

**MINUTES  
FOR THE MEETING OF THE  
HAWAII BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES**

DATE: June 4, 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. Cummins called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

The following were in attendance:

**MEMBERS:** Meyer Cummins (Land Survey Division) [remote]  
Arthur Buto for Mary Alice Evans (Office of Planning and Sustainable  
Development) [in-person]  
Holly McEldowney (Department of Land and Natural Resources) [in-person]  
Lilliane Makaila (Department of Hawaiian Home Lands) [remote]

**ABSENT:** Marques Marzan (Bishop Museum)  
Keith Gutierrez (Office of Hawaiian Affairs)  
Kapā Oliveira (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa)

**GUESTS:** Jenny Runyon (Staff, US BGN, USGS) [remote]  
Dr. Shellie Zahniser (Executive Secretary, Domestic Names Committee  
(DNC), US BGN, USGS) [remote]  
Regina Hilo (Department of Land and Natural Resources) [remote]  
KITV4 News [remote]

*[0:01:05]*

**AGENDA ITEM 2: Review of Meeting Minutes for May 7, 2024**

*[0:02:57]*

**MOTION:** Ms. Makaila moved to approve the minutes of May 7, 2024. Ms. McEldowney seconded the motion.

*[0:03:14]*

*The members present voted unanimously to approve the meeting minutes of May 7, 2024.*

*[0:03:23]*

**AGENDA ITEM 3: Public Comments**

Mr. Buto received an email from Ms. Shelby Bourquein, contractor for the US BGN asking about the status of the Name Request for **Reyes Beach**. Mr. Buto recalled that the Board deferred discussion and decision while waiting to hear from the applicant about attending an HBGN meeting. Mr. Buto will reach out to the family.

Mr. Buto received an email from David Fogel from Apple asking about a spreadsheet of authoritative names for Hawai‘i. He saw the pdf lists on the HBGN website. Mr. Buto directed him to the downloadable GNIS file on the USGS website.

Ms. Runyon confirmed that Shelby is the new contractor with the US BGN. She is following up on new name proposals.

Ms. Runyon noted that David Fogel is a cartographer with Apple Maps. He is interested in using official names from state and federal naming authorities in Apple Maps and would like to learn more about the naming process at those jurisdictional levels.

Ms. Makaila commented on the name proposal for **Reyes Beach**. The proposal states that this is an unnamed feature, but she would like to see some research either from the applicant or from the Board providing historical information and identifying traditional names for that place, and she would like to see some level of consultation with lineal and cultural descendants and community groups in that area. It is near Pāhōnu Pond, the historical turtle pond in Waimānalo that several community groups are associated with – Waimānalo Limu Hui, Ke Kula Nui o Waimānalo, and community members who work on the pond. Establishing a memorial name for a geographic feature might be a more difficult task for the applicant than naming a building or a park.

[0:12:03]

**AGENDA ITEM 4: Announcements**

None.

[0:12:15]

**AGENDA ITEM 5: Discussion about the possibility of using Hawaiian terminology instead of English descriptors in feature names.**

Mr. Buto provided a listing of the GNIS Feature Classes and their descriptions. The descriptions include several different Hawaiian terms, like “moku” and “awāwa.”

Mr. Cummins expressed a concern that dropping a descriptor entirely from the name might lead to ambiguity or difficulty understanding what feature is being referenced on a map. He suggested including a descriptor in parentheses in the name as a way of clearly and unambiguously identifying a feature, e.g., “gulch.”

Ms. Makaila supports including Hawaiian words in the descriptions of the GNIS Feature Class. Although the Board would review specific feature names individually, generally she favors removing English descriptors, e.g., O‘ahu Island should be O‘ahu, with the Feature

Class identifying it as an island and the Feature Class description including the Hawaiian term “mokupuni.”

Ms. Runyon will find out about the process for revising the Feature Class descriptions. She noted that for a feature in the GNIS database, there’s not a way to show descriptions for the Feature Classes along with the feature name.

Ms. Makaila responded that she is interested in modifying the descriptions of some of the Feature Classes. She noted as an example that for Feature Class “stream” the Hawaiian term “awāwa” is included in the description. But in Hawaiian, “kahawai” is the more common term for the flowing of the water, while “awāwa” refers to the land that is carved out by the stream, e.g., a gulch.

Ms. Makaila will send to Ms. Runyon and Mr. Buto a list of Hawaiian terms that should be included in Feature Class descriptions or terms that are incorrectly applied or terms that are misspelled. This might be a work in progress that Ms. Oliveira (not present at this meeting) can ask Hawaiian language program students to help with.

Ms. McEldowney noted that one of the purposes of the authoritative names in the GNIS is to standardize feature names on USGS maps (and Google and Apple maps). The feature names should be descriptive and complete enough to enable people to communicate their location unambiguously to first responders or to people who are unfamiliar with the Hawaiian language. Historically, the English descriptor was included in the feature name for that purpose. There may be unintended consequences of removing the English descriptor. The Board should consider this on a case-by-case basis.

This discussion will continue next meeting.

[0:33:02]

**AGENDA ITEM 6: Discussion and decision on establishing a Permitted Interaction Group to research the name of the Island of Hawai‘i.**

At the last meeting the Board started the conversation about establishing a Permitted Interaction Group (PIG), the pros cons, and the potential cost (to visit Island of Hawai‘i). Because a full Board wasn’t present, the discussions was tabled.

Mr. Cummins asked if any of the members present today would be willing to serve on the PIG. Ms. Makaila said that she would be happy to participate.

Mr. Cummins thought that Ms. Makaila and Ms. Oliveira would be good candidates, because of their knowledge of ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i and their interest in the topic. However, neither was present at the last meeting; Ms. Oliveira is not present today.

Ms. Oliveira's 'ōlelo Hawai'i expertise extends to both language and geography. Mr. Cummins also volunteered to provide an additional mapping expertise from a surveyor's perspective.

[0:46:58]

**MOTION:** Mr. Buto moved that the Board table this discussion until the next meeting where there are at least five Board members present. Ms. Makaila seconded the motion.

[0:47:18]

*The members present voted unanimously to table this discussion until the next meeting where there are at least five Board members present.*

[0:47:27]

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

[0:47:48]

[363581] **Punchbowl.**

Mr. Camara is not present to discuss Puakea Nogelmeier's research into Pūowaina.

[0:48:12]

[358537] **Alapena Pool.**

Mr. Cummins found a few maps of the area, but the names are not on them. He also found File Plan 184, ca. 1917 that shows **Alapena Pool** labeled. Alapena Falls shows up on more modern maps. There were no references in field books. Ms. McEldowney noted that it is one of three pools in the area. She has some maps, because this area is next to the Royal Mausoleum, which is a State Park. Mr. Cummins will also look at Grant 3691, which abuts the pool, to see if it references the pool.

[0:51:44]

[358539] **Alau Gulch**

[358546] **Alei Pali**

On Registered Map 1784, of the Ka'ena area, Mr. Cummins found **Alau** and **Alei** (which might be the location of the trig station with that name), but not **Alau Gulch** or **Alei Pali**. Mr. Cummins will look at the field book associated with the map to learn more about the naming convention for the labeled features, e.g., **Alau**, **Alei**, and Holoihonuamea Rocks. Ms. McEldowney noted that Emerson did maps of some of the grants in the area. He was trying to preserve native rights to certain activities like collecting salt and drying nets, even if they weren't the grant owner.

[1:01:23]

[358606] **Aniani Nui Ridge.** Mr. Cummins was unable to find a map with the ridge but did find **Aniani** on Registered Map 72, circa 1872, of the Waimānalo area.

Ms. Makaila found **Aniani Nui** in both the Papakilo and Ulukau databases, but both cite USGS map as the source. **Aniani** is referenced as well in Ulukau in reference to Maunawili. Unable to find definitive references to it. She hasn't looked at the nūpepa yet for **Aniani** or **Aniani Nui**.

Mr. Buto will leave the same list of names to review for the next meeting.

[1:08:04]

**AGENDA ITEM 8: Adjourn**

[1:08:08]

Dr. Shellie Zahniser, the new Executive Secretary for the US BGN Domestic Names Committee (DNC) introduced herself. The DNC will review the decisions of the HBGN and if approved, will incorporate those decisions into the GNIS database.

[1:09:37]

**MOTION:** Mr. Buto moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. McEldowney seconded the motion.

[1:09:54]

*The members present voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.*

Mr. Cummins adjourned the meeting at 3:13 pm.

| 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 |         |                  |               |                |        |  |                |
|---|---------|------------------|---------------|----------------|--------|--|----------------|
| Stat  | Feat ID | Feature Name     | Feature Class | Corrected Name | Source | Notes  | USGS Quad Name |
| 3   | 358537  | Alapena Pool     | Lake          |                |        | PNH: not listed; HBGN: more research needed, 05-07-2024<br>HBGN: found on File Plan 184 (ca. 1917); will check State Parks maps and Grant 3691 abutting Alapena Pool, 06-04-2024   | Honolulu       |
| 3   | 358539  | Alau Gulch       | Valley        |                |        | HBGN: "Alau" and "Aleī" found on Registered Map 1784; will check Field Book associated with map for information about naming conventions, 06-04-2024   | Kaena          |
| 3   | 358546  | Alei Pali        | Cliff         |                |        | HBGN: "Alau" and "Aleī" found on Registered Map 1784; will check Field Book associated with map for information about naming conventions, 06-04-2024   | Kaena          |
| 3   | 358606  | Aniani Nui Ridge | Ridge         |                |        | PNH: not listed; more research needed; 05-07-2024;<br>HBGN: Registered Map 72 (ca. 1872) shows "Aniani;" online resources Papakilo Database and Ulukau both include records related to "Aniani Nui;" will check nūpepa, 06-04-2024 | Koko Head      |