adding diacritical marks to names and not recommending name changes. This only clarifies meanings of existing names.

Ms. Kam noted that combining components of common place names will not be readily accepted by everyone. Ms. Louis recalled that when the board began following the 'Ahahui 'Ōlelo guidelines, it assumed that all applicable names covered by the guidelines should be combined. Names would remain separate if descriptors, such as Kai or Waena, were involved. These are not part of the name and the name remains valid without these descriptors. For Ko'olauloa, loa is part of the name and cannot be removed because it is part of the name. Ms. Kam pointed out that most people in the community do not understand this. They will see a familiar name in a different format and wonder why. It is difficult to expect the community to understand the reasoning used by the Board when making these decisions. Ms. Losch suggested that including communities in this discussion is a way to educate them and to explain the reasons for the change. If they understand the intent, they will view place names differently. If they understand that it is honoring the intent of the kupuna, then maybe they will see it that way. She gave the example of Lā'ie. She grew up in Kahuku and everyone said "Lāia". She questioned why people were saying Lā'ie and was told because they saw it in a book. It is like "mālie" and "mālia". It is easier to say "mālia" than "mālie", but the real word is mālie. In everyday speech many people say malia. This happens when a language is not in common use.

Ms. Delos Santos noted that Ms. Runyon specifically said that it was not the BGN's intent to use circular reasoning. Common usage does not necessarily determine what name should be used going forward. In controversial situations, it is good practice to seek wider input. This would make the work of HBGN more difficult. Ms. Louis believes that more people will understand how the HBGN makes its decisions once the criteria and guidelines used are posted online along with the status of decisions and background on why decisions were made.

Mr. Mills announced that he needed to leave. Ms. Delos Santos volunteered to act as chair for the rest of the meeting.

Mr. Akana suggested that the Board not stop at just 'Ohe'o, but consider the name "Ohe-o-Kapo". He explained that 'ohe is a kino lau of the goddess Kapo. Ms. Silva pointed out that the *Sites of Maui* article also names the other pools and the Board should probably consider those as well. It might be good for NPS to include these names in their interpretive materials. Ms. Delos Santos noted that NPS could not use these names until they were recognized by HBGN and entered into the GNIS. Ms. Lane-Kamahele said that NPS still struggles with signage at the pools and finding ways to provide enough information so that people can see the pools without encouraging them to take risks. She also announced that NPS just published a brochure focusing on what the community wants

visitors to know about the park. On the brochure's map, the area is labeled 'Ohe'o. A separate tag says "Pools" with an arrow pointing to the pools. In her discussions with Haleakalā National Park staff, they did discuss using this approach if HBGN decided not to reconsider its previous decision. If HBGN takes action on the individual pool names, the park would have the option of including these names in appropriate materials. Ms. Louis pointed that even if HBGN recommends entering the individual pool names in the GNIS, this does not require NPS to use these names in all its publications. Ms. Silva suggested that signage with this kind of information is also important for educating the local population about Hawai'i place names. She noted that the article in *Sites of Maui* calls the pools, collectively, "Na Wai Nahiku" and the seventh pool is also named "Nahiku". Ms. Lane-Kamahele explained that signage identifying all seven pools is problematic because visitors may then want to see all seven which is hazardous. Ms. Silva argued that the Board should consider recognizing these individual names so that NPS would have the option of using them in the future.

Ms. Lane-Kamahele said that she found it interesting that the kupuna and community group working with NPS to develop the brochure did not bring up any of these names for the pools. She did not know if they were aware of the names and chose not to use them or if they did not know them. She is not sure how widely park staff consulted.

AGENDA ITEM 5: Request from Office of Hawaiian Affairs to Reconsider HBGN Decisions on Maunakea and Maunaloa

Mr. Akana presented his reasons for believing that the HBGN decision to combine the names Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa should be reconsidered. He has always seen these name components separated in the literature. This indicates that Kea was the name of the mountain and was not a description of the mountain. Loa was the mountain's name and not a description. All the Hawaiian language newspaper sources separate the words in these two place names. He believes that the HBGN mistakenly assumed that "Kea" and "Loa" were descriptors of the mountains. It would be like combining Mauna and Ka'ala on O'ahu. Ka'ala is the name of the mountain.

Ms. Silva added that some mele and mo'olelo strongly suggest that the original name for Mauna Kea was Mauna a Wakea. It did not mean "white mountain" originally. This is mentioned in a birth song for Kauikeaouli published in *The Echo of Our Song*. It is found elsewhere as well so she agrees that the word components should be separate. She noted that she has occasionally seen them combined but this is in later newspapers. She said she agrees with Mr. Akana for the most part. In Theodore Kelsey's work, he suggests that Mauna Loa was Mauna Hāloa. She has not seen this elsewhere.

Ms. Louis said she wished this information had been available when the Board first discussed these names. Ms. Kam agreed that the Board did not have this kind of discussion when the decision was made. She recalls the Board looking at format more than addressing the rationale behind names. Ms. Louis said she appreciates having decisions questioned and people on the board bringing different backgrounds to the discussion. This forces

everyone to examine the intent of place names. Ms. Kam again raised her concern over the many other names that the Board routinely combined in the past.

Mr. Akana asked if the Board should decide now or wait until it has consulted with others. Ms. Louis suggested that the Board consider consulting with community groups that have an interest in these kinds of issues. Ms. Delos Santos reiterated that public outreach is important if a decision is or could be controversial. Ms. Kam thought it might be good to notify people who are following the Board's previous decisions and let them know that some decisions have changed based on new information. Mr. Akana suggested that we at least inform Mr. Bobby Camara who raised the issue at the last meeting. Ms. Delos Santos pointed out that Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa remain separate in the GNIS even though the HBGN submitted them as combined. The Board could ask that these two changes be removed from the submittal before the changes are entered in the GNIS. Ms. Silva believes that the decision to separate these name components is not controversial because most people are already accustomed to seeing it this way. Ms. Delos Santos confirmed that no one in the community was officially notified of the Board's previous decision. Mr. Camara only knew because she sent him the spreadsheet when he inquired about other names. Public input is not necessary if no one is clamoring for the change.

Motion: To reverse the previous HBGN decision to combine place name components of the place names Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa (Akana/Kam)

Vote: Approved unanimously by voice vote.

Ms. Louis said she would change the spreadsheet to reflect this decision and Ms. Delos Santos offered to inform Ms. Runyon and Mr. Camara of the HGBN decision.

Ms. Louis repeated concerns that other place names combined by the Board need to be reexamined and hoped that this process would lead to a broader discussion of the underlying issue. She can easily generate a list of previously combined names for Hawaii Island because most are landforms such as pu'u and kīpuka. The Board now has the capacity to examine the rationale behind a name more thoroughly, often because information is more readily available online. Ms. Kam said she welcomes the opportunity to revisit these decisions. It can be awkward if the HBGN decision is different from what appears in *Place Names of Hawaii* which many use as a standard reference. Ms. Delos Santos proposed that Hawai'i Island be given priority because these names have been submitted to the BGN and entry in the GNIS may be pending. There is still an opportunity to change a decision before action is taken by the BGN. Ms. Runyon did say that reconsidering decisions too many times is not good, but the BGN does want names to be as accurate as possible. Clearly explaining why names were reconsidered and changed are an important part of this process.

Ms. Louis suggested that the Board specifically discuss, as an agenda item, how it wants to apply the 'Ahahui 'Ōlelo guidelines for combining names before proceeding with the spreadsheets. This discussion could result in a clear statement on why decisions are being reconsidered and how the Board intends to apply the guidelines going forward. Ms. Silva

noted that this exercise would also help the Board compile all the different guidelines or policies developed over the years. It could serve as handbook or users guide for the Board and the public.

Motion: To review HBGN past decisions to combine components of place names and to potentially reconsider those decisions (Silva/Kam)

Vote: Approved unanimously by voice vote.

AGENDA ITEM 6: Continued Discussion of Selected Maui [Hawai'i] Island Place Names

At the last meeting, Mr. Camara identified several place names on the Hawai'i Island spreadsheets that he believes should be reconsidered. Included were: Kipukakekake, Pu'uwa'awa'a (quad name correction), Kīpukapepeiau, Kamakai'a Uka, Kamakai'a Waena, Keahole Southwest, Halema'uma'u, Kūki'o Bay, and Kīpuka Mizotas. Ms. McEldowney reported that the specific concerns he raised are listed the November 21, 2013 meeting minutes that will be available shortly. Ms. Louis added the Mr. Camara said he was willing to go through the spreadsheet to see if there were any other place names needing attention. Ms. McEldowney and Ms. Silva both thought some of the questions raised by Mr. Camara needed more discussion while others were relatively simple. A decision on Halema'uma'u, in particular, needed deliberation. Ms. Delos Santos proposed considering these names at the next meeting.

Motion: To defer consideration of these Hawai'i Island place names to a subsequent meeting (McEldowney/Silva)

Vote: Approved unanimously by voice vote.

AGENDA ITEM 7: Discussion of Maui Island Place Names

Motion: To defer discussion of the Maui Island place names to a subsequent meeting (Kam/Silva)

Vote: Approved unanimously by voice vote.

AGENDA ITEM 8: Adjourn

The Board decided to meet next on February 20, 2014 at 10:00 am. The change in time is to accommodate Ms. Silva's class schedule. The meeting adjourned at 2.20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Holly McEldowney