

COUNCIL OF THE COUNTY OF MAUI

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

October 3, 2014

Committee
Report No. _____

Honorable Chair and Members
of the County Council
County of Maui
Wailuku, Maui, Hawaii

Chair and Members:

Your Economic Development, Energy, Agriculture, and Recreation Committee, having met on September 16, 2014, makes reference to a Miscellaneous Communication dated May 28, 2014, from the Deputy County Clerk, transmitting the matter relating to an evaluation of the Maui Community Correctional Center (“MCCC”) Work Line Program.

Your Committee notes the MCCC program is a collaboration between Maui County and the State Department of Public Safety to provide inmate assistance to the County and nonprofit organizations in labor-intensive tasks.

The Chair of your Committee explained your Committee is tasked with gathering information about the program and determining whether the County’s grant to the program has been well spent. In Fiscal Year 2015, the County appropriated \$117,000 for the program, an annual amount that has remained unchanged for several years.

The Interim Director of Parks and Recreation provided a description of the program’s operations and transmitted statistics regarding program expenditures, budget, projects, and job assignments.

The Interim Director stated the program is truly a partnership between the State and County. The State and County have contributed funds and provided substantial help to the community by aiding nonprofits acting on County property or participating in co-sponsored events, as well as assisting the Department of Parks and Recreation with work it is not able to complete alone.

James Hirano, Warden at MCCC, agreed the MCCC program has had a strong collaboration with the County for over ten years. Mr. Hirano informed your Committee sentenced inmates, which account for approximately 37 per cent of the MCCC population, are qualified to participate in the program through an interview and

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assessment process upon entry to the correctional facility, and then assigned on a weekly basis by an internal committee.

Mr. Hirano advised your Committee grant funds are not utilized to pay the inmates. Inmates are paid \$0.25 per hour through MCCC's budget. He stated grant funds are used solely for equipment and transportation necessary for the inmates to carry out their assignments. While the County contributes \$117,000 per year to the program through grant funds, he said the State contributes \$263,000 to pay for the salaries of five MCCC employees who staff the program.

Peter Kawaa, Lieutenant at MCCC, informed your Committee inmates are divided into four groups that are responsible for specific tasks, including painting, landscaping, construction, and general maintenance.

Your Committee recognized the importance of the program's intangible values such as boosting inmates' sense of self-worth and giving back to the community, so many may become productive citizens. Your Committee also noted the program's positive effects on inmates when getting them out in the open air, receiving a plate lunch, learning a skill, and being part of a working team.

Your Committee examined the County's return on investment in the program, inquiring about the program's level of performance of grant requirements. Mr. Hirano said the program has exceeded the required grant work hours every year by well over 10 per cent. Mr. Hirano further stated the program has resulted in a cost savings to the County of \$239,000 from April through December 2013, and \$213,000 from March through August 2014. He explained that the cost savings are calculated by multiplying hours worked by \$13.69 - the hourly pay scale for the same job performed by a civilian ten years ago.

Your Committee considered suggestions to improve program operations. The Interim Director advised your Committee the Department is in the process of revising program documentation to make reporting more efficient. Additionally, the Department is working on improving program performance measures, methods of information tracking, goals to assess grant effectiveness, and related staffing. The Department anticipates having more specific program information in time for the Council's Fiscal Year 2016 Budget consideration.

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Your Committee was impressed with how well the program functions to provide needed labor and significant cost savings to the County. Your Committee recognized the program's nonmonetary value in rehabilitating inmates, teaching job skills, and preparing for reintegration back into society.

Your Committee expressed its appreciation to MCCC and the Department of Parks and Recreation for their continued efforts to maintain the program.

Your Committee voted 5-0 to recommend filing of the communication. Committee Chair Guzman, Vice-Chair Carroll, and members Crivello, Cochran, and Victorino voted "aye". Committee members Baisa and White were excused.

Your Economic Development, Energy, Agriculture, and Recreation Committee **RECOMMENDS** the Miscellaneous Communication dated May 28, 2014 be FILED.

This report is submitted in accordance with Rule 8 of the Rules of the Council.



DON S. GUZMAN, Chair