

MINUTES

of the

PUBLIC HEARING HELD ON

MAY 23, 2011

THE COUNCIL OF THE COUNTY OF MAUI, STATE OF HAWAII, CONVENED A PUBLIC HEARING ON MONDAY, MAY 23, 2011 AT 10:35 A.M., WITH CHAIR DENNIS A. MATEO PRESIDING, FOR THE PURPOSE OF RECEIVING TESTIMONY ON ADOPTING THE FUEL TAX RATES FOR THE COUNTY OF MAUI FOR THE FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2011 TO JUNE 30, 2012.

CHAIR MATEO: Council of the County of Maui, for May 23, 2011, public hearing on adopting the proposed fuel tax rates for the County of Maui for Fiscal Year 2012, will come to order.

Mr. Clerk, may we have the roll call please.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: COUNCILMEMBERS GLADYS C. BAISA, ROBERT CARROLL, ELEANORA COCHRAN, DONALD G. COUCH JR., G. RIKI HOKAMA, MICHAEL P. VICTORINO, VICE-CHAIR JOSEPH PONTANILLA, AND CHAIR DENNIS A. MATEO.

EXCUSED: COUNCILMEMBER MICHAEL B. WHITE.

There were approximately 10 members of the public in attendance.

COUNTY CLERK JEFFREY T. KUWADA: Mr. Chairman there are eight Members present and one excused.

Mr. Chairman, notice of this recon, of this public hearing was published in the May 12, May 15, and May 19, 2011 editions of The Maui News.

CHAIR MATEO: Thank you very much, Mr. Clerk.

Members, the purpose of the public hearing this morning is to receive testimony on the proposed fuel tax rates for the County of Maui effective July 1, 2011.

Mr. Clerk, do we have anyone signed up to provide testimony this morning?

COUNTY CLERK: Mr. Chairman, we, we have one request to offer testimony.

CHAIR MATEO: Prior to calling up the individual, the Chair will simply state, anyone providing testimony will be allowed to speak for three minutes. On the podium a lighting system is there to assist you with your testimony. At the start of your comments the green light will be lit. At the two minute thirty second mark the yellow light will be lit letting you know you have thirty seconds to conclude. And at the three minute mark the red light will be lit letting you know that you will need to conclude. If a little more time is needed, the Chair will allow an additional minute for you to complete your comments to the Council.

And just for a housekeeping point, if anyone has their cellphones with you or other noisemaking devices, this would be a good time to either turn them off or set them on the silent mode.

Mr. Clerk, call up our first testifier.

COUNTY CLERK: Calling Michael Suyama.

MR. MICHAEL SUYAMA:

Good morning. My name is Michael T. Suyama. I live on 718 Lono Avenue in Kahului.

My concern is you guys property, I mean taxes on the gas fuel. At one point when you guys started I was in favor for it but I'm against it at this point, or, hopefully you guys will bring it down. Why? It's not because the high prices on fuel. Because the things that you guys do on the road is inaccurate, not good for, for the youth, seniors and our residential.

I've talked to individuals, I walked around, I drove around. I went to see the Kauai, Big Island, how they handle this stuff. And yet, I live on the cor, corner of the Lono and Papa. The problem over there is, great you guys put up four stop signs but the part is, you guys forgot to put crosswalk.

You put one three crosswalk on the four intersection area where if you guys stop there early in the morning or when the school is over, you get Pomaika'i Elementary, Maui Waena students, high schools, who'd walk down and they would have to make a U-shape crossing over the intersection because you don't have the fourth crosswalk.

Okay, I asked them, can you guys put a line or something over there. No, because of budget. Then, what is the sense of we paying taxes, you guys don't even put a line there for the crosswalk so that kids can cross or the bike lane. You guys stop it from South Papa all the way up to Kam Avenue and there's no bike lanes, because those kids ride their bikes to school.

But in nine, past nine months, I, since I took an early retirement. I mean watching and the community I talk to, they all come, well my corner is like a community center that everybody come and talk story. And we talk about the problem that what we have in the community. I see you guys do great in Kihei, Lahaina, Upcountry, not majority but at least where the tourist is.

But what happened to the people in Central, that we have concern? We have a big baseball park, kids goes over there, people walk in the afternoon or mornings, there's no crosswalks, there's no bike lanes. What happened? So why pay taxes that we cannot have because you guys don't want to do it?

Okay, I, I see the workers there, I ask them. How about giving us a chance? Use little bit of the tax money, paint that road or pave it. And I told them, oh how about you put "stop" before you come to a stop sign. No, on Lono, you cannot. Then how come between Kahului School ending and Maui High School parking you have a bump, bump and crosswalk, when you guys told me it's not possible?

That's why I, I question, what is my, what is the taxes being used for? Yet you jeopardizing the youth, a senior citizen who does a lot of walking there because you guys do those odd things or pukas that you guys saying you'll patch and you guys don't? Come on. Give me, give us a break. We live in Central.

We support you folks, we believe in you people, why can't you help us by getting those things repaired? Or put a line there. I see four cars on an intersection. Okay, so, please help us in doing something with it, we get the tax. Don't make us pay for something we cannot get. Thank you.

CHAIR MATEO: Thank you, Mr. Suyama. Mr. Suyama, hold on a minute.

VICE-CHAIR PONTANILLA: Chairman.

CHAIR MATEO: Mr. Suyama. Members, need to have any part of the testimony rephrased? Mr. Pontanilla, followed by Mr. Hokama.

VICE-CHAIR PONTANILLA: Thank you. Thank you, Mike for being here. You know as your representative from Kahului, I had instigated or you know, for the four way stop at Lono and Papa Avenue. But this is the first I've heard in regards to crosswalks or raised crosswalks. We took cared, Hina Avenue and Lono Avenue because of the school kids.

But I'm going to be following up with the Public Works Department in regards to what your comments are, you know, talking to some of the employees and, you know, the indication that there's no money. That's, you know, in my opinion there is money for any safety issue that we have in this County.

For your information though, in the 2012 Fiscal Year Budget, which we are presently undertaking for this Administration, there are monies to remove the four way stop sign which is working really effectively with traffic signals. And hopefully, hopefully Public Works is listening to you, the comments that you made and to the comments that I'm making in regards to the public safety.

So, I, I'll follow up with Public Works. This, this is really upsetting for me. Anything that is safety issue should be taken cared of. So thank you, Mr. Suyama.

CHAIR MATEO: Thank you, Mr. Pontanilla.

Mr. Hokama.

COUNCILMEMBER HOKAMA: No, Chairman, I was going to ask Mr. Suyama questions in the similar line. I find it difficult when we were presented a budget with carryover savings to hear of these issues and concerns from Mr. Suyama and being told there's not sufficient resources to take care of uh this request. So I can tell Mr. Suyama that we will address this and we'll assist you in making the departments more responsive to reasonable queries such as this, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIR MATEO: Thank you, Mr. Hokama.

Mr. Victorino.

COUNCILMEMBER VICTORINO: Thank you. Michael, thank you. These, you went specifically to department people that were on the road in requesting the striping or the sidewalk?

MR. SUYAMA: The reason why they do, they were painting the roads.

COUNCILMEMBER VICTORINO: I see, and so you asked them at that point in time--

MR. SUYAMA: Why not put additional lines so the, and they said it's because it's not assigned or no, no budget. What?

COUNCILMEMBER VICTORINO: Excuse me. And then did you have an opportunity to call the department itself, the Department of Public Works?

(Councilmember White arrived at the meeting at 10:44 a.m.)

MR. SUYAMA: I've been trying to talk to individuals about it but the part is um because of their busy schedule I do understand. And they told me you need to testify, is what my community people tells me because I'm the youngest, oh, retiree there. Majority is retired seniors but I said okay I'll be the sucker to go. That's why I'm here.

COUNCILMEMBER VICTORINO: Well, okay, no, thank you and I, I think awareness is important when you bring it to our attention. And, and let me clarify one thing, I think both Mr. Pontanilla and myself take it very seriously when you say we take care the tourists and we don't take care the locals. No way, Michael. You know that doesn't happen, you know that.

And it's just that this may be something that we need to look at more carefully and find out why the department is not doing it. It is nothing about locals versus tourists. The sidewalk needs to be there, we'll make sure it gets in there.

Thank you, Michael. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR MATEO: Thank you, Mr. Victorino. Members, further, further needs? Thank you very much.

I'm sorry. Go ahead, Ms. Baisa.

COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: Just one quick, just a quick comment. Thank you very much for coming today and you know it's always distressing to hear about things that are perceived that we don't, we're not doing anything or we don't care, because we really do care. And a lot of this goes on in departments that we don't have any control over. You know, we do the budget and give them the money and then they have to make it happen.

And it's been people like yourself come and tell us that we become aware and then of course we start asking questions and amazing things happen. So I want to thank you for coming but I think it's really interesting that you came today not to say, I don't want to pay. You said I'm willing to pay but I want to know what you going to do with my money and I want to see results. Is that what I'm hearing?

MR. SUYAMA: That's correct.

COUNCILMEMBER BAISA: Very good. Thank you very much. I think you got a lot of company.

CHAIR MATEO: Thank you, Ms. Baisa. Members, any further questions? Thank you, Mr. Suyama. Thank you very much.

Mr. Clerk.

COUNTY CLERK: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Suyama was the only person signed up to offer testimony.

CHAIR MATEO: Thank you. Hearing that, at this point the Chair will allow anyone in the gallery wanting to provide testimony on the proposed adopting the fuel tax rates for the County of Maui. If you want to provide testimony please advance to the podium at this time.

Members, seeing no one advance, with no objections the Chair will close public testimony. Any objections?

MEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTION.

CHAIR MATEO: Thank you. Mr. Clerk, are we in receipt of any written testimony?

COUNTY CLERK: Mr. Chairman, we have received no written testimony.

CHAIR MATEO: Thank you very much. At this time, Members, the Chair would just like to note because we have a--

COUNTY CLERK: I apologize, Mr. Chair, I'm informed that we have received one piece of--

Oh, okay, no. I was, I was correct, we haven't received, no test, written testimony on the fuel tax rates.

CHAIR MATEO: Thank you. So, Mr. Clerk is there any additional business for this Council?

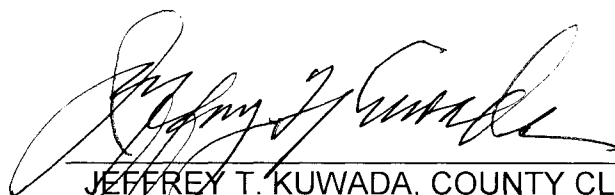
COUNTY CLERK: No, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIR MATEO: Thank you, Members the Chair would like to note at this point that at 11:00 a.m. this morning, right here in this chamber, we will reconvene our public hearing on the proposed property tax rates for the County of Maui. Again, that'll be at 11:00 a.m. this morning, our reconvened meeting.

With no additional business regarding this subject matter, the Council of the County of Maui, the public hearing for the fuel tax rates for the County of Maui, this meeting is now adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

The public hearing of *MAY 23, 2011*, was adjourned by the Chair at 10:47 a.m.



JEFFREY T. KUWADA, COUNTY CLERK
COUNTY OF MAUI, STATE OF HAWAII