



STATE ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM,
OFFICE OF PLANNING & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, STATE OF HAWAII
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MINUTES

State of Hawai'i Environmental Advisory Council (EAC)
Tuesday, July 11, 2023, 1:00 - 3:00 PM
Via Zoom and in person at
Leiopapa A Kamehameha, 6th Floor Conference Room
235 S. Beretania St., Honolulu, HI 96813

Governor

Josh B. Green, M.D.

Lt. Governor

Sylvia Luke

OPSD Interim Director

Mary Alice Evans

Chairperson

Puananionaona Thoene

Vice Chair

Mary Begier

Members

Roy Abe

Stephanie Dunbar-Co

Dawn Hegger-Nordblom

Maka'ala Ka'aumoana

Ian Robin Kaye

Theresita Kinnaman

Michele Lefebvre

Rachel Sprague

Ron Terry

Michael Tulang

N. Mahina Tuteur

Members Present

Puananionaona Thoene (Chairperson), Mary Begier (Vice-Chairperson), Roy Abe, Dawn Hegger-Nordblom, Makaala Kaaumoana, Robin Kaye, Tessie Kinnaman, Michelle Lefebvre, Rachel Sprague, Ron Terry

Members Absent

Stephanie Dunbar-Co, Michael Tulang, Mahina Tuteur

Staff

Alison Kato (Deputy Attorney General), Tom Eisen (Environmental Review Program), Kim Ishimoto (Special Plans Branch)

Public Present

Sean Maskrey

Note: **Bolded** items below indicate text from the agenda

Materials for this agenda and minutes of this meeting will be available at specific links indicated below or at: <https://planning.hawaii.gov/erp/ec-meetings/>

1. **Call to order, Roll Call, Introductions, Quorum**

With a quorum of 9 members present, Chairperson Thoene called the meeting to order at 1:01 PM.

2. **Review and adoption of meeting minutes**

▪ [June 2023 meeting minutes](#)

MOTION: Member Begier moved to approve the meeting minutes as amended. Member Kaye seconded. Chairperson Thoene requested that an amendment be made to the staff section by capitalizing "Sustainable." The EAC unanimously approved the motion (9-0-0).

3. **Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) Interim Director's Update**

Mr. Eisen presented the Interim Director's Report on behalf of OPSD Interim Director Evans. He reports that Interim Director Evans' title has changed from Acting Director and could possibly change in the future if appointed to Director by the Senate. OPSD has also initiated the hiring process to fill one of the vacant junior Planner positions. Due to the success of the OPSD Mailchimp invitation for the forum, the platform will continue to be used.

4. Information & Outreach (I&O) Committee Update

- **Recap of June 27, 2023 forum (Clearing the Hurdles of EIS)**

Committee Chair Begier reported on the forum titled, "Clearing the Hurdles of EIS." She reports that the forum was successful and that there were over 100 participants in attendance.

- **Discussion of and planning for future forums**

Committee Chair Begier reports that the next forum will likely be in October. There is currently no subject matter identified at the time.

Member Kaye suggested that they conduct a survey to ask the participants questions such as what they learned, any further questions, what they would like to see next, etc. Committee Chair Begier acknowledged the suggestion and responded that it would be a good idea, but the Committee would need support in setting up the survey and handling the data results. Member Terry agreed with Member Kaye's suggestion and further elaborated that it would be beneficial for the presenters.

Member Kaye also suggested that members of the Council have questions that can be used to ask the presenter, to help get the conversation flowing. Committee Chair Begier agreed with the suggestion and that the Committee will work to prep questions ahead of the forum.

Discussion of possible topics for future forums included affordable housing and topics not specifically related to Chapter 343. Environmental issues such as storm water runoff, coral reef, water use, and invasive species were discussed as possible forum topics.

5. Discussion of next steps for the Strategic Planning Committee

Committee Chair Kaye reported that the Committee had four priorities:

1. Unfinished business (development of policies and procedures)
2. Integration into OPSD
3. Elevator speech
4. Carrying capacity

Chairperson Thoene mentioned that, when the EAC moved from DOH to OPSD, there's a disconnect in the Council's Ch. 343-6 statute in that ecology and environmental quality is more of a Health function and that the Council is an advisory role. Chairperson Thoene asked ERP to check with Director Evans as to how the Council can be helpful to OPSD and would like to engage in future discussions.

Regarding these priorities, the first three have been addressed. The Committee has also discussed the annual report and the recruitment of new members.

The Permitted Interaction Group (PIG) will need to be wrapped up before the end of the 2023 year, in order to ensure that any recommendations for legislative changes to Chapter 343 or Council rules can be used for the upcoming legislative session. Chairperson Thoene mentioned that Representative Lowen is still very much interested in having a Department of the Environment. Member Terry suggested that the Strategic Planning Committee could start looking at two or three forms of the Department.

6. Discussion of the Council's role, if any, in reviewing and responding to HRS Chapter 343 scoping requests, review of Environmental Assessments or Environmental Impact Statements

Member Kaaumoana commented that while it is enticing to want to help to assist with the requests, it is not the Council's responsibility to provide responses to the requests, but rather advise the departments. If a member of the Council would like to review and comment on an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), they should do so in their own capacity.

Member Terry commented that it may be beyond the capacity for the Council to review and respond to the request within the allotted time. The Council is not legally obligated to respond to the requests.

Member Kaye will draft a statement that could be used by the current Council as a policy for not responding to EA and EIS review requests. The drafted language will be reviewed by Chairperson Thoene and later circulated to the Council to determine if the statement should be adopted as a policy of the Council. The statement will not be used as a response to the individual EA or EIS on behalf of the Council.

Chairperson Thoene clarified that if the Council receives requests, it will be circulated to the members of the Council, and the members will be able to provide their own comments as an individual.

At 2:14 PM, Member Hegger-Nordblom joined the meeting. The Council has a quorum of 10 members.

7. Discussion of next in-person meeting, tentatively September 5 or 6, 2023

The next in-person meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 6, 2023 at the OPSD conference room.

8. Discussion of Hawaii Congress of Planning Officials Conference, September 6-8, 2023

- Regular Registration ends on July 31, 2023

9. Next Meeting: Tuesday, August 1, 2023

Next meeting will be via Zoom on August 1, 2023.

10. Reminder: Send all ERP correspondence to dbedt.opsd.erp@hawaii.gov

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:28 PM.