

**SALARY COMMISSION
KALANA O MAUI, MAYOR'S CONFERENCE ROOM
ONLINE VIA BLUEJEANS
FRIDAY, MAY 13, 2022
MINUTES**

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Chair Parker at 8:32 a.m.

Present: Chair Scott Parker
Vice-Chair Grant Nakama
Clark Abbott
Stanford Lantias
Tambara Garrick
Edwin Misaki
Peter Martin
Uvette Sakamoto

Absent: Andrew Ho

Staff: Christie Trenholme, Deputy Corporation Counsel
Michelle Yoshimura, Budget Director
LeeAnn Nomura Matsui, Secretary

For the record in the Mayor's Conference Room is Budget Director, Michele Yoshimura, Secretary, LeeAnn Nomura Matsui, Commissioner Uvette Sakamoto and Deputy Corporation Counsel Christie Trenholme.

2. Public Testimony

Deputy Managing Director Josiah Nishita Testified for Agenda Item #5.
Good Morning Chair and Members. Thank you for allowing me to testify today. I just wanted to provide a brief update since our last meeting on May 9th, this is regarding the Department of Agriculture Director and Deputy. Since our last meeting, we did have the posting closed for both positions on May 9th. As of the closing of the posting, we had 13 applications for director and 7 applications for deputy. Our selection committee right now is going through to determine if individuals that submitted applications are qualified or not to then move on to the interview phase. Following the interview phase assuming that they are qualified and capable candidates, then move forward that on to the Mayor's consideration.

Chair Parker closed public testimony.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the February 25, March 11 and April 8, 2022 meetings.

Commissioner Garrick motioned to approve the February 25, March 11, and April 8 2022 minutes seconded by Commissioner Abbott. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Misaki: I talked to Christie and in the minutes, it reflected that my abstinent vote was no vote, but actually it should be and don't have to change the minutes, but it's really a non-vote. It's neither a yes or a no vote because it sounded like that I voted no, but it wasn't that at all. So just wanted to clarify that with the rest of the commission members, it was a non-vote.

Chair Parker: Do we ask for an amendment to the minutes to clarify that?

Deputy Corporation Counsel Christie Trenholme: In the minutes for this meeting, we can reflect that an abstention is a non-vote and we need five affirmative votes for a motion to pass. I think I have misspoken at the last meeting, so I apologize. But we can clarify that that's the process in the minutes for this meeting and moving forward.

Chair Parker: Will that work for you Commissioner Misaki?

Commissioner Misaki: Yes, just reflect it in this meeting's minutes. Thank you.

4. Consideration of Changing Commission Meeting Time to 9:00 a.m.

This is to give the staff time to set up and work out any technical difficulties.

Commissioner Garrick made a motion to approve meeting time change to 9:00 am for Salary Commission meetings moving forward, seconded by Commissioner Misaki. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Consideration of Salaries for the Department of Agriculture Director and Deputy Director

Chair Parker: I just want to clarify that in the agenda, we do have one piece of written testimony that was submitted by Councilmember Sinenci. There was also additional information that was submitted by Director Underwood based on a request that we had and some salary review that he presented. The letter from Councilmember Sinenci addresses a little about the experience that the Council added to the Agriculture Director and Deputy Director positions and also a request by the Councilmember regarding the pay and in terms of Director Underwood, he did provide history of the salary for the Director of Transportation back from 2003, and then he also did provide salaries of positions overseeing agriculture programs in the County of Hawaii and County of Kauai and in salaries of the University of Hawaii, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources. He also provided as best as possible salaries of teachers, such as those at Lahainaluna High School. So, if you

haven't had a chance to reference those materials please do they are linked in the agenda.

Commissioner Garrick: Question for Mr. Nishita is he received 13 applications for Director and 7 for Deputy. I don't know if they've had time to review those. Does that feel to them like a significant number of applications based on the salary? Or were they hoping and or expecting to receive more applications for this position?

Deputy Managing Director Josiah Nishita: We do know of individuals who decided to decline to apply because of the salary. So, at this point everybody who did submit applications for the director and deputy position are aware of the current salary that was set forth by the Salary Commission. We haven't had a chance yet to go through every application, identify who may be qualified or not. The selection committee is undergoing that right now. On the surface, I do know that there are unqualified candidates who have applied just by skimming the materials submitted and there's some additional process we need to go through to kind of iron that out before we have further information for you.

Commissioner Garrick: Mr. Nishita, would it be your recommendation that this commission take another look at the salary today or wait to hear back from you after you guys have had the chance to review the current applications?

Deputy Managing Director Josiah Nishita: We're not going to dictate to the Salary Commission what you should or shouldn't do. We were requesting a salary increase previously before the recruitment closed so that we could broaden the pool of candidates that would apply. At this point we are going through the phase of evaluating the candidates that did submit their applications. In one sense I feel it would be a little unfair at this point to then increase it after the recruitment has closed since individuals specifically did not apply because of the lower salary requirement, and then now they wouldn't be up for consideration. If the Salary Commission does decide to increase it, I think we would try to look at either, re recruiting for it so that everyone has an equal playing field. We'll be able to make whatever adjustments as needed based on what the Salary Commission's recommendations are.

Commissioner Misaki: You mentioned that on the surface you saw people who weren't qualified. On the surface did you see people who were qualified?

Deputy Managing Director Josiah Nishita: I do believe that there may be individuals who are qualified that at least meeting the minimum qualifications. Whether the selection committee that's made up of Ag experts throughout the County ultimately determine whether these individuals have the expertise necessary to lead the department is another question. But on the surface, I do believe that there are at least a few candidates that may meet the minimum qualifications.

Vice-Chair Nakama: Is the County under any kind of obligation to hire a qualified candidate that was recruited during this recruitment process or is it able to forego

hiring from this pool in favor of reopening the recruitment. Is there an obligation to hire someone from this pool because their recruitment already closed, if they are qualified?

Deputy Managing Director Josiah Nishita: I defer to Dave Underwood if he has any additional thoughts, but to me, this position is an appointed position at the director and deputy director level. Technically, the process that we're undergoing is not a requirement that I'm aware of. Ultimately, if it came down to it, Mayor could just make a selection at any time and forward that onto the Council's consideration. Mayor does want to make sure that the individuals who are very experienced and knowledgeable about agriculture are making recommendations as to who would be best qualified. But I'm not aware of any charter or legal requirement that would prohibit us from stopping the recruitment and essentially re-recruiting based on some additional information that has come in.

Vice Chair Nakama: Got it, thank you. And just to confirm what I thought I heard earlier, the department would be willing to reopen recruitment if the Salary Commission were to adjust the director and deputy director salary.

Deputy Managing Director Josiah Nishita: It would be at least my recommendation that we would re-recruit if the Salary Commission did change the salary just so that every individual who was considering taking the position be under the same information as every other candidate.

Commissioner Sakamoto: Is there a minimum requirement of applicants or qualified applicants that needs to be met before it goes to the next level for consideration? I'm just trying to see if there's a minimal.

Chair Parker: Thank you for that question. I think we might have lost Mr. Nishita, but let's hold until he comes back.

Deputy Managing Director Josiah Nishita: Sorry Chair, I apologize, I got booted out for some reason. I didn't hear the question though.

Chair Parker: I think the question was is there a minimum number of applicants – actually maybe you know what, I'm going to ask our member to ask it again so that I don't restate the wrong inquiry here. Can we re-ask the question?

Commissioner Sakamoto: Is there a minimum requirement of applicants or qualified applicants before you go to the next level of the hiring process? So, if there's one or two applicants that are qualified, is there a requirement? Does it need it? It feels as if there's no choice, not a broad - - there's no broad options, there's not multiple options. I'm just trying to get more information on that.

Deputy Managing Director Josiah Nishita: Thank you very much. No, there's no minimum requirement. Obviously, the more individuals we have under consideration, the bigger the pool of candidates, the more likely we are to find

someone who is highly qualified and capable of doing the job. But there is no minimum requirement of that and the timeline that we're under is essentially by Charter. The department starts, you know, is officially established July 1st, 2022. We're trying our best to get a Director and Deputy in place within that timeframe, and the individuals would still have to go through even if they made it through this process and were appointed by Mayor, they would have to go through Council confirmation. The Director would I apologize, Council confirmation prior to being put into the position officially.

Commissioner Misaki: I have a request to Deputy Nishita. So, if you guys decide to reopen the recruiting process and close this one, will the Commission members be able to know who the qualified people were and what their qualifications were of this current candidate pool?

Deputy Managing Director Josiah Nishita: Typically, we don't release the information of individuals who weren't selected. Individuals who are applying may have current careers and of course, considerations of, you know, their current employer knowing that they're applying for other jobs or things of that nature. So, typically, we don't release information of other individuals who weren't selected.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Christie Trenholme: Thank you Josiah. I just have a general reminder that we should be - - the Commission is kind of charged with looking at the position itself, not the individuals. So, we would be looking at the position and what it requires and what the appropriate salaries for that position and responsibility is. Just generally speaking.

Commissioner Abbott for Director Nishita When the people are applying and you're exhibiting or advising them of the amount of money being suggested being paid to them on a yearly basis, are you at the same time, including any of the possible wonderful benefits like the training, the leave sharing the loan forgiveness, the retirement plans, the benefit plans and all of the other goodies that are involved in the salary? Or are you just giving them what the gross amount of the salary is?

Deputy Managing Director Josiah Nishita: The recruitment notices include a lot of that information, of course salary is listed on there, but individuals are aware of the various benefits and what not that come with working for the county as an employer.

Chair Parker: We were provided information from Director Underwood regarding comparable, as best as possible comparable salaries related to agricultural type positions. I'm not sure if you had any thoughts on that based on what he provided and whether you were able to preview that - - based on the County's ask and what we were able to find relative to what the County of Hawaii is paying for someone who's running their agriculture program, and it's titled Economic Development Specialist and the UH CTAHR positions and their highest paid extension agent. I just was wondering if you had any thoughts based on that salary and or ask for I guess similar responsibilities and expectations.

Deputy Managing Director Josiah Nishita: We are aware of the information and the administration's recommendation would still be the same as it was previously.

Chair Parker: Any other questions for Mr. Nishita from any of the Commissioners? Hearing none, I guess we do have an opportunity here to leave our decision where it's at regards to the director and deputy director of Agriculture. We did set a salary for both of them and that has been established and posted. And so, agenda item five here is to provide us an opportunity to consider leaving it where it's at or making an adjustment. So, I just want to make sure that we use our time here to take advantage of an agenda item being presented one way or the other. But I leave it at that just so that we have an opportunity to capitalize on agenda item number five.

Budget Director Michele Yoshimura: Chair Parker, I was sitting in the conference room and they're having technical difficulties. Could we ask for a short recess while we resolve that?

Chair Parker: Of course. Let's start with five minutes and then we'll see how long we need after that.

RECESS: 9:04 a.m.

RECONVENE: 9:10 a.m.

Commissioner Garrick: Chair Parker, my discussion on this agenda item is that if we're not going to take action today to reevaluate, that we consider having this item on the agenda for our next meeting and get an additional update from Mr. Nishita on the hiring process.

Commissioner Misaki: I think we should revisit this item once this first recruiting period is over and then we'll know if we have to consider adjusting the salary or not. But we should actually wait till this first recruiting process is over. And if the management department decides to open up recruiting because there's no candidate available, then we should relook at this. Thank you.

Commissioner Sakamoto: I don't agree with that. I think we should look at it right now because if it's supposed to take effect in July, we only have one more meeting which is next month to decide on that. And if we don't the bases right now, I think that's a concern and we may not have enough time. Correct me if I'm wrong commissioners, it was recruited at \$90,000 for salary for this position. Is that correct? That still stands?

Chair Parker: I believe 90 and 70 and I apologize I don't have the numbers in front of me.

Commissioner Sakamoto: Was this position on the proposed or approved budget and how close or is it in alignment with the budget or - - I just need to know that information. The \$90,000, is that within the budget, because were looking at

comparisons of other positions, comparable positions, but out of the budget aligned into this position - - does anybody know?

Deputy Managing Director Josiah Nishita: We set the salary at ninety and seventy for the director and deputy respectively in the FY23 budget, because that was the Salary Commission's recommendations at that time. So, in terms of if you're saying if it's in line with it, we made the budget to be in line with what the Salary Commission's recommendations were. I believe that Council's coming up May 26 for first reading of the budget and then June 8th for a second reading of the budget. Our current process we're hoping to conclude interviews around May 27th through the ending of May with a transmittal to Council, probably in the first week of June or so if there's a recommendation to be made for these selections. Thank you.

Commissioner Misaki: Question for Corporation Counsel. Is there any legal ramification to the current applicants if we change the salaries now?

Deputy Corporation Counsel Christie Trenholme: As Josiah mentioned, this is an appointed position at will. I think if we re-open the pool if the salary is changed and those candidates are still going to be given the same consideration as any other applicant, so, - - see any issues with reopening it, if that's the question.

Commissioner Misaki: Yeah so if we do change the salary, then we would have to stop the current process and reopen the process again, right?

Deputy Corporation Counsel Christie Trenholme: Yes, that's what Deputy Managing Director mentioned they would do. I believe they've just closed their applications, right? So, they're kind of looking through the applications they received at this time. So, they would reopen to accept additional applications and then I don't believe they have scheduled any interviews yet, but that's my understanding?

Commissioner Misaki: Thank you, I just wanted to understand the process.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Christie Trenholme: Sure, and I don't know if Josiah or Director Underwood has any thoughts on that.

Deputy Managing Director Josiah Nishita: The only thing I would add is just going off of what Christie mentioned, we haven't scheduled any interviews yet. The selection committee will determine who's qualified based on the minimum qualifications, and we hope that to be concluded by May 17th and then from there, we'll schedule interviews for any qualified candidates if any.

Vice-Chair Nakama: In addition to the scheduling and timing concerns that were already raised, I also wanted to kind of point out that we're kind of asking the County to act and hire or not hire on a huge assumption that the Salary Commission will act to increase the salary of the director and deputy for the Ag Department. If say a marginal candidate from this pool is rejected, say if a candidate just barely meets the minimum qualifications and the county knows that there are likely better

candidates out there but this is the pool that they have given the salary that we approved. We're telling the County that we want them to make a decision, not knowing how we'll act if they reject the minimum qualifications of that applicant. So, they will have to re recruit, but not knowing if we would raise the salary. So, I feel like that puts them in kind of a tough position, given how little time they have left before July 1st. So that's one consideration I think we should take into account to.

Chair Parker: This might not necessarily be a question, but I'll just throw it out there and maybe Mr. Nishita you can help us as we understand the potential impacts of the present salary that we set and whether it needs to be adjusted and in the comparables that were provided by Director Underwood. But in the communications that we received from Councilmember Sinenci it outlines what the requirements are for this position. And so it says, in addition to the experience already required by the charter of five years of experience in the field of agriculture and in an administrative capacity, either in public service, private business or both, they are also requiring a minimum of five years of experience with agriculture production or food distribution systems in Hawaii, a minimum of three years of experience in the following areas: managerial and budgetary experience, developing, supervising and coordinating agricultural programs or projects in Hawaii, working with various cultural backgrounds, experience in Native-Hawaiian agricultural farming techniques such as biodynamic planting methods, no-till practices and kilo and ahupua'a connectivity systems. In addition, the director must research issues, threats and solutions to the agriculture sector is encouraged to attend continued education to further their knowledge about the agriculture sector and solutions to challenges and must collaborate with experts and the community to advance local agriculture. So, I guess I just ask and I know you don't have to share this with us, but as we consider the salary, my question becomes then is \$90,000 not an adequate salary based on those qualifications that were laid out? As we look at the comparables that Director Underwood provided for us, when we look at someone from UH as an extension agent making one hundred and one two forty-four or the director of the agriculture program through the County of Hawaii making ninety-one nine sixty-eight who is probably doing similar. Because what they're not doing is what the State of Hawaii Department of Agricultural is doing, which is also enforcement and so I think there's a big difference there. But I just throw that out there because I think that's our conundrum, right? That were facing is a benchmark has been provided from administration to say Department of Transportation should be the minimum comparable. But when we listen to those minimums that were established by the Council and we look at comparables, that's where we're kind of struggling.

Deputy Managing Director Josiah Nishita: Like I had indicated earlier, our recommendation would still be the same. I believe in terms of the extension agents that were provided in the transmittal from Director Underwood, he can clarify if this isn't the case, but I believe in his correspondence that it indicated those were the minimum salaries for those positions. So, obviously dependent on experience and education and all that kind of stuff. Just based on the minimum qualifications set forth by the Charter, by the Council, they did recently in the ordinance as well as what the community expectations are, we've had a variety of community meetings

and meetings with stakeholders to identify what the duties and responsibilities of the department is and what's really the community expectations. And based on that holistic view of it, we'd stick by our recommendation of pegging it to the director of the Department of Transportation. Thank you.

Director Underwood: I just want to point out that those comparables that we provided were not selected by us. Those were comparables that were requested by the Commission. So, they may vary substantially in minimum requirements and duties. The positions on Kauai and the Big Island, they're not department heads. So, they would not have responsibility for hiring, termination and things like that. They probably would not be as involved in the budget as a department head would, and the minimum qualifications are quite different. Minimum qualifications for those positions are basically a degree and four years of research and analytical experience. So, they're good information I think for the Commission and they are involved doing certain types of things, but they may not be exact comparables. I guess I just point that out for the Commission. Thank you.

Chair Parker: Thank you. I appreciate that and I know you brought that up the last time when we were asking as well. So, thank you for re clarifying as well.

Vice-Chair Nakama: I totally agree with Deputy Director Nishita. So, for example, the CTAHR extension agent at a salary of one hundred one thousand per year, that person would have enforcement responsibilities but they would not have any department head or managerial type responsibilities that I think more than make-up for the enforcement that they would be doing. On Kauai, the Economic Development Specialists for position is actually a non-director position that's under the Director of the Office of Economic Development. So, that's not really to me, apples and apples comparison. Although maybe the day to day responsibility of that person might mirror the department, they don't have to run a department and that person is at ninety-one thousand. I continue to think that the Department of Transportation or any director position is the best comp for this position and again the DOT director salary is one hundred twenty-six thousand. So, I mean, to me, all signs point to something over the CTAHR extension agent salary, definitely over the EDS for salary on Kauai and much closer to the DOT Director salary. That's just my two cents based on all of the testimony provided for this meeting and everything that we've heard prior to this.

Commissioner Garrick: I echo Commissioner Nakama's sentiments. I just wanted to state that for the record.

Chair Parker: Thank you.

Commissioner Sakamoto: I have a question for Corporate Counsel, Christie. As we try to come to a decision on the salary for these positions, the way we structure the salary is that within our lines of procedures on how to do it. So, in other words, if right now the budget says it's ninety thousand, and we had already recruited with this salary amount - - on the recruitment is it described as up to ninety-thousand

or starting at ninety-thousand? Is there a way that we may not have to change this or go back and extend work, you know we could just have this as a starting point and make the salary based on certain criteria's or bench marks. Because you'll never know what kind of recruits you'll have. You might have that they may be over qualified or they maybe underqualified. So, do you think I mean, I'm just asking a question, I don't know, like, is that part of the Commissioners responsibility when we determine the salary, is it out of bounds when we say how they can earn the x amount, or if we put in there like maybe a structured table or something like that? Or is that not –

Deputy Corporation Counsel Christie Trenholme: Thank you for the questions. No, it's - - like I mentioned where the Salary Commission is charged with setting the salary for that position, what they think is appropriate based on what they know about the position, duties, and responsibilities. I think in prior to this meeting and receiving the additional requirements from the County Council that was submitted by Councilmember Sinenci there weren't a lot of details on the minimum requirements for the position and as Chair Parker has covered the Commission has more information on the position itself and the duties and responsibilities and I think that that's what the Commission needs to look at. What is the appropriate salary amount.

Commissioner Sakamoto: So, it's just one dollar amount?

Deputy Corporation Counsel Christie Trenholme: Yes, one dollar amount for that.

Commissioner Sakamoto: It's not based on benchmarks or exceptions?

Deputy Corporation Counsel Christie Trenholme: Right, just based on the position, responsibilities and duties.

Commissioner Sakamoto: Thank you.

Commissioner Misaki: My question is, I'm looking at the salary schedule that was sent us – seems like every year they raise the salary until they got to the current salary. That's the same – as the Salary Commission we can do the same thing, right? Raise the salary every year to meet the right amount when they get there, because when they start off, they're not going to do everything at once.

Chair Parker: Commissioner Misaki are you referencing when the Department of Transportation was first created?

Commissioner Misaki: Yeah, it's on that schedule, right? The 2003 they started off with eighty thousand and then as of 2020, it grew all the way to one hundred twenty-six thousand, yeah. That's what I'm referring to the letter that was sent us by Director Underwood. Thank you.

Chair Parker: Thank you. I'll just clarify, you know, we did set a salary again at ninety for the director and seventy for the deputy director. So, the question remains, you know, do we leave it at that or do we make an adjustment to it? And so that's the question for the Salary Commission at this point which is why agenda item number five remains on our agenda because the salary has been established, ninety for the director, seventy for the deputy.

Commissioner Abbott: I have a question for Nishita - - If you have several applicants which were overqualified or whatever, whatever term you want to use, would those people be needed to be re contracted or re contacted for an increase? If an increase in salary was granted, would they need to be re contacted to see if they want to apply at the higher salary. I mean you've got to cover all the bases, because if you refuse them at one level and then all of the sudden change the game posts, you got to give them an equal opportunity to reapply, if I'm not mistaken.

Deputy Managing Director Josiah Nishita: Thank you Chair Parker and member Abbott. I'm going to make an assumption here that I think is pretty, fairly accurate that those who were willing to apply at ninety and seventy will be willing to apply at a higher salary. But, you know, I think you know if we extended the recruitment, if the Salary Commission did change the recommendation and we extended the recruitment, we would keep in consideration all of those individuals who had already applied and just allow additional time period for individuals who hadn't applied previously to then give consideration to it, given whatever changes the Salary Commission may have made.

Commissioner Abbott: Thank you very much. I'm in agreement with Commissioner Misaki on starting them at the salary we have them at because next year they're going to change the salary --we're going to give them a raise probably. You have to start - -have a starting point somewhere and as he pointed out, the Department of Transportation was eighty-three thousand or whatever it was in 2003. You got to start somewhere and you can't start somebody at the same salary as somebody who's been there for 10 years, it isn't fair, that's just not logical.

Commissioner Garrick: I think you know the cost of living in 2003 versus 2022 is vastly different and also the level of experience that we're asking these applicants to have is at or higher the level of some of our existing directors. So, if a motion were to be made today to increase these salaries, I would be 100 percent in support of that. I think given the level of experience that we're being asked to hire and the County is asking to extend the recruitment time, I think that we should be in support of that instead of maybe hiring somebody that's not in the correct position that doesn't have the level of experience and then maybe we're setting them up not to succeed. So, I think we should get the best person for the job in this position from the get go that can really set this department up to be successful.

Commissioner Abbott: I agree a hundred percent, but I think starting at a high salary is not the way to go. They have to prove themselves in their position first.

Vice Chair Nakama: Can I make one final comment. Just want to point out that I agree with Commissioner Garrick's point that the cost of living in 2003 is a lot different than 2022 and actually went and did a quick calculation of what that exactly is just based on regular inflation. So, in 2003, eighty thousand dollars was equivalent to one hundred twenty-five thousand seven hundred dollars in today's money. Coincidentally, one hundred twenty-five thousand seven hundred is almost exactly what we pay the Department of Transportation Director. I mean it's just coincidental. But I mean, it just goes to show you know there has been a lot of inflation since then, I think that breaks down to approximately three percent per year. But eighty thousand in 2003 has the same buying power as one hundred twenty-five thousand seven hundred dollars today. So, I think that's something that needs to be kept in mind. That eighty thousand then, is not eighty thousand now.

Commissioner Abbott: I agree a hundred percent. I just think - - I don't want to start the horse out the gate before it's proved its it's abilities.

Vice Chair Nakama: And I agree with that sentiment, but the information provided in the salary schedule that is being referenced in this argument of the DOT - - when it was first started, being started off at a salary of eighty-thousand dollars, I'm just saying that if we're comparing a starting salary to a starting salary, the starting salary of eighty grand in 2003 is equivalent to a starting salary of one hundred twenty six in 2022. So, I mean they did start it, you know, a proportionally equal rate in 2003 - - and that was - - 2003 was out of the gate for the DOT back then.

Commissioner Misaki: Thanks for that Grant. Commissioner Abbott, I don't know what you agreed with me but, but I just wanted - - I'm still in the process of taking all this information and thank you guys for all this information. But I pointed out this salary schedule from the Department of Transportation is some people were aware that salaries can change on a yearly basis. That's all I wanted to point out. Thank you.

Commissioner Abbott: I agree, that's what I was pointing out. There has to be a starting point - - it's going to increase, period.

Chair Parker: Thank you. We have Director Underwood that wants to make a comment.

Director Underwood: I don't know if the Commissioner will find it useful, but when the Department of Transportation was initially created, the Salary Commission at that time did price it in line with other existing department heads. So, the progression you see over time is similar to the other department heads. So, it was in line with other department heads at that time and the progression has just been the normal increases for department heads across the board. Thank you.

Chair Parker: Thank you Director Underwood.

Commissioner Sakamoto: I have a question. When the Department of Transportation salary or director salary was considered as a comparison, does that include DLNR or did DLNR have a separate - - or did we ever get that salary comparison. Anyone know?

Chair Parker: Sorry just asking for clarification. What department?

Commissioner Sakamoto: I'm asking about DLNR. If the Department of Transportation Director salary was in comparison, did we get the or was there a comparison for the Director for the Department of Land and Natural Resources for the State as well?

Chair Parker: We didn't because and anybody can chime in on this, I don't believe we did because we only referenced the Department of Transportation salary that was for the County - - and it was referenced to the Transportation Department for the County of Maui.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Christie Trenholme: I think that Councilmember Sinenci noted in his written testimony that the Chair of the Hawaii State Department Board of Agriculture's annual salary is \$154,000 so I don't know if that's helpful at all, but that was in his written testimony.

Commissioner Garrick: And I think we had initially looked at the salaries of all department and deputies and then we were matching it to the lowest, which was the Department of Transportation. So, that's why we keep referencing the Department of Transportation - - it's not that they're the same job, it's that they were the lowest salary of all departments and we were looking to align with existing departments. It didn't really have anything to do with the Department of Transportation.

Chair Parker: And it was County of Maui departments.

Commissioner Misaki: I think we had this discussion earlier that it was - - it wouldn't be a good comparison to compare the County's position with the State of Hawaii's position because the State of Hawaii Department of Transportation and Department of Agriculture, they manage the whole State. Whereas we're just talking about positions that manage the County of Maui. So, I think we had this discussion a few meetings back. Thanks.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Christie Trenholme: I think one additional I recall for the Department of Transportation, it's similarly sized to the proposed Department of Agriculture. So, the staff and the size of the department was - - appears to be comparable to the Department of Agriculture.

Commissioner Garrick: That's correct. Can we be reminded of those existing salaries for Department of Transportation?

Chair Parker: \$126,386 for the Director I believe - -and actually I stand corrected. Director Underwood if you might be able to clarify for me if that is the correct one inclusive of the five percent that will take effect July 1st. That's not inclusive of the five percent I believe.

Director Underwood: That's correct. That does not include the five percent.

Commissioner Garrick: So existing salary for Director is \$126,386?

Chair Parker: Yes

Commissioner Garrick: And Deputy, do you have that?

Chair Parker: I would have to ask Director Underwood for that one, apologies.

Director Underwood: I don't have that right in front of me. I'll get that for you Chair.

Chair Parker: Thank you. Commissioner Nakama you have a comment.

Vice Chair Nakama: I was actually going to ask if there still was a motion on the floor or if I can make a new motion.

Chair Parker: I don't think anybody made a motion. So, if you have a motion, you can make one.

Vice Chair Nakama: I have a motion. I would like to make a motion to set the County Agriculture Director salary at \$114,000 and that's based on an average between the CTAHR agent's salary and the Department of Transportation Directors salary. Because for me, I feel that you know, at a minimum, we need to recruit people who are extension agent level candidates and we need to incent them to leave or stop being an extension agent and become a County director. So just as an olive branch, I think this is a great compromise. It's above an extension agent. It would be a step up in responsibilities for that agent and it also reflects and is still below the DOT Director's salary. It meets all of the criteria in terms of a starting point of being requested by some of the board members that's below the DOT Directors salary, but also is above the extension agent salary. So, I think it's a good compromise all around.

Commissioner Garrick: Commissioner Nakama would you consider adjusting your motion to include a salary increase for Deputy Director?

Vice Chair Nakama: I would, but I would defer to Director Underwood about - - is that a 10 percent reduction typically below from a Director to a Deputy Director?

Director Underwood: Thank you Commissioner and Chair. Yes, it is typically about 10 percent. The current salary for the Transportation Deputy is \$113,747, that's approximately a 10 percent difference.

Vice Chair Nakama: Okay thank you. Then yes, I would like to amend my motion to also include a salary for the Deputy Director of \$102,600.

Commissioner Garrick: I second Commissioner Nakama's motion.

Chair Parker: Thank you. So, we have a motion on the floor from Commissioner Nakama, seconded by Commissioner Garrick to set the salary of the Director of the Department of Agriculture to \$114,000 and the Deputy Director to \$102,600, and so I'll open it up to any discussion. If I don't hear or seen none for discussion, I'll call for a vote and I will ask commission secretary to please take a roll call vote. Motion passed with 7 ai's, 1 no, and 1 excused.

Chair Parker: Thank you and thank you Commissioner Nakama and Commissioner Garrick for getting us to this point and moving us forward. I also appreciate Mr. Nishita for being here and allowing us to dialog with you as well as Director Underwood.

Commissioner Misaki: I want to thank the staff, the Management Staff and also everybody else for providing all the information and really helped me to process all the information and come to a conclusion myself. So, thank you everybody.

Chair Parker: I would second that Commissioner Misaki. Thank you as well.

6. Schedule Next Meeting

Chair Parker: I do believe that we have concluded much of our work, at least up until this point in establishing salaries up to July 1st. So, I open it up - - we do have a meeting scheduled for June, but it'll open it up for discussion if there is any question or need to maintain that meeting scheduled for June.

Commissioner Misaki: My comment is I agree with you, Scott, that we've accomplished a lot in the past five months and I think our first meeting at the beginning of the fiscal year in July would be a good, out next meeting.

Vice Chair Nakama: Hi Chair, I agree with that too. Thank you Commissioner Misaki for that suggestion.

Chair Parker: Question for Christie, would we need a motion to move a meeting or not have a meeting in June and resume in July? Or can we just schedule a meeting for July?

Deputy Corporation Counsel Christie Trenholme: We could do a motion if anyone wants to make a motion to set the meeting for July 8th.

Commissioner Garrick: Motion to set the next Salary Commission meeting on July 8th at 9:00 a.m., seconded by Commissioner Nakama. The motion passed unanimously.

Next meeting will be on Friday, July 8, 2022 at 9:00 a.m.

7. Agenda Setting for Next Meeting

- Update on Department of Agriculture recruiting process from the Management Department.

8. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m.