

Notes from the January 10th, 2023 meeting of the
Environmental Advisory Council's Strategic Planning Committee

Present:

Roy Abe
Maka'ala Kaaumoana
Rachel Sprague
Ron Terry

Gordon Scruton, Jr
Stephanie Dunbar-Co
Robin Kaye, Committee Chair
Les Segundo, EAC Staff

- Meeting convened 10:04 AM
- Quorum ascertained; introductions completed; no public present

Annual Report Discussion

- Stephanie commented on why the annual report needed to be discussed, particularly in terms of how to make it a meaningful document. She reminded the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) members of how difficult it has been to prepare an annual report, given that the Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) has no budget and is composed of all volunteers. She also raised the need to clarify "boundaries" now that the EAC's annual report was to be part of the Office of Planning and Sustainability's (OPSD) annual report. [*NOTE: In a subsequent meeting, there was much discussion regarding the OPSD's annual report; it was in fact reported that such a document was NOT required as an independent document. This is being explored by the OPSD and will be clarified at the next EAC meeting.*]
- Maka'ala suggested that a discussion regarding the EAC's annual reporting requirement (currently in statute) be had with new OPSD Director Glenn. She hoped that the EAC's report would be helpful to the environmental work of other state agencies.
- Ron hoped that the EAC annual report would hold agencies accountable for their environmental work, highlighting those that had done well and those that had not. He suggested that the EAC use press releases to highlight the work of some agencies.
- Robin suggested that the annual report focus on one particular issue; for example, highlighting agencies that were doing good work around cesspool issues.
- Roy hoped the annual report would prioritize issues, and that the EAC needed to assure that its words were read. He further suggested that perhaps the focus of the annual report would be on runoff or watersheds.

- Rachel commented that having the EAC serve as a “scorecard” for agencies was challenging at best without clear criteria or expectations, posing significant risk to the EAC. She suggested that the EAC pick one or two issues, provide examples of agencies that were having a positive impact on those issues and help focus on what additional resources might be needed to further their work.
- Steph suggested that the EAC select its focus issue early in the year, then work with the Information and Outreach Committee (I&O) to help bring attention to that issue, which would ultimately enrich the annual report at the end of the calendar year.

Informing Constituencies of the EAC’s statutory role

- Members discussed using the EAC’s and Environmental Review Program’s (ERP) website to help articulate the role and responsibilities of the EAC. Posting the recently-developed “Elevator Speech” would be helpful as well.
- The Committee suggested working with those who interacted directly with state agencies (e.g., environmental consultants) and encouraging them to help inform agencies of the EAC’s role.
- The EAC should request a participatory role at the next Hawaii Congress of Planning Officials. This should include an information table, but also an opportunity to make a presentation about its role.

Recruiting new members

- The various statewide and county planners would be a good source to make recommendations on potential EAC members.
 - Another possible source of names would be the respective relevant legislative committee chairs.
 - It was suggested that, similar to the practices of many nonprofit organizations, departing members help find their successors. This would be particularly helpful in assuring a smooth transition.
 - Members suggested that the EAC set-up an early-in-their-tenure meeting with the new chair and/or deputy chair of the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR.)
- The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 PM