

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AGRICULTURE,  
AND RECREATION COMMITTEE**

Council of the County of Maui

**MINUTES**

**March 10, 2009**

**Council Chamber**

**CONVENE:** 2:05 p.m.

**PRESENT:** VOTING MEMBERS:

Councilmember Jo Anne Johnson, Chair  
Councilmember Sol P. Kaho'ohalahala, Vice-Chair  
Councilmember Gladys C. Baisa  
Councilmember Michael J. Molina

NON-VOTING MEMBERS:

Councilmember Danny A. Mateo (In 2:08 p.m.)

**EXCUSED:** Councilmember Joseph Pontanilla

**STAFF:** Lance Taguchi, Legislative Analyst  
Tammy M. Frias, Committee Secretary

**ADMIN.:** Zachary Helm, Deputy Director, Department of Parks and Recreation  
Patrick Matsui, Planning and Development Chief, Department of Parks and Recreation  
Kalbert L. Young, Director, Department of Finance  
Jeffrey T. Ueoka, Deputy Corporation Counsel, Department of the Corporation Counsel

**PRESS:** *Akaku--Maui County Community Television, Inc.*

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**ITEM NO. 7: MAUNALOA COMMUNITY CENTER (MOLOKAI) (C.C. No. 09-30)**

CHAIR JOHNSON: . . .(*gavel*). . . Members, the Economic Development, Agriculture, and Recreation Committee meeting of March 10, 2009 will come to order. I'd like to thank the Members of this Committee--all two of them, besides myself--for showing up. Oh, make that three Members. I really appreciate you showing up on an off-meeting week and for making the time available.

I'd like to acknowledge my Vice-Chair Sol P. Kaho'ohalahala--

VICE-CHAIR KAHO'OHALAHALA: . . .(*inaudible*). . .

CHAIR JOHNSON: --thank you for attending. And also my Members Gladys Baisa--thank you, Gladys, for being here--

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COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: My pleasure.

CHAIR JOHNSON: --and also Member Michael J. Molina.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Good afternoon, Madam Chair. Sorry for being late.

CHAIR JOHNSON: Oh, no. Thank you very much. I, I realize we have had an unusual week with a lot of meetings going on and just a precursory to Budget. And excused from the meeting is Member Pontanilla.

With us from the Administration we have Mr. Pat Matsui from. . .it would be my right, from the Parks--and is it Planning?--Parks Planning. We have our Deputy Director, Mr. Zach Helm--thank you for your attendance, too--and we have Corporation Counsel Mr. Jeff Ueoka. Thank you. Thanks so much. And we have our stalwarts Lance and Tammy. I really appreciate your showing up. And just entering, who is our esteemed Chair from Molokai. . .

COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: Yay.

CHAIR JOHNSON: . . .and that is Danny Mateo. Although he's not a Voting Member, I think the subject matter has necessitated his attendance at this Committee meeting. So, I want to thank you very much, Mr. Chair, for attending.

Without further ado. . .because this is only one item that we have on our Committee agenda today and because it was time sensitive, I do not believe we have had any members of the public who signed up to testify. I will keep testimony open for about another five minutes because we're hoping this is not a horribly long meeting. I know Members have other things that they have commitments for. But I would, at this point in time, just read the subject matter, which is Item No. 7 involving the Maunaloa Community Center on Molokai.

So without further ado, if either Mr. Helm or Mr. Matsui would like to just give us a brief overview. This is consideration for County Communication No. 09-30, from the Director of Parks and Recreation, transmitting a proposed resolution entitled, **AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF THE MAUNALOA COMMUNITY CENTER FROM MOLOKAI PROPERTIES LIMITED, PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 3.44 OF THE MAUI COUNTY CODE.** Thank you, Zach.

MR. HELM: Thank you, Chair Johnson, and the Committee. At this time I'd like to introduce our Planning and Development Chief, Pat Matsui to give you an. . .overview of the item that's in front of you.

MR. MATSUI: Thank you. This project started about two administrations ago. In 1999 under Apana Administration, an agreement to purchase real estate was. . .was done and the agreement was for

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500,000 to build a community center that would replace the existing old, wooden commu..., community center that was there. It was a turnkey agreement where we would pay them 500,000 and they would in turn construct a new community, design and construct a new community center and then upon completion turn it over to the County, the land and the center. And then, anyway, since then there was like two amendments, one of which was to add another \$200,000 to that. You know, initially the Ranch thought they could build it for 500,000, but they were short so, you know, in . . .let's see. . .in 19..., 2006 under Arakawa, there was an amendment and to add another \$200,000. It was finally completed, I think, later part of 2008, the construction was substantially completed. There was a bunch of punch list items that needed to be done. At that time the Ranch was going through some problems. We had a hard time getting any response from them. And we finally decided. . .well, looked at the contract and if it's substantially completed, we could take it over and get it accepted by the County Council and then pay them the balance of the \$700,000. So we would, upon acceptance of this, we, by the Council, we would pay them \$50,000, the balance of the 700,000 that we agreed to pay them.

CHAIR JOHNSON: Is, is that it, Pat?

MR. MATSUI: Right.

CHAIR JOHNSON: Okay. I'd also like to acknowledge in the audience, we also have our Director of Finance, Mr. Kalbert Young, if there are questions surrounding this. Because, Mr. Mateo, you. . .even though you're not a Member of this Committee-- If there are no objections since we--and, and pardon me--I would, without objection, close public testimony at this time.

COUNCIL MEMBERS: No objections.

CHAIR JOHNSON: Alright, thank you. Because Chair Mateo is here and because he has a long-standing working knowledge of the problems and this particular project, if there's no objections from my Members, I'd like to give an opportunity first for Danny to share his thoughts on this and actually just give the information. Are there any objections?

COUNCIL MEMBERS: No objections.

CHAIR JOHNSON: Alright. Thank you very much. Chair Mateo.

COUNCILMEMBER MATEO: Madam Chair, thank, thank you very much for the opportunity. Department, thank you very much for. . .you know, I guess this has been a long, a long project, and to give you, you know, to continue where Mr. Matsui. . .with the information he has just shared. In April 28, 1998, Council Chair Patrick Kawano transmitted a letter from Molokai, from Molokai Ranch to the Department of Parks and Recre..., to the Parks and Recreation Committee Chair, at the time Dennis Nakamura, and the letter requested for a joint venture with the County in funding for this new community center that was then estimated at \$1.5 million of which the County would have contributed this \$500,000 commitment. We also need to

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understand that at that time the consideration of a center was much larger than the facility we're ending up with today. That center did include a swimming pool, picnic tables, and the like with, with nice grass areas where people could go and have picnics outside. Unfortunately because of financing, the project has since been downsized considerably and, nonetheless, this has been now 11 years of waiting for a community center. The Maunaloa community has gone through their share of difficulty economically and is virtually in dire need of the opportunity to have something positive happen in this community. This positive that this community is so long in deserving is called the Maunaloa Community Center. This is what our community is all about. It is a sense of place, it is *their* facility as it is all of our facility. This community, Maunaloa, has, has gone without for such a long period of time. This new facility virtually replaces an aged, termite-eaten, rat-infested facility that was more so standing on one leg than anything else. So in essence, this is truly a major accomplishment for all of us in being able to provide this kind of realization to this community that really is so deserving. You know, there is this simple understanding that in these tough times we become better, not bitter, and what a *better* opportunity do we have than to provide the Maunaloa Community Center with something like this particular gift, which is something that all of the residents of Maui County contributed and participated in because it is through everyone's financing. Madam Chair, this facility has gone from \$500,000 in 1998 to 700,000 in 2009. Although the punch list was not completed, the required amount of tasks still responsible or still to be done at this point are really minor in scope, and the Parks and Recreation had in fact completed or, or just about completed the punch list. So this really is an exciting time for our community, and with the Department here, I, I ask the Committee Members, Madam Chairman, to help move this project forward at this point so our community can in fact come together in April when the Department recognizes their grand opening of this particular facility, because this is a project long in coming and at this point so deserving to our community. And, Madam Chair, I take this opportunity to thank you for taking the time in your Committee to move this project forward. So thank you very much, Madam Chair.

CHAIR JOHNSON: Thank you very much, Chair Mateo. And just for the other Members, there, there were a number of items in my Committee, but I asked Ms. Horcajo, who's Director for our Parks Department, I asked are there things that are time sensitive, and this was one of the things that she said, well, we're going to be opening in April on this facility. And I said, well, but before it opens don't we need to accept it. . .*(chuckle)*. . .don't we need to do something. So we agreed that yes, we should not do after-the-fact things, we should do it the right way and with the assistance of Chair Mateo in really permitting us to have this meeting in an off week, which I know is difficult for all of you, we were able to move it forward. So I, I just think that also it's really important to know that we have to be a little bit more flexible and we have to focus on the bright spots. So, I just want to thank whoever had a hand in making it possible.

Members, do you have questions of the Administration or is there anything that is not clear to you at this time?

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Recommendation, Madam Chair?

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CHAIR JOHNSON: Okay. Seeing none, the Chair's recommendation is to move forward the resolution, and this is a revised resolution--it was a little bit different from the initial one--but it's a revised proposed resolution entitled "AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF THE MAUNALOA COMMUNITY CENTER FROM MOLOKAI PROPERTIES LIMITED, PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 3.44, MAUI COUNTY CODE" and this would move it on to the full Council, and it would include the filing of this communication.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: So moved.

VICE-CHAIR KAHO'OHALAHALA: Second.

CHAIR JOHNSON: So it's been moved by Member Molina, seconded by Member Kaho'ohalahala. Are there any questions or discussion? I'll start with Mr. Molina.

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I've very happy to support this proposal. The people of Maunaloa *certainly* deserve a new community center, and I'm so happy to see that this community center will be there in my lifetime, a new one. And as the description Chair Mateo gave of the old community center, it certainly compares in contrast the differences between the two and, and certainly the people of Molokai need something positive during these dire economic times that we live in. Thank you.

CHAIR JOHNSON: Thank you very much. Member Baisa?

COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: Thank you very much, Chair, and of course I am extremely supportive of this. However, I thought it might be helpful, if not for us, but for the members of the public, what exactly are we buying? I mean when we talk about a community center, is it big, is it small, does it have a kitchen? What, what is it?

CHAIR JOHNSON: And I will allow Mr. Matsui to describe it.

COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: Just briefly.

MR. MATSUI: Okay. You have a 2,500 square foot social hall and then another 1,000 square feet that would consist of restrooms, kitchen, storage, and lanai.

COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: Is this going to be a certified kitchen. . .

MR. MATSUI: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: . . .which would, I think, be very useful to Molokai to have a facility like that. You know, certified kitchens are hard to come by with all the fundraising and attempts that people have to do things. That's good. Thank you very much. I appreciate that.

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CHAIR JOHNSON: Yes, and, and also I think along with economic development, if we have certified kitchens, it would provide some economic opportunities for people to utilize that facility. Vice-Chair Kaho'ohalahala?

VICE-CHAIR KAHO'OHALAHALA: I want to congratulate the people of Molokai, especially Maunaloa, for having taking on this. . .long, hard, arduous kind of attempt to finally complete this. So, I'm very happy for you and I look forward to one day being perhaps hosted at one of the events in Maunaloa.

CHAIR JOHNSON: Thank you very much. Any final comments? Chair Mateo?

COUNCILMEMBER MATEO: Act..., actually no. For, for me, you know, this is a, a real exciting time. For me the Maunaloa Community Center, Madam Chair, is really my final responsibility or commitment that I have made to former Chair Kawano and *just* to see it, you know, be able to move forward is really an exciting opportunity. This has been long and coming and this community is really excited at this point to have something that they can recognize as their sense of place for this community. So, I, I'm rather excited and cannot wait until the announcement of the grand opening of the facility. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIR JOHNSON: Thank you very much, Chair Mateo. And I want to thank the Administration too for working with us to bring this forward quickly. Even though it's not a project that took a little, you know, short period of time, I think Chair Kawano, former Chair Kawano would've been very proud of the fact that better late than never and particularly at a time when the community is facing some circumstances that we wish would be otherwise. But I think it's something that they can focus on to be positive about. And these days with all the doom and gloom being spoken about on CNN, I prefer to focus on the things that really contribute to what wonderful communities we have and a testament to the hard work and dedication of many people. And I want to thank you also, Chair Mateo, for being supportive all these years and, you know, through the good and the bad and all the challenges that the Molokai Ranch has faced too and the different ownerships as well.

So, Members, without further ado, all those in favor of the motion, please signify by saying aye.

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR JOHNSON: And the Chair votes aye. So it is unanimous that this will move on to the full Council.

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**VOTE:**      **AYES:**      **Councilmembers Baisa, Molina, Vice-Chair Kaho‘ohalahala,  
and Chair Johnson.**

**NOES:**      **None.**

**EXC.:**      **Councilmember Pontanilla.**

**ABSENT:**      **None.**

**ABSTAIN:**      **None.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**ACTION:**      **Recommending ADOPTION of revised proposed resolution, and FILING of  
communication.**

CHAIR JOHNSON: Are there any other announcements?

COUNCILMEMBER MOLINA: Madam Chair, just for clarification, we have one excusal vote as well for the record.

CHAIR JOHNSON: Oh, yes, I'm sorry. Yes. Member Pontanilla, you know, that would. . .it's not a no vote, but it's just he is excused. So thank you for that, Member Molina.

Any further announcements? Seeing none. . .if, Staff, is there anything further that we need to do? That's it. Thank you. A very short and sweet meeting. I thank all of you.

And this meeting is adjourned. . . .(gavel). . .

**ADJOURN:** 2:24 p.m.

APPROVED:

  
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JO ANNE JOHNSON, Chair  
Economic Development, Agriculture, and Recreation Committee

ear:min:090310

Transcribed by: Tammy M. Frias