



## **AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE**

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### MINUTES

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2016  
CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING ROOM  
HONOLULU HALE, 2<sup>nd</sup> FLOOR

Members Present: Charley Ice, Yukio Kitagawa, James Nakatani, Dean Okimoto, Alan Takemoto  
Members Excused: Fred Humphrey  
Staff: Sharleen Oshiro, City Council staff

1. With a quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m.
2. The Minutes of September 26, 2016 were approved as circulated.

Motion made by Member Nakatani, seconded by Member Okimoto.

AYES: Ice, Kitagawa, Nakatani, Okimoto, Takemoto - 5  
NOES: None - 0  
EXCUSED: Humphrey -- 1

3. Reports: Update by Mayor's Agricultural Liaison, Dr. Po-Yung Lai. Dr. Lai referred to an update of the report on export-ready commodities that had been requested by the Task Force at its previous meeting. The report identifies 22 commodities now ready for export. Pa'ina Hawaii would be available to help ship the commodities to the mainland from Oahu. If a farmer would like to propose a crop not already on the list, they can approach Pa'ina Hawaii and additional work can be done on a product configuration for eventual approval by the USDA. In response to a question from Member Kitagawa, Dr. Lai clarified that the costs of this project were initially covered by a grant from the Hawaii State Department of Agriculture (HDOA), with the money ultimately coming from the USDA. Pa'ina received the competitive grant. In response to a question from Member Okimoto, Dr. Lai confirmed that basil was also tested, but not as one of the 14 products funded in the grant. Basil was among several crops previously approved. Member Ice asked about saluyute jute, which Dr. Lai, though unfamiliar with the crop, characterized as a "fruit." Member Kitagawa asked if funds would still be available for developing

configurations for additional crops, to which Dr. Lai replied that Lyle Wong of Pa'ina indicated that the organization would be willing to do so even without additional funding.

4. a. Important Agricultural Lands (IAL).

Mr. Tim Hata, Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP) gave an update on the project. DPP has been working with their consultant, HHF Planners, on the landowner notification phase of the project. The plan is to send out a notification letter to approximately 2,000 landowners that have been identified by the consultant as having land either wholly or partially within the IAL boundaries. The letter will alert individuals that their lands are affected by and eligible for IAL. The letter will reference community meetings scheduled for January. The letter will also include instructions on how to look up TMKs on the IAL website, as well as a 4-5 page FAQ. After the notification and meetings, there will be a 60 or 90 day comment period in which the public can comment on the draft IAL maps. Two locations are being considered for the community meetings: one on the North Shore (possibly Sunset Beach Elementary) and the other at Kapiolani Hale in Ewa. Maps will be presented and next steps will be explained. It will be emphasized that the IAL process is a work in progress and that further refinement will be done in terms of the extent and boundary lines of IAL. In the spring of 2017, DPP hopes to hold a third and final Technical Advisory Committee meeting and then prepare the final IAL maps. It will then hold one more community meeting before submitting the maps to the City Council for their consideration and approval by resolution.

Upon questioning, Mr. Hata stated that the IAL law does not specify the mode for mailing out the notification letters and that the DPP may use regular or Certified Mail, depending on budgetary considerations. City, State, and Federal agencies will also be notified through the messenger, and HHF will email interested parties about the notification and upcoming meetings. (There is an email list.) A press release will also be prepared and Neighborhood Boards contacted.

b. Bill 60 (2016) Real Property Tax Exemption for Homes: Update

c. Bill 66 (2016) Relating to Real Property Dedication for Government Owned Agricultural Land

Chair Takemoto stated his understanding that Bill 60 (2016) had been deferred and that Bill 66 (2016) was now the vehicle for the dedication of government-owned agricultural land. Budget and Fiscal Services (BFS) Director Kurokawa clarified that Bill 60 (2016) was deferred due to a technical flaw in its title, so BFS had Bill 66 (2016) introduced. The Bill passed First Reading at the full Council and will be heard at the Budget Committee meeting on Wednesday, November 16<sup>th</sup>. Bill 66 (2016) is more or less the same as Bill 60 (2016); a CD1 has been offered that may be redundant but does not seem to have any technical issues. Member Kitagawa asked for more details on what would be amended and Director Kurokawa, with assistance from Task Force aide Sharleen Oshiro, offered to provide a copy of the CD1. Director Kurokawa reaffirmed that he saw no problems with the amendment. The Budget Committee's meeting was to be held at 9 a.m. and would provide another opportunity for public testimony. Chair Takemoto reminded the Task Force that they had agreed to provide written testimony, which had been circulated, and that the testimony would be revised to refer to Bill 66 (2016). Chair Takemoto invited other Task Force members to appear at the meeting to give testimony, since he would not be able to; if no one

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would be available, the Task Force would submit written testimony only and would encourage stakeholders to submit testimony as well.

d. Election of Officers: Chair and Vice-chair.

Before discussion of this item, Dr. Lai was called up to respond to a question on tomatoes and other crops not found on the export list. Dr. Lai stated that tomatoes and more than one hundred other fresh fruits, herbs, and vegetables had been previously approved for export. Member Nakatani asked if apple bananas or any kind of Thai/Laotian bananas had been approved. Dr. Lai could not speak to those specific fruits but referenced U.S. Hawaii Manual, Table 3-1, "List of Approved Fresh Fruit, Herbs, and Vegetables from Hawaii - Authority 7 CFR 318.13," which catalogues the crops eligible for shipment to the mainland with or without treatment. Dr. Lai offered to check on the status of the bananas in question. In response to a question from Member Ice, Dr. Lai replied that he was not sure if HDOA has a link to the USDA table on its website. Member Nakatani asked what the cost of doing a single product configuration was for Pa'ina, to which Dr. Lai replied that he would check and get back to the Task Force. The major concern is how to stack boxes so that each receives the minimum dosage during irradiation. In response to a question from Member Kitagawa, Dr. Lai stated that on the approved list a generic reference to "banana" is typical, rather than specifying variety, but different parts of a crop (e.g. taro roots and leaves) are sometimes listed separately. He will investigate the degree of specificity on the list and get back to the Task Force. Member Ice asked if irradiation affected ripening, to which Dr. Lai replied that he thought it is supposed to enhance shelf life but could not say for sure about maturity. Member Nakatani added that it does have some effect but is crop-specific.

Turning to the matter of the election of officers, Chair Takemoto asked if there was any interest in the Chair and Vice-Chair positions. Member Nakatani moved that the Chair (Takemoto) and Vice-Chair (Kitagawa) be retained. The motion was seconded. Member Ice commended the Chair for his work so far. Hearing no objections, the vote to retain the current Chair and Vice-Chair was unanimous.

AYES: Ice, Kitagawa, Nakatani, Okimoto, Takemoto - 5  
NOES: None - 0  
EXCUSED: Humphrey - 1

5. Announcements: Chair Takemoto raised the possibility of holding a meeting in January or February of 2017. Member Ice supported setting a date for January and cancelling or deferring if there is not enough on the agenda. In reference to specific dates, Task Force aide Sharleen Oshiro asked if she could get back to the Task Force on room availability, given that she was not yet in possession of the Council's January calendar. Chair Takemoto agreed and asked if the same day (Monday) and time (1:00 p.m.) would work for everyone, which was positively received.

Member Nakatani asked if there was anything the Task Force would be pursuing or following in the upcoming session of the State Legislature. Chair Takemoto did not have a specific item in mind, while Member Nakatani stated that he did not know exactly

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where the IAL process was at the State level. He asked if it would be worth investigating or pushing the matter forward and stated that, if it is a matter of budgetary constraints, he would like to know how much more funding it would take to move ahead. Member Okimoto noted that the incentives part of the process was still missing and that notification would be essential. Member Ice noted that other modes of transmittal besides mail (such as email) may be cheaper. Member Nakatani expressed his frustration at not knowing where the process stands and how close to the end goal the various parties are. Chair Takemoto wondered if the State would provide money to the City to expedite the process. The Chair suggested sending an inquiry to DPP asking how much funding they will need for the next phase and then take that to the Legislature to see what support may be forthcoming. He will work with staff to write up a memo to DPP, with the hope that answers will be provided with enough time to prep for the Legislative Session. Member Ice suggested that the inquiry may provoke other questions and Member Okimoto requested that the incentives issue be raised.

Chair Takemoto was passed a draft calendar, which gave the first Budget Committee meeting as taking place on January 11, 2017 and the opening of the State Legislative Session as January 18, 2017. Monday, January 9<sup>th</sup> was chosen as the tentative date for the Task Force's next meeting, with the caveat that room availability would need to be verified. Member Nakatani reported that at the last Budget Committee meeting Chair Kobayashi seemed to support the intent of the ag bills in question but requested additional information from BFS. Chair Takemoto asked Task Force members to send him any items they would want included on the January 9<sup>th</sup> agenda.

6. Adjournment: Member Nakatani made motion to adjourn, seconded by Member Okimoto. The motion passed unanimously.

AYES: Ice, Kitagawa, Nakatani, Okimoto, Takemoto - 5  
NOES: None - 0  
EXCUSED: Humphrey - 1

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.