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**HO'OKAHUA HAWAI'I STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING
HAWAI'I TOURISM AUTHORITY
Wednesday, December 11, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.
VIRTUAL MEETING**

MINUTES OF HO'OKAHUA HAWAI'I STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mahina Paishon (Chair), Kimberly Agas,
Todd Apo, Mufi Hannemann

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Stephanie Iona, Chris West

HTA STAFF PRESENT: Daniel Nāho'opi'i, Kalani Ka'anā'anā,
Caroline Anderson, Jadie Goo, Dede Howa,
Lindsay Sanborn, Patricia Ornellas, Meagan
DeGaia

GUEST: Tyler Gomes, Ka'ini Aranaydo, Dan
Wacksman,

LEGAL COUNSEL: John Cole

1. Call to Order and Opening Protocol

Chair Paishon called the meeting to order at 9:11 a.m. Mr. Ka'anā'anā opened the meeting with the Aloha chant.

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

Ms. Sanborn did the roll call. Members in attendance were alone and by themselves.

3. Approval of Minutes of the September 12, 2024 Ho'okahua Hawai'i Standing Committee Meeting

Mr. Hannemann made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Agas seconded.

4. Presentation, Discussion, and Action on the LA Rams 2025 Program

Mr. Ka'anā'anā stated that detailed information about this program was contained in the staff report to the Board meeting scheduled for December 19.

Staff recommended a partnership over two years with the L.A. Rams for a total investment of \$3.7 million. Several points have been negotiated relating to important issues for the HTA Board strategy for sports, community engagement and benefits for communities, building brand awareness, and extending the Hawai'i brand.

Staff proposed that the initial year's program should take place on Maui, given the softness of the Maui market and the aim of the Board for Maui recovery. The marketing portion of the project is to include premium associations, with the twin messages "L.A. Rams at Home in the Hawaiian Islands" and "Official Island Getaway of the L.A. Rams" to be used throughout branding in the U.S., in stadiums during game activations, and organized team activities (OTAs) which represented one portion of the program.

The Rams were to conduct two pre-season practice periods, Hawai'i being the second. These activities would provide an opportunity to bring the team and staff to the islands. During these OTAs there would be practice and preparation for the season, and in the process, meaningful community engagement would take place, including youth focus, a football camp, a girls' flag football clinic, which would provide flag football kits for girls' teams, and locker room refurbishment for a Maui high school.

It was hoped that a training session focusing on health and player safety would be held with athletic trainers. Mr. Ka'anā'anā mentioned the importance of safeguarding student-athletes' health and that the Rams' training staff would contribute meaningful expertise to local trainers and athletic staff.

Referring to building other elements of integration relevant to the community, Mr. Ka'anā'anā commented that the Vince Lombardi trophy was to be brought to Maui to provide a focal point for local young people to meet the players and be inspired by them.

The marketing aspect of the program, in terms of game day entitlement, would include:

- High-visibility branding during one home game annually, including LED displays, social media, and stadium activations.
- Hawaiian-themed gameday elements such as lei and music, plus pre-game and in-game media inclusion to build awareness in the core market in California.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā noted that there were to be year-round digital applications, including sweepstakes, to incentivize travel to Hawai'i, not just during the OTA period. This would provide a good alignment with the target California market and other mindful travelers who overlapped with Rams fans.

International expansion focused on Japan, a strong external market for the Rams. The plan was to leverage sweepstakes, digital campaigns, and co-branded marketing materials in Japan. The international leg represented a new and incremental addition to previous Rams deals.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā noted that the State Dept, Brand USA, and U.S. Travel have made sports tourism a priority, and it appeared to be the fastest-growing segment of the visitor industry.

He commented that many Hawai'i youths had no opportunity to travel and meet their sporting heroes, so bringing these heroes to Hawai'i was a praiseworthy endeavor. At the same time, the HTA's core missions would be accomplished by bringing travel demand to the Hawaiian Islands, managing the impacts of tourism, and bringing community benefits. These were the three stools of the HTA strategy about sport.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā hoped to clarify the total cost of the partnership, which was to consist of two equal payments, one at the end of April and the other at the end of September, as follows:

For the 2025/2026 season

Payment 1: April 30, 2025, FY25, Program ID 115, BLI 346: \$955,000

Payment 2: September 30, 2025, FY26, Program ID 116, BLI 346: \$955,000

For 2026-2027 Season:

Payment 1: April 30, 2026 FY26 Program ID 116 BLI TBD: \$977,500

Payment 2: September 30, 2026 FY27 Program ID 116 BLI TBD: \$977,500

Mr. Ka'anā'anā informed committee members that the Rams had been informed that this was dependent on the availability of funds, and they had also been told about the fiscal year and understood that the HTA might not be aware of the future budget immediately.

The following summary appeared in the committee handout:

	2025–2026 Season	2026–2027 Season	Total
Base	\$1,500,000	\$1,545,000	\$3,045,000
Playoff Contingency	\$360,000	\$360,000	\$720,000
Miscellaneous Costs	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$100,000
Total	\$1,910,000	\$1,955,000	\$3,865,000

The partnership was to continue into the post-season if there were playoffs. The fee for the playoff extension was defined as a playoff contingency and might not exceed \$360,000 per year. The miscellaneous costs concerned the involvement of the HTA staff in program implementation and oversight.

The expenditure for the first year was \$1.91 million, and that for the second year was \$1.955 million, giving a total of \$3.865 million. Mr. Ka’anā’anā noted that in the opening paragraph, the total had been wrongly stated as \$3.7 million, and this would be corrected before the next committee meeting.

Mr. Ka’anā’anā noted that staff had explained to the Rams organization that the HTA would need to seek procurement exemption annually and the partnership would be subject to the availability of funds. The Rams were prepared to work under those conditions. From the Board’s perspective, what Mr. Ka’anā’anā was requesting was the ability of the staff to make plans and execute processes that would enable them to fulfill the deal and obtain Board approval. Mr. Ka’anā’anā would work on the mechanics of the partnership after this approval.

The HTA staff recommended approving this plan.

Chair Paishon asked if there were questions and comments.

Mr. Hannemann thanked Mr. Ka’anā’anā and asked about feedback from partners such as the HVCB, Kilohana, and Hawai’i Tourism Japan (HTJ). All these partners would be affected: HVCB from the marketing standpoint, Kilohana in terms of community engagement, and HTJ in terms of the Rams’ willingness to incorporate the objectives of Japan tourism. Japanese people also enjoyed seeing the Rams during their global outreach.

Mr. Ka’anā’anā replied that there was resounding support from these partners. The leaders of all three partners supported the principles of the partnership. Mr. Takahata of HTJ noted that the highest levels of professional sports attracted much interest from Japanese nationals, and he saw a deep connection with Japan in the opportunity. Mr. Talwar of the HVCB also recognized the important and valuable opportunity in the key West Coast market. Mr. Ka’anā’anā had asked for their assessments in writing and expected to receive these soon. He

had also asked one of their main vendors, ONB, a media buyer, to evaluate the media and marketing aspects of this partnership.

Mr. Hannemann asked for more details of the playoff contingency. He pointed out that in a playoff scenario, in the run to the Super Bowl which the Rams had done once before, there was a maximum of four games since there was no automatic bye. He asked what would happen to the \$360,000 if the Rams only played one game.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā replied that, in simple terms, the payment was per game. There were home games and away games, and the home games were about 6% more expensive than the base deal. The total amount was not to exceed \$360,000 annually. He explained that if the Rams took the first game and did not continue, the HTA would not be billed for the remainder since it would be on a per-game basis. This was included separately and incrementally because no one knew how they would play. However, seeking approval for the whole deal amount was necessary, including the possible maximum ceiling.

Mr. Hannemann commented that Maui was still in a world of hurt, which would be a great boon for the island.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā responded that he was still working with the L.A. Rams to obtain the number of back staff they expected to bring along with the team. Hawai'i was an alluring destination, and families liked to visit. The total number of visitors could be plugged into the DBEDT economic impact calculator for a rough assessment of the economic impact. A separate part of this was to examine the contingency miscellaneous, estimated at \$50,000 annually, to determine if there were other ways to measure the economic impact.

Mr. Hannemann asked how long the Rams were expected to stay.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā replied that the stay would be about a week and a half since some staff would come before the core group and some would stay behind later to wrap up and clean up.

Mr. Hannemann asked whether the players and staff coming for this off-season training would come with their family members and whether they would include players still hoping to make the team.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā responded that he believed the total number would be 150, including the trainers, the sports staff, the marketing teams, and the cameramen.

Mr. Hannemann asked how the HTA regularly organized sports events, as they have to go to the legislature for funding yearly. An example would be the Clippers, who had come to Hawai'i for

many years. He asked whether there was difficulty in replying when the teams wanted to know that the event was not just a one-year deal.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā responded that the Rams had received good feedback after their previous game in Hawai'i. They had also received good feedback from players and staff. Firstly, this gave an alignment from a values perspective. Secondly, a full package had been provided so that when they considered locations for OTAs, Hawai'i had everything they were looking for: facilities for practice and features to enrich the players and families psychologically. Also, Hawai'i was close but far enough away to build some excitement. The Rams saw value in Hawai'i as a destination.

Chair Paishon thanked Mr. Hannemann for his questions and called on Mr. Apo.

Mr. Apo commented that the funds to be paid in FY25 appeared to have no risk. The contingency attached to FY26 and FY27.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā confirmed this.

Mr. Apo asked whether the Playoffs contingency of \$360,000 was the per-game payment or the maximum if the team went for all four games.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā responded that it was the maximum to be paid if they went for all four games.

Mr. Apo asked what the expected benefit for Hawai'i was from the \$360,000. It seemed unlikely that the Rams would make a wild card and play all four games if they made a full run. It was extremely unlikely that they would have a home game. He asked what the HTA would obtain in terms of marketing if the Rams were not at home.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā responded that it was the extension of the brand. He was ignorant about the playoffs and the wildcard but stated that other markets were targeted across the U.S. There were states other than California that contained target visitors.

Mr. Apo asked which Hawai'i branding features would be seen when the Rams were in a visiting stadium such as Chicago. Mr. Ka'anā'anā promised to find out the answer to this question.

Mr. Apo asked whether there was an option not to do the playoffs as part of this package. Mr. Ka'anā'anā responded that the short answer was yes. Mr. Apo commented that this was worth evaluating, although social media might make it worthwhile. So far, he had no clear understanding of the marketing value of the playoff dollars.

Mr. Apo added that he would like to understand the involvement of the HTA staff and whether this work should be done by contractors such as the HVCB or Kilohana. Mr. Hannemann had

pointed out that there were benefits from both sides. It seemed the HTA staff were to coordinate and manage the Rams contract.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā explained that sports programs were coordinated in-house at the HTA. A vacancy for a brand manager concerned with sports had been posted, and recruitment was ongoing. So far, more than 45 applications have been received. Vetting was in progress, and eventually that person would take more of the lead on sports programs instead of Mr. Ka'anā'anā. The sports program came under program ID 115, which was within Mr. Ka'anā'anā's purview. The organization of program IDs under budget heads showed sports as part of destination stewardship.

Mr. Nāho'opi'i pointed to another reason why sports tourism was managed in-house at the HTA: U.S. and Japan marketing and other international activities would be presented by the team. The HTA staff would work with each of the separate markets to identify their roles in partnering in-market.

Mr. Apo asked whether there was any guarantee about which players would attend the community activities. He enquired whether it was possible to guarantee that famous names would participate in these activities.

Mr. Nāho'opi'i responded that they hoped to negotiate for that, but various players had contracts with different constraints that might limit their commitment to Hawai'i. However, they would ask and advocate for the popular names.

Mr. Apo mentioned that he had some experience with the pro ball, so he understood the complications surrounding some players and was grateful for the answers.

Chair Paishon thanked Mr. Apo for his insightful questions and comments.

Ms. Agas asks how committee members can continue to assist Mr. Ka'anā'anā and Mr. Nāho'opi'i. Many great programs were planned, and it was important to fill the sports tourism position so that they could be a part of this program.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā agreed and repeated that applications were being vetted at the moment. The position had been approved; the HTA had to make a selection and a conditional offer. He affirmed to committee members that he was highly motivated to get someone on board.

Ms. Agas thanked Mr. Ka'anā'anā for his answer.

Chair Paishon stated that she had just one question or comment. Mr. Hannemann had asked how the economic impact would be evaluated, and Chair Paishon added that community impact should also be measured. She appreciated the goals of this program regarding

community support and believed that the issues Mr. Ka'anā'anā had mentioned would do much to engage with the community. She praised Kilohana for their work and mentioned that she had attended the Hō'ike capstone event of the Hawai'i Tourism Collaborative the previous day. She suggested that if community and youth engagement were to be focused on Maui, it was important to double down and leverage the connections that had been made through Kilohana, the HVCB, and other entities. This could be done by continuing to build connections with regenerative experience providers and the network of community members and youth with whom they had already engaged. It was also important to measure the impact of these partnerships.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā responded that the short answer was that the HTA was looking at the number of opportunities for engagement and community participation in these events as ways to create key performance indicators (KPIs). This would measure community benefits. Some innovative ways of looking at this were to Maui itineraries and locations on Maui for the team and their families using the reservation system. Some CTC cohort participants could be tied to this because teams often buy amenity tickets for the people traveling with the team. Suggestions for native Hawai'i businesses on the DBEDT list could also be given.

Chair Paishon agreed and thanked Mr. Ka'anā'anā.

Mr. Hannemann commented that the aspect of community engagement was to be endorsed. He and Mr. Apo had seen what happened on Maui when they were there with Mr. Ka'anā'anā for the Maui Classic, which had been successful from a sports tourism and marketing perspective. They had seen what Kuhio Lewis and Michael Karne had done to ensure Kepper had been promoted amongst the guests, taking advantage of the first-ever Lahaina Festival in Royal Lahaina. Mr. Hannemann had understood from Mr. Lewis that the three-day event had brought in \$300,000 in sales from the 60-plus businesses involved.

The positive feedback for the Lahaina Festival went beyond the direct benefit, and Mr. Hannemann believed that the Rams partnership presented a similar opportunity. Gov. Green, Mayor Bissen, and the Senate Tourism Chair, Lynn DeCoite, who had taken part in the saturation activation in September, had heard directly from the Rams in a presentation.

Mr. Hannemann appreciated the fact that the Rams were open to suggestions. He noted that flag football was an interscholastic sport beginning this year, and the Rams were to include it in their activities. In addition to planning the traditional football clinic with the young men, the Rams also planned a flag football clinic for young women. The Rams also mentioned the issue of sports injuries, such as concussions, and how they could be treated or prevented.

Mr. Hannemann commented that it was clear that everyone would look forward to seeing a football game here. The last NFL game played here was between the Rams and the Cowboys; it had been sponsored by the HTA, and it sold out. He believed this was the second-best thing until a new stadium would be built.

Mr. Hannemann had heard Mr. Apo's plea to ensure that star players would visit Hawai'i, and that the NFL would do their best to bring the players that people wanted to see. Athletes appreciated the positive response of Hawai'i people to visiting professional athletes.

Lastly, Mr. Hannemann remembered when Chris Tatum was President/CEO of the HTA, and he asked Mr. Hannemann to help him in the clinics. Mr. Tatum had felt strongly that the clinic should benefit students on O'ahu and provide an opportunity to bring neighbor island student-athletes. Mr. Hannemann asked whether one of the airlines would partner with the HTA to bring student-athletes from neighbor islands to Maui to participate in football or flag football.

Mr. Apo asked, procedurally, assuming the committee approved this recommendation from staff, which other questions would be necessary.

Chair Paishon stated that the actual vote was to present this item to the full Board and would lead to discussion, which would enable the HTA staff to follow up with further research.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā promised to look for the answers to the questions that had been asked before the committee meeting of the following day. The answers would eventually be presented to the full Board. If the motion was passed at the full Board meeting, that would make it final.

Mr. Apo believed that sports brought many benefits, both from a marketing standpoint and visitors coming to Hawai'i. As Mr. Hannemann had said, Hawai'i was a unique location, and bringing these professional athletes here was very important.

Chair Paishon called for a motion to bring this motion before the full Board for consideration at their December meeting.

Mr. Apo verified that the motion will be discussed by other committees.

Mr. Apo moved that this committee should positively recommend this request to the full Board. Ms. Agas seconded the motion.

Ms. Sanborn conducted the roll call vote, and the motion was carried unanimously.

5. Update on HTA Destination Manager Vacancies

Ms. Sanborn gave an update to the committee members on the destination manager vacancies. The destination manager would be a key contributor in advancing projects that align with their Strategic Plan and island-specific DMAPs. As of September 10, 2024, the staff has been actively trying to recruit and fill the five vacant destination manager positions. This would be for the islands of O'ahu, Hawai'i Island, Kaua'i, Maui and Lāna'i (together) and Moloka'i. So currently, they have 31 applications as of December 9.

She gave a breakdown of how they were received per island. O'ahu had 11 applications, Hawai'i Island had four, Kaua'i received one, Maui, received two, and Moloka'i had three. Unspecified, they had 10 applications. Mr. Ka'anā'anā mentioned that unspecified meant that the applicant didn't specifically note what island they were applying to.

There were no questions.

Ms. Sanborn said they were currently in the interview status of the 31 applicants. They have 10 applicants that were selected for interviews, five of which have been completed. Two applicants had accepted other job offers. One applicant interview for the future was set for December 12, 2024, at 3:30 p.m. The three applicants and the rest were pending to be scheduled. O'ahu had five, Hawai'i had one, Kaua'i had one, Maui had one, and Moloka'i had three interviews.

As of October 16, 2024, they welcomed Meagan DeGaia and Patty Ornellas, who were also on the call. Ms. DeGaia is the destination manager for Maui and Lāna'i, and Ms. Ornellas is the destination manager for Kaua'i. Ms. Sanborn welcomed them to the team and introduced them to the committee members. She informed everybody that they intend to hire and onboard the remaining destination managers. Three will be for Hawai'i Island, O'ahu, and Moloka'i by February 2025. Mr. Ka'anā'anā said that as of 30 minutes ago, they made a conditional offer to the Hawai'i island destination manager, so they are excited about that opportunity. They will have one of the Moloka'i interviews this week. O'ahu is fairly competitive, so they are going through them diligently.

Chair Paishon thanked Ms. Sanborn for her presentation. She asked for an overview of Mr. Apo for his overall contextual understanding of what the positions mean, who oversees them, what their charge is, and why the new positions were created.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā clarified that the legislature added Destination Management to HRS §201B, which is the statutory authority. That included the creation of five new FTEs in FY2025. They started the search in September when the allotments were received, and they could start in the new fiscal year. They are newly created positions. The destination managers sit in the destination stewardship office of the HTA, and they fall under Mr. Ka'anā'anā leadership. They

will directly report to him as part of the team in stewardship. They are on the island, and their intention is, in the initial stage, to support Ms. Anderson in the planning for the next DMAPs. Beyond that, when the new DMAPs are created, they will lead implementation and collaboration for the DMAPs. They will have a few additional stewardship-related duties on top of that.

Chair Paishon added that in past conversations, Speaker Nakamura is very much in support of having a greater on-island presence and really supports the next tactical move and overall strategy. Sen. DeCoite also supports having a greater on-island presence and is taking a much more regional approach.

Mr. Apo appreciated the explanation. He assumed that the positions would work with the Kilohana bucket. He asked if they would have any responsibility on the marketing side with the HVCB. Mr. Ka'anā'anā said they would collaborate with them. The connection between the marketing/brand team and the stewardship team is that there is a slight overlap. They are informing a grassroots approach to how marketing happens. They have established a process internally at the HTA and between the GMT and the stewardship team. They will not have a direct responsibility over marketing.

Mr. Apo asked about the history of why Moloka'i is separated. Mr. Ka'anā'anā said Moloka'i presented some unique tourism opportunities. The community is trying to find a balance. When he talked to community members on Moloka'i, there was a desire for economic development. They see tourism as catalytic. There is an added emphasis on the neighboring islands. One of the things that he would like the legislature to do is add a DM for Lāna'i as well. Lāna'i is an important market for them with the resorts given on-island. Moloka'i is also looking to find a path forward.

Mr. Apo asked if they would consolidate it to align with a county given and said they could have that conversation sometime.

Mr. Hannemann said Mr. Apo raised a good point. He said the tourism chair who represents Moloka'i has impressed upon them that they need to take the view that they want to try to do everything from a county perspective, but it also helps that they demonstrate to the people of Moloka'i that they are just as important as the voices that they will always hear from West Maui, South Maui, etc. He asked if Ms. DeGaia and Ms. Ornellas could say a few words.

Ms. Ornellas introduced herself as the destination manager for Kaua'i and gave some background on herself. She has been under the HVCB since October 2021. She felt this was a good move over. She is excited to be joining. She said they have great synergy with the HVCB, and it is important to find the balance.

Ms. DeGaia introduced herself. She was brought on in August 2021. She is thankful to have been hired and to be in-house with the HTA. She looks forward to continuing to develop and build the new pathway forward for the next DMAP for Maui and Lānaʻi.

Chair Paishon thanked them for the roles they have taken on. There was no vote required.

6. Presentation and Discussion on the Progress of the Reservation System Report

Ms. Sanborn introduced Mr. Aranaydo as well as Mr. Wacksman. Mr. Aranaydo introduced Mr. Wacksman, who would be doing the presentation.

He is the CEO of Sasato Consulting, a Honolulu-based firm. They are focused on travel and hospitality. Also on the call in the virtual room was his colleague Lisa Manor Miller, who is helping him with the project and the team. They are engaged by Kilohana to assess feasibility and a strategic approach to developing a destination app. The destination app has become known as the smart app, so they refer to it as that often in the presentation. The purpose of the app is to manage the destination of Hawaiʻi better, but it expands way beyond that.

He gave some scope to the project. They are focused on six core areas:

Gathering input from key industry stakeholders. They had a goal of completing around 100 interviews with stakeholders. They are on an accelerated time frame, so they had to finish those quickly.

Focus on evaluating related systems currently in use in Hawaiʻi. Many things are going on in Hawaiʻi that are similar to what they are trying to consider for the smart app or integrate with it.

Reviewing and analyzing best practices. They looked at similar apps and technology both in and outside Hawaiʻi.

Assess potential marketing strategies. They have to figure out how to market it and how they will acquire new users. They also focused on the associated costs of that.

Technology aspects. Identifying what they believe should be the core business requirements.

Technical and operational considerations.

The ultimate goal is to create a comprehensive report that will provide insights, recommendations, and actionable steps for the project.

He put together the best team in the industry. They also have over 100 years of experience in travel technology and the Hawaiian market. Each person led a specific area. They kicked off the

project on September 9, and the team has been diligently doing interviews, research, and analysis over the past couple of months.

They have a four-phase process that they follow. The first phase is research and discovery. One of the key goals in that phase was conducting as many stakeholder interviews as possible for several reasons. Conducting the interviews early on enables them to understand the overriding issues from the stakeholder perspectives, etc. They were able to get a lot of those interviews in place. The report covers more than just interviews. They recognized early on in the project that this would be the biggest challenge because of the accelerated timeline and people's schedules. The goal was to get all of the interviews completed by November 15. They pushed the timeline back from mid-November to early December. By early December, they had 72 interviews completed. They broke down interviews by category. Suppliers, like hotels, airlines, and activity companies, received a 60 to 70% response rate from each stakeholder.

Prior to the interviews they shared a survey. The interviews tend to be qualitative and not quantitative, so they used a bit of quantitative data using the pre-survey, and they had pretty good response rates. A little bit over 80% of the people they interviewed responded. Even though they did not get to all the 100 interviews they had hoped to get to, he believes that in all the conversations they had there was enough information to make their conclusions and to build the report.

There were many other parts of the project, and they made good progress. In terms of the production of the report they thought about going into some specifics but thought it would be better to hold that for the full Board meeting. The report is almost complete.

In terms of the process through the three months, they work closely with the Kilohana team. They had weekly updates. They addressed multiple things on the calls. Next, they will be working on finalizing the report and meeting with the Kilohana team on Friday to go through everything in more detail. They have additional updates for the various committees during that week. They have the full Board meeting presentation on December 19, during which they will go into great detail. One is the presentation, and one is the full report.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā said the report intends to be finalized before the Board, and then the work begins to implement the reservation system that the bill called for from the legislature.

Chair Paishon asked if there were any comments or questions. Mr. Hannemann told Mr. Wacksman, Mr. Ka'anā'anā and Mr. Aranaydo that it is imperative that they get the report out before the end of the year. There are many eyes looking at them on this aspect. It is part of their emphasis on managing tourism better in the hot spots. He asked if there was one factor standing in the way of reaching the deadline.

Mr. Wacksman said from the report perspective there should be no issues or concerns.

Mr. Gomes said there were still members of the Board they did not get a chance to interview for one reason or another. He is committing to additional follow-up and outreach to complete those interviews. It should not impact on the statistical analysis of the report. They wanted to give every Board member a chance to offer their feedback.

Mr. Hannemann thanked Mr. Gomes for getting this done. Mr. Apo went back to the interview breakdown slide. The tourism category had the least interviews completed. He asked who was in that group.

Mr. Wacksman said the list was supplied by Kilohana and the HTA. They also added some additional people. The full list would be included in the report as well.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā said it also included people like Toni Marie Davis from the Activities and Attraction Association of Hawai'i.

Mr. Apo asked if the tour operators were on the supplier side. Mr. Wacksman said they are on the supplier side, but it depends on how they presented to them.

Mr. Apo asked what the outcome would be and how the HTA would move forward. Mr. Wacksman said it looked at a technology that would better manage the destination and improve the visitor experience. When they did the interviews, it ran the gamut from people who thought it should be purely a reservation system to people who thought it should be the Expedia of Hawai'i. It should end up being more narrow, and that is one of the conclusions they will focus on.

Chair Paishon asked if they had participated in the interview process from DLNR. Mr. Wacksman said yes, and there were several follow-ups with DLNR people.

Chair Paishon asked about DBEDT. Mr. Wacksman said they also interviewed DBEDT and Dir. Tokioka.

Mr. Ka'anā'anā said they also consulted DOT.

Chair Paishon asked if, in the final report, they would provide actionable suggestions for which HTA could take action. Mr. Wacksman said that was correct.

Chair Hannemann said he was pleased to hear the update and appreciated all the work done so far. He appreciated the leadership of Mr. Gomes and Mr. Ka'anā'anā.

Ms. Agas said she worked with Mr. Wacksman as well. She said there were great questions. She said it is imperative to make experiences so much better. She appreciated all the work put into this.

No action was required in this matter.

7. Presentation and Discussion on HTA's Planning Projects as they Relate to the Tourism Functional Plan, HTA Strategic Plan, and Destination Management Action Plans

Chair Paishon asked if the members could stay on for another 15 minutes as the next item was important. Everyone agreed.

Ms. Sanborn said Ms. Anderson would present this agenda item.

Ms. Anderson went over the different plans that were coming up. They will be working on three major plans. One is the State's Tourism Functional Plan update. The past legislature session Act 128 was signed by the governor, which designated the HTA to prepare and update the Tourism Functional Plan in coordination with the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development. Initially, OPSD had this role, but now the HTA does. Part of the act incorporated a regenerative tourism framework. That is what they will be updating as part of the functional plan. Part of that act requires a report to the legislature that is due 20 days before it starts. They asked the legislature if they could extend the deadline for when the plan gets updated until the following year. In the meantime, they will provide them with a report of what they have done to date.

Another plan that they will be working on is the Tourism Strategic Plan. This is part of the statute that they, as an agency, are responsible for creating a vision and developing a long-range strategic plan for tourism in Hawai'i.

The last set of plans they will work on is the DMAPs. The governor signed Act 225 in the past legislature session, which requires the HTA to develop DMAPs for each county. She went over the timelines of the plans.

DMAPS - She is happy that Megan and Patty are the destination managers at the HTA. She has enjoyed working with them previously. Together, they will develop the DMAPs and hopefully get the planner position filled by January, if not February. This will help them as they develop the plans. This includes review research, data collection, establishing goals and objectives, developing actions, measures, and prioritization, creating and refining plans, and having the Board approve the plans in July and August. There are four DMAPs that they will have to create.

She anticipates it will be spread out because of the nature of the work. For engagement, they will be developing island councils for each DMAPs. This was one of the suggestions or recommendations from the governance study. She looked at the governance studies and the recommendations they had. In the previous July, they conducted a third-party evaluation of the DMAPs and also took into consideration the recommendations that they provided for creating a better planning process and plans moving forward. Throughout the process, they continued to engage with the community and industry as they developed the DMAPs.

Tourism Functional Plan follows a similar pattern, and there is an overlap. They are trying to do as much as they can, so when they go out for community industry meetings, the information they gather helps them see how they can do it efficiently. They estimate that the Tourism Functional Plan will be put forth before the governor for approval in September. The process is somewhat similar. For the Tourism Functional Plan, they will be creating an advisory group. This is part of the State Planning Act. The advisory group needs the governor's approval. So, they will be submitting the list to the governor in January.

The HTA Strategic Plan development timeline has a similar approach to what they are doing. She would also like to hold strategic planning sessions with staff and Board members. From that, they can work on developing goals, objectives, and strategies and put this forward to the Board in September for approval.

As far as engagement, she will be working with the Administrative & Audit Committee. Community and industry engagement is important, so she will continue to provide updates and get feedback from the Ho'okahua Hawai'i and Branding committees.

Chair Paishon had two questions. The first was to Mr. Hannemann. She asked if it was appropriate for the Administrative & Audit Committee to take on the HTA Strategic Planning or if it is governance.

Mr. Hannemann said that was a good question. He said a case can be made by both, but at the end of the day there needs to be a lead committee that will oversee this. He said it is a good discussion because he can see a case being made and put it in governance since it is part of what they need to do going forward. Maybe the Administrative Committee would oversee the implementation of that plan once everyone has adopted it. What he is most concerned about is the one-person operation. He said Ms. Anderson needs staff and support. He asked Ms. Anderson if one staff member was enough. There is a lot of expectation for the HTA because destination management has been codified. He does not think everyone is aware that it will require funding. If they are not funded, they become unfunded mandates. He would hate to

see two or three legislative sessions where the HTA gets blamed for not fulfilling certain issues when there was no funding. He asked Ms. Anderson for her thoughts on this.

Ms. Anderson said she is thankful that she has great relationships with the destination managers, who will assist her with developing the DMAPs. She works very closely with Ms. Chun of the Tourism Research Branch and will work with her to gather data. They will be conducting interviews for the planner position this month, hoping that positions are filled by mid to late January, latest February. She will also be issuing RFPs and solicitations for additional facilitation support. She feels that she has the resources and support to help get through the various development plans. Mr. Nāho'opi'i and her will discuss this with the directors from DLNR to DOT, the AG department, etc. They will reach out requesting their support as they embark on all the various plans, trying to build collaboration and engagement with everyone. They want the best plan for the agency and the state.

Mr. Nāho'opi'i said they would know more after talking to the major agencies and departments included in the functional plan. The functional plan is not just the HTA's plan, it is the overall State tourism plan, ensuring they have commitment. During identifying and developing that plan, they will know where additional resources, both money and staffing, might be needed. If, in the end, it becomes an area that either the HTA or the other departments take on in tourism, there may not be existing positions or resources at that time. They would have to go forward with the legislature for those requests. In the initial phases of working with Ms. Anderson, the Board approved the \$400,000 for contracted services, which will get them through the first six months of the planning process. They will see from that point forward if additional resources are needed.

Mr. Hannemann said they all realize its importance and what is expected from their hard-working staff. It is incumbent on the Board to look how they can support filling the vacancies to have the support they need.

Mr. Nāho'opi'i added that the committee would be very critical because a major component of the input into the plans is the community. Getting enough outreach into the community to get the right stakeholders to participate in the process may take many more resources than anticipated at first.

Mr. Hannemann said the track record that the HTA has had from its inception on the DMAP process is going to be very helpful because not only have they been added for a while, but they have identified people in these various areas who have shared the same ideas at the grassroots level, through the county and then to the HTA. It is important to follow that same process. He

wanted to ensure that the CEO is adequately equipped to have those kinds of discussions because it would take a lot more to lead the efforts from the HTA.

Chair Paishon agreed. She said one of the issues that they as a Hawai'i community face is community engagement fatigue. She said if they do not yet have an updated matrix, she said it is important that the committee and all Board members put their eyes to the list of preliminary invitees and leverage folks who are representing their respective islands and ensuring they are thinking of those who need to be at the table. To help that along is if they can have a combined list in one place, in one master list. She also told Ms. Anderson that she would like to learn the plan for consolidating. What is the approach to consolidating community engagement and stakeholder engagement to lessen community engagement fatigue. She asked that this is presented at the January meeting.

Ms. Anderson said she would do so.

Mr. Apo asked about the functional plan and the request for an extension on reporting to the legislature. He asked when that went into the legislature and if there was a bullet point set, and she can share the reasons. He said it is good for them all to understand the rationale.

Ms. Anderson said they are asking for an extension because the act required them to have the plan updated by the end of the year, December 2025, and given staffing resources, they were not provided any funding. They are requesting it to be pushed back one more year. However, they are still going to move ahead. They will start meeting with government agencies, going through the plans, getting data research, etc. If they cannot do it within six months, they will need more time. So far, as staff, she has reviewed the plan to see what has to be done. She has compiled a preliminary list of the advisory group and needs to get it shared and approved by the interim president and CEO. They will be meeting with the heads of the state agencies and the heads of the county's Office of Economic Development to share with them because they are also part of the tourism Functional plan update.

Mr. Apo wanted to ensure they were ready for that question. He asked about the charts, the island councils, and the advisory group, going back to community fatigue, but asked if creating formal island councils and advisory groups is unnecessary as they add more layers. He does not think they need to create those layers. Ms. Anderson said they need those advisory councils because they are the champions of the DMAPs. Moving forward, one of the recommendations from the governance study was that those councils would also be helping with the implementation of the plans. Because the council members would be from that island, and the people represented by the council would be the community. It is good to have that diverse group that can help move forward, especially when it comes to destination management and

also working with the other state and county agencies that have a role in moving some of the actions for the DMAP.

Mr. Apo said that creating that infrastructure concerns him.

Ms. Anderson said that at the next meeting in January, she would provide more information about the council and the advisory group for the functional plan. She did not have it prepared for this meeting.

No further action or vote was required for this item. The committee members shared a lot of items that they want to dig into further for the next meeting in January.

8. Presentation and Discussion on the Progress of EDA's Non-Competitive State Tourism Grant under the American Rescue Plan Act

Ms. Anderson asked if they could defer this item as it was an update on the progress of the EDA grant. Chair Paishon said if there is no pressing issue they need to know about, they can defer to January's meeting. Ms. Anderson said she would be happy to present it in January's meeting.

9. Adjournment

Chair Paishon thanked the guest presenters, the public, and the HTA staff for a robust discussion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Sheillane Reyes
Recorder