

**COST OF GOVERNMENT COMMISSION
MINUTES
Kalana O Maui Building, 9th Floor, Mayor's Conference Room
Thursday, November 13, 2014**

PRESENT: Tina Gomes, Chair
John Watling, Vice-Chair
Garrett Evans, Member
Stanford Lantias, Member
Gayle Long, Member (left at 11:44 a.m.)
Dale Thompson, Member
John Watling, Member

EXCUSED: Kent Hiranaga, Member
Gabriel Hoeffken, Member

STAFF: Linden Joesting, Deputy Corporation Counsel
Gina Gormley, Technical Writer for the Commission

OTHER: John Buck, Executive Assistant, Office of the Mayor
Lance Taguchi, County Auditor

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Gomes called the meeting to order at 10:13 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL

III. PUBLIC TESTIMONY

There was no public testimony.

IV. REVIEW AND APPROVE OCTOBER 16, 2014 MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Evans moved that the October 16, 2014 minutes be approved, and Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion. The motion passed without objection. Commissioner Hiranaga and Commissioner Hoeffken were excused.

V. COUNTY AUDITOR'S UPDATE

There was no update to provide.

VI. DISCUSS THE UPCOMING PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016 AS IT PERTAINS TO THE COST OF GOVERNMENT COMMISSION

A proposed budget request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 needs to be submitted to County Auditor Taguchi specifically relating to the Technical Writer position.

County Auditor Taguchi informed the Commission that the Maui County Council appointed a new Commissioner from Lanai. Assistance will be needed in transporting the Commissioner from the ferry in Lahaina to Wailuku in time for the 10:00 a.m. meetings. The ferry departure and arrival times change depending on the time of year; therefore, at times, it may be difficult for the Commissioner to arrive at the meeting on time.

Off-island commissioners would be reimbursed for travel expenses and would also receive a daily per diem. County Auditor Taguchi prepared ballpark general estimates on travel costs and per diem on a per annum basis. He estimated approximately \$4680.00 for a Lanai Commissioner and \$5280.00 for a Molokai Commissioner. Executive Assistant Buck estimated approximately \$7000.00 not including per diem.

The Commission is concerned about the budget and logistics of the Lanai Commissioner. Chair Gomes and Executive Assistant Buck will inquire with other commissions regarding their budget and logistics pertaining to travel. Chair Gomes will meet with County Auditor Taguchi and Executive Assistant Buck to discuss further and provide information at the December 18, 2014 meeting.

The Commission discussed whether off-island commissioners could call in to the meeting by telephone. County Auditor Taguchi explained that commissioners could call in; however, if the connection is lost, the meeting would have to be stopped until connection is reestablished. Connection would have to be reestablished in 5-15 minutes. Also, if handouts were provided at a meeting, there was concern over how the off-island commissioner would get that information. Deputy Corporation Counsel informed the Commission that under the Sunshine Law, a commissioner can call in as long as they are located at a public place so that members of the public can come and testify.

The new Commissioner is anticipated to begin in December or January.

County Auditor Taguchi explained that the Commission's budget is incorporated into the Office of the County Auditor's (OCA) budget. He requested that the Commission finalize their request by the December 18, 2014 meeting. He also informed the Commission that the OCA, the Office of the Mayor, and the Maui County Council does not set any limitations on the proposed budget request.

VII. DISCUSS 2014-2015 ANNUAL REPORT

A. Update of T.I.G. of County Planning Commissions

Commissioner Watling informed the Commission that he looked at Kauai and Hawaii County commissions. Hawaii County has a windward and leeward planning commission with each having their own operating structure. The T.I.G. was unable to meet over the last month.

B. Update of T.I.G. of Grants Making System & Process

Commissioner Evans informed the Commission the T.I.G. had three separate meetings with Council Members White and Couch and Council Chair Baisa.

Council Member White felt that line-item grantees were treated differently than traditional grantees in both the application and evaluation process. The line-item recipients are targeted for extra scrutiny because of favoritism on the part of county bureaucrats and/or the Administrator overseeing the grants.

Council Member White expressed concern over the creation of a single separate grants management department. First, the loss of expertise by removing grant management from the department most knowledgeable about their own grants. Second, the increased costs in adding a department. However, Council Member White did note some of the benefits of a single grants management department, primarily the ability to streamline reporting and monitoring of all grants.

Council Member Couch shared similar concerns as Council Member White. He agreed that traditional and line-item grantees were treated differently. He stated that line-item grants are necessary and felt the County Council was better equipped to monitor and evaluate grantees rather than a single grants management department. He stated the County Council is fully capable of conducting testimony and evaluations amongst themselves.

Council Member Couch would support a single grants management department with the right personnel.

Council Member Couch did not think appropriating funds based on need would be efficient because the Request for Proposal process is too onerous since grants are allocated for one year terms. In addition to this, the County is required by law to go with the lowest bid.

Council Member Couch felt that line-item grantees should not go through the application process. Instead, funds should be automatically appropriated.

Council Chair Baisa supported granting large and multiple grants to a single organization because she believed this improved efficiency. She felt the County's grant division is too small and is not able to spend sufficient time to be helpful advisors to grantees. She explained that currently grantees receive onsite visits about once per year and she would like to see this increased to once per month.

Council Chair Baisa recommended the following actions: (1) A needs assessment should be done on a regular basis by a company familiar with the County of Maui; (2) An evaluation of grantee results; (3) Help with advisement for current grant recipients; and (4) Training of grantees to manage their organization to be in compliance with county requirements.

Council Chair Baisa did not agree that line-item grants should be replaced with appropriation for specific needs because the Council Members need to be able to support organizations they deem worthy.

Council Chair Baisa did support the creation of a single grants management department. She also suggested the T.I.G. make recommendations regarding conflicts of interests and ethical behavior for Council Members relating to organizations in which the Council Member is directly involved with.

C. Timeline and Discussion for 1st Rough Draft

Chair Gomes distributed an outline to the County Planning Commissions T.I.G. and Grants Making System & Process T.I.G. to follow when drafting their final reports. Chair Gomes would like a rough draft prior to the December 18, 2014 meeting and a final draft by February 2015.

Chair Gomes recessed the meeting at 11:45 a.m. and reconvened the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

VIII. DETERMINE NEXT MEETING DATE, TIME, AND AGENDA

The next meeting is scheduled for December 18, 2014, in the Mayor's Conference Room, at 10:00 a.m.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Evans moved and Commissioner Lantias seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Hiranaga, Hoeffken, and Long were excused. The meeting adjourned at 11:51 a.m.