



**MINUTES  
FOR THE MEETING OF THE  
HAWAII BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES**

DATE: March 21, 2013  
TIME: 1:00 pm  
PLACE: Leiopapa A. Kamehameha Building  
Office of Planning, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room  
235 S. Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

**AGENDA ITEM 1: Call to Order**

Arthur Buto, Chairperson of the Hawai'i Board on Geographic Names (HBGN or Board) and Hawaii GIS Program Manager, called the meeting to order at 1:20 pm.

The following were in attendance:

**MEMBERS:** Arthur Buto (Office of Planning), Betty Kam (Bernice P. Bishop Museum), Holly McEldowney (Department of Land and Natural Resources), Kamanao Mills (Department of Hawaiian Home Lands), Ryan Morales (Land Survey Division), Noenoe Silva (University of Hawai'i)

**ABSENT:** Kamoia Quitevis (Office of Hawaiian Affairs)

**ADVISORS:** Renee Louis, PhD.

**OTHERS:** Nick Belluzzo (State Historic Preservation Division), Melia Lane-Kamahele (Pacific Islands Office, National Park Service)

**AGENDA ITEM 2: On O'ahu, Kaukonahua Stream [GNIS FID 360666] where it flows into Kaiaka Bay is labeled "Kiikii Stream" on the USGS HALEIWA topographic maps, and there is corroborating evidence of local usage of "Kiikii Stream." However, there is no entry in GNIS or *Place Names of Hawaii* for Ki'iki'i Stream. HBGN is reviewing the evidence and other resources in order to decide if USBGN should be asked to consider a name change for the lower portion of the stream**

Mr. Buto summarized a request the HBGN received from the Jennifer Runyon of the U.S. Board of Geographic Names (BGN) regarding the name Ki'iki'i Stream. The BGN is in the process of updating the topographic maps for Hawai'i and discovered some discrepancies. On the Haleiwa topographic quad, a stream entering Kaiaka Bay is labeled "Kiikii Stream",

but it is not in the national Geographic Names Information System (GNIS). In the GNIS, the name Kaukonahua extends to the lower portion of the stream. If the HBGN believes that this lower portion of the stream is Ki'iki'i Stream and recommends this name change, the BGN can officially vote on the change at its upcoming meeting.

Ms. Silva found Ki'iki'i in Lloyd Soehren's catalog of Hawaiian place names and it is clear from descriptions that Ki'iki'i is the name of the stream when it enters Kaiaka Bay. The catalog was drawn from a number of historic land records, such as those recorded when land boundaries were being mapped and recorded starting in the mid-1800s.

Ms. Louis noted that this issue is not unique. She has a whole page of names for each island that she found on USGS quads but not in the GNIS. The spreadsheets the HBGN is working on currently are those that are in the GNIS but were not entered on the HBGN place name spreadsheets when they were compiled from USGS quads. She is more concerned about place names on the quads not being in the GNIS because it is understandable that not all names in the GNIS can be placed on maps. Ki'iki'i was probably overlooked when they began the process of entering place names in the GNIS from the quad maps. It is probably the result of human error.

Mr. Morales noted that on a Land Court map the stream adjoining the parcel is labeled Kiki Stream. Ms. Silva noted that Soehren's catalog has other examples of it being written as Kiki. Surveyors at the time may not have transcribed the name correctly or did not hear it correctly.

Mr. Morales questioned whether the HBGN's decision on Ki'iki'i would require the Land Court records to be changed. Land Court is the process by which the state officially guarantees that a particular owner has clear title to a piece of land and that the title cannot be challenged. Place names along parcel boundaries are an important part of this process because they verify the parcel's location.

Ms. Silva proposed that the HBGN not rely solely on the Land Court records when recommending official names, but could address this potential problem by recommending that Kiki be included as a variant in the GNIS. Ms. Louis agreed and clarified that Ki'iki'i would be recorded as the official name in the federal records but the variant, Kiki, could still be accessed as a name associated with this feature. Ms. McEldowney noted that this does raise an interesting issue given that state law requires all state departments to use place names approved by the HBGN. After further discussion, all agreed that it would not be practical to change place names that have already been recorded by the Land Court and that having these names listed as variants was sufficient recognition that these other names have been used for particular features. Mr. Buto also pointed out that the state law requiring use of official names has an exception for "legally established names or spellings" which could apply to the Land Court.

**Motion:** To recommend that Ki'iki'i Stream be officially added to the GNIS, while also noting the name Kiki as variant. (Mills/Silva)

**Vote:** Approved Unanimously. Ayes: Buto, Kam, McEldowney Mills, Morales, and Silva.

**AGENDA ITEM 3: Discussion of Remaining Hawai'i Island Names**

Before continuing and completing the Board's review of place names on the Hawaii Island spreadsheet, Ms. Silva reported on research she did on the name Waikupanaha which the Board discussed at the last meeting. It is identified as a pond in Soehren's catalogue and appears to have no diacritical marks. The name Waiākeawaena Elementary School was also revisited as was the Board's discussion of whether "waena", noting a location's relative position within a larger place, should be separated from the place name. In the various documents Ms. Silva looked at, Waiākeawaena was either written as one word or had a dash between Waiākea and waena (waena not capitalized). The Board agreed that the name should remain combined based on historical usage and that the second "a" should have a kahakō. The name Waikoloaiki was also discussed as another example of whether or not to combine place names composed of a specific name and a modifier.

Ms. Louis reviewed the convention guiding these decisions. If a modifier functions as a modifier within the place name, such as noting relative location within a larger named area, then the specific name and the modifier remain separate (e.g., Kalihi Kai). If the place name cannot be understood without both the specific name and the modifier, then it is combined. This is where community outreach can help.

The Board reviewed a total of 15 place names on the list of names that are in the GNIS but were not on the HBGN's working spreadsheets prepared by entering names off of the USGS quads. Determinations were as follows:

- Seven need further research (Waineku Reservoir, Kanekauui Point, Kauna'oa Bay, Kawaihae-Hō'epa, Mohouli Pond, Ohia, and Paohia Gulch)
- Two appear in *Place Names of Hawaii* and required no spelling changes as no diacritical marks need adding (Wailau Hawaiian Home Land and Waiolama Canal);
- Four appear in *Place Names of Hawaii* but require spelling change to include 'okina and/or kahakō (Wainānālī'i Pond, 'Alae Crater, Honomū-Kuhau Hawaiian Home Land, and Ho'olulu Cove)
- One was a HBGN determination based on John Clark's place name book (Kamekame Beach), and
- One is a recommended name change or spelling correction for what appears to be a typographical error when the place name was entered into the GNIS (i.e., Walaka Bridge should be Waiaka Bridge). The BGN can decide if this would be a name change or correction.

Ms. Louis explained that the Board will move to a comparable spreadsheet for Maui Island at the next meeting now that the Hawai'i Island spreadsheet is finished.

**AGENDA ITEM 4: Old and New Business**

Mr. Buto reported on the conference call he and Ms. Louis had with the "Landsongs" website administrator. The website helps native peoples use current technology to record and perpetuate traditional knowledge about their ancestral landscapes. Mr. Buto was interested in the website as a potential place to host and support the "Native Place Names of Hawai'i" website which is now on the HBGN's web page. "Landsongs" is currently a small

operation, but they have set up a robust database and have a nice web interface. The website is capable of hosting the Hawai'i database and the data are transferable. He primarily works with indigenous tribes in Canada and because it is a private site, keeping records confidential is not a problem. The public cannot access the information but he did show them web maps which he has created for the tribes to demonstrate what could be done for the Hawai'i database. There would probably be a hosting charge.

Mr. Buto expressed hope that the HBGN could continue to maintain the Native Place Names of Hawai'i website and expand it. At present, almost all the entries are for Kaho'olawe with very little for other islands. All the information on the HBGN working spreadsheets could be uploaded to the database easily but the voice clips with the pronunciations would be missing. Ms. Louis initially visualized having video clips on the web site in which people from specific areas could talk about places and their histories. OP does not have staff to maintain or expand the database and Ms. Louis has moved on to other projects. He believes the website is valuable and a good idea, but it requires funds. OP staff worked with Ms. Louis initially to launch the site but currently it is not being actively maintained. It is not a burden to simply host the site, but is preferable to have it grow which takes additional staff or money. Even if the database were moved to a hosted site, staff and funds would be needed to generate new information. Minimally, OP can provide backend maintenance and the interface, but it cannot generate frontend data.

One option would be to give external groups specialized access to the database so they could update it independently. As long as one person acts as the database administrator, then contributions from individuals or groups could be facilitated and the administrator could oversee permitted access and provide a level of quality control. Having an administrator would be a cost.

Ms. Louis noted that another organization the HBGN could work with is the Coeur d'Alene Tribe which established the web-based Native Names Project. This site was the original inspiration for the Native Place Names of Hawai'i project. Our place name database could go to their website but it is not as robust a system as that of Landsongs. A drawback is that they can only accommodate place names, locations, and sound clips. It also includes information on traditional uses and stories associated with the place. One advantage, however, is that they have established a direct connection with the USGS so that names in their database can be uploaded to the National Map. On the USGS National Map website under "Place Names", there is a "Native Place Names" option which links to the Coeur d'Alene Tribe's website. The Coeur d'Alene server runs the Native Place Names database. The database has both the official and native name of places which is needed for most native lands. Hawai'i is different in that the native place name is generally the same as the official name.

Mr. Buto explained that he wanted to raise this issue with the Board because members might know of opportunities for collaboration or have suggestions for grant opportunities. Maybe with collaboration it would be possible to develop a grant proposal and obtain funding. The project could be designed to focus on community involvement and be set up so that community members enter information independently under the oversight of a site administrator or designated staff.

Ms. Lane-Kamahele raised the possibility that communities might be concerned about information they compile being housed elsewhere. Ms. Louis emphasized that, if an out-of-state host were used, this should be explained clearly to participants from the beginning. When properly informed, individuals can decide which names they want to keep private and which they are willing to share. Mr. Buto expressed concern that having an externally hosted database gives the impression that we cannot take care of our own information. Because the project was undertaken by the HBGN and HBGN is a state board, the state should host the database. In some cases, people may want the information recorded but they do not want it made public. This is the service Landsongs can provide. A tribe's information is not shared with the public but can be shared within the tribe only.

Ms. Lane-Kamahele stressed how frustrating it has been to see massive amounts of information collected by various agencies and institutions over the years and then have the data become difficult or impossible to access because there were no resources to maintain the system. The system and technology became obsolete although the information is still good. There needs to be a long-term commitment.

Mr. Buto clarified that he does not expect to resolve the issue here or today, but he did want to start the conversation. The place names website is not a core function of the HBGN, but he believes the Native Place Names of Hawai'i project is valuable and should be continued.

Ms. Silva raised the issue of Board decisions being the result of research which should therefore be accessible to the public. She suggested a possible partnering with the UH Library. Its whole mission is public access to information.

Ms. Kam asked if Sunshine Law requirements would continue to apply even if the database were hosted by a private institution. A database created by a state agency might still be subject to public access requirements. Mr. Buto felt that it probably would not be subject to mandatory disclosure if it were held by a non-profit or other private institution. If it were hosted by a public institution, then public access could not be denied. It is not a problem with the current database, but it could be if the project moves forward and some people want recorded information to remain private. Ms. Silva noted that even public libraries have non-disclosure agreements for donated records that prevent access for a defined number of years.

Mr. Buto asked that this discussion be continued at the next meeting and suggested the possibility of forming a working group to pursue potential options.

**AGENDA ITEM 5:      Adjourn**

The Board set April 18, 2013 as the date for the next meeting. The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3.03 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Holly McEldowney