

BOARD OF WATER SUPPLY
COUNTY OF MAUI

REGULAR BOARD MEETING
MINUTES OF JUNE 17, 2021

The regular meeting of the Maui County Board of Water Supply was held online via BlueJeans, on Thursday, June 17, 2021.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Dean Frampton at 1:32 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Members present: Dean Frampton, Chair
Nalani Kaninau, Vice Chair
Norman Franco
Buddy James Nobriga
Antonette Eaton
Johanna Amorin

Members excused: Joseph Aquino

Staff present: Jeffrey Pearson, P.E., Director
Keola Whittaker, Deputy Corporation Counsel
Sherilyn Otsubo, Commission Support Clerk

Cablecast: Video conferenced live via BlueJeans and recording viewable at <https://www.akaku.org/boards-commissions/>.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Member Franco moved to approve the minutes of May 20, 2021.

Member Amorin seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

IV. TESTIMONY FROM THE PUBLIC

There was no public testimony.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Discussion of water rates and rate structure.

Chair Frampton stated that this item will be deferred to the next meeting. Councilmember Rawlins-Fernandez will be following up on her previous testimony.

Vice Chair Kaninau requested to have an updated report for the 2020 Consumption by District and Consumption Charge.

Director Pearson will follow up with the Fiscal Division.

B. Request for Submittal of Proposed Charter Amendments and/or Recommendations.

Member Franco referred to the current Charter and read Section 8-11.7. He stated that by being semi-autonomous, the Board would bypass the Council and get the politics out of the department. Since we are a self-supporting branch of government, there's no need to go to the Council to get general obligation bonds because it's supported by the revenues obtained by our customers.

Member Franco also found out that there are over 250 subdivisions in various phases of approval. Being semi-autonomous would allow the department to float their own general obligation bonds.

Chair Frampton asked Director Pearson if we have the capacity to serve the 250 subdivisions.

Director Pearson replied that there are many different caveats to the subdivisions on file. They could be a 3-lot subdivision or multiple lots. Director cannot answer the question not knowing more details of the subdivisions.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Whittaker mentioned that if the board decides to move forward, they don't need to come up with the wording. Members can comment on the Charter Commission's wording when they take it up. The process is as follows: the board makes a recommendation to the Charter Commission; if at least one member of the Charter Commission is interested, they will determine the wording and bring it to the entire commission for a vote; if it passes, it goes on the ballot. However, they are required to submit all proposed amendments to the Council and the Council may suggest other wording. The Charter Commission may or may not take their suggestions, but they don't need Council's approval.

Vice Chair Kaninau asked if the board is agreeing to the responsibilities in the two models.

Chair Frampton said that it's up to the board to decide.

Member Nobriga supports the motion without coming up with any wording, and also supports testifying to the Charter Commission should they decide to take this amendment further. He doesn't want the change to made overnight.

Vice Chair Kaninau stated that the County's Boards and Commissions are the voices of the people. As an advisory board, our responsibility is to keep conversations regarding water alive. Her concern is creating another layer of bureaucracy that is not accessible to the community.

Member Nobriga commented that as an advisory board, no one has to listen to what the board says. You keep the conversations alive, you listen to the public, and you do a lot of work, but only about half of it may get done. Currently, the director has 3 bosses, the mayor, the Council and the Board. Being semi-autonomous would streamline who the department responds to.

Member Franco made a motion to send a letter to the Charter Commission to have them consider a semi-autonomous Board of Water Supply.

Member Amorin seconded the motion.

Director Pearson stated that it's the Board's decision and he will support the Board either way. He said that working under this administration is going well.

Vice Chair Kaninau asked to see the Charter prior to the change in 2002.

Chair Frampton said that we can continue to keep this item on the agenda and monitor its movement through the Charter Commission.

Member Nobriga asked if it's in the Board's purview to discuss the success of the Department when it was semi-autonomous versus the 20 years since the change.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Whittaker said yes, you can discuss it at a future meeting.

The motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Discussion of site visits to Department Facilities.

Chair Frampton discussed this earlier with Director Pearson and since the Board currently has only 7 members, scheduling these visits might be easier in terms of the Sunshine Law.

Director Pearson stated that 2 groups of not more than 4 members would comply with the Sunshine Law. One visit will be to Waikamoi and the Olinda Treatment Plant and it would be about a 4-hour tour. The other visit will be to the Iao Water Treatment Plant, the intake at the Wailuku River, and ground water wells in the Central area, and would take about 2-3 hours.

B. Discussion of Six-Month Priorities List.

Chair Frampton stated that his priority would be speaking with the Wastewater Reclamation Division about R-1 water.

Member Eaton also mentioned a development in Wailea and they're requesting a lot of water for irrigation and other uses that our treated water shouldn't be used for.

Director Pearson isn't aware of this development/project.

Vice Chair Kaninau would like to see a presentation on Sustainability and Zero Waste on the next agenda.

VII. DIVISION REPORTS

Chair Frampton asked Director Pearson about the virtual meeting held on 5/27/21 between DWS Engineering, Plant Operations and Water Treatment Plants Division to discuss 2 newly proposed well sites in West Maui and any suggestion for other sources.

Director Pearson stated that a few years ago, the water commission established interim in-stream flow standards for streams in West Maui, including Kanaha Stream. In doing so, DWS has to divert a little less water to the Lahaina Treatment Plant and allow water to remain in the stream. By doing that we lose some of our source, so they're making attempts to replace the source with additional wells.

Chair Frampton also asked about the 5 temporary construction meters which are currently being monitored.

Director Pearson replied that temporary meters are used for very limited reasons. They don't allow potable water to be used for dust control. These temporary meters are used for only 3 reasons: pressure testing of a new system before it goes online; chlorination of that same system; and flushing of the waterlines in the system.

Chair Frampton noticed that the pumping of the Iao Aquifer is at 76%.

Director Pearson said they are doing their best to divert more water from the Wailuku River. The more surface water they can treat using gravity, the less water they have to pump out of the aquifer using electricity. They're trying to protect the aquifer and reduce electrical costs.

Member Franco asked if water meters are still issued during droughts and conservation periods.

Director Pearson said yes. He also mentioned that although they requested a conservation of water in Lahaina, the whole island is entering into a drought situation. The Mahinahina Treatment Plant has been shut down since June to install ultraviolet treatment and also to improve the communications within the treatment plant called SCADA. Kahakapao Reservoir levels are beginning to drop, however there are steady flows into the Wailoa Ditch to alleviate the dropping of the reservoirs.

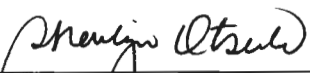
VIII. NEXT MEETING DATE AND TIME

July 15, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the regular meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Prepared by:



Sherilyn Osubo
Commission Support Clerk

Approved for distribution:



Jeffrey T. Pearson, P.E.
Director