

**STATE OF HAWAI'I**  
**OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**  
560 N. NIMITZ HWY., STE. 200  
HONOLULU, HI 96817

**COMMITTEE ON BENEFICIARY ADVOCACY AND EMPOWERMENT**

**January 8, 2025**

**9 a.m.**

**(In-person at OHA Maui Ola Boardroom  
and via Interactive Conference Technology)**

**MINUTES**

**TRUSTEES PRESENT**

Brickwood Galuteria, Chair  
Kaleihikina Akaka, Vice Chair  
Dan Ahuna  
Keli'i Akina  
Luana Alapa  
Kaiali'i Kahele  
Carmen Hulu Lindsey  
Keoni Souza  
John Waihe'e, IV

**CEO**

Stacy Ferreira

**COO**

Kehaulani Pu'u

**BAE STAFF**

Kyla Hee  
Lei-Ann Durant  
Mark Watanabe  
Nathan Takeuchi

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES STAFF**

Carina Lee  
Crayn Akina  
Jasmine Branco  
Kanani Iaea  
Kauai Wailehua  
Mele Moniz  
Melissa Wennihan  
Pohai Ryan  
Remy Keli'icho'omalu  
Richelle Kim  
Sommer Soares

**ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

Arlene Aguinaldo  
Elena Farden  
Everett Ohta  
Hailama Farden  
Kamakana Ferreira  
Kevin Chak  
Ku'uleianuheha Awo-Chun  
Leina'ala Ley  
Lei Vaughn-Sekona  
Nietzsche Ozawa  
Poni Askew  
Ramona Hinck

**Chair Brickwood Galuteria** called the meeting of the Committee on Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment to order on Wednesday, January 8, 2025, at **9 a.m.**

Roll Call – Seven board members were present and constituted a quorum

Trustee Keli'i Akina arrived at 9:03 a.m.

Trustee John Waihe'e, IV arrived at 9:09 a.m.

**Chair Galuteria** welcomed the committee members and shared his vision for the future of this committee (see attached).

## **II. NEW BUSINESS**

### **a. Island Burial Council Nominations: Action Item #25-01 (9:16:21 a.m.)**

**MOTION 1:** 1<sup>st</sup> – Trustee Dan Ahuna

2<sup>nd</sup> – Trustee John Waihe'e, IV

**To approve the individuals listed in Section I. above as the Office of Hawaiian Affairs's 2025 nominations to the O'ahu Burial Council, Hawai'i Island Burial Council, Maui Island Burial Council, Moloka'i Island Burial Council and the Kaua'i Island Burial Council and to authorize the Administration to timely transmit these nominations to the Governor.**

- *There were no testifiers on this subject*

## **DISCUSSION**

**Kamakani Ferreira**, OHA's lead compliance specialist, shared OHA's process regarding burial council policies and procedures. OHA is mandated by HRS 60.43.5 specifies that candidates should have knowledge of burial practices and Hawaiian cultural practices, so Kamakana and his team engineered a scoring rubric around that. Applicants submitted a letter of intent (optional), submitted a resume and completed an online application. Each applicant is scored according to HRS 60.43.

Committee members included **Kamakana, Kai Markell** (Compliance Enforcement Manager), and **Ku'ikeokalani Kamakea-Ohelo** (Strategy and Implementation).

**Chair Galuteria** asked if the vetting process is based on academics or culture and past practices of the candidates. **Kamakana** responded that scoring is based experience with 'iwi kupuna issues, research or knowledge of Hawaiian burial practices, or experience with historic



**CEO Ferreira** stated that this request for \$1M was a recommendation from the Public Land Trust Working Group (PLTWG) so this is a deliverable from that working group. \$1M will enable OHA to start the audit. OHA will follow the procurement procedure which is OHA's standard practice. The recommendation, which came from the Public Land Trust, was submitted last session at a much lower amount, the ask for \$1M is an estimated cost to at least start the inventory audit.

Similarly, there will be another request for the same amount of \$M. \$750K will come from the Governor, [Josh Green]; and if approved by this board, OHA will be putting \$250K into its budget that will match this bill with appropriation. We wanted to have as many opportunities - it is that important that we get this approved in order to get an accurate inventory.

\*The big change from last year's bill is the ask of an increase of \$1M in order to provide accuracy, self-reporting, verifying the revenues from each department.

**OHA Interim General Counsel, Everett Ohta**, corrected that this bill does include an exemption of the procurement process because we are reintroducing the same bill that was previously sought by the PLTWG seeking the same type of funding as last year. Although OHA is part of the working group, this is not something OHA submitted on its own. It's a carry over of sorts that is a little unusual, but it does call for an exemption from those services. This exemption would allow OHA not to use state procurement code 103.d.

**Trustee Akina** state his question was not about the increased funding. The question was why we have to go outside the procurement process to get the results we want. He wants to ensure the public knows that the safeguard usually put in place with the procurement process will be adhered to. **Everett** stated that the exemption speaks to the specialized work regarding both the inventories as well as financial reporting received by the agencies as well as confirm its accuracy. This is somewhat specialized and is not a generalized annual audit done by the agencies. OHA is seeking to have those funds transferred to OHA to minister, through a contract, to a vendor who is doing that kind of work. The work will take a considerable amount of time, but the agency will need that information to do its work. Given past reviews, there is a lot of work with the agencies.

**Trustee Dan Ahuna** stated that this adds a little protection and prevents the state from stealing the land.

**Chair Galuteria** thanked Chair Emeria Hulu [Lindsey] for leading the charge to get OHA to this point through her years of working on this issue. **Chair Emerita** stated that it has been an interesting two years working with the PLTWG and she feels working with the State helped her understand a few things. With regard to the \$1M, the Governor [Josh Green] did send a message via one of his employees working with the PLTWG, that he would be willing to put his \$750K into his personal message to the Legislature which is encouraging. He wants to give the Legislature the idea that OHA and the State are working together. Hopefully, that will give them the encouragement to give OHA the money. **Chair Emerita** thanks Chair Galuteria for his work with the PLTWG.







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## BAE Script Addition

1 message

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Brickwood Galuteria <brickwoodg@gmail.com>  
To: Brickwood Galuteria <brickwoodg@gmail.com>

Mon, Jan 6, 2025 at 8:47 PM

**Chairperson:** Before we proceed with the agenda, I would like to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude to the previous Board and Committee Leadership. We owe a special debt of gratitude to Chair Emeritas Hulu Lindsey, our previous Board Chair, and former BAE Chair Kaleikina Akaka for their unwavering commitment and we thank you sincerely for your service. Your dedication, vision, and hard work have been instrumental in guiding our organization through numerous challenges and achievements. You have laid a strong foundation upon which we can continue to build and thrive. As we move forward, we are excited to embark on a new chapter. This is a time of renewal and opportunity, and we are confident that with the collective wisdom and energy of this entire Board, we will achieve even greater heights." Let us work collaboratively to create a brighter future for OHA and the Lahui we serve."

Today, we will revisit the purpose and goals of the Committee on Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment. Our primary mission is to ensure that the needs and rights of our beneficiaries are represented and advocated for effectively. We aim to empower them through support, resources, and education. We will continue to work on initiatives to raise awareness about the rights of our beneficiaries...to conduct workshops and community outreach programs, and explore new avenues for advocacy. Our focus has been on providing resources and support to empower our beneficiaries. We have developed training programs and collaborated with local organizations to offer mentorship opportunities. We recommend expanding these programs and seeking additional partnerships while continuing relationships within and outside the Lahui. Beneficiary Advocacy is clear. Beyond that, I've been trying to wrap my head around Empowerment and what that really means. Empowerment within the context of indigenous peoples involves providing the tools, resources, and opportunities necessary to take control of their own lives and destinies. It encompasses several key aspects:

Firstly, Empowerment means supporting our right to self-determination 'Ea, to govern ourselves, make decisions about our land, culture, and future, and maintain our sovereignty. Safeguarding our language, traditions, and cultural practices. This includes promoting and revitalizing our cultural heritage to ensure it is passed down to future generations. Empowering and providing opportunities for economic independence is crucial. This includes access to education, job training, and support for Native Hawaiian businesses, enabling them to thrive. You've heard me constantly mention "Political Musularity." Ensuring that we have a voice in local, national, and international political arenas is vital. This helps us advocate for our rights, influence policies affecting our Lahui, and participate fully in decision-making processes. Our rights to our ancestral lands and resources is fundamental to our identity, livelihood, and well-being. Providing equitable access to quality education and healthcare services empowers the Lahui to improve our overall quality of life and ensures that future generations are well-equipped to succeed. And finally, addressing historical injustices and ongoing discrimination is essential. The dispossession was real, and must and will continue to be acknowledged. But we will not subscribe to a "woe is me" mentality. Empowerment is promoting social justice, equity, and human rights ensuring that all be treated with dignity and respect. Empowerment is a multifaceted approach that requires collaboration, respect, and a commitment to justice and equity, so let's get to work.

Are there any questions or discussions regarding the the Committee on Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment?"

DRAFT