

PUBLIC HEARING

SEPTEMBER 12, 2018

A public hearing of the Council of the County of Kaua'i was called to order by Ross Kagawa, Chair, Public Works / Parks & Recreation Committee, on Wednesday, September 12, 2018, at 1:46 p.m., at the Council Chambers, 4396 Rice Street, Suite 201, Historic County Building, Lihue, and the presence of the following was noted:

Honorable Mason K. Chock
Honorable Ross Kagawa
Honorable Arryl Kaneshiro
Honorable Derek S.K. Kawakami
Honorable JoAnn A. Yukimura
Honorable Mel Rapozo

Excused: Honorable Arthur Brun

The Clerk read the notice of the public hearing on the following:

“Bill No. 2717 – A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 13 OF THE KAUA'I COUNTY CODE 1987, AS AMENDED, RELATING TO THE ELECTRICAL CODE,”

which was ordered to print by the Council of the County of Kaua'i on August 8, 2018, and published in The Garden Island newspaper on August 16, 2018.

The following communication was received for the record:

1. Hawai'i Electricians Market Enhancement Program Fund, dated September 12, 2018

The hearing proceeded as follows:

SCOTT K. SATO, Deputy County Clerk: Committee Chair, we have no registered speakers and received (1) written testimony.

Committee Chair Kagawa: Thank you. Is anybody wanting to speak on the Electrical Code? Please state your name and you may begin.

MATTHEW BERNABE: Matt Bernabe, for the record. I recently had to change my meter because the meter socket had burned out. When my electrician came out, he told me that it is on their side. When they came out, they said, “It is the socket and you have to get this. Call us up and cut the power.” My house is at risk for burning. I am talking about two (2) months ago, recently. Mine was from the '80s and my socket box was so outdated that I had to actually get the bigger one and do

the “whole nine (9) yards.” I was unaware that I was going to have to call and make an appointment and prolong this process with the County and what not, to the point where the technician that came out for the Kaua‘i Island Utility Cooperative (KIUC) tells me, “Your house could burn. Call me back, we can cut the power.” The lady on the phone was giving me this *huhū* that I was going to have to do this whole process. I am looking now at these brackets and it looks like you are even removing that out of this thing for when you have to do meter work, which basically this was. So my question to you is...I am not aware, but when I asked contractors that worked for prominent contractors and deal with electricity, they said that this is a real problem that slows down the process. This means that costs money for the construction of homes that then is transferred to the public and that compounds the housing problem. I only know this from me being the person that just dealt with this. It is ironic that this is on the agenda for today. I have to do more studying and it looks like it is going to come back on the agenda later, but I just wanted to put that out there that it is was frustrating. I got mine done and my friend who works for a very prominent contractor told me, “You probably got it done in record time.” I will be honest with you folks—do you know how I got it done? I actually threatened to call my lawyer. I am not lying to you. I was on the phone with the lady and said, “Listen, my next call is to my lawyer because your guy told me that my house is going to burn and now you are telling me that I have to get routed to the County.” There is something that is a step here that I do not think these guys should be able...I do not know...I will learn more, but I do know that I am aware that there is something here that are making house costs go up. Thank you.

Councilmember Yukimura: I have a question.

Committee Chair Kagawa: Go ahead.

Councilmember Yukimura: Matt, I am just trying to understand what you said, that something in these amendments that are before us...

Mr. Bernabe: Well, in the bracketed thing is removal, right? You folks are removing...on this amendment, let me get to it...you are having brackets...the exceptions...so under the exceptions of having to go through the process is meters and lines. Do you see the bracketed area?

Councilmember Yukimura: Yes.

Mr. Bernabe: I read it enough that I remembered it and I dealt with it, so I know what we are talking about. In that bracketed thing, that meter right there...that meter and socket and all of that stuff...I literally...when my house was smoking and firing and the guy that comes out for KIUC tells me what to do, “Call the electrician, cut the power, and your house is in jeopardy, let us do it.” Then I call up and the lady starts to side-wind me to some appointment...

Councilmember Yukimura: The lady is someone...

Mr. Bernabe: The KIUC lady, the lady that you call to cut the power.

Councilmember Yukimura: Okay.

Mr. Bernabe: Who is not in the field and she is just following the rules that you folks have set forth or whatever it is. All I know is that I am going to have to do more homework, because like I said, I am not an electrician. I was only dealing with that once in my life because that thing was from 1985. It was an original box from when we got the house.

Councilmember Yukimura: Okay, so right now, this is still an exception to the law, but still there was some interruption...

Mr. Bernabe: They may not even know the rules.

Councilmember Yukimura: So we are not sure what exactly is causing your box...

Mr. Bernabe: Right, and I will be honest with you, after that occurred, I talked to other people that build houses for a living and I asked them about this because I thought I was crazy. From the electrician that I hired, to my neighbors, and to all of these other guys told me, "Yes, this is a problem, Matt." We have electricians waiting on the jobsite on the clock, racking up the bill, waiting for the County this and County that. I was blown away. Of course, I moved on with my life and did not think anything of it until I saw it on the agenda today.

Councilmember Yukimura: And it is waiting for the County and not the KIUC?

Mr. Bernabe: Yes, the County.

Councilmember Yukimura: Okay. Can you give me the names of a couple of the people who have told you that it is a problem so that we can contact them?

Mr. Bernabe: My electrician was Randall (Inaudible), Jr.

Councilmember Yukimura: Okay.

Mr. Bernabe: That was one. I can come back and tell you privately, but I am not sure...I do not know about my neighbors, but Randall wants the publicity because he is a good electrician and you folks should hire him.

Councilmember Kagawa: As far as the exact names, maybe we do not want to really advertise the names...

Mr. Bernabe: Yes, but my point is that as a civilian, I found that out just because I had to deal with it and that is all I am saying.

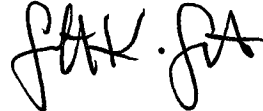
Councilmember Kagawa: Thank you, Matt.

Councilmember Yukimura: Can you just give that information to Christiane?

Councilmember Kagawa: Yes. Christiane handles the Electrical Code from our staff. Christiane, thank you. Is there anybody else that wants to speak on the Electrical Code? Seeing no further speakers, this public hearing is closed.

There being no further testimony, the public hearing adjourned at 1:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



SCOTT K. SATO
Deputy County Clerk

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