

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

DATE: March 1, 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 Conference Room  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

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

Mr. Marzan called the meeting to order at 2:06 p.m.

The following were in attendance:

**MEMBERS:** Marques Marzan (Bishop Museum) [remote]  
Arthur Buto for Mary Alice Evans (Office of Planning and Sustainable  
Development) [in-person]  
Kapā Oliveira (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa) [remote]  
Lilliane Makaila (Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL)) [remote]  
Holly McEldowney (Department of Land and Natural Resources) [remote]  
*arrived 2:24pm*

**ABSENT:** Keith Gutierrez (Office of Hawaiian Affairs)  
Meyer Cummins (Land Survey Division) [remote]

**GUESTS:** Bobby Camara (retired) [remote]  
Jenny Runyon (USGS) [remote]

*[0:03:10]*

**AGENDA ITEM 2: Review of Meeting Minutes for September 20, 2023**

Mr. Cummins noted some unclear language at the beginning of Agenda Item 7. Mr. Camara noted several typographical errors and suggested some clarifying language

*[0:18:10]*

**MOTION:** Ms. Oliveira moved to approve the minutes of September 20, 2023 as revised. Ms. Makaila seconded the motion.

*The members present voted unanimously to approve the meeting minutes of September 20, 2023 as revised.*

*[0:18:43]*

**AGENDA ITEM 3: Public Comments**

Mr. Camara commented that starting next Friday, Hawai‘i Volcanoes National Park will be reviewing a short list of place names, including Lua Poholo.

Ms. Runyon asked to speak at the end of the meeting.

[0:20:24]

**AGENDA ITEM 4: Announcements**

None.

[0:20:34]

**AGENDA ITEM 5: Advisory Committee on Reconciliation in Place Names update**

Mr. Camara and Mr. Marzan shared their impressions of the meeting of the Advisory Committee on Reconciliation in Place Names in November. Mr. Camara joined the meeting remotely and thought it went really well. Mr. Camara, Mr. Marzan, and former Board members Brad Ka‘aleleo Wong, Niniau Kawaihae, and Kamana‘o Mills shared their experiences serving on the HBGN with the Advisory Committee members.

[0:23:58]

**AGENDA ITEM 6: Discussion and decision on Kapoho Crater / Pu‘uolēkia**

Dr. Hazlett is still working on this name proposal. He’ll let the Board know when he’s ready to bring it back to the Board.

[0:24:30]

**AGENDA ITEM 7: Discussion and decision on Reyes Beach**

Mr. Buto was copied on a response from Ms. Runyon on behalf of the US BGN to proposals to name Edward Reyes Viewpoint and Reyes Beach on O‘ahu. The response noted that the US BGN does not have jurisdiction over administrative features, such as the proposed Edward Reyes Viewpoint. By the copied response Ms. Runyon is forwarding the proposals to the HBGN for its consideration.

Mr. Buto reached out to the requester to let them know that the name proposal is on this month’s meeting agenda and inviting them to attend. Mr. Marzan pointed out that the location of the beach is in the area of Waimānalo Beach on the map, near Kaupō Beach Park. Ms. Oliveira noted that access to the beach area is from Kaiona Beach Park; the nearby structure going out into the ocean is Pāhonu. Because of the cultural significance of this area, she thinks the beach is probably not unnamed.

[0:32:40]

**MOTION.** Mr. Buto made a motion to defer this item until the Board has a discussion with the family. Ms. Oliveira seconded the motion.

*The members present voted unanimously to defer this item until the Board has an opportunity to discuss it with the family.*

[0:33:25]

**AGENDA ITEM 8: Discussion and decision on selected place names on the Island of Hawai'i**

[0:33:50]

Mr. Camara suggested that the Board discuss the order of considering names on various islands. The Board has been discussing the names on the Island of Hawai'i for years and wonders if there are features on other islands that should be discussed that are more impactful.

Ms. Oliveira asked about the process to revisit names, such as Island of Hawai'i. Mr. Buto acknowledged that proposing specific names at the current meeting to revisit at the next Board meeting gives members some time to do research ahead of the next meeting. Ms. Oliveira proposed reviewing Island of Hawai'i at next month's meeting.

The Board agreed with Mr. Marzan's suggestion that the review of names cycle through the islands, ten names at a time.

[0:46:20]

[363733] **Puu Ikaaka.** Mr. Cummins had sent a link to Registered Map 1264 that shows Puu Ikaaka. Mr. Camara noted that this is just below the Judd Road on the map. The road goes up past Wahapele to Puu Ikaaka then starts downward from there and levels off between Puu Ikaaka and Ahua Umi.

Mr. Camara volunteered to reach out to the Kona Historical Society to see if they can provide any insight into the meaning and spelling of the feature.

[0:55:00]

[363750] **Puu Kaakihi.** Mr. Cummins sent a link to Registered Map 2231 that shows Puu Kaakihi next to the Grant 779 to Wahineiki and Grant 2408 to Kaili and Nahale (*see Fig. 1*). Ms. Makaila has not any references that would help to understand the meaning of Kaakihi.

With respect to presumptively inserting an 'okina in Ka'akihi, the general feeling of the Board is to not add that to the spelling unless there is documentation or confirmation from cultural or lineal descendants of kama'āina to that place. Mr. Camara suggested looking at the grants to see what the documentation says and talk with the Richards family at Kapuā.

Ms. Oliveira suggested that if the Board could plan a day to travel to a neighbor island with a publicized list of names to be reviewed, the community might have enough time to research the names and be more inclined to come forward with evidence, especially in cases where they might be lineal descendants. However, she recognizes that the Board doesn't

have the resources. Mr. Camara added that based on his experience over the years he is not optimistic that people would know, even lineal descendants. In addition, the kūpuna who might have the knowledge will probably not be looking at meeting notices posted on the Internet. It might be more fruitful to have Hawaiian studies / anthropology / archaeology / geography students who are interested in place names do research as a project.

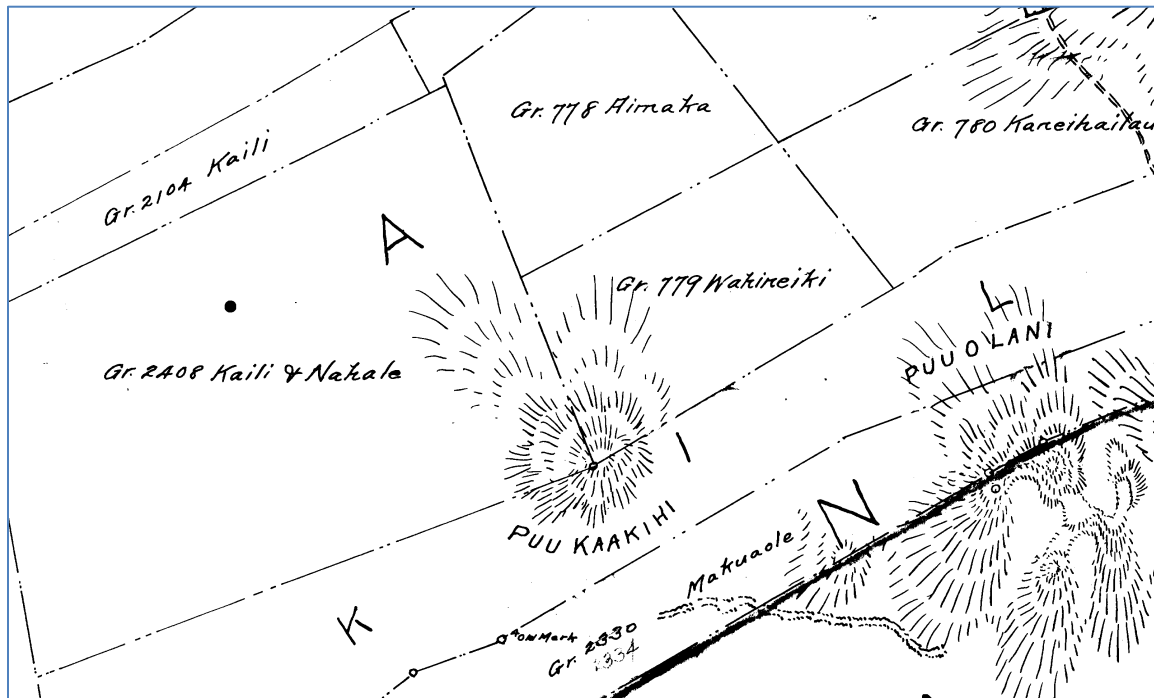


Fig.1. Portion of Registered Map 2231 showing Puu Kaakihī.

[1:11:39]

**MOTION.** Ms. Olivera moved to concatenate the name and add an ‘okina in pu‘u (and Status Code will be changed to “7”). Ms. Makaila seconded the motion.

*The members present voted unanimously to add an ‘okina to pu‘u and concatenate the name, resulting in **Pu‘ukaakihī**.*

[1:14:27]

**AGENDA ITEM 9: Next meeting**

Ms. Oliveira’s schedule is fuller now since she has taken on a new position. Mr. Marzan suggested meeting on the first Tuesday of the month. The members present – Mr. Marzan, Mr. Buto, Ms. Oliveira, Ms. Makaila, and Ms. McEldowney – agreed to meet on the first Tuesday of each month from 2pm-4pm.

[1:19:00]

**AGENDA ITEM 3: Public Comments**

Mr. Marzan called on Ms. Runyon who had asked earlier to speak at the end of the meeting.

Ms. Runyon noted that the question of the official name of the State came up at the Department of the Interior (DOI) about a month ago. At the beginning of February an internal communication noted that it was Mahina ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian Language Month). There was a link in the announcement to the DOI’s newly revised departmental manual that includes guidance for use of the Hawaiian language, not just for place names, but also for flora and fauna. In the manual, the name of the State is spelled with the ‘okina. It was brought to Ms. Runyon’s attention who subsequently had internal discussions with Ka‘i‘ini Kaloi from DOI’s Office of Native Hawaiian Relations (ONHR) about the manual. Ms. Runyon pointed out that the official name of state as it appears in the GNIS does not include the ‘okina and federal agencies should follow the GNIS spelling.

She went through some correspondence with the HBGN circa 2016 sharing past discussion and documentation as well as the Act establishing the State of Hawai‘i (which did not include the ‘okina). She noted that making a change in the GNIS would require Congressional action on the name of the State. The response from ONHR acknowledged the authority of the GNIS but asked if the ‘okina could be included out of respect for the culture. Mr. Kaloi’s colleague, Lisa Oshiro Suganuma also expressed concerns about not including the ‘okina. They will consult with the Solicitor’s Office to get an official interpretation and to see if they can use the spelling with the ‘okina in their documentation and still acknowledge and address the spelling found in the GNIS.

Ms. Runyon noted that she sees that the HBGN website includes the use of the ‘okina in the name of the State.

The manual in question contains guidance on the importance of orthography, some background on the Hawaiian language, and use of the modified orthography with exceptions... flora and fauna endemic or indigenous to Hawai‘i, Hawaiian cultural sites and features, geographic place names, and government units, such as the State of Hawai‘i, and the names of the counties. Ms. Runyon asked when the formal HBGN decision on the name of the Island of Hawai‘i took place. Mr. Camara wasn’t sure but remembers that in 2000 all of the national park area names were corrected.

Mr. Kaloi remembered having spoken to someone at the HBGN. Mr. Marzan noted that Mr. Brad Ka‘alelelo Wong, a former HBGN member now works at the ONHR.

Mr. Camara compiled information about the name of the State as well as what he believes is the way forward to getting the name with an ‘okina officially changed. He has communicated with the Governor’s Office and met with Senator Schatz and his staff multiple times about this issue but has not been successful persuading them to pursue this.

Ms. Oliveira noted that there will be arguments on both sides from native speakers.

Ms. Makaila noted that DHHL defers to the spelling that is most easily understandable or helps to convey the proper pronunciation. So, in the documents they prepare, generally they utilize diacriticals.

Ms. Runyon related her understanding that native speakers don't use diacriticals because they know how the words are pronounced, and that the diacriticals were a colonial introduction to the language that primarily help non-native speakers understand proper pronunciation. Ms. Makaila confirmed that Hawaiian was not a written language, so historically there were no diacriticals. There is an active argument about whether to include them or not now, but there is no majority accepted opinion on that. In her writing for work she tries to write at the most accessible level and so includes diacriticals. Native speakers will be able to read and understand a word written with diacriticals; non-native speakers will also be able to read it and to look it up if they don't understand it.

Ms. Runyon acknowledged that the US BGN faces similar issues with feature names associated with other indigenous peoples and that there is a lack of awareness of the US BGN and its role and relationship with federal agencies.

Mr. Buto noted that the HBGN statute does state that State agencies "shall" follow the naming decisions of the Board. But like the US BGN, awareness of the HBGN and its role is not widely known.

He recalled that back in 2016 when the HBGN did consider changing the name of the State, it concluded that it is not the kuleana of the Board, but that responsibility rests with the State Legislature or through amending the State Constitution, after which it would be pushed up to our Congressional Delegation to address at the federal level. At that time, HBGN sent letters to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of House of Representatives urging them to work with the Hawaiian Civic Clubs on the issue – at their annual convention, the Hawaiian Civic Clubs passed a resolution urging the addition of an 'okina to the spelling of the name of the State. We didn't hear anything from the Legislature and have not seen a bill introduced since then.

Ms. Runyon noted that a bill was introduced in the US House of Representatives to abolish the US BGN.

[1:59:07]

Due to a lack of quorum, Mr. Marzan adjourned the meeting at 4:05pm

<i>Status Key: 1 = Not Hawaiian; 2 = Not Reviewed; 3 = More Research Needed; 4 = HBGN Corrected; 5 = Already Correct in GNIS; 6 = Name Change; 7 = HBGN partial correction, exhausted available reference and research resources</i>							
Stat	Feat ID	Feature Name	Feature Class	Corrected Name	Source	Notes	USGS Quad Name
3	363733	Puu Ikaaka	Summit			PNH: not listed; HBGN: combined, Pu'uikaaka; HBGN: Mr. Camara will consult with the Kona Historical Society, 03-01-2024	Hualalai
7	363750	Puu Kaakihi	Summit	Pu'ukaakihi	HBGN	PNH: not listed; HBGN: combined, Pu'ukaakihi; HBGN: concatenated per Style Guide, but more research needed; exhausted available reference and research resources, 03-01-2024	Hawi