

HAWAI'I BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES (HBGN)

Notice of Meeting and Agenda

235 S. Beretania Street

**6th floor Library**

Honolulu, HI 96813

Tuesday, June 4, 2024

2:00 p.m.

*As authorized under Act 220, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2021, this meeting will be held with Board Members, Staff, and Agencies participating in-person at the above location or via Zoom online meeting venue.*

**Zoom meeting information:**

URL: [https://bit.ly/hbgn\\_2024](https://bit.ly/hbgn_2024)

or dial: (253) 205 0468 [audio only]

Meeting ID: 810 5134 5336

Passcode: 542392

A G E N D A

1. Call to Order
2. Review and approval of meeting minutes for May 7, 2024  
*The Board will review/amend the minutes from the previous meeting and will vote on whether or not to approve them at this time. [Action item]*
3. Public comments.  
*Participants may provide comments about issues not on the agenda for possible inclusion on a future agenda. [Not an action item]*
4. Announcements.  
*Participants may share information not requiring Board discussion, action, or decision making. [Not an action item]*
5. Discussion about the possibility of using Hawaiian terminology instead of English descriptors in feature names.  
*Board members will discuss the possibility of standardizing naming conventions using Hawaiian terminology to replace English descriptors such as "Gulch," "Crater," and "Stream." [Not an action item]*
6. Discussion and decision on establishing a Permitted Interaction Group to research the name of the Island of Hawai'i.  
*Board members will discuss the option of establishing a Permitted Interaction Group (PIG) to research the name of the Island of Hawai'i and to facilitate engaging with community members and stakeholders. The discussion will include identifying members of the PIG, setting the scope of the investigation, and setting the scope of each member's authority. [Action item]*

7. Discussion and decision on selected feature names on O‘ahu.  
*Board members are reviewing and researching feature names from its review list. Board members will discuss the results of their research and may make naming decisions. [Action item]*
8. Adjourn

**Meeting Materials:**

Meeting materials will be available in advance of the meeting on HBGN’s website (<https://planning.hawaii.gov/gis/hbgn/hbgn-meeting-materials>).

**Zoom meeting information:**

To participate via the Zoom link provided, you will need a computer or mobile device with internet access, video camera (recommended), and microphone. You will be muted during the meeting unless you are testifying or actively participating in a discussion. You may also access the Zoom meeting by phone only by using the dial-in phone number, meeting ID, and meeting passcode information provided at the top of this agenda. Further instructions for how to use Zoom are available at: <https://planning.hawaii.gov/ghgstf/agendas-and-minutes>.

If connection is lost, the meeting may reconvene when either audiovisual communication or audio-only communication is established within thirty minutes. The public may access the reconvened meeting by clicking the link again.

If it is not possible to reconvene the meeting within 30 minutes after an interruption, then check HBGN’s website (<https://planning.hawaii.gov/gis/hbgn>) for information as to whether the meeting will be continued to an alternative date and time, or the meeting may be terminated.

**Information about submitting and providing testimony:**

Written testimony may be submitted on any agenda item:

by email: [arthur.j.buto@hawaii.gov](mailto:arthur.j.buto@hawaii.gov) or

by postal mail: Office of Planning and Sustainable Development  
ATTN: Hawai‘i Board on Geographic Names  
P.O. Box 2359  
Honolulu, HI 96804-2359

Written testimony should include the word “testimony” with the agenda item number and description in the Subject line, and should be received no later than **Saturday, June 1, 2024, 4:30 p.m.**, in order to be included in the meeting packet. Testimony received after that time will be distributed at the meeting and posted on the website but may not be included in the meeting packet.

Members of the public may also provide oral testimony and participate in discussions for any agenda item during the meeting. If attending in person, please indicate that you wish to speak by raising your hand. When recognized by the Chairperson, you may present your testimony. If attending virtually, please indicate that you wish to speak by using the raise hand function in Zoom, or if calling in by telephone, entering \* and 9 on your phone keypad. When recognized by the Chairperson, you will be unmuted. If calling in by phone, you can unmute and mute yourself by pressing \* and 6 on your keypad. When testifying, you will be asked to identify yourself and the organization, if any, that you represent.

**Information about attending the meeting in person:**

Persons may attend the meeting in person at: Leiopapa A Kamehameha, 235 S. Beretania Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room, Honolulu, HI 96813. Visitors will be asked to:

- Present a government issued picture ID at the security desk in the lobby;
- Wear a mask which covers both the nose and mouth;
- Maintain social distance of minimum 6 feet apart from others whenever possible.

**Information about auxiliary aids:**

If you need an auxiliary aid/service or other accommodation due to a disability, contact Arthur Buto at (808) 587-2894 or by email at [arthur.j.buto@hawaii.gov](mailto:arthur.j.buto@hawaii.gov) as soon as possible. Requests made as early as possible will allow adequate time to fulfill your request.

Upon request, this notice is available in alternate formats such as large print, Braille, or electronic copy.

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

DATE: May 7, 2024  
TIME: 2:00 p.m.  
PLACE: Leiopapa A Kamehameha Building  
Office of Planning and Sustainable Development  
235 S. Beretania Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Library  
Honolulu, Hawai‘i 96813

*[0:00:00]* **AGENDA ITEM 1: Call to Order**

Mr. Marzan called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

The following were in attendance:

**MEMBERS:** Marques Marzan (Bishop Museum) [remote]  
Meyer Cummins (Land Survey Division) [remote]  
Keith Gutierrez (Office of Hawaiian Affairs) [remote]  
Arthur Buto for Mary Alice Evans (Office of Planning and Sustainable  
Development) [in-person]  
Kapā Oliveira (University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa) *joined at 2:55pm* [remote]

**ABSENT:** Lilliane Makaila (Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL))  
Holly McEldowney (Department of Land and Natural Resources)

**GUESTS:** Bobby Camara (retired) [remote]  
Regina Hilo (Department of Land and Natural Resources) [remote]  
Others (see Appendix) [remote]

*[0:00:52]*

**AGENDA ITEM 2: Review of Meeting Minutes for April 2, 2024**

*[0:02:35]*

**MOTION:** Mr. Cummins moved to approve the minutes of April 2, 2024. Mr. Gutierrez seconded the motion.

*[0:02:58]*

*The members present voted unanimously to approve the meeting minutes of April 2, 2024.*

*[0:03:08]*

**AGENDA ITEM 3: Public Comments**

Mr. Buto received an email this afternoon asking that the Board review the name of Kipapa Gulch on O‘ahu. The GNIS has two entries, “Kipapa” and “Kīpapa Stream.” Mr. Camara

noted that [361265] Kīpapa Stream is probably what the inquiry is referring to. Mr. Buto is not sure that the Board’s practice of removing English descriptors includes “Stream” and “River.” Mr. Marzan recalled that the renaming of ‘Īao Stream to Wailuku River included the “River” in the name because it appeared that way in historical documents and maps. He also noted that the Board decided to rename the **Seven Sacred Pools of ‘Ohe‘o** to **‘Ohe‘o**, removing English descriptors from the feature name. Mr. Cummins noted that from a surveyor’s perspective, including the type of feature in the name or in parentheses after the name on a map can help to clarify what feature is being referenced, but he doesn’t recall if a decision has been made by the Board to incorporate that as a standard.

Mr. Camara suggested that the Board research the meaning and use of Hawaiian feature classes and consider using them in the feature names. Mr. Marzan asked to include a discussion of feature descriptors on the agenda for next month. Mr. Cummins agreed that it is worthwhile to do some research and discuss this further. He noted that using the Hawaiian feature class in the name is consistent with historical grant documents and nūpepa.

[0:13:40]

**AGENDA ITEM 4: Announcements**

Mr. Gutierrez announced that OHA is going through some internal restructuring and a new HBGN designee will be named soon. He expressed his mahalo for the members’ support during his time on the Board. Mr. Marzan thanked him for his time and energy serving on the Board.

[0:16:35]

**AGENDA ITEM 5: Discussion and decision on establishing a Permitted Interaction Group to research the name of the Island of Hawai‘i**

Mr. Buto explained that based on the level of interest expressed at last month’s meeting, that more engagement with the community on the Island of Hawai‘i, especially in-person is called for. A Permitted Interaction Group (PIG) allows more flexibility to engage with the community, as the Board experienced recently with the PIG for Ahu‘ailā‘au (formerly known as “Fissure 8”). It may be easier for individual agencies to fund travel than for the Board as a whole. The PIG could schedule more frequent interactions with the community than the Board’s monthly meetings and also allow community members who are not comfortable with remote meeting technology to participate in-person in a more local setting.

Mr. Buto attached information about PIGs – the full Board would need to identify the PIG members and set clear objectives for the PIG. The PIG would be free to schedule its own meetings, possibly travel to the Island of Hawai‘i, and would be responsible to report back to the Board with its recommendation(s). Up to three HBGN members can be named to serve on the PIG as well as cultural resource people; the PIG could also consult with other knowledgeable persons.

Mr. Marzan noted that some key Board members are not present; he would like more Board members to be present to discuss and make decisions about the PIG.

Mr. Camara suggested that one of the objectives of the PIG include adding an ‘okina to the name of the State in the State Seal. There was a bill this legislative session that would have made that change, but it died. There was significant opposition to that proposed measure as not everyone and not all Native Hawaiians support the use of diacriticals.

Mr. Buto expressed his hesitation to broaden the scope of the PIG beyond the name of the island to include making a change to the State Seal. Conversely, Mr. Cummins thought that the PIG’s engagement with the community might be a good opportunity to gauge sentiment for or against the ‘okina in the State Seal.

Mr. Camara suggested that the PIG’s work include well-documented evidence and reasons for its recommendations and should not necessarily reflect the “loudest voices” heard at the meetings.

[0:35:00]

**AGENDA ITEM 6: Discussion and decision on selected feature names on the Island of Hawai‘i.**

Mr. Camara reported that the Hawai‘i Volcanoes National Park’s Kupuna group met and will be compiling a list of proposed name changes, including **Lua Poholo** along with crater names and feature names with English descriptors. The process will take a few months. Mr. Camara will suggest that they submit packets in batches rather than wait for all the names to be reviewed.

Mr. Buto asked if the Board wants to consider a name change for **Mizotas Kīpuka**, since it is named after a person. Mr. Camara found that according to standard naming guidelines the proper name is written separately from the geographic feature, so the feature could be **Kīpuka Mizota**. Mr. Buto will work with Mr. Camara to put together a Name Change Application Form.

[0:45:45]

**AGENDA ITEM 7: Discussion and decision on selected feature names on O‘ahu.**

[0:45:50]

[358471] **Aimuu Gulch**.

Mr. Cummins found this feature on Registered Map 2252 displayed with no diacriticals as it appears in the GNIS. The feature class in the GNIS is “Valley,” so replacing “Gulch” with the Hawaiian feature class would result in the name **Awāwa Aimuu**. Mr. Gutierrez found a reference to Pu‘u‘aimu‘u and ‘Aimu‘u Stream. He would like to continue researching the feature.

Mr. Marzan suggested that more research is needed for this feature name.

[363581] **Punchbowl.**

Mr. Camara did not get a response yet from Puakea Nogelmeier about his research into “Punchbowl.”

[358537] **Alapena Pool.**

[358606] **Aniani Nui Ridge.**

[358618] **Api Spring.**

Mr. Gutierrez didn’t find any alternate spellings for **Alapena Pool** but he would like to continue researching it and some of the other feature names, particularly **Aniani Nui Ridge** and **Api Spring**.

Mr. Buto will leave these unresolved names on the list for the next meeting. Most of them include an English descriptor and will be affected by next month’s discussion about using Hawaiian terminology instead of English descriptors in feature names.

The Board members confirmed items for next month’s agenda: review the use of English descriptors in feature names; continue discussion about a Permitted Interaction Group in consideration of the island name, Island of Hawai‘i; revisit the names on the O‘ahu feature names list.

[0:59:15]

**AGENDA ITEM 8:      Adjourn**

Mr. Marzan adjourned the meeting at 3:04pm

**From:** [Bourquein, Shelby \(Contractor\)](#)  
**To:** [Buto, Arthur J](#); [mmarzan@gmail.com](mailto:mmarzan@gmail.com)  
**Cc:** [BGNEXEC, GS-N-MAC](#)  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] RE: BGN Name proposal: Reyes Beach | RL 455  
**Date:** Friday, May 10, 2024 3:17:42 AM

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Arthur,

I'll stand by, we appreciate the work of Hawai'i BGN. Mahalo and happy Friday.

Shelby Bourquein  
Geographic Research Analyst | Toponymist  
Contractor supporting [U.S. BGN](#) | [DNC](#)  
Xcellent Technology Solutions, Inc.

(703) 648-4551

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**From:** Buto, Arthur J <[arthur.j.buto@hawaii.gov](mailto:arthur.j.buto@hawaii.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 10, 2024 12:16 AM  
**To:** Bourquein, Shelby (Contractor) <[sbourquein@contractor.usgs.gov](mailto:sbourquein@contractor.usgs.gov)>; [mmarzan@gmail.com](mailto:mmarzan@gmail.com)  
<[mmarzan@gmail.com](mailto:mmarzan@gmail.com)>  
**Cc:** BGNEXEC, GS-N-MAC <[bgnexec@usgs.gov](mailto:bgnexec@usgs.gov)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] RE: BGN Name proposal: Reyes Beach | RL 455

**This email has been received from outside of DOI - Use caution before clicking on links, opening attachments, or responding.**

Aloha Shelby,

I reached out to Torrey Donovan to ask if they could attend a meeting to discuss the name request but didn't hear back. I haven't put this on the agenda yet as this is a request that the Board would prefer to discuss with the applicant present. I'll reach back out to Torrey (the original email was sent in February of this year). Mahalo for the reminder...ab

Arthur Buto, Manager  
Hawai'i Statewide GIS Program  
Office of Planning and Sustainable Development  
235 S. Beretania Street, 6<sup>th</sup> floor, Honolulu HI 96813

Email: [arthur.j.buto@hawaii.gov](mailto:arthur.j.buto@hawaii.gov)  
Phone: (808) 587-2894  
Website: <https://planning.hawaii.gov/gis>  
Geoportal: <https://geoportal.hawaii.gov>

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**From:** Bourquein, Shelby (Contractor) <sbourquein@contractor.usgs.gov>

**Sent:** Thursday, May 9, 2024 9:21 AM

**To:** mmarzan@gmail.com; Buto, Arthur J <arthur.j.buto@hawaii.gov>

**Cc:** BGNEXEC, GS-N-MAC <bgnexec@usgs.gov>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] BGN Name proposal: Reyes Beach | RL 455

Good afternoon Chair Marzan and Mr. Arthur,

I help with casework as a contractor alongside Matt and Jenny. Just reaching out as I created a case packet to share with the Hawai'i Board on Geographic Names, and to say that if there is anything the board needs regarding the case please feel free to send me a message.

The proposal's write up is on [Review List 455](#)

Thank you,

Shelby Bourquein  
Geographic Research Analyst | Toponymist  
Contractor supporting [U.S. BGN](#) | [DNC](#)  
Xcellent Technology Solutions, Inc.

(703) 648-4551

**From:** [David Fogel](#)  
**To:** [Buto, Arthur J](#)  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] Project to correct spellings of Hawaiian Place Names  
**Date:** Monday, May 13, 2024 6:05:25 PM  
**Attachments:** [PastedGraphic-1.png](#)

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Hi Arthur,

Thanks for your prompt reply.

On May 13, 2024, at 6:55 PM, Buto, Arthur J <[arthur.j.buto@hawaii.gov](mailto:arthur.j.buto@hawaii.gov)> wrote:

A better source for the names, including the diacritical marks (‘okina and kahakō) is the **USGS’ Geographic Names Information System** database (GNIS). The spellings that the Hawai‘i Board on Geographic Names (HBGN) approves are sent up to the US BGN. If the US BGN approves those names and spellings, they are incorporated into the GNIS.

Good to know all of the changes are in GNIS today. It sounds like the work is complete? In other words, the Hawaiian names listed in the Project are now updated in GNIS. This is great!

I did a sanity check (can't hurt). Excellent.

. <https://edits.nationalmap.gov/apps/gaz-domestic/public/gaz-record/358433>

‘Āhinahina / June 11, 2015

As a followup, we are working to improve our coverage (everywhere). Knowing the GNIS has a great deal of coverage, but misses a few things here and there, I wondered if you are aware of data collections that help to fill in gaps in Hawai‘i? As an example, in the California State Park near where I grew up (Mt. Diablo, S.F. Bay Area), one of the major peaks is (was) not in GNIS. I have asked for it to be added. It seems more collaborative to share back concerns and help to improve GNIS rather than make edits here alone. Basically, place names as commodities is the notion. Mt. Olympia is the example at about 37.90106, -121.90255.



Local names are a big challenge too. At one time, I thought we might reach out to individual State Boards on Geographical Names to help fill in the map. We were discouraged from doing so as this may work for many place names, but then we find "Nancy's Hill" and, well, we don't know much about Nancy ... quite a bit of work in this case.

I see the HBGN notes and more online. We may join a meeting as observers as we press to do better.

Thanks,  
= David

**APPENDIX**

Hawai'i Board on Geographic Names

May 7, 2024

235 S. Beretania Street, 6th floor Library

<b>Name (Original Name)</b>	<b>User Email</b>	<b>Total Duration (Minutes)</b>	<b>Guest</b>
HI State Planning CZM Program	dbedt.op.czm@hawaii.gov	67	No
KHON2 News		1	Yes
Meyer Cummins		1	Yes
Jennifer Kelleher		1	Yes
Arthur Buto		1	Yes
Keith Makale'a Gutierrez		1	Yes
Kalei Bridges		1	Yes
Bobby's iPad		1	Yes
Regina Hilo		1	Yes
Marques Hanalei Marzan		1	Yes
Bobby's iPad		67	Yes
Regina Hilo (SHPD) (Regina Hilo)		62	Yes
KHON2 News		62	Yes
Marques Hanalei Marzan		66	Yes
Kalei Bridges		61	Yes
Meyer Cummins		61	Yes
Keith Makale'a Gutierrez		62	Yes
Jennifer Kelleher		61	Yes
Arthur Buto		62	Yes
Donna Kimura, IHVB		1	Yes
Donna Kimura, IHVB		60	Yes
Fay Kailikini		1	Yes
Kalei Kailikini (Fay Kailikini)		56	Yes
Hailama Farden		2	Yes
Hailama Farden		22	Yes
Kyla-Marie Turner		2	Yes
K. Kapā Oliveira		9	Yes
K. Kapā Oliveira		1	Yes
K. Kapā Oliveira		2	Yes
Leilani DeMello		1	Yes
Leilani DeMello		3	Yes

## GNIS Feature Classes

06/04/2024

Feature Class	Description
Arch	Natural arch-like opening in a rock mass (bridge, natural bridge, sea arch).
Area	Any one of several areally extensive natural features not included in other categories (badlands, barren, delta, fan, garden).
Arroyo	Colloquial usage in southwestern United States. The valley of an ephemeral stream with a flat floor and steep banks or the ephemeral stream flowing through a valley with a flat floor and steep banks, either hydrographic or hypsographic (draw, wash, gully).
Bar	Natural accumulation of sand, gravel, or alluvium forming an underwater or exposed embankment (ledge, reef, sandbar, shoal, spit).
Basin	Natural depression or relatively low area enclosed by higher land (amphitheater, cirque, pit, sink).
Bay	Indentation of a coastline or shoreline enclosing a part of a body of water; a body of water partly surrounded by land (arm, bight, cove, estuary, gulf, inlet, sound).
Beach	The sloping shore along a body of water that is washed by waves or tides and is usually covered by sand or gravel (coast, shore, strand).
Bench	Area of level to gently sloping land on the flank of an elevation such as a hill, ridge, or mountain where the slope of the land rises on one side and descends on the opposite side (first bottom, flood-plain step, level, terrace, tread).
Bend	Curve in the course of a stream and (or) the land within the curve; a curve in a linear body of water (bottom, loop, meander).
Canal	Waterway, primarily manmade, used by watercraft or for drainage, irrigation, mining, or waterpower (ditch, lateral, sluice).
Cape	Projection of land extending into a body of water (lea, neck, peninsula, point).
Census	A statistical area delineated locally specifically for the tabulation of Census Bureau data (census designated place, census county division, unorganized territory, various types of American Indian/Alaska Native statistical areas). Distinct from Civil and Populated Place.
Channel	Linear deep part of a body of water through which the main volume of water flows and is frequently used as a route for watercraft (passage, reach, strait, thoroughfare, throughfare). Not a Stream or Valley.
Civil	A political division formed for administrative purposes (borough, county, incorporated place, municipio, parish, town, township). Distinct from Census and Populated Place.
Cliff	Very steep or vertical slope on one side (bluff, crag, escarpment, head, headland, nose, palisades, precipice, promontory, rim, rimrock, scarp).
Crater	Circular-shaped depression at the summit of a volcanic cone or one on the surface of the land caused by the impact of a meteorite; a manmade depression caused by an explosion (bowl, caldera, lua, maar).
Crossing	A place at which a river or stream may be crossed (landing, ferry, ford).
Falls	Perpendicular or very steep fall of water in the course of a stream (cascade, cataract, waterfall).
Flat	Relative level area within a region of greater relief (clearing, glade, pan, park, playa lake, salina, upland)
Gap	Low point or opening between hills or mountains or in a ridge or mountain range (col, notch, pass, saddle, water gap, wind gap).
Glacier	Body or stream of ice moving outward and downslope from an area of accumulation; an area of relatively permanent snow or ice on the top or side of a mountain or mountainous area (icefield, ice patch, snow patch).
Gut	Relatively small coastal waterway connecting larger bodies of water or other waterways (creek, inlet, slough).
Island	Area of dry or relatively dry land surrounded by water or low wetland (archipelago, atoll, cay, hammock, hummock, isla, isle, key, moku, rock).
Isthmus	Narrow section of land in a body of water connecting two larger land areas.
Lake	Natural body of inland water (backwater, lac, lagoon, laguna, oxbow, pond, pool, resaca, tank, tarn, waterhole).

## GNIS Feature Classes

06/04/2024

Feature Class	Description
Lava	Formations resulting from the consolidation of molten rock on the surface of the Earth (kepula, lava flow, māwae, traps).
Levee	Natural or manmade embankment flanking a stream (bank, berm).
Military	Place or facility used for various aspects of or relating to military activity.
Pillar	Vertical, standing, often spire-shaped, natural rock formation (chimney, hoodoo, monument, pinnacle, pōhaku, rock tower).
Plain	A region of general uniform slope, comparatively level and of considerable extent; can refer to the flat area of a large mesa (desert, grassland, highland, kula, plateau, savanna).
Populated Place	Place or area with clustered or scattered buildings and a permanent human population (city, settlement, town, village). A populated place is usually not incorporated and by definition has no legal boundaries. However, a populated place may have a corresponding "civil" record, the legal boundaries of which may or may not coincide with the perceived populated place. Distinct from Census and Civil classes.
Range	A single mass of hills or mountains; a complex, interconnected series of mountain ranges having a well-defined longitudinal trend (cordillera, mountain belt, sierra).
Rapids	Fast-flowing section of a stream with turbulent flow, often shallow and with exposed rock or boulders, where discharge is mostly influenced by velocity rather than width and depth (dalles, riffle, ripple).
Reservoir	Artificially impounded body of water (lake, tank).
Ridge	Elevation with a narrow, elongated crest that can be part of a hill or mountain (arête, crest, chenier, cuesta, divide, esker, hogback, mogote, lae, ridge, spur).
Sea	Large body of salt water (gulf, ocean).
Slope	A gently inclined part of the Earth's surface (grade, pitch).
Spring	Place where underground water flows naturally to the surface of the Earth (seep).
Stream	Linear body of water flowing on the Earth's surface (anabranh, awāwa, bayou, branch, brook, creek, distributary, fork, kill, pup, rio, river, run, slough)
Summit	Prominent elevation rising above the surrounding level of the Earth's surface; does not include pillars, ridges, or ranges; can occur as a single isolated mass or in a group (ahu, ballon, berg, bald, butte, cerro, colina, cone, cumbre, dome, head, hill, horn, knob, knoll, mauna, mesa, mesita, mound, mount, mountain, peak, pu'u, rock, sugarloaf, table, volcano).
Swamp	Poorly drained wetland, fresh or saltwater, wooded or grassy, possibly covered with open water (bog, cienega, everglades, fen, marais, marsh, pocosin, slough).
Valley	Linear depression in the Earth's surface that generally slopes from one end to the other (barranca, canyon, chasm, cirque, cove, coulee, draw, fjord, glen, gorge, gulch, gulf, gully, hollow, ravine).
Woods	Small area covered with a dense growth of trees; does not include an area of trees under the administration of a political agency.

## Quick Review: Who Board Members Can Talk To and When (Part 3) (Revised December 2022)

OIP often is asked whether board members can talk to one another in various situations when not in a meeting. To help board members understand what they can talk about when they are not in a meeting, OIP put together a three-part Quick Review. The entire series can be found online on [OIP's Sunshine Law training webpage at oip.hawaii.gov](https://oip.hawaii.gov).

Boards subject to the Sunshine Law, Part I of Chapter 92, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), are generally required to conduct all business in open meetings that have been properly noticed to allow for public participation. This Quick Review discusses an exception to the open meeting requirement for “permitted interaction groups” or “PIGs,” as set forth in section 92-2.5(b), HRS. While other types of permitted interactions were previously discussed in Part 2 of this Quick Review series, this article explains how members of a board may form a PIG to investigate or to negotiate a matter.

### PIGs Established to Investigate

Two or more members of a board, but less than the number of members which would constitute a quorum, may be assigned to investigate a matter relating to the official business of their board.

In order for a board to take action on a matter investigated by a PIG, **three separate board meetings must occur** in the order described below. At the **FIRST** meeting of the full board, the investigative PIG is formed and the scope of the investigation and the scope of each member's authority are defined. No new members or issues can be added to the PIG after the first board meeting. The PIG may then conduct its investigation outside of open meetings, which may take months to complete.

At a **SECOND** meeting of the full board, the findings and recommendations of the PIG are presented to the board, **but the board cannot discuss or act on the report at this meeting.**

- A PIG may present its findings to the full board in an executive session *if* the reason for entering into the executive meeting is one of those set forth in section 92-5(a), HRS, or other law. For example, if a PIG was created to investigate whether to take certain disciplinary action against an employee, it may present its findings to the full board in accordance with section 92-5(a)(2), HRS, which allows boards to enter executive meetings to consider the discipline of an employee. In such a situation, OIP generally recommends

that the PIG also present a “sanitized” report during the public session that omits the confidential information but informs the public of the general nature of the PIG’s findings and recommendations, so the public is at least generally informed of the PIG’s work and has something upon which to base testimony at the subsequent meeting where the board will discuss and perhaps act on the report.

**After the PIG makes its report to the board at the second meeting, the PIG is automatically dissolved and should not continue working.** The Sunshine Law does not allow a PIG to make more than one report or to continue working on its assignment after its report, so a PIG should not be providing “updates” on its work or more than one report. See [OIP Op. Ltr. No. F23-01](#) on OIP’s [Opinions page](#) for an in-depth discussion on investigative PIGs.

**The board cannot discuss, deliberate, or make any decisions regarding the PIG’s report until a THIRD meeting** held separately and after the meeting at which the findings and recommendations of the investigation were presented by the PIG.

Waiting until a subsequent board meeting to discuss and act on the PIG’s report gives the public the opportunity to present informed testimony at the meeting where the board will discuss and act on the report.

#### Some Practical Considerations for Investigative PIGs

- A PIG is fundamentally a permitted interaction with detailed reporting requirements, not a special type of committee.
- Because they are a permitted interaction rather than a type of committee, PIGs are not subject to the Sunshine Law’s requirements for giving notice, holding open meetings, or keeping minutes.
- PIG members may communicate by interactive technology (Skype, teleconference, etc.), and by email, telephone, etc., on matters within the scope of the PIG’s authority without violating the Sunshine Law.
- Although a PIG is not required to hold public meetings, it can choose to do so if it wishes.
- PIGs may solicit input from the public as part of an investigation without the need of filing a meeting agenda in accordance with the Sunshine Law.



- A PIG may include among its members people who are not members of the board that created the PIG. A PIG may also consult with others (i.e., staff, members of the public, individuals with expertise in a field, stakeholders, etc.) in furtherance of its investigation, but should NOT consult with other members of its parent board.
- Members of a board who are not part of the PIG may NOT attend PIG meetings or be included in PIG communications.
- Before the PIG reports to the board, PIG members should not discuss the status of their investigation with other board members who are not part of the PIG.
- A standing committee of a board may create a PIG, and such PIGs must follow all the requirements of section 92-2.5(b), HRS, including reporting back to the committee that created them.
- Sometimes, it may be better for a board to establish a temporary committee instead of a PIG, or to delegate authority to one member to perform a task and report back to the board. See OIP Op. Ltr. No. F23-01 at 15-16 for more information.
- A PIG may continue its work after the loss of a PIG member. For example, if a PIG's member's term on the board ends, that member also ceases to be a PIG member, but the PIG can continue working with the remaining original members. The board should not substitute another board member into that vacant PIG position. The PIG's membership was previously established at the initial meeting that created the PIG and new members cannot be added. The PIG can continue without the now-departed member, but if a board wants to change the PIG's membership, it should first allow the current PIG to report back and automatically dissolve. After hearing the investigative PIG's report and waiting until a subsequent board meeting to discuss and act on the report, the board can then create a new PIG to carry on the now-dissolved PIG's work.
- Similarly, once a PIG is formed, the board may not add new assigned tasks to an existing PIG.

## PIGs Established to Negotiate

Another less common type of PIG can be formed when two or more members of a board, but less than a quorum, are assigned to present, discuss, or negotiate any position adopted by the board at a meeting. The assignment of members to a PIG for the purpose of negotiation, and the scope of each member's authority, must be defined at a board meeting prior to the presentation, discussion, or negotiation. The three-meeting requirement for investigative PIGs does not apply to PIGs established to negotiate.

As a final note, boards should keep in mind that they may be subject to other laws or rules in addition to the Sunshine Law, which could affect members' ability to discuss pending matters. This may be particularly relevant for boards that exercise adjudicatory functions (which are not subject to the Sunshine Law), as they must generally avoid *ex parte* communications. Similarly, some boards are subject to confidentiality provisions outside the Sunshine Law, and if a board is involved in a procurement, it must follow procurement laws. Boards should consult with their own attorneys on the application of such laws and rules.

HBGN  
06/04/2024  
Selected O'ahu Names

Status	Feat ID	Feature Name	Feature Class	Corrected Name	Source	Notes	USGS Quad Name
3	358757	Diamond Head	Summit			PNH: Diamond Head; world-famous tuff crater... the highest point is Lē'ahi Peak... formerly called Lae'ahi and sometimes Diamond Hill (Kaimana Hila) in the 1800s. HBGN: The name is almost 200 years old (ca. 1825); designated as a National Natural Landmark; more research needed on variant names and historical context, 04-02-2024	Honolulu
3	363581	Punchbowl	Crater			PNH: Punchbowl; post-erosional tuff cone in Honolulu... The National Cemetery of the Pacific is in the crater... see Pūowaina. HBGN: Puakea Nogelmeier did extensive research; Mr. Camara will reach out to him; DHHL has lands outside of the crater; cultural significance as a leinaaka'uhane; more research needed, 04-02-2024	Honolulu
3	358471	Aimuu Gulch	Valley			PNH: not listed; HBGN: more research needed, 04-02-2024; Registered Map 2252 displays Aimuu Gulch just as it appears in the GNIS; references found to Pu'u'aimu'u and 'Aimu'u Stream; more research needed, 05-07-2024	Waimea
3	358537	Alapena Pool	Lake			PNH: not listed; HBGN: more research needed, 05-07-2024	Honolulu
3	358539	Alau Gulch	Valley				Kaena
3	358546	Alei Pali	Cliff				Kaena
3	358606	Aniani Nui Ridge	Ridge			PNH: not listed; more research needed; 05-07-2024	Koko Head
3	358618	Api Spring	Spring			PNH: not listed; more research needed; 05-07-2024	Koko Head
3	358648	Awanui Gulch	Valley				Ewa