

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

DATE: March 12, 2025  
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 2:03 p.m.

The following were in attendance:

**MEMBERS:** Marques Marzan (Bishop Museum) [remote]  
Holly McEldowney (Department of Land and Natural Resources) [in-person]  
Arthur Buto for Mary Alice Evans (Office of Planning and Sustainable  
Development) [in-person]  
Meyer Cummins (Land Survey Division) [remote]  
Kapā Oliveira (University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa) [remote] *(joined at 2:10  
p.m.)*  
Hailama Farden (Office of Hawaiian Affairs) [remote] *(joined at 2:12 p.m.)*

**ABSENT:** Lilliane Makaila (Department of Hawaiian Home Lands)

**GUESTS:** Bobby Camara  
Dr. Shellie Zahniser (Executive Secretary, Domestic Names Committee  
(DNC), US BGN, USGS) [remote]  
Lei De Mello

**[0:01:02]**

**AGENDA ITEM 2: Review of Meeting Minutes for December 3, 2024**

**[0:01:48]**

**MOTION:** Mr. Cummins moved to accept the minutes of December 3, 2024. Ms. McEldowney seconded the motion.

**[0:02:05]**

*The members present voted unanimously to approve the meeting minutes of December 3, 2024.*

**[0:02:10]**

**AGENDA ITEM 3: Public Comments**

Mr. Buto received an email from the Office of Information Practices (OIP) regarding reviewing documents outside of a Sunshine Meeting. Board members must meet in a regular Sunshine meeting in order to review documents that relate to a Board decision. Mr. Buto suggested that the Board schedule a meeting next month to finalize the documents related to the proposal to change the name of the “Island of Hawai‘i” to “Hawai‘i” in order to distribute them to the members’ networks and on the HBGN website well in advance of the planned June meeting.

Mr. Cummins and Mr. Marzan agreed that a meeting next month is in order.

Mr. Camara expressed disappointment that the Board is only meeting quarterly.

[0:07:00]

Ms. Oliveira joined the meeting.

Mr. Buto explained that the decision to move to a quarterly meeting was made to boost attendance by members. Several members noted that meeting less frequently raised the priority of the meeting in their schedules and would make it more likely that they would attend; they are less likely to let other obligations take priority in their schedules. The quarterly meeting schedule could be changed if it doesn’t result in better attendance.

[0:08:45]

Mr. Farden joined the meeting.

Mr. Cummins suggested a meeting on Wednesday, April 9, 2025. Mr. Buto will schedule an hour-long meeting 3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Ms. Zahniser reported that the US BGN has been executing the Executive Order 14172 and has updated the GNIS to reflect name changes from “Gulf of Mexico” to “Gulf of America” and from “Denali” to “Mt. McKinley.”

[0:14:40]

**AGENDA ITEM 4: Announcements**

There were no announcements.

[0:14:55]

**AGENDA ITEM 5: Selection of Chairperson**

Board members expressed gratitude to Mr. Marzan for chairing the Board for the last nine years.

The Board discussed various options for the term and start of service. A two-year term aligned with the election of the Governor was proposed as one that could adjust to changes

in the Governor's Cabinet but still provide some continuity of leadership of the Board. Changes in agency leadership require new or renewed identification of Board designees.

[0:25:23]

**MOTION:** Mr. Cummins moved to vote on a new Chair every two years at the last meeting of that year with no limit on the number of terms that the member may serve as Chair. Ms. Oliveira seconded the motion.

[0:26:45]

*The members present voted unanimously to approve the motion that the Chair be selected every two years at the last meeting of the year and that there be no limit on the number of terms that a member may serve as Chair.*

Mr. Farden nominated Mr. Marzan to serve as Chair. Mr. Cummins seconded the nomination.

Mr. Marzan indicated that he is not opposed to continuing to serve as Chair.

[0:29:11]

**MOTION:** Mr. Farden moved to close the nominations. Mr. Cummins seconded the motion.

[0:29:50]

*The members present voted unanimously to close the nominations.*

There being no other candidates, Mr. Marzan was elected Chair by acclamation.

Ms. Zahniser noted in the chat that the HBGN's recommendation that "**Pu'u Kalena**" be changed to "**Kalena**" is on the US BGN docket for its meeting on March 13, 2025.

[0:30:00]

**AGENDA ITEM 6: Discussion and decision on selected feature names on O'ahu**

Mr. Buto explained that the list being considered today continues the discussion of names by ahupua'a.

Mr. Camara asked if there is a process to advise people making maps to remove English descriptors from place names.

A discussion followed with Board members – Mr. Cummins: if the feature is well-known, leaving out the English descriptor is fine, but if not well-known the descriptor can help when reading maps, e.g., putting the descriptor in parentheses. Mr. Buto: in maps, the English descriptor helps to clarify what the name is referring to and what the common name is for that feature, both historically and in the present day. In the GNIS the word "historical" is used in parentheses after the Primary Name to identify a place that no longer exists. At a

prior meeting the Board adopted a practice of removing the English descriptor if there was no other feature in that area with the same name. Mr. Farden: if we're communicating with other people, the priority should be to communicate clearly and not necessarily to follow spelling or grammar rules. Mr. Cummins: suggested leaving the English descriptor for clarity. Ms. Oliveira: one resource in her academic studies stated that when referring to a place name, you're quoting ancestors. She suggests that identifying the feature without the English description be an Alternate Name. Mr. Marzan: it has been his experience that the Board has advocated for the 'inoa Hawai'i in its decisions. Mr. Camara: balancing 'olelo Hawai'i and English naming is not always straightforward. He would like the Board to pause this discussion and focus for now on the Hawaiian part of the name. Mr. Marzan proposed considering the English descriptors later.

[1:02:43]

[359197] **Hina Gulch.**

Ms. Oliveira stated that she is confident that this feature name is correct.

[1:11:45]

**MOTION:** Ms. Oliveira moved to change the status to "5, GNIS correct." Mr. Buto seconded the motion.

[1:12:02]

*The members present voted unanimously to change the status to "5."*

[1:12:13]

[359484] **Ihihi Gulch.**

A discussion followed about the uncertainty of the meanings of some of these names and danger of making educated guesses about the diacriticals in the spellings – the Board's decision to make a spelling decision would have an impact on others looking at the name and inferring some meaning based on that spelling. It would be better to not make a spelling change if there's no evidence to support that change.

Ms. Oliveira suggested reviewing specific names that may have some significance instead of or in addition to a systematic review of names. As an example, she cited "Honomanū" on Maui. Mr. Farden noted that another resource for the Board may be the interviews Mr. Kanalele recorded with mānaleo (<https://library.byuh.edu/clinton-kanalele-collection>).

[1:38:22]

**MOTION:** Ms. Oliveira moved to leave the status of the remaining names on the list as "3, more research needed." Mr. Farden seconded the motion.

[1:38:50]

*The members present voted unanimously to leave the status of the remaining names on the list as "3."*

[1:39:28]

**AGENDA ITEM 7: Discussion and decision on selected feature names on Kaua‘i**

[364827]

**Waiohonu.**

Ms. Oliveira thinks that this name is correct, based on its listing in *Place Names of Hawaii*.

[1:42:57]

**MOTION:** Ms. Oliveira moved to change the status of **Waiohonu** to “5, correct in GNIS.” Mr. Farden seconded the motion.

[1:43:30]

*The members present voted unanimously to change the status of **Waiohonu** to “5.”*

[1:45:30]

**MOTION:** Ms. Oliveira moved to withdraw her previous motion to change the status “5” because she mistakenly thought this was the **Waiohonu** on Maui, but this is on Kaua‘i. Mr. Farden withdrew his previous second.

[359786]

**Kahoano.**

Mr. Cummins found “Puu Kahoana” on Registered Map 1395, dated 1878. Next to it is labeled “Palena Swamp” that may be what became “Waita Reservoir.” He also looked at an updated version Registered Map 2375, dated 1903. **Kahoano** is not labeled on this map, but a feature labeled “Waihohonu Hill” is located where **Waiohonu** should be. Mr. Cummins will continue looking at these maps.

Mr. Buto will add a review of the feature name **Honomanū** to the agenda for the June meeting of the Board. Mr. Cummins asked that a longer list of names be made available so that he can begin researching them now. Mr. Buto will post longer lists on the website.

[2:06:44]

**AGENDA ITEM 8: Adjourn**

[2:06:47]

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

[2:07:03]

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

Mr. Marzan adjourned the meeting at 4:10 p.m.

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 references and research resources							
Stat	Feat ID	Feature Name	Feature Class	Corrected Name	Source	Notes	USGS Quad Name
5	359197	Hina Gulch	Valley	Hina Gulch	HBGN	PNH: Hina, Moloka'i; HBGN: feature name is correct as listed in GNIS, 03-12-2025	Kahuku
3	359484	Ihiihi Gulch	Valley			HBGN: more research needed, 03-12-2025	Kahuku
3	359607	Kaaoao Gulch	Valley			HBGN: more research needed, 03-12-2025	Kahuku
3	359731	Kahawainui Gulch	Valley			HBGN: more research needed, 03-12-2025	Kahuku
3	359732	Kahawainui Stream	Stream			HBGN: more research needed, 03-12-2025	Kahuku
3	361152	Kepi Gulch	Valley			HBGN: more research needed, 03-12-2025	Kahuku
3	361399	Kōloa Gulch	Valley			PNH: Koloa Street, O'ahu; Kōloa Beach, Ka'ū, Hawai'i; Kōloa, Kaua'i; HBGN: more research needed, 03-12-2025	Kahuku
3	361708	Lamaloa Gulch	Valley			PNH: Lamaloa, Moloka'i; HBGN: more research needed, 03-12-2025	Kahuku
3	363816	Pu'ukauweweole	Summit			HBGN: more research needed, 03-12-2025	Kahuku
3	363846	Pu'uki	Summit			PNH: Pu'uki on Hawai'i and Kaua'i; HBGN more research needed, 03-12-2025	Kahuku
3	364999	Wini Gulch	Valley			HBGN: more research needed, 03-12-2025	Kahuku
3	359786	Kahoano	Summit			HBGN: more research needed, 03-12-2025	Koloa
3	361592	Kumanumanu	Summit			HBGN: more research needed, 03-12-2025	Koloa
3	363262	Pihakekua	Crater		AH3	Var: Pihakekua (UHP); PNH: not listed; AH3: Pihakekua; HBGN: more research needed, 03-12-2025	Koloa
3	364119	Puu Wanawana	Summit		AH3 / UHP	PNH: not listed; AH3 / UHP: Pu'uwanawana; HBGN: more research needed, 03-12-2025	Koloa
3	364827	Waiohonu	Summit			PNH: Waiohonu, Maui; HBGN: more research needed, 03-12-2025	Koloa