



STATE ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

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

Minutes

State of Hawai'i Environmental Advisory Council
235 S. Beretania Street, Suite 702, Honolulu, HI 96813
Tuesday, January 6, 2026, 1:00 PM

Members Present

Dawn Hegger-Nordblom, Jay Stone, Michele Lefebvre, Rachel Sprague, Mark Gordon

Members Absent

None

Staff

Mary Alice Evans (OPSD Director), Tom Eisen (Environmental Review Program [ERP] Staff)

Public Present

Andrea Suzuki (Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation's [HHSC]), Emma Yuen (Department of Land and Natural Resources [DLNR]), Zachary King (DLNR), Jennifer Grimm (DLNR), Melissa Kunz, Ron Terry

Note: **Bolded** items 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 five members present, Chairperson Hegger-Nordblom called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM.

2. Review and adoption of minutes from Thursday, November 13, 2025 and Tuesday, December 2, 2025

https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/erp/EC_Meetings/2025-11-13-Environmental-Advisory-Council-Minutes-draft.pdf

MOTION: Member Sprague moved to approve the November 2025 meeting minutes. Chairperson Hegger-Nordblom seconded the motion. There was no further discussion or public testimony. The EAC voted to approve the motion (5-0-0).

https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/erp/EC_Meetings/2025-12-02-Environmental-Advisory-Council-Minutes-draft.pdf

MOTION: Member Lefebvre moved to approve the December 2025 meeting minutes.

Chairperson Hegger-Nordblom heard Agenda item **4. Exemptions Committee** before Agenda Item **3. Review of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, Repeal of Chapter 11-200.1 and Adoption of Chapter 15-20 Hawai'i Administrative Rules**. These minutes retain the original Agenda numbering order and are documented in a different order than the video recording.

3. Review of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, Repeal of Chapter 11-200.1 and Adoption of Chapter 15-20 Hawai'i Administrative Rules

https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/erp/EC_Meetings/Proposed-HAR-15-20-Rules-DRAFT-REVISIONS-3-Nov-2025.pdf

Ron Terry spoke on their written comments. Terry raised concerns regarding ADA accessibility and the difficulty of converting complex documents to be ADA compliant. The Council informed Terry that the Environmental Review Program has asked for guidance from the Department of Health Disabilities and Communication Access. The Council also clarified that documents must comply with the State's standards, rather than the federal government's standards.

Ron Terry inquired how a changed project will be distinguished from a new project, referring to page 17 of the Hawaii Administrative Rules. The Council explained that the referenced material is regarding multiple rounds of Environmental Assessments (EA) for the same project, not multiple projects. The Council inquired if adding clarifying details to the document would be helpful.

Ron Terry suggested that all agencies should be able to take advantage of de minimis exceptions, regardless of whether they have an exemption list, and included an alternative sentence for the Hawai'i Administrative Rules (HAR). The Council discussed including exemption list reminders in The Environmental Notice.

The Council discussed a current rule that states that agencies are not required to have an exemption list, but if they do have one, the agency is required to update the list.

4. Exemptions Committee

a) Proposed Agency Exemption List Revisions – Department of Land and Natural Resources

https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/erp/EC_Meetings/2025-11-04-DLNR-Exemption-List-briefing-list.pdf

Emma Yuen led discussion on the Department of Land and Natural Resources' (DLNR) proposed exemption list. Their proposed changes are focused on supporting conservation work by making the conservation process more streamlined.

General comments include:

- Type 1, Part 1, Number 28: Discussed the potential public perception of replacing the term commercial logging with clearcutting, highlighting that size is not defined. Consider including acreage/size classification in exemption. Consider including a DLNR definition of clearcutting.

- Type 3, Part 1, Number 17: Discussed increasing water tank capacity. Consider reviewing other organizations' exemption lists for justification.
- Type 4, Part 1, Number 3: Discussed the inclusion of clearcutting in the justification for removing the term commercial logging. Recommended updating the Department of Agriculture reference.
- Type 4, Part 1, Number 19: Discussed collaboration efforts among DLNR divisions to create exemption around traditional and customary practices. Discussed definition/parameters of "minor."
- Type 4, Part 1, Number 20: Discussed the distinction between preparing outreach materials and conducting education activities.
- Type 4, Part 1, Number 21: Consider including type description in exemption.
- Type 5, Part 1, Number 20: Consider include type description in exemption.
- Type 5, Part 1, Number 21: Discussed permit issuance for kilo (data collection) activities.
- Type 1, Part 1, Numbers 36-44: Consider moving exemptions to Type 8.
- Type 4, Part 1, Number 17: Consider moving exemption to Part 2. Consider including language to indicate helicopter landing pads are temporary and in rural areas.
- Type 4, Part 2, Number 3: Discussed 75% non-native vegetative cover threshold. Committee requested more information on how that number was determined.

b) Proposed Agency Exemption List Revisions – Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation

https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/erp/EC_Meetings/2026-01-06-HHSC-Exemption-List-Request-11-28-25.pdf

Andrea Suzuki led discussion on Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation's (HHSC) first exemption list.

General comments include:

- Part 1, Type 9: Discussed adding acquisition of property to exemption list.
- Part 1, Type 9, Number 1: Discussed the inclusion of workforce housing due to the nursing shortage and rural location.
- Part 1, Type 1 Number 2k: Consider moving exemption to Type 2.
- Part 1, Type 4, Number 7: Consider removing exemption, as activities are covered in Type 8, Number 8.

5. Announcements

Next Meeting: TBD

Director Evans thanked ERP Staff Kayli Ann Yoshioka for her service with ERP and the Council.

The next EAC meeting is scheduled for February 3, 2026 at 1:00 PM.

6. Public Comments: Participants may provide brief comments about issues not on the agenda for possible inclusion on a future agenda.

There were no public comments.

7. Adjournment

Chairperson Hegger-Nordblom adjourned the meeting at 3:25 PM.