

**STATE OF HAWAI'I**  
**OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**  
**560 N. NIMITZ HIGHWAY, SUITE 200**  
**(VIRTUAL MEETING - VIA ZOOM WEBINAR)**  
**COMMITTEE ON BUDGET AND FINANCE**  
**MINUTES**

**April 1, 2026 11:00 a.m.**

*(or immediately following the conclusion of the OHA Investment and Land Management (ILM) Committee Meeting)*

**FULL MEETING CAN BE VIEWED AT [04/01/26 Budget and Finance \(BF\) Meeting](#)**

**ATTENDANCE:**

Chairperson John Waihe'e, IV  
Vice-Chairperson Dan Ahuna  
Trustee Kaleihikina Akaka  
Trustee Keli'i Akina  
Trustee Luana Alapa  
Trustee Brickwood Galuteria  
Trustee Kaiali'i Kahele  
Trustee C. Hulu Lindsey  
Trustee J. Keoni Souza

**ADMINISTRATION STAFF:**

K. Sean Kekina, COO / Ka Pou Nui  
Carla Hostetter, *Director, Research & Evaluation*  
Daniel Sandomire, *Managing Director of Real Estate*  
Daniel Santos, *IT Systems Engineer & Administrator*  
Elena Farden, *Sr. Director, Strategy & Implementation*  
Emmit Ford, *Legal Counsel*  
Everett Ohta, *General Counsel*  
Grace Chen, *Budget Chief*  
James Matsuzaki, *GIS Administrator*  
Kale Hannahs, *Research Systems Manager*  
Keith Gutierrez, *Research & Evaluation Manager*  
Keola Fong, *Legal Counsel*  
Kyle Saucier, *IT Systems Engineer & Administrator*  
LeAnn Gentry, *Investment Land Asset Manager*  
Lori Walker, *Land Integrated Assets Manager*  
Poni Askew, *Operations Manager*  
Rozelle Agag, *Associate General Counsel*  
Ryan Lee, *Investment Director, Interim CFO*  
Stephanie Jones, *Legal Office Administrator*

**BOARD COUNSEL:**

Kapono Kiakona

**BOT STAFF:**

Carina Lee  
Crayn Akina  
Kanani Iaea  
Mark Watanabe  
Melissa Wennihan  
Momi Kaaihue  
Pohai Ryan

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**Chair Waihe'e** calls the Committee on Budget and Finance meeting for Wednesday, April 1, 2026 to order at **11:50 a.m. (0:18 / 1:01:40)**

**Chair Waihe'e** notes for the record that **PRESENT** are:

MEMBERS			AT CALL TO ORDER (11:50 a.m.)	TIME ARRIVED
CHAIR	JOHN	WAIHE'E, IV	PRESENT	
VICE-CHAIR	DAN	AHUNA	PRESENT	
TRUSTEE	KALEIHIKINA	AKAKA	PRESENT	
TRUSTEE	KELI'I	AKINA	PRESENT	
TRUSTEE	LUANA	ALAPA	PRESENT	
TRUSTEE	BRICKWOOD	GALUTERIA	PRESENT	
TRUSTEE	KAIALI'I	KAHELE	PRESENT	
TRUSTEE	C. HULU	LINDSEY	PRESENT	
TRUSTEE	J. KEONI	SOUZA	PRESENT	

At the Call to Order, **NINE (9) Trustees are PRESENT**, thereby constituting a quorum.

## II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

None.

## III. NEW BUSINESS

### A. Mahi'ai Microfund Program – Program Status Update

Administration will provide an update on the development and implementation of the Mahi'ai Microfund Program, including next steps toward deploying financial assistance to Native Hawaiian farmers. (4:05 – 19:50 / 1:01:40)

**Chair Waihe'e** recognizes Ka Pou Nui Kekina (4:05 / 1:01:40)

**Ka Pou Nui Kekina:** Mahalo, Chair I'd like to call up Poni Askew to the table to give us the program status update.

**Director of Economic and Business Resilience Askew:** We're distributing handouts this morning. I'll just give a minute for that. Mahalo Elena for your support today.

So, this morning I'm going to walk through a brief update on the Mahi'ai Micro Fund and also take a moment to ground where we are in relation to what we are seeing across our farming communities right now. What you'll see in this presentation is a program that was thoughtfully designed and approved by this Board and is now ready to launch. But at the same time, conditions on the ground have shifted. So in addition to walking through the program as designed, I'll also introduce a potential adjustment for your consideration, not as a change in direction, but as a way to ensure the program remains aligned with current need while still grounded in the intent this Board originally approved.

The slide features the Mahi'ai Micro Fund logo at the top, which includes a stylized green leaf above the text 'Mahi'ai MICRO FUND'. Below the logo is the title 'Mahi'ai Micro Fund – Program Updates' and a subtitle 'STRATEGY & IMPLEMENTATION: ECONOMIC RESILIENCE - BF COMT UPDATE: APRIL 1, 2026'. The main content is organized into two columns. The left column contains a bullet point: 'The Mahi'ai Micro Fund provides targeted financial support to Native Hawaiian farmers facing rising operational costs, including water and property-related expenses.' Below this is a paragraph: 'This program addresses a gap in accessible support for small-scale Native Hawaiian farmers and helps stabilize ongoing agricultural activity. By offering micro-funding support, the program stabilizes ongoing agricultural operations and supports long-term viability of Native Hawaiian agriculture.' The right column contains a bullet point: 'What the Program Delivers' followed by a list of four items: 'Up to \$5,000 in direct financial support to up to 28 NH owned farming businesses', 'Covers key costs including water and property-related expenses', 'Available to HRP-verified Native Hawaiian farmers', and 'Designed for simple application and efficient disbursement'. At the bottom of the slide, a final bullet point states: 'Budget: \$140,000 previously approved on May 22, 2024. No further board action needed at this time.'

### **Director of Economic and Business Resilience**

**Askew:** So, I'll walk us through three things today. What the program is, where we are in terms of readiness and what we see are seeing now and where there may be opportunity for alignment.

With that on page one, the Mahi'ai micro fund was designed to address a very specific gap where Native Hawaiian farmers are actively operating but experiencing increasing pressures from rising cost, particularly water and property related expenses. This was not intended to be a broad subsidy program, but rather a targeted short-term stabilization tool to support farmers that are at risk of disruption.

As reflected here on page one, the program provides up to \$5,000 to approximately 28 Native Hawaiian farming businesses with a focus on keeping the process simple, accessible, and efficient. And just to ground this, this program is tied to a Board approved budget item from May 2024.

**Director of Economic and Business Resilience Askew:** So today, the program is fully designed and we're ready for launch. We're on track to launch mid-April with systems in place for intake review and reporting. Applications will be submitted online and we're leveraging systems already in place including processes used to implement programs like AHO and I Ola to ensure proper track tracking prevent duplication and maintain integrity. We've also established a standardized evaluation rubric, HRP aligned eligibility and data tracking tools to measure outcomes. So, from an operational standpoint we're ready to execute. [\(7:15 / 1:01:40\)](#)

### Program Development & Current Status

#### Current Status

<b>Fully Designed</b> Program fully designed and structured for launch	<b>Partner Coordination</b> Coordination between OHA and Hawaiian Council underway
<b>Launch Confirmed</b> Mid-April launch confirmed	<b>Systems Validated</b> All systems aligned and validated for rollout

#### Program Development – How It Was Built

- Data Infrastructure**  
Secure storage, aggregated reporting, and performance tracking systems
- Survey & Reporting Tools**  
Applicant-facing intake forms and program monitoring instruments
- Evaluation Rubric**  
Standardized scoring criteria for consistent, equitable review
- Eligibility Framework**  
HRP-aligned verification protocol ensuring program integrity
- Intake System**  
Applicant portal and submission workflow – fully operational

### Program Authorization & Milestones

<b>May 22, 2024</b> BM #24-11 Board of Trustees approved creation of the Mahi'ai Micro Fund	<b>April 30, 2025</b> BF #25-27 Budget & Finance Committee approved funding reallocation	<b>May 16, 2025</b> Procurement Initiated RFP process launched in accordance with State requirements	<b>August 2025</b> RFP Released 3 proposals submitted, evaluated, and contractor selected
<b>March 20, 2026</b> Contract Executed Agreement finalized with Hawaiian Council	<b>Mid-April 2026</b> Program Launch Intake opens and funding deployment begins		

n Status: Program previously approved by the Board – implementation underway and on track for mid-April 2026 launch.

### Implementation Plan & Next Steps

- Program Readiness**  
Website, application, and communications aligned – ready for program launch.
- Review Begins**  
Hawaiian Council and OHA conduct joint review and eligibility confirmation.
- Disbursement**  
Funds distributed to approved applicants.
- Mid-April Program Launch**  
Application portal opens – Mahi'ai submit inquiry forms, HRP verification begins, and applications are received.
- Awards Communicated**  
Hawaiian Council issues final approval decisions & regrets – notifications sent to applicants.

**Director of Economic and Business Resilience Askew:** This slide outlines how the program has progressed. This action item was approved by the Board in May of 2024 with BF committee approval to reallocate funds following in April 2025. In May 2025, procurement was conducted through a competitive RFP process in accordance with State and OHA procurement requirements with three native CDFIs in submitting their proposals. Hawaiian Council was selected based on capacity, experience, and alignment. The contract was executed with Hawaiian Council on March 20th of this year, and we are on track for a mid-April launch.

**Director of Economic and Business Resilience Askew:** This slide outlines how the program will be executed.

- OHA is responsible for the intake and data collection of our beneficiaries, program criteria, eligibility and final award decisions.
- Hawaiian Council supports the application intake, documentation, and disbursement of funds.
- All applications go through a joint review process with final approval remaining with OHA.
- So, while we are leveraging Hawaiian Council's strength in intake and processing as well as distribution of funds, OHA maintains full oversight of eligibility criteria and final award decisions. This structure ensures accountability, transparency, and alignment with our standards.
- We've also built in reporting mechanisms to track both performance and impact to our farmers.

### Program Execution & Delivery Model

#### Roles & Responsibilities – Who Does What

<b>Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sets program criteria and funding priorities</li> <li>Manages intake and HRP verification</li> <li>Refers eligible applicants to Hawaiian Council</li> <li>Co-reviews applications</li> <li>Makes final award decisions</li> <li>Oversees compliance and reporting</li> </ul>	<b>Hawaiian Council</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports applicants through the application process</li> <li>Collects and organizes required documentation</li> <li>Reviews applications for completeness</li> <li>Co-reviews applications with OHA</li> <li>Communicates decisions to applicants</li> <li>Coordinates disbursement of funds</li> </ul>
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#### Joint Review Process – How Decisions Are Made

All award decisions flow through a structured joint review process that separates intake and eligibility functions from final approval authority, ensuring accountability at every stage.

- 1 Application Submitted
- 2 Joint Review (OHA + Hawaiian Council)
- 3 Final Approval (OHA)
- 4 Award Issued

This structure maintains clear oversight and program integrity while aligning with OHA governance standards and leveraging Hawaiian Council's strengths in application processing, intake, and case management.

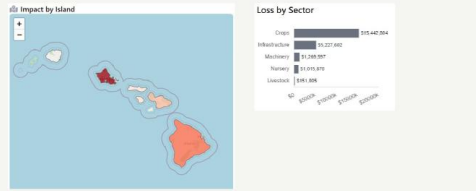
#### Reporting & Oversight

- Hawaiian Council provides reporting on application intake, eligibility, and award processing. OHA's Economic & Business Resilience team leads outcome tracking, survey insights, and program impact evaluation.

## Kona Low Storms Statewide Agricultural Impact

Latest Data (as of 3/30/26)

Reported Damage by Island & Sector	AGRICULTURE (A)	MANUFACTURING (M)	RETAIL (R)	OTHER (O)	TOTAL (T)
Hawaii	\$1,966,112	\$16,000	\$112,000	\$1,562,285	\$3,656,407
Maua	\$1,021,111	\$16,775	\$95,000	\$1,134,886	\$2,267,771
Oahu	\$9,425,211	\$71,138	\$106,700	\$9,603,049	\$19,106,098
Molokai	\$445,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$447,000	\$893,000
Lana	\$5,000	\$12,000	\$1,000	\$18,000	\$36,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$13,862,434</b>	<b>\$106,805</b>	<b>\$215,700</b>	<b>\$13,274,940</b>	<b>\$27,459,879</b>



381 farms impacted      3,499 acres affected      \$23.1M total estimated losses

Self-Reported Losses by Island

- Oahu: \$13,096,825
- Hawaii Island: \$6,457,207
- Maua: \$3,041,546
- Molokai: \$488,200
- Lana's: \$23,300

The losses span all major agricultural sectors, including crops, livestock, nursery operations, infrastructure, and machinery.

**Director of Economic and Business Resilience Askew:** Trustees, in front of you is an amendment that I submitted. So, you'll see another document stapled for your reference, it should have some pictures on the front of it. Since finalizing this program design, we've seen significant impacts from the recent Kona Low conditions as reflected here using the Ag stewardship dashboard. **(9:35 / 1:01:40)**

There's over 380 farms currently reported as being impacted statewide. Nearly 3,500 acres have been affected and there's over \$23 million in self-reported losses. These impacts go beyond cost pressure and extend into crop loss, infrastructure damage, and broader operational disruptions.

So with that, what we're seeing now is a shift in need.

**Director of Economic and Business Resilience Askew:** Looking at the current landscape, there are a few efforts underway. The Department of Ag and Biosecurity, DAB as they are called now, has administered a small emergency grant program with a short application period and a minimal amount of funds that they offered. They are working also towards a loan program that is not yet open. At the same time, organizations like Hawaii Farm Bureau and Hawaii Agricultural Foundation are leading philanthropic and community-based fundraising efforts. However, most available support is either limited in scale, loan based or delayed in deployment. So, there is a clear gap in flexible, accessible funding that can support farmers in real time.

## Current Direct Farmer Support — Scale of Need

### Available Relief Programs

Dept. of Ag & Biosecurity	Emergency Agricultural Loan Program	Philanthropic & Community Response
ENROLLMENT CLOSED	APPLICATION PERIOD: NOT YET OPEN	ACTIVE
Emergency Farmer Relief Program	Emergency Agricultural Loan Program	Philanthropic & Community Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One-time grant of \$1,500 per farmer</li> <li>Open to farmers, ranchers, and ag businesses in Hawai'i</li> <li>Required valid GET license and documented storm-related damage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agency: Hawai'i Dept. of Agriculture &amp; Biosecurity</li> <li>Loans up to \$100,000 at approximately 3% interest</li> <li>Open to agricultural producers impacted by storms</li> <li>Additional eligibility criteria TBD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hawai'i Farm Bureau and Hawai'i Agricultural Foundation leading active disaster fundraising</li> <li>Grassroots networks such as Farm Fun(d) Day at the Kōkua Learning Farm fundraising efforts.</li> </ul>

Current Landscape

- Most existing programs focus on households or general disaster relief
- Farmer-specific support is often limited in scope or delayed in disbursement
- There is a critical absence of flexible, immediate funding mechanisms tailored to the scale of agricultural losses impacting small farms

Available support is limited — farmer losses are significant and immediate.

## Aligning Mahi'ai Micro Fund to Current Needs

Current Micro Fund Structure	Current Conditions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fixed use only</li> <li>Water / property tax relief</li> <li>~28 farmers supported</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$23M+ losses</li> <li>381 farms impacted</li> <li>Crop + infrastructure loss</li> <li>Operational recovery required</li> </ul>

### Gap in Alignment

### Proposed Action

- Remove use restrictions
- Adjust program structure
- Add \$100,000 from Kūlana 'Āina budget

### Board Direction Requested

- Approve removal of use restrictions
- Approve program adjustment for flexible recovery use
- Approve addition of \$100,000 from Kūlana 'Āina

**Director of Economic and Business Resilience Askew:** Given this, we would like to explore with the Board whether it makes sense to adjust the Mahi'ai micro fund to better align with current conditions. This is not a departure from the program, but an evolution of it. The proposed adjustment includes removing strict use restrictions to allow more flexible recovery support, adjusting or removing award size and number of beneficiaries, and exploring a reallocation of funds from Kūlana 'Āina in the amount of \$100,000, resulting in a total program size of approximately \$240,000.

This request does not include a request for any additional funds, it doesn't go beyond what's have been already approved for my department within this fiscal year. So, the intent is to prioritize those impacted by Kona Low while still supporting broader mahi'ai needs.

**Director of Economic and Business Resilience Askew:** We've confirmed that the contract structure allows for this adjustment with Hawaiian Council and we're currently coordinating with them on this deployment. ([12:25 / 1:01:40](#))

So, at this stage we're I'm seeking your direction on three areas; whether there is openness to make the fund more flexible, whether there is support for reallocating Kūlana 'Āina funds to Mahi'ai micro fund and whether returning to Budget and Finance on April 18th with a formal action item would be an appropriate next step.

Overall, the program is fully designed, approved, and ready to launch. What we're bringing forward is an opportunity to ensure it also is responsive to what our farmers are experiencing right now. I'm happy to take any questions. Mahalo.

**Chair Waihe'e** recognizes Trustee Souza

**Trustee Souza:** Mahalo, Chair. Mahalo, Poni and your team, K. Sean, Summer, Administration; number one for recognizing the shift for the deployment of these funds without altering the intentions, keeping that going, also identifying other funds. There's no better time to deploy these funds rather than in the time of need, absolute time of need, the recent devastation from the Kona Lows, and so I fully support the recommendation and if it needs to come back in the form of an action item the following meeting and go through that process I fully support that as well. Mahalo, Chair.

**Chair Waihe'e** Thank you, Keoni.

**Director of Economic and Business Resilience Askew:** Mahalo.

**Chair Waihe'e** recognizes Trustee Akina

**Trustee Akina:** Thank you, Chair. Poni, wonderful, I appreciate the work that's been put in by your team. Just a quick question with the Kūlana 'Āina, the reallocation of funding. Are you looking at increasing the amounts provided per farmer or increasing the number of farmers?

**Director of Economic and Business Resilience Askew:** At first I would like to increase the number of farmers, with this early stage uh the data for Native Hawaiian specific farmers, we still have to gather that. So, I would say that depending on that number it may also adjust the amount that we can distribute out to them as well.

**Trustee Akina:** Thank you. I'm glad to hear that we're going to try to help more farmers.

**Director of Economic and Business Resilience Askew:** Mahalo.

**Chair Waihe'e** recognizes Trustee Galuteria

**Trustee Galuteria:** Mahalo, does this in any way replicate or align with existing relief efforts on the State level or is this a standalone?

**Director of Economic and Business Resilience Askew:** Yes, Trustee it's a standalone. The only efforts that have been offered was through DAB for \$1,500. It had a 3-day window for application and submission last week. So, if you could imagine the reach of farmers who had the opportunity to stop cleanup and apply, their response rate actually was 1,700 applicants and 333 received \$1,500 within that 3-day period.

**Trustee Galuteria:** Okay, mahalo. ([15:34 / 1:01:40](#))

**Chair Waihe'e** recognizes Trustee Lindsey

**Trustee Lindsey:** Poni, is there a cap for each applicant, and I ask that because I know there's different sizes of farms, how are you folks planning to do that?

**Director of Economic and Business Resilience Askew:** So, we would align it against our rubric and create priorities based on the results of that rubric, as well as priority on Kona Low farmers. Regarding sizing, I think that's going to be pending the data that we get in the next week to really understand the size of the farms. But generally speaking, our mahi'ai are considered across the board small farmers with total acreages not to exceed 10 acres. Most of them living within the 2 to 5 acre range. So that's who we're looking at working with specifically.

**Trustee Lindsey:** Thank you.

**Director of Economic and Business Resilience Askew:** Mahalo.

**Chair Waihe'e** recognizes Trustee Akaka

**Trustee Akaka:** Mahalo, Poni for your presentation. It's very nice to see the progress thus far and I am looking forward to more visuals of those that we are working with, the mahi'ai and so forth. I also wanted to check too, as we have with any entity that we're working with that there is that co-partnership with OHA's logo and information that is shared with those that are applying. I want to make sure that that is there. I looked online to see what I could find, but I didn't really see anything more than a couple points of information on our site.

**Director of Economic and Business Resilience Askew:** With Mahi'ai Micro Fund, we had intended on actually doing so in the next few days, and they would be leveraging the Mahi'ai Micro Fund logo that you see on the presentation as well as our OHA logo when it when it does go live. We do plan on postponing that if it's amenable for the Board for us to reassess Mahi'ai micro fund, looking at early May launch instead of mid-April

**Trustee Akaka:** Mahalo

**Chair Waihe'e** recognizes Trustee Lindsey

**Trustee Lindsey:** Poni, how are you folks going to separate the work between Hawaiian Council and OHA?

**Director of Economic and Business Resilience Askew:** Yes. So, in the contract that we created with them I think it was on page four of the document, we have our roles separated there. So, OHA is going to be setting program criteria and funding priorities. We're actually going to take the kuleana on as taking in the first round of inquiries from our beneficiaries, from AHO processes we found that to be a much more easier process for our beneficiaries to get HRP verified, receive a referral letter from us to go to Hawaiian Council and then Hawaiian Council's kuleana is just to manage the documents that they have to submit for eligibility, to aggregate that for us to be able to review it, approve the mahi'ai getting the loan and then Hawaiian Council would be responsible for distributing the funds.

**Chair Waihe'e** asks if there are any other questions? ([19:26 / 1:01:40](#))

There are none.

**Chair Waihe'e:** Okay, just to be clear, so today was just an update and a presentation. Any recommendations that require action we'll bring back at a future meeting that's going to be agendized.

**Director of Economic and Business Resilience Askew:** Correct, yes. Mahalo.

**Chair Waihe'e:** Thanks, Poni.

### III. NEW BUSINESS

#### **B. Informational Budget Briefing to:**

- (1) Receive updates on the execution status of FY2026 budgeted initiatives,
- (2) Review and consider proposed readjustments to the FY2026 budget, and
- (3) Evaluate proposed budget readjustments and realignments for FY2027.

These briefings are intended to support informed fiscal oversight and decision-making by the Board of Trustees (BOT).

They also provide OHA's executive leadership team, department heads, division directors, and appropriate support staff an opportunity to present status updates, outline proposed modifications, and discuss strategic budget priorities for the upcoming fiscal periods.

- a. **Corporation Counsel – General Counsel Everett Ohta and Appropriate Support Staff**  
([19:50 – 38:35 / 1:01:40](#))

**BF Chair Staff Akina** states that no one has signed up to testify on this item.

**Chair Waihe'e** recognizes Ka Pou Nui Kekina. ([20:15 / 1:01:40](#))

**Ka Pou Nui Kekina:** Mahalo, Chair Waihee. I'd like to call up Everett Ohta to deliver his budget presentation.

**General Counsel Ohta:** Good afternoon, Chair Waihee and Trustees, Everett Ohta, General Counsel for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. This is the Corp Counsel briefing on the FY26 budget and projections toward the FY27 fiscal year. I am joined in the boardroom by the rest of the Corp Counsel office staff who I'll be introducing a little bit later. To get into the presentation I can begin with just a review of the Corp Counsel office, our budget and projections going forward.



**CORPORATE COUNSEL OFFICE OVERVIEW**

**Paia Purpose, Function, and Responsibilities**

- Provides legal advice, guidance, and assistance to OHA staff on compliance with federal, state, and county laws and regulations, as well as compliance with policies and procedures adopted by the OHA Board of Trustees and OHA Administration. Drafts and reviews contracts, policies, coordinates with outside counsel. Oversees risk management and records management.
- OHA may retain its own attorneys and does not need to be represented by the Attorney General (see HRS § 28-8.3).
- Support for all agency operations and external contracts.

**General Counsel Ohta:** As an overview, the Corporate Counsel office provides in-house legal services that serve the entire agency from staff to the Board of Trustees across a range of areas such as contract review, policy and legal compliance with various state statutes and procedures within the office. **(21:39 / 1:01:40)**

We effectively review all of the contracts and agreements that come out of the office. We review all of the agendas published that support the work of

this Board and advise staff on legal questions or operational questions as they arise across the range of activities that OHA provides. We are authorized to do so by statute, where the ability for OHA to retain its own attorneys and not be represented by the attorney general's office is recognized in statute. Through this we also utilize outside counsel as necessary to provide specialized services for this for this agency across a few areas, and we have contracts with those external firms. That's basically the summary of activities for the Corp Counsel office.

**General Counsel Ohta:** Going back to what we presented back in FY26, during the budget briefings ahead of the biennium budget, this is just a recap of our role in realizing the priorities of the agency. Specifically we were to focus on filling vacancies within the Corp Counsel office and supporting other employment initiatives of the agency. We're also to provide for improvements through trainings as required under state law, OHA section 10, that's 42 and 43 and provide other legal trainings to staff as well as execute on other initiatives including the direct legal services support provided by external contractors and providing again services across a range of OHA activities.

**COMMUNICATIONS STATUS OF FY2026/FY2027 GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

**Spending Priorities & Aligned Goals**

- Spending Priority – Staffing**
  - a. Initiate recruitment and support hiring of vacant positions within the Corporate Counsel office
  - b. Support implementation of new initiatives to establish OHA as an employer of choice.
- Spending Priority – Operational Process and Infrastructure Improvements**
  - a. Conduct statutorily required trainings on Native Hawaiian rights in coordination with UH Ka Huli Ao
  - b. Conduct internal trainings on federal and state law compliance.
- Spending Priority – Execute Transformational Programs and Services**
  - a. Contract with direct legal services provider for Native Hawaiian rights and resource protection.
  - b. Contract with UH Ka Huli Ao for Native Hawaiian rights clinics to provide community client support and practical experience for law students
  - c. Provide legal support for range of programs and initiatives that carry out OHA's statutory mandates

**FY2026/FY2027 BUDGET – includes PRs and POs (reserved funds, not available)**

APPR	FUND	EXPENSE CATEGORY	OBJECT	ACCT CODE DESC.	FY2026 BUDGET	FY2026 SPEND	FY2026 REMAINING	FY2027 BUDGET	FY2027 SPEND	FY2027 REMAINING	EXPENSE DESCRIPTION / BUDGET PROVISION
930	2300	Contracts	57110	Services on a Fee	1,500,000	1,500,000	0	1,500,000	-	1,500,000	Direct LS to beneficiaries
930	2300	Contracts	57115	Legal Services	235,000	234,400	600	235,000	-	235,000	Ao Aka Ao Mei & NH Law Training Course
930	2300	Contracts	57115	Legal Services	300,000	229,853.05	30,000	300,000	-	300,000	External legal counsel to support litigation and legal needs
930	2300	Overhead	55910	Insurance	650,000	465,016.82	184,483	702,000	-	702,000	Annual insurance premiums
930	2300	Overhead	56810	Settlements – Lawuits	30,000	-	30,000	30,000	-	30,000	Contingency for potential settlements
930	2300	Program	53400	Books & Reference Materials	500	-	500	500	-	500	Miscellaneous reference materials
930	2300	Program	53510	Dues and fees	2,650	2,472	178	2,650	-	2,650	HBA dues and membership in OHA Lawyers section of HBA.
930	2300	Program	53520	Office Subscriptions	26,800	21,500	5,300	26,800	-	26,800	LexisNexis, PLI, MLS
930	2300	Program	55790	Book rental, record storage	15,000	2,500	12,500	15,000	-	15,000	Record storage and document shredding
930	2300	Program	57250	Seminars & Conferences	2,000	-	2,000	2,000	-	2,000	Continuing legal education

**General Counsel Ohta:** This is just a review of where we are in terms of our FY26 budget. As you can see, the large amounts of our budget have been encumbered through spending on items such as the direct legal services contract and contracts for services with the Ka Huli Ao Center for Excellence in Native Hawaiian Law, which provides our Native Hawaiian Rights training, as well as the Native Hawaiian Law Clinic that supports primarily rural beneficiaries on matters that can be supported by law students under the supervision of professors at Ka Huli Ao.

We also, through this have handled the insurance renewals which we presented to this Board in November of 2025 ahead of our annual renewal that occurs in December of each year, and the payment of premiums shortly thereafter which again provides for the majority of that spend is reflected in our budget. We also have the other spending items that are comprised here and provided in general terms as shown on this slide. I'd be happy to answer any questions that the Board may have about the state of our budget.

**Chair Waihe'e** asks if there are any questions on the state of the budget. ([25:37 / 1:01:40](#))

There are none.

**Chair Waihe'e:** If not, Everett you may proceed.

**General Counsel Ohta:** Thank you, just a note in terms of possible realignment asks going forward, we don't have a realignment ask at this time. But we are projecting the potential need for one given the current amounts remaining in our legal services budget. The remaining amount of \$30,000 is provided in FY26, and it is probably insufficient to cover what might be at this point unanticipated expenses for the agency. This fiscal year we have incurred a number of unanticipated legal expenses, including those covered in third-party investigations that we contract out to law firms that handle sensitive investigations for the agency. So those things of course are brought up and not necessarily anticipated, but we do have resources available to address those needs as they arise. But that comes from contracts that are occasionally needing to be replenished, we've done so in a number of cases, but the remaining balance for that is limited, and potential issues that come up might require additional funds to those budgets.

**CORPORATE COUNSEL OFFICE**  
**PROPOSED BUDGET REALIGNMENTS FOR FY2026**

**Description of Realignment (\*revised)**

Additional funds for Legal Services (external law firms with expertise)

- Unanticipated expenses related to pending and anticipated litigation and external investigations
- Anticipated costs for investigations, LLC formation, due diligence work, etc. that exceed internal capacity
- Remaining \$30,000 for FY26

\*Expected return of funds to OHA for deposit in general operating account.

1. Audubon Society funds from Waimea Valley operations circa 2005 - \$37,761.85
2. Williams & Connolly (via Paul Weiss) retainer - \$86,914.02

1. Possible source of funds for OHA CC Legal Services budget

One area of potential funds for that is expected returns of funds and this is a revision to the slide that was provided in the board packet. This is actually things that are relatively recent coming to us, two refunds of funding; one relating to the Audubon Society from their operations of Waimea Valley, shortly after the acquisition of that valley, the Audubon Society contacted us, stating that these funds were available and subject to return to OHA which we of course agreed to and are facilitating that.

We also were contacted by the Paul Weiss law firm which had a retainer that we're also seeking the return of and facilitating that return, those funds in particular are legal service contract in nature and might be subject to a future request from my office to seek those funds through a realignment.

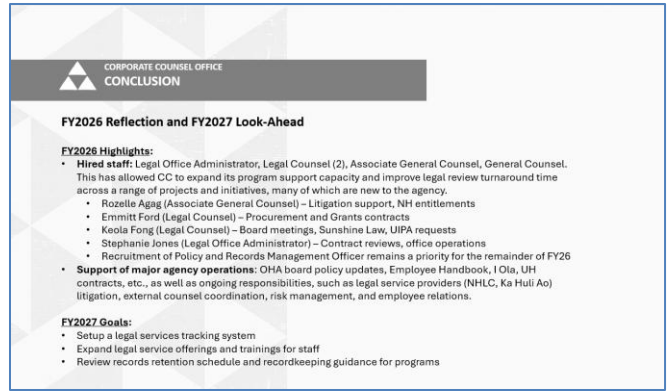
**Chair Waihe'e** recognizes Trustee Galuteria

**Trustee Galuteria:** You mentioned that you see insufficient funds. What are you anticipating asking for; double this, triple of this?

**General Counsel Ohta:** At this point we do have contracted funds that are encumbered and available to address one or two off needs that might arise, that's the purpose of having these standing contracts with firms that we have utilized in the past. So, it's ensuring that we do have these balances and we monitor these contracts and their available balances, and if they are starting to run low we do have the opportunity then to come to this Board and seek additional funding that would then be added to these contracts via a contract amendment. So, at this point I don't have a number for you, it's still kind of monitoring how our spend rate is on these contracts whether or not any new matters arise that would have us anticipating additional expenses. We should have enough of a runway to be able to make that ask, that's why I'm just flagging it as a potential ask at this point rather than stating a specific number.

**Trustee Galuteria:** Okay, Mahalo. (29:47 / 1:01:40)

**General Counsel Ohta:** Thank you. In terms of FY26 highlights, I'm happy to share as you folks are all aware that we have nearly full staffing in the Corp Counsel office; we have with us in the boardroom today the members of the Corp Counsel office. We have Rozelle Agag, who's the Associate General Counsel, we have Emmitt Ford who's one of our Legal Counsel, along with Keola Fong, and Stephanie Jones who's our Legal Office Administrator. So, we do now have a full team of attorneys with one position currently vacant, which is the Policy and Records Management Officer, that position is still under active recruitment. It's a little bit of a specialized position, we at one point had a viable candidate in the beginning of the fiscal year, unfortunately, that hiring did not go through, but we still continue to actively recruit for that position and still priority for recruitment over the remainder of the fiscal year.



In the meantime, we're taking care of more of the day-to-day responsibilities that might be put on that position in terms of UIPA or information requests; those are largely handled by Keola with support from others within the office, but certainly we would like to have that position filled so that person can be more dedicated toward that work, as well as helping serve the records management needs of the agency, but again those all fall within the purview of our office.

We continue to support major operations of the agency, again across the range of activities that OHA involves itself in, particularly under this new biennium budget where a number of novel and progressive initiatives have been stood up. We've had to provide support in areas that are expansions of our past practice and activities. So, our team has been stepping up to fill those and provide the support needed across our agency.

Going forward, we're looking to continue expanding or maintaining the option, legal service support. We're looking to stand up a legal assignment tracking system that both supports our internal functioning as well as provides for some visibility for staff submitting those requests without compromising the confidentiality of some of those requests. And then looking again towards supporting the records needs through filling of the Policy and Records Management Officer position.



**General Counsel Ohta:** That concludes my presentation, but I'd be happy to answer any questions that this Board or anyone else might have. Thank you.

**Chair Waihe'e:** Thank you, Everett. ([32:40 / 1:01:40](#))

**Chair Waihe'e** recognizes Trustee Kahele

**Trustee Kahele:** Everett, thanks for the presentation, congratulations on really building a team around you. At one time it was an army of one, and it was just you. It's nice to see the people that you've been able to bring to the Office of Hawaiian Affairs and recruit and that's great, I'm really happy with your team's work and the work that we were able to do last year especially around OHA's Governance documents and kind of cleaning up some of the internal things that I think were long overdue. Could you touch on some of the external contracts that we have, and give us an overview of some of those contracts whether they're legacy contracts or new contracts. This would be for legal services that we currently have.

**General Counsel Ohta:** Yes, to Chair Kahele's question, we have, starting with Board Counsel here with Kapono providing, advice support for that, that helps with the functioning of our meetings. We have litigation support through the Dentons and McCorrison law firms, we have support for employment matters through the ES&A firm, we have support on our Public Land Trust and Ceded Lands issues through Sherry Broder, who's a solo practitioner but has several contracts with us. We also have Real Estate support from the McCorrison law firm that continues to do work, primarily in Kaka'ako Makai but also on other commercial properties. We have additional open contracts, a number of which we're looking to close out as part of a cleanup effort, that's in coordination, a future presentation to your office, Chair Kahele. I think those are the major ones that I can recall off the top of my head. We do have, I think, more comprehensive contract reporting as part of that separate effort, but those are the ones that kind of come to the top of mind.

**Trustee Kahele:** Thanks, Everett, and I do appreciate you going through the contracts that we have for our Trustees' awareness. We have several legal contracts and service contracts that in some cases they're almost legacy, they've been around so long, and Everett and his team have been working on cleaning those up and kind of fallen into recommended state procurement laws around contracts and procurement. And then also ensuring that the rates that are reflected in those contracts, in some cases, we benefit from them if they're rates that are overdue from years past. But, it also gives us a chance to engage with the service provider and update those things. So, I think that's great.

Everett, do you foresee any, I know you talked about the budget and a potential realignment. I mean, obviously we have several legal cases that are, maybe I could characterize it would seem like burning through a lot of our legal fund quicker than we had anticipated, will you be bringing either a budget realignment or an additional plus up to the FY27 budget for the General Counsel's annual budget based on what we currently are addressing and what we may have to continue to address as we go into the next fiscal year.

**General Counsel Ohta:** Thank you for the question. We do have I think approximately 300,000 in the FY27 budget, that's part of our kind of normal spend, and again given the spend rates on some of our pending matters, I think possibly revisiting the FY27 budget for an increase, I think we can do it at the beginning of the fiscal year, we do have a little bit of time given the amount that is budgeted. But I think at some point, that will probably be another area that we'd have to likely request additional funds. So, I think I was flagging the FY26 budget for legal services as a more immediate need, but FY27 is also likely going to need funding, although it could be later in that fiscal year, we have enough at least to kind of get us through the beginning portion and kind of reassess along the way.

Trustee Kahele: Okay, thanks. ([38:30 / 1:01:40](#))

Chair Waihe'e asks if there are any further questions.

There are none.

Chair Waihe'e: Thanks, Everett.

### III. NEW BUSINESS

#### **B. Informational Budget Briefing to:**

- (1) Receive updates on the execution status of FY2026 budgeted initiatives,
- (2) Review and consider proposed readjustments to the FY2026 budget, and
- (3) Evaluate proposed budget readjustments and realignments for FY2027.

These briefings are intended to support informed fiscal oversight and decision-making by the Board of Trustees (BOT).

They also provide OHA's executive leadership team, department heads, division directors, and appropriate support staff an opportunity to present status updates, outline proposed modifications, and discuss strategic budget priorities for the upcoming fiscal periods.

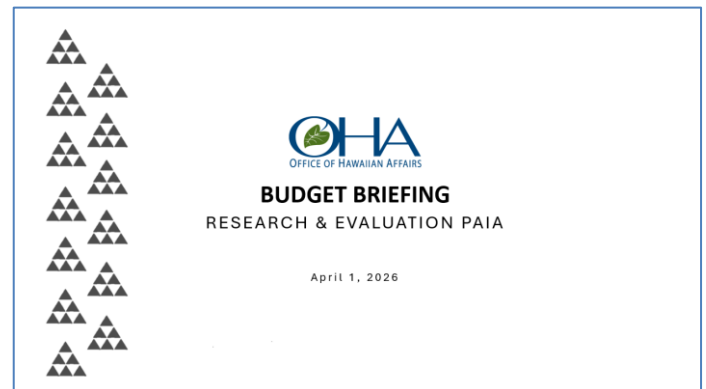
- b. **Research & Evaluation – Research & Evaluation Director Carla Hostetter and Appropriate Support Staff** ([38:35 – 50:20 / 1:01:40](#))

BF Chair Staff Akina states that no one has signed up to testify on this item.

Chair Waihe'e recognizes Ka Pou Nui Kekina ([38:40 / 1:01:40](#))

Ka Pou Nui Kekina recognizes Carla Hostetter

Research & Evaluation Director Hostetter: Aloha, Chair Waihee. Aloha, Trustees. (*portion cut off*)



**COMMUNICATIONS OVERVIEW**

**Paia Purpose, Function, and Responsibilities**

- The Research and Evaluation Paia gathers, compiles, analyzes, and reports data to identify and explore strengths, needs, and disparities within Native Hawaiian communities to inform OHA's decision-making and support community and beneficiary self-determination.
- This role involves population-level research, evaluation of OHA programs, processes, and community impact as requested, digital archiving of Native Hawaiian cultural and historical collections in the Papakilo database; mapping of Native Hawaiian land, culture, and history in the Kipuka GIS database; and compiling Native Hawaiian physical, sociological, psychological, and economic data in the Native Hawaiian Data Book.
- **Alignment to OHA's mandate:** HRS §10-6 (5) and HRS §10-6 (1), A-B
- **Alignment to MIMO strategic priorities:** All OHA Research and Evaluation activities strive to provide the best data and information available on Native Hawaiian Educational Pathways, Health Outcomes, Quality Housing, and Economic Stability. The R&E Paia also endeavors to support Native Hawaiian data sovereignty; and research which is strength-based and uplifts the foundations of Native Hawaiian wellbeing, including 'ohana, mo'omeheu, and 'āina.

**Research & Evaluation Director Hostetter:** Reporting to inform OHA's decision-making and support beneficiary communities. This includes both population research and OHA evaluation as requested. We also manage our Papakilo (*portion cut off*), economic needs of Native Hawaiians. And of course, all of our research is in direct alignment with our MIMO foundations and directions.

**Research & Evaluation Director Hostetter:** So, our first spending priority for this biennium was to support OHA as an employer of choice. As of today, we have made three hiring recommendations for all existing R&E analyst vacancies. So, we're just awaiting the next steps on HR's offer to those three positions. We've also hired one part-time administrative assistant, and then additionally during this period, R&E has really focused on building up and developing our new research systems program. That included promoting our manager internally and developing system specific position descriptions. So far, we've been able to hire our GIS analyst for Kīpuka, and we've made a hiring recommendation for our Digital Archive System Administrator for Papakilo. So right now we only have one outstanding recruitment in our paia and that's for the Native Hawaiian Data Book Administrator. R & E also continues to engage in professional development activities and we've been honored to represent OHA at two different national conferences with a third one upcoming. We've also represented OHA and 12 different professional research and evaluation organizations. [\(39:20 / 1:01:40\)](#)

**Research & Evaluation Director Hostetter:** Our second spending priority was our research systems and infrastructure improvements. So, those budget items included our server hosting backup and support, so we're happy to report with that contract it continues to be successfully implemented with funding from Fiscal 25, and then we'll be able to extend the time of performance for another year when it comes due on June 12th. For our Papakilo

Collection Acquisitions, two contracts have been executed thus far. For our Awaiaulu national collections and then just recently for our 'Iolani Palace collections as well, and then we have two other collections that are under negotiations from Bishop Museum and Awaiaulu International Collections. Then for our Kīpuka GIS database updates and repairs, we're successfully overseeing the completion of phase one. So that's the assessment contract with funding from Fiscal 25, and we're on schedule for phase two to be procured in quarter 4 to implement those recommendations that come from the phase 1 assessment. Of course, this work has been greatly aided by our newly hired GIS Administrator. We're also moving forward on our Native Hawaiian data book redesign, moving through our procurement process. We just recently completed an evaluation of 15 different proposals. So, we had a really great response and we're on schedule to execute that contract in quarter 4.

**Research & Evaluation Director Hostetter:** Our third spending priority was to execute transformational program and services aligned with OHA's mandate. So again, we're happy to report our Awaiaulu programmatic grant, which was a board-directed grant, it is active and in good standing. Awaiaulu is providing expert training and mentoring to 11 Hawaiian language fellows. And then, per Chair's suggestion, they're also providing OHA with 120 hours of fellow support and consultation annually.

**Research & Evaluation Director Hostetter:** Then, per Trustee Galuteria's suggestion, the Fellows are also going to be connected with our 'Aha 'Ōpio program through an annual presentation. ([42:40 / 1:01:40](#))

We just also wanted to mahalo our Grants team including Chantel and Ahia who are supporting the grant monitoring for us. Next we have our Hawaiian Kingdom Crown and Government Land Inventory Project which was temporarily paused in Q1 and Q2 to address for the Public Land Trust working group's funding needs. But once the determination was made to move forward with partial funding, we were able to engage our procurement processes and then if additional funds do become available, if they're unused by our PLT working group, they can be added to that contract, so they will not lapse at the end of the fiscal year. So currently our professional service vendors have been evaluated by committee and the award memo was actually just approved by chair this morning. So mahalo for that.

We've also made great progress on our Communication and Engagement Strategy Market Research study and we're now ready to execute that contract with our selected vendor happily within our budget. So, mahalo to Bill and the Comm's team for their close collaboration on this.

As for our annual statewide 'Imi Pono Hawaii Wellbeing survey, in Fiscal 26, we did release three research briefs related to that data on Ke Akua Mana, Ea Rising and Community Connections. We're also continuing to track 10 MiMO population level indicators. However, for our 2026 survey launch, it was scheduled for March 20<sup>th</sup>, so we made a same day decision to delay that release of the survey, so that efforts could be focused on our Kona Low storm relief.

**COMMUNICATIONS STATUS OF FY2026/FY2027 GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

Spending Priorities & Aligned Goals

**3. Spending Priority- Executing Transformational Programs & Services, Aligned with OHA's Mandate**

**Kūkulu Kumuhana Native Hawaiian Wellbeing Framework Annual Convening:** Co-hosted annual gathering on November 21, 2025, at Kamehameha Kapālama Campus to implement the framework across multiple partners and communities. Over 100 attendees. *Advancing Native Hawaiian Wellbeing Across Systems* panel facilitated by OHA R&E Manager.

**Data Sovereignty/ Intellectual Property Rights Workshops:** First workshop to take place at the U.S. Indigenous Data Sovereignty & Governance Summit 2026, April 17, 2026, in Tucson, AZ. Second workshop planned for May 18, 2026, hosted in the NLK Board Room.

**Research & Evaluation Director Hostetter:** So, our final two budget items under this priority are for our Kūkulu Kumuhana Native Hawaiian Wellbeing Framework annual convening, and that was held on November 21, 2025. And then we have our Native Hawaiian Data Sovereignty and Intellectual Property Rights workshops, they're scheduled to take place on April 17th. So, that first one will take place at the US Indigenous Data Sovereignty Summit in Tucson, Arizona, we'll be hosting the Hawaiian attendees at that conference. And then the second workshop is on the books for May 18<sup>th</sup> and that'll be hosted right here in our boardroom.

**Research & Evaluation Director Hostetter:** Next slide is our detailed budget report, I'd just like to direct your attention to the Fiscal 26 remaining funds category. So, under the contracts budget which is the 57110, services on a fee basis, you'll see that we do have a remaining balance of 525,000 which will be allocated by the end of the year. So that 225 includes the 25,000 for the Imi Pono well-being survey which as I just noted is delayed, so our communities are going to be able to focus on the storm recovery efforts but we do plan to reserve those funds by the end of April. It also includes 150,000 for the phase two of our Kīpuka system repair which will be based on the phase one findings.

FY2026/FY2027 BUDGET											
APPR	PROG	EXPENSE CATEGORY	ACCT CODE DESC.	FY2026 BUDGET	FY2026 SPEND	FY2026 REMAINING	FY2027 BUDGET	FY2027 SPEND	FY2027 REMAINING	EXPENSE DESCRIPTION / BUDGET PROVISION	
	930	5100	R&E DIV	57110-SERVICES ON A FEE BASIS	\$1,280,000	\$755,000.00	\$525,000.00	\$970,000.00	\$0.00	\$970,000.00	Native Hawaiian Data Book Redesign, Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument Research, Hawaiian CSG Land Inventory, Imi Pono Survey, Servers, Kīpuka Phase II
	9305	100	R&E DIV	53530-SUBSCRIPTION BASED IT AGREEMENTS (SBITAs)	\$20,315.00	\$20,310.38	\$4.62	\$20,315.00	\$0.00	\$20,315.00	Survey Platform
	9305	100	R&E DIV	86030-GRANTS IN AID-COMMUNITY GRANTS	\$250,000.00	\$250,000.00	\$0.00	\$250,000.00	\$0.00	\$250,000.00	Awaiiaku Programmatic Grant
	9305	100	R&E DIV	53400-BOOKS & REFERENCE MATLS	\$250.00	\$0.00	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$0.00	\$250.00	Reference materials as needed
	9305	100	R&E DIV	53510-DUES	\$300.00	\$0.00	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$0.00	\$300.00	Professional organizations as due
	9305	100	R&E DIV	53520-OFFICE SUBSCRIPTIONS	\$150.00	\$0.00	\$150.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	Office supplies as needed
	9305	100	R&E DIV	53910-PRINTING	\$300.00	\$0.00	\$300.00	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	\$2,500.00	Report/ Study recruitment materials as needed
	9305	100	R&E DIV	57250-SEMINAR & CONFERENCE FEES	\$4,640.00	\$255.00	\$4,385.00	\$5,540.00	\$0.00	\$5,540.00	Professional trainings/ conferences as needed
	9305	100	R&E DIV	57285-CONFERENCES, MEETINGS, EVENTS-ONG BY OHA	\$15,000.00	\$4,630.00	\$10,370.00	\$15,000.00	\$0.00	\$15,000.00	Kūkulu Kumuhana, Native Hawaiian Data Sovereignty/Intellectual Property Rights Workshops

FY2026/FY2027 BUDGET											
APPR	PRG	EXPENSE CATEGORY	ACCT CODE DESC.	FY2026 BUDGET	FY2026 SERVO	FY2026 RETAINING	FY2027 BUDGET	FY2027 SERVO	FY2027 RETAINING	EXPENSE DESCRIPTION / BUDGET PROVISION	
930	5210	R&E PRG	EQUIPMENT	53500-SUBSCRIPTION BASED IT AGREEMENTS (SERV)	\$6,000.00	\$5,974.90	\$25.10	\$5,500.00	\$0.00	\$5,500.00	Statistical Analysis System
930	5210	R&E PRG	OVERHEAD	54150-PARKING VALICATIONS	\$150.00	\$16.00	\$134.00	\$150.00	\$0.00	\$150.00	Parking as needed for trainings/ off-site meetings
930	5210	R&E PRG	PROGRAM	53400-BOOKS & REFERENCE MATLS	\$160.00	\$0.00	\$160.00	\$250.00	\$0.00	\$250.00	Reference materials as needed
930	5210	R&E PRG	PROGRAM	53520-OFFICE SUBSCRIPTIONS	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$250.00	\$0.00	\$250.00	Access to academic publications as needed
930	5210	R&E PRG	PROGRAM	53510-DUES	\$800.00	\$376.00	\$424.00	\$800.00	\$0.00	\$800.00	Professional organizations as due
930	5210	R&E PRG	PROGRAM	57250-SEMINAR & CONFERENCE FEES	\$5,000.00	\$2,380.00	\$2,620.00	\$6,750.00	\$0.00	\$6,750.00	Professional trainings/ conferences as needed

**Research & Evaluation Director Hostetter:** Again, those funds will be allocated by the end of April. And then also within that 225 you'll see the 250,000 that is being held for the needs of the PLT working group. Again, if these funds are not used by the PLT working group by the end of the fiscal year, Procurement has let us know that we will be able to add them to this contract for the Hawaiian Crown and Government Land Inventory. **(45:50 / 1:01:40)**

Finally, on your presentation materials, you'll see that there is an additional \$100,000 that is also reflected there and that's for the server hosting. However, these materials were submitted last week and since that time, those funds have been allocated and are pending Chair's approval. So, the amount left as of today is actually 425,000 or 33% of our annual contract budget. You'll also see remaining funds in the 57255 conferences, meetings, events organized by OHA, and those are for our two upcoming workshops on Native Hawaiian data sovereignty and intellectual property rights. And then the other rows on this slide and on the next slide are smaller amounts just to be expended as needs arise or as payments become due.

**Research & Evaluation Director Hostetter:** So, at this time we're not going to be requesting a realignment for Fiscal 26 or for 27. However, as mentioned we will be able to add those remaining funds to the Crown and Government Land Inventory historical project if they're unused by the PLT working group project.

**COMMUNICATIONS**  
PROPOSAL FOR BUDGET REALIGNMENTS IN FY2026

**Description of Realignment**

- No realignment for FY2026 or FY2027 requested at this time.
- Funds to be added to **Hawaiian Kingdom Crown and Government Lands Inventory** historical project as available, if unused by the Public Land Trust Working Group project.

**COMMUNICATIONS**  
IN CONCLUSION

**FY2026 Reflection and FY2027 Look-Ahead**

**FY2026 Highlights:**

- Revising our three flagship **Research Systems** under one program oversight: **Papakilo Database**, **Kipuka GIS**, **Native Hawaiian Data Book**
- 'Ōlelo Hawai'i Community Research Project:** Closed 5-year federal grant (\$311,939) to study the impact of intergenerational programming on Hawaiian language perpetuation and normalization. Funded 4 nonprofits, collecting data from 434 participants. Findings published on OHA website.
- Island Community Reports:** Completed 2025 annual series.
- MiMO Stakeholder Engagement Report:** Collected, analyzed, and reported on input on OHA's strategic plan from 641 stakeholders via surveys and 72 stakeholders via 11 focus groups.
- Ad Hoc Data & Research Requests:** Completed 13 ad hoc requests in FY26 for surveys, data and research briefs to support internal decision-making and external advocacy.

**FY2027 Goals:**

- Completion of **Research Systems** Program development (new Research Systems Administrator position); **Papakilo Database** collection acquisitions (Awaiaulu International & Hawai'i Academy of Recording Arts collections), **Kipuka GIS** Phase II: updates & repairs, **Native Hawaiian Data Book** redesign, **Hawaiian Kingdom Crown and Government Lands Inventory** (Phase II: Kaua'i, Ni'ihau, Molokai and Lana'i)
- Continuation of high-quality **research & evaluation services, products & collaborations**
- Continuation of **Awaiaulu Program Grant**
- Completion of Communications & Engagement Strategy Market Research Study**

**Research & Evaluation Director Hostetter:** Finally, just some quick highlights from Fiscal 26, so far we have focused on reviving our three flagship research systems underneath one program. We've closed a 5-year federally funded community study on 'Ōlelo Hawai'i, which provided funding to four nonprofits to collect data from 434 participants, and the findings were published on the OHA website. We've also completed publishing our 2025 Island Community Report annual series and we're just

starting on our 2026 series shortly as your folks meetings come up. We've also produced a MiMO stakeholder engagement report based on input from 641 stakeholders via an online survey and 72 stakeholders via 11 focus groups. We've completed 14 internal ad hoc requests for surveys data and research briefs and we've supported internal decision-making and external advocacy with that.

For 2027, our goals are going to be the completion of our Research Systems Program development including a new position for the Research Systems Administrator, additional Papakilo Database collection acquisitions, Kipuka GIS phase 2 updates and repairs at the completion of our Native Hawaiian data book redesign and the continuation of our Hawaiian Kingdom crown and government land inventory. Of course, we'll continue to prioritize producing high quality research and evaluation services, products, and collaborations, and then we'll continue with a two-year programmatic grant.

**Research & Evaluation Director Hostetter:** Then, of course, we'll complete the OHA Market Research Study as well. So, that's all I have for the presentation today, but I'm happy to answer any questions you folks have. Thank you. ([48:55 / 1:01:40](#))



**Chair Waihe'e:** Thank you, are there are there any questions for Carla, members?

**Chair Waihe'e** recognizes Trustee Galuteria

**Trustee Galuteria:** Thank you for your hard work, this is a lot of work. So, to you and your crew, Big Mahalo. It's not a question more than just a kind of reflection on the type of data made available to the public. There's a lot of data that we have, may I suggest that when the redesign is done of the data book, that you work closely with communications to promote it.

**Research & Evaluation Director Hostetter:** Yes, absolutely.

**Trustee Galuteria:** I'm thinking of places like the school system that could use some of this data, higher education looking for data, the State looking for data. But anyway, I just would offer that as a suggestion. Okay.

**Research & Evaluation Director Hostetter:** Yes. Thank you, Trustee. I think we do plan once we get our research program fully hired, fully developed and all of the redesigns to our systems come out that we will do a more public push working in close collaboration with our Comm's team.

**Trustee Galuteria:** Very good.

**Research & Evaluation Director Hostetter:** Absolutely. Thank you.

**Chair Waihe'e:** *Any other questions?*

There are no other questions.

**Chair Waihe'e:** Thanks again, Carla.

### III. NEW BUSINESS

#### **B. Informational Budget Briefing to:**

- (1) Receive updates on the execution status of FY2026 budgeted initiatives,
- (2) Review and consider proposed readjustments to the FY2026 budget, and
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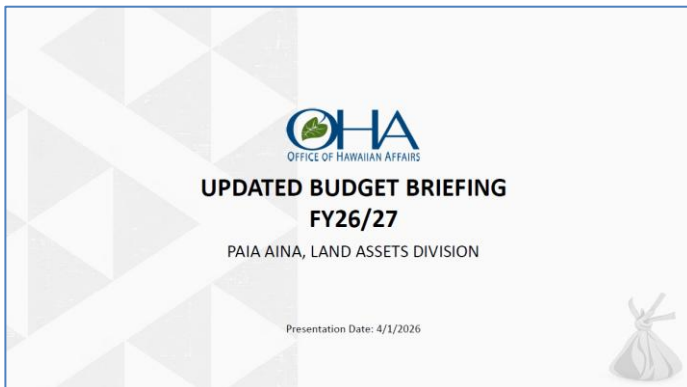
They also provide OHA's executive leadership team, department heads, division directors, and appropriate support staff an opportunity to present status updates, outline proposed modifications, and discuss strategic budget priorities for the upcoming fiscal periods.

- c. **Resource Management – Land Assets – Managing Director of Real Estate – Land Division Daniel Sandomire and Appropriate Support Staff** ([50:30 – 1:00:30 / 1:01:40](#))

**BF Chair Staff Akina** states that no one has signed up to testify on this item.

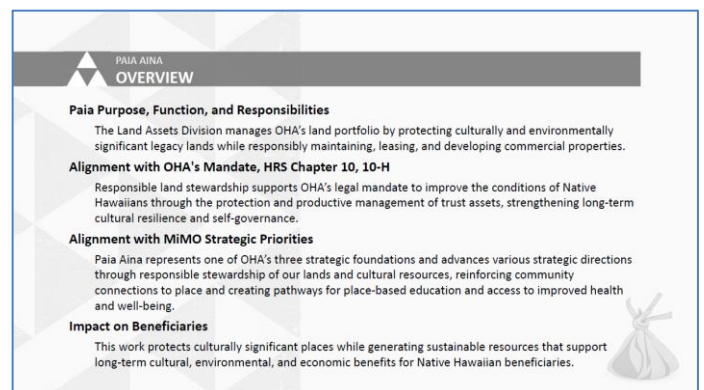
**Chair Waihe'e** recognizes Ka Pou Nui Kekina. ([50:40 / 1:01:40](#))

**Ka Pou Nui Kekina:** Mahalo nui, Chair. This one we're actually going to turn our attention to the online screen and Daniel Sandomire is going to take it away.



**Land Director Sandomire:** Morning Chair, I had an unfortunate exposure to the flu. So, out of an abundance of caution, I will be presenting virtually. Also with me online is, Lori Walker and LeAnn Gentry, respectively, the Legacy Land Manager and our Commercial Land Agent. As we go through our budget briefing, any questions that will come up, me being the new kid on the block, they would be probably best able to answer.

**Land Director Sandomire:** Paia 'Āina, is the division responsible for managing OHA's land portfolio. These are both, two broad categories, culturally environmentally significant Legacy lands and also our Commercial Assets, where we maintain, lease and plan the development of cash flow producing properties. This work is grounded in OHA's legal mandate under HRS Chapter 10 to improve the conditions and the betterment of Native Hawaiians through the productive management of Trust assets.



PAIA AINA  
OVERVIEW

**Alignment with MiMO Strategic Priorities**

- ✓ Aina is one of the three strategic foundations
- ✓ 1.3 - Increase the number of Native Hawaiians engaged in traditional learning systems that re-establish/maintain strong cultural foundations and identity.
- ✓ 3.1 - Increase availability of and access to quality, culturally based, and culturally adapted prevention and treatment interventions in ohana, schools, and communities
- ✓ 3.4 - Empower communities to take care of iwi kupuna
- ✓ 4.1 - Preservation and perpetuation of Hawaiian language, culture, traditions, identity and sense of lahui
- ✓ 4.2 - Increase community stewardship of Hawaii's natural and cultural resources that foster connection to aina, ohana, and communities
- ✓ 4.3 - Increase restoration of Native Hawaiian cultural sites, landscapes, kulaiwi and traditional food systems
- ✓ 5.3 - Increase safety, stability, social support networks, and cultural connection in Native Hawaiian communities
- ✓ 8.1 - Increase the number of successful, community strengthening Native Hawaiian-owned businesses
- ✓ 8.2 - Establish new markets for Native Hawaiian products that can provide Native Hawaiian producers a livable wage

**Land Director Sandomire:** Next slide talks about MiMO and the alignment. Paia 'Āina supports several MIMO strategic directions, some of them are outlined here, and just to confirm what I'm learning and what we are expressing is that these are embedded in every leasing decision we make, every legacy land that we steward and every partnership that we build. [\(52:20 / 1:01:40\)](#)

**Land Director Sandomire:** Status of our FY 26-27 goals and objectives. We've organized our work around three areas. One is the departmental and operational improvements. The team prior to my arrival has been working on making this a best-in-class organization. So, it's really about building a strong foundation. We've completed our implementation plan for the Hawaii Real Estate Strategic Plan and finalized our Investment Lands SOPs and have made good progress, just internal finalizations to the Legacy Land Management SOPs.

PAIA AINA  
STATUS OF FY2026/FY2027 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

**Spending Priorities & Aligned Goals**

1. Departmental, Operational Improvements - Exemplary management planning and execution
  - A. Strategic Planning
    - Implementation Plan for Hawaii Real Estate Strategic Plan completed
    - Business Model & Operating Plan in progress
  - B. Foundational Documents & Policies
    - Investment Lands Management Policy – completed
    - Legacy Lands Management Policy – completed
    - Investment Lands SOP – completed
    - Legacy Lands SOP – final draft
  - C. Organizational Structure
    - Joint Venture structure for Kakaako Makai – approved; implementation underway
    - Property-level LLC structures for fee-owned assets – approved; implementation underway
    - DHHL partnership framework for Kakaako Makai Lot I – in development
  - D. Personnel
    - Redrafting Position Descriptions
    - Strategic outreach to the local development community for recruitment
    - Building internal capacity to reduce reliance on consultants

So these are the rules that'll guide rules of the road that will guide us going forward with responsible land management. On the organizational side, we've received Board approval for joint venture structures for our Kaka'ako Makai and approval to start property level LLC structures for our fee-owned properties. We're starting the implementation of both of those now. In addition, we're working on a partnership with Department of Hawaiian Homelands for Kaka'ako Makai Lot I. In Personnel, we have two outstanding positions. I'm re-drafting those position descriptions to tailor to our existing capabilities and what we're looking at going forward. To recruit for those, I'll be doing strategic outreach to the local development community and really building our internal capacity and reduce our reliance on consultants.

PAIA AINA  
STATUS OF FY2026/FY2027 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

**Spending Priorities & Aligned Goals**

2. Investment Lands Capital Improvements - Manage and maintain investment land assets to generate revenue
  - A. Kakaako Makai - Tenant Improvements at Lot L FY26 completion
  - B. NLK Building Improvements – 3<sup>rd</sup> floor fire alarm install completed; 70 ton AC replacement FY26 completion; elevator modernization, cooling tower replacement FY27 completion
  - C. HHS Capital Improvements – parking lot repave in progress, FY26 completion
3. Legacy Lands Stewardship – Cultural and natural resource management planning and execution
  - A. Wao Kele o Puna – Community engagement facilities FY26 completion
  - B. Wahiawa – I Ulu mai ka Ululau compliance, partnership agreements in progress FY27 completion, site prep and planting start
  - C. Hoomana – Cesspool closure FY26 completion, tenant transition FY27
  - D. Prospective Land Acquisitions – Due diligence FY27 completion; key acquisition risks assessment for Kahana completed

**Land Director Sandomire:** Spending priorities and aligned goals continued, this is for investment lands capital improvements; tenant improvements on lot L are nearly complete, tracking for a FY26 completion. Nā Lama Kukui, we've completed several, including a third-floor fire alarm installation and tracking to finish the 70 ton AC replacement, and elevator modernization over on the third floor Mauk side and cooling tower replacement are going to stretch into 2027. But the work as far as procurement, setting up the design, specking and reaching out to the vendors

is underway. On the Legacy Lands, we have Wao Kele o Puna, community engagement facilities are completed in 2026. At Wahiawā, we're working through compliance requirements under the I Ulu mai ka Ululau federal grant with partnership agreements in place and site preparation underway. At Ho'omana, we've completed cesspool closures this year and plan the tenant transition in FY27. We've completed key acquisition risk assessments for Kahana with full due diligence for assets going forward in 2027.

**Land Director Sandomire:** Our budget shows in the green 26, in the blue 27. Across the commercial properties; Kaka'ako Makai, Nā Lama Kukui, 500 North Nimitz and shops, our budgets total approximately 12.4 million with realignments made midyear, which were just completed to reflect the project progress. [\(56:30 / 1:01:40\)](#)

APPL/FUND	PROGRAM	FY26 BUDGET (M/FY26)	FY26 REMAINING (M/FY26)	FY27 BUDGET	FY27 FORECAST	DESCRIPTION
930 TRUST-COMMERCIAL	8230 KAKA'AKO MAKAI	3,937,302	1,466,570	1,132,477	-	Budget: Property mgmt, Lot L leasing commissions, KM community planning, DHSR Lot L Cultural Center, JV, LLCs Remain: To be encumbered/reassessed FY26 Q4
930 TRUST-COMMERCIAL	8220 NA LAMA KUKUI	5,356,382	2,611,543	4,555,648	961,700	Budget: Property mgmt, leasing commissions, interest/principal on AOB loan, repairs/maint, 1 cooling tower, elevator modernization, utilities, CAM, insurance Remain: To be encumbered/reassessed FY26 Q4 FY27 Realign: Interest/principal on AOB loan moved from 8211, delayed FY26 capital projects (elevator modernization and cooling tower)
930 TRUST-COMMERCIAL	8230 500 N NIMITZ	3,043,871	1,051,689	2,885,499	-	Budget: Property mgmt, interest/principal on CPB loan, parking lot repair, repair/maint, utilities, insurance, CAM, RPT Remain: To be encumbered/reassessed FY26 Q4
951 TRUST-COMMERCIAL	8240 501 SUMNER	1,209,134	692,492	1,072,138	-	Budget: Property mgmt, interest/principal on CPB loan, repair/maint, insurance, RPT Remain: To be encumbered/reassessed FY26 Q4
930 TRUST	8300 LEGACY & PROGRAMMATIC LANDS	415,698	375,370	80,330	-	Budget: USGS stream monitoring, multi-party mgmt planning, land transfer due diligence, multi-party compliance, Kakaia site safety repairs, HCA data, professional development for LUP staff Remain: To be encumbered in FY26 Q4
930 TRUST	8303 KUKAILELO	359,700	332,700	272,000	-	Budget: 511-acre site maintenance (veg maint for access, firebreak, security, infrastructure), Birthstones stewardship Remain: To be encumbered in FY26 Q4
930 TRUST	8305 WAIALUA COURTHOUSE	49,325	21,011	42,000	10,000	Budget: Property condition assessment, site mgmt/stewardship, repairs, utilities Remain: To be encumbered in FY26 Q4 FY27 Realign: increased programming and repair/maint
930 TRUST	8320 WAO KELE O PUNA	330,141	101,043	224,000	-	Budget: Helicopter flights, property mgmt/stewardship, WDCP truck maintenance Remain: To be encumbered in Q4

So loan restructuring and shifting priorities there. FY27 budgets are at approximately 9.6 million across those same properties, reflecting a more normalized operating posture as major capital projects near completion.

On the Legacy Land sides, we've made targeted realignments, moving funds from general land and programmatic lands to specific properties like Wao Kele o Puna and Waialua Courthouse to reflect actual spending needs. Remaining 26 funds are expected to be encumbered by quarter 4.

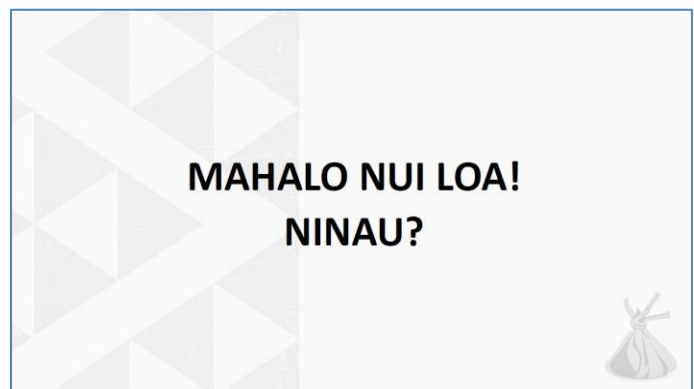
**Land Director Sandomire:** So, looking back at 26, these are reflections, leasing operations have been strong.

- NLK is at 94% occupancy.
- Vacant spaces are actively being marketed.
- Kaka'ako Makai lot L is at 75% leased with negotiations ongoing for the remaining space. A lot of interest there.
- HHS; Longs / Office Depot sublease is complete. The tenants are hopefully moving in soon.
- And IBC was leased out fully at the beginning of 26, so that is a 5-year lease.

2026 Reflection	2027 Strategic Focus
<b>Leasing / Income operations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o NLK - 93.61% Occupied - all vacant spaces currently marketed, actively being toured with prospective tenants</li> <li>o KM - Lot L 75% Leased - remaining space currently in lease negotiations</li> <li>o HHS - Longs/Office Depot Sublease Completed - tenant improvements in progress, opening date TBD</li> <li>o IBC - Leased as of January 2026 - guaranteed income for next five years</li> </ul>	<b>Revenue Optimization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Iwilei: market challenges - rent reviews &amp; market adjustments</li> <li>o Lease restructuring and extension negotiations</li> <li>o Future redevelopment opportunities &amp; timing</li> <li>o Kakaako: Interim uses for underutilized lands pending redevelopment</li> </ul>
<b>Investment Land holdings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Kakaako Makai - HCDA community planning participation ongoing</li> <li>o \$2MM EPA grant for Brownfields Phase II ESAs and recently completed the QEP RFP</li> </ul>	<b>Development pipeline</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o JV partnership / RFP structure</li> <li>o Developer outreach and partnership cultivation</li> <li>o Support for HCDA amended rules to include housing</li> </ul>
<b>Legacy Lands - Operations, Programming</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Grant progress - compliance activities, formalizing agreements</li> <li>o Asset Plans, SOPs - in progress</li> <li>o Increased engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Formalize LLCs</li> <li>o Land Acquisition due diligence</li> <li>o Manage grant budgets / track spending plan</li> <li>o HLID Project - construction to start, closeout extended to Dec. 2028</li> <li>o Update Position Descriptions</li> <li>o Financial analysis- proforma modeling</li> <li>o New LLCs - charts of accounting, budgets</li> </ul>
<b>Capacity Building</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Righting the ship, foundational documents</li> <li>o Growing team, filling vacancies</li> </ul>	

Looking ahead to 27, our strategic focus shifts to revenue optimization. So, there's market challenges in Iwilei, but we'll look to stabilize that and look also to what opportunities there are to redevelop going forward. In the development pipeline, we have JV partnerships and looking at the RFP, RFQ for finding that right partner and setting ourselves up for the most success we can, and we've been working through HCDA to amend the rules to include housing, that'll be the biggest factor to improve the performance of Kaka'ako Makai as a viable project. Again, through 27, we'll be formalizing the LLC's, we'll focus on due diligence for land acquisition opportunities, managing our grants that we've been given. We're extending the HLID project, but starting to focus on winding that down, and again with capacity building updating project descriptions doing our proforma analysis modeling and creating new LLC's which will help our risk management.

**Land Director Sandomire:** Next slide is the one I look forward to. Mahalo Nui Loa, if you have any questions, myself and my team are here to answer. Thank you.



**Chair Waihe'e** Thank you. Members, do you guys have any questions for Daniel or his team?

There are none.

**Chair Waihe'e**: Okay, well, thank you.

**IV. ADJOURNMENT**

**Trustee Lindsey** moves to adjourn the BF meeting.

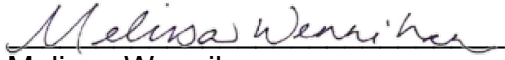
**Chair Waihe'e** calls for a **ROLL CALL VOTE**.

12:52 p.m.							1:00:30 / 1:01:40
TRUSTEE		1	2	'AE (YES)	A'OLE (NO)	KANALUA (ABSTAIN)	EXCUSED
VICE-CHAIR DAN	<b>AHUNA</b>			X			
KALEIHIKINA	<b>AKAKA</b>			X			
KELI'I	<b>AKINA</b>			X			
LUANA	<b>ALAPA</b>			X			
BRICKWOOD	<b>GALUTERIA</b>			X			
KAIALI'I	<b>KAHELE</b>			X			
CARMEN HULU	<b>LINDSEY</b>	1		X			
J. KEONI	<b>SOUZA</b>			X			
CHAIR JOHN	<b>WAIHE'E</b>			X			
<b>TOTAL VOTE COUNT</b>				<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**VOTE: [ X ] UNANIMOUS [ ] PASSED [ ] DEFERRED [ ] FAILED**

**Chair Waihe'e** adjourns the BF meeting at 12:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Melissa Wennihan  
Trustee Aide  
Committee on Budget and Finance

As approved by the Committee on Budget and Finance (BF) on April 15, 2026



Trustee John Wain'e IV  
Chair  
Committee on Budget and Finance