Ke'ena Kuleana Ho'opipa O Hawai'i
1801 Kalākaua Avenue
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96815
kelepona tel 808 973 2255
kelepa'i fax 808 973 2253
hawaiitourismauthority.org

**ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
OF THE
HAWAI'I TOURISM AUTHORITY
Thursday, September 11, 2025 at 10:30 a.m.**

Virtual Meeting

MINUTES OF THE ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Kimberly Agas (Vice Chair), James McCully (Vice Chair), Leah Belmonte, Mericia Palma Elmore, Terry Fischer, Joel Guy, Danny Ojiri, Lisa Paulson, Lāna'i Tabura, Linda Wong
MEMBER NOT PRESENT:	Troy Lazaro, Christian West
HTA STAFF PRESENT:	Caroline Anderson, Jadie Goo, David Uchiyama, Talon Kishi, Jill Radke, Patricia Ornellas
LEGAL COUNSEL:	John Cole

1. Call to Order

Vice Chair McCully called the meeting to order at 10:42 a.m.

2. Roll Call to Announce Name of Participating Board Members and to Identify Who Else is Present with Board Member if Location is Nonpublic

Mr. Uchiyama did the roll call, and members were in attendance except for members Lazaro and West, who were excused.

3. Opening Protocol

Ms. Ornellas, Kaua'i Destination Manager, gave the opening cultural protocol. Ms. Ornellas said they are starting the DMAP process. Along with fellow island destination managers, they worked on the in-person DMAP community meetings. They kicked off Kauai's meeting in

Waimea last night with other destination managers, Blane Andrade (Oʻahu Destination Manager), Meagan DeGaia (Maui and Lanaʻi Destination Manager), Matthew Sueda (Hawaiʻi Island Destination Manager), Kui Adolpho (Molokaʻi Destination Manager). The purpose of the meeting was to gather as much information and input from the community members on various topics, such as for Kauaʻi specifically, traffic infrastructure and access, enforcement and safety, visitor education, and resident engagement and communication. For Kauaʻi, those topics all directly and indirectly address impacts to their hotspots, resident sentiment, and visitor experience. They are looking forward to the outcome of the previous night's meeting. For Kauaʻi, they will continue having more in-person, in-community meetings to gather more information for DMAPs. She felt it was a successful meeting with members from our Kauaʻi Advisory Group and everyone else who attended. She gave a shoutout to those who joined her on the ground presence. She said no task is too big when done together. Collaboration is really imperative for success.

4. Report of Permitted Interactions at Informational Meetings or Presentations Not Organized by the Board Under HRS section 92-2.5(e)

There was no input on Permitted Interaction Groups.

5. Discussion, Selection and Appointments of Board Members to Standing Committees

- **a. Sports Tourism**
- **b. Film Production Tourism**
- **c. Administrative**
- **d. Branding**
- **e. Hoʻokahua Hawaiʻi**

They took a poll of the members. Ms. Anderson gave the staff report. In the report, the staff would like to establish board committees in the areas of sports tourism, film production tourism, administrative, branding and Hoʻokahua. She thanked everyone for taking the time to share with her the committees that they would like to participate in. The staff looked at the first, second, and third choices. They worked with Dir. Tokioka, and Mr. Uchiyama. She gave the results of the committee.

The Administrative Standing Committee:
They will oversee the contract terms of the President and Chief Executive Officer. They are also responsible for making recommendations related to their evaluation.
Chair - Member McCully
Vice Chair - Member Guy
Members - Member Belmonte, Member Elmore, and Member Paulson.

Staff leads - Ms. Anderson and Mr. Uchiyama.

Branding Standing Committee:
They will provide strategic review, evaluation, and recommendations on the Board's branding and marketing initiatives, programs, and activities that support the HTA's vision, mission, and strategic objectives, with a particular focus on destination branding, meetings, conventions, and incentive business.
Chair - Member Agas
Vice Chair - Member Ojiri as Vice Chair.
Members - Member Lazaro, Member Tabura, and Member Fischer.
Staff leads - Ms. Goo.

Film Production Tourism Standing Committee:
They will guide initiatives that promote Hawaiʻi through film and television and integrated marketing to drive economic development and foster a positive, authentic representation of the state.
Chair - Member Elmore
Vice Chair - Member Wong
Members - Member Ojiri, Member Paulson, and Member Belmonte
Staff lead - Ms. Goo.

Hoʻokahua Hawaii Standing Committee:
They provide strategic guidance on destination stewardship, perpetuation of Hawaiian Culture, development and enhancement of visitor experiences, workforce development, and the creation and implementation of the HTA's Strategic Plan, destination management action plans, and the state tourism functional plan.
Chair - Member Paulson
Vice Chair – Member Fischer
Members - Member Belmonte, Member Guy, and Member Lazaro.
Staff lead - Ms. Anderson.

Sports Tourism Standing Committee:
This committee will advance Hawaii's position as a premier destination for sports-related travel and events, providing strategic guidance on initiatives that leverage sports tourism to drive economic impact, enhance the destination's brand, support local, national, and international partnerships, and strengthen the community's well-being.
Chair – Member West
Vice Chair - Member Tabura
Members - Member Agas, Member Fischer, and Member Wong.

Staff lead - Mr. Lafitaga.

Vice Chair McCully pointed out that everyone would be notified of all committee meetings, so they will be able to attend and participate, but without voting, unless they are appointed member. He questioned the printed quorum - four members each for Branding and Administrative, and three members as quorum for the other committees. He said that usually it is a majority of the appointed members that can establish quorum. He asked AG Cole if there is a reason that they have different numbers.

AG Cole said it is three if there are only five members, but he wanted to check with Ms. Anderson and Dir. Tokioka, if there was some other reason that they put four for those first two committees. Ms. Anderson said it might be a typo on her end. A quorum for a committee of five would be three members.

Member Belmonte thanked them for having faith in her to be placed on the Film Production Tourism Committee. She asked if it was possible to ask if there were other members interested in the committee. Ideally, she would like to be on the Administrative and Hoʻokahua committees.

Vice Chair McCully said it was all voluntary and reminded her that if she were on the Administrative and Audit Committee, she would be a member of the CEO Search Committee as well.

Member Belmonte said that because of other constraints outside the HTA, she asked to be removed from the Film Production Committee and to only serve on the Hoʻokahua, Administrative, and the CEO Search Team committees.

Member Tabura said he is all for the Sports Committee. As for the Branding Standing committee, he has time constraints and has asked to be removed from that committee.

Vice Chair McCully said they could approach Ms. Anderson about any committees they wish to be removed from.

Ms. Anderson said they could clear it up now to finalize the committees.

Vice Chair McCully said they would take the slate and vote on it as presented. If anyone wishes to step down from any committee, they can sort it out at the next meeting. Everyone agreed.

He asked for a motion for appointments to the following committees as recommended by the interim president and CEO. Vice Chair Agas made a motion for all the committees. Mr. Fischer seconded.

The motion passed.

6. Creation of a CEO Search Permitted Interactive Group (PIG)

Ms. Anderson gave the staff report. She said the staff report is in the Board packet. The purpose of the CEO search PIG is to work with the HTA's executive search firm and review qualified candidates' resumes for the position of the HTA president and CEO. It is also to conduct interviews with qualified candidates, as well as to develop the contract terms for the president and CEO, and report back to the full Board. The staff would like to recommend the Board approve the creation of the CEO search PIG.

Vice Chair McCully asked for a motion for the creation of the CEO search PIG as presented by staff. Vice Chair Agas made a motion. Member Paulson seconded. Vice Chair Agas asked Vice Chair McCully who would be serving on the PIG. Vice Chair McCully said it would be the members of the Administrative Standing Committee as recommended by staff. It is the only assignment or power of the advisory Board, so it is their biggest responsibility. It will take a lot of time and will require more time than any of the other committees. He said if anyone was uncomfortable with making that commitment, they must let them know. All members of the Board are limited. The PIG cannot have contributions from other members. It is only the members of the PIG who are at the meeting, discussing the CEO search. The definition of a PIG is that it has to be less than a quorum in attendance, not simply for voting purposes, but for purposes of discussion and interaction.

Dir. Tokioka said that, for the edification of all members, the interactive committee will review the applicants. Ms. Anderson and he received them a week prior from Bishop and Company. The committee will review it, but for the rest of the members, it will go to the full Board for discussion after some of the choices have been made. He asked what the role would be of those members who are not on the PIG. AG Cole said the Board will decide what the PIG needs to do. Ms. Anderson had laid it out in her document, specifying the top two candidates that the PIG would narrow down to. However, the Board could decide something different, or they could leave the number blank and have the PIG itself decide how many candidates to recommend. The whole purpose of the PIG is to allow it to operate outside of the Sunshine Law and not need to post notices for every meeting. They can meet and discuss matters on a more structured and expedited basis, complete their work, and then report to the full Board on their outcome.

Vice Chair McCully said there would be two motions. One is to establish the PIG. He asked about the salary and asked if it is statutory or policy that it will not be more than the Lieutenant Governor's salary.

Dir. Tokioka said it is statutory, and it was changed last year.

Vice Chair McCully asked about the new revised HRS. AG Cole said he did not think the statutes had been revised from the past session. They would have to go to the Bill itself that passed.

Vice Chair McCully said that on the second page of the staff report, some of those things that Ms. Anderson proposed are modifiable by the PIG itself. AG Cole said for the motion, they should remove the number two in both, conduct interviews with qualified candidates to narrow down the candidates, and then interview the candidates, thereby not restricting them to do two or more.

Vice Chair McCully asked for a vote for the establishment of the PIG.

The motion passed unanimously.

7. Discussion and Assignment of Board Members to the CEO Search Permitted Interaction Group (PIG)

Ms. Anderson provided her staff report. Ms. Anderson thanked them for establishing the CEO search PIG. The purpose of the agenda item was to assign the Board members to it. They would like to use the committee members of the Administrative Standing committee as the members of the CEO search PIG. The members would be McCully, Guy, Belmonte, Elmore, and Paulsen.

Vice Chair McCully asked for a motion for the assignment of the Board members to the CEO search PIG as recommended by the interim president and CEO. Vice Chair Agas made a motion for the assignment of the Board members just identified by the CEO for the search committee for the group. Member Fischer seconded.

Member Guy said he is looking forward to it and is excited to serve as Vice Chair under Vice Chair McCully's leadership. He thanked the staff for putting them all together.

The motion passed unanimously.

8. Adjournment

Vice Chair McCully said his goal was to have the meeting done in under half an hour. He reflected on the fact that it was September 11, 24 years after the pivotal moment in their national life, and how fortunate they are to live and serve in Hawaiʻi.

He concluded the HTA Advisory Board meeting. He thanked everyone who joined.

The meeting adjourned at 11:04 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheillane Reyes

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Sheillane Reyes
Recorder