

PUBLIC HEARING

MAY 11, 2016

A public hearing of the Council of the County of Kaua'i was called to order by Arryl Kaneshiro, Chair, Budget & Finance Committee, on Wednesday, May 11, 2016, at 5:04 p.m., at the Council Chambers, 4396 Rice Street, Suite 201, Historic County Building, Lihu'e, and the presence of the following was noted:

Honorable Mason K. Chock  
Honorable Gary L. Hooser  
Honorable Ross Kagawa  
Honorable Arryl Kaneshiro  
Honorable KipuKai Kuali'i  
Honorable JoAnn A. Yukimura

Excused: Honorable Mel Rapozo

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

“Bill No. 2625 – A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE RELATING TO THE OPERATING BUDGET AND FINANCING THEREOF FOR THE FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2016 TO JUNE 30, 2017 (*Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Operating Budget*),”

which was ordered to print by the Council of the County of Kaua'i on March 23, 2016, and published in The Garden Island newspaper on April 1, 2016.

The following communications were received for the record:

1. Brier, Laurel, May 10, 2016
2. Britt, Sharon and Douglas, May 9, 2016
3. Burrell, Pamela, May 9, 2016
4. Coan, Susan, May 9, 2016
5. Curtis, Ken, May 9, 2016
6. Dente, Marj, May 11, 2016
7. Downs, Monty, May 10, 2016
8. Hafdahl, Palmer, May 11, 2016
9. Harder, John, May 11, 2016
10. Jay, Jonathan, May 11, 2016
11. Matayoshi, Coralie, May 9, 2016
12. Mulhall, Mary, May 9, 2016

13. Oliver, Polli, May 9, 2016
14. Powers, Eve, May 10, 2016
15. Schact, Troy, May 9, 2016
16. Shigeta, Layne, May 10, 2016
17. Stayton, Susan, May 9, 2016
18. Styer, Fred, May 11, 2016

The hearing proceeded as follows:

JADE K. FOUNTAIN-TANIGAWA, County Clerk: Committee Chair, we have three (3) registered speakers. The first registered speaker is Bill Lucey, followed by Padraic Gallagher.

Committee Chair Kaneshiro: We are on the Operating Budget of the County. When you come up, sit down and state your name. You will have three (3) minutes to speak. When you have thirty (30) seconds left, that light will turn yellow, and then when your three (3) minutes is up, it will turn red.

BILL LUCEY: Bill Lucey. Hopefully it will be shorter than that. I am with the Kaua'i Invasive Species Committee (KISC) and I reviewed the budget discussions on our particular project that is in the Economic Development package under Agriculture. I just wanted to make a quick case for why I think it is a good idea to continue supporting us. We run completely off of soft money. Every year, we have to come up with State money, Federal money, and anywhere we can get it. So even though it is not a giant part of our operating budget, some years it makes a difference between laying off a couple of people at the end of the year or not. Most of you are probably aware that we work island-wide on a number of different species, and we have been fairly successful, so I just wanted to give a couple of examples of what happens if you do not nip these issues in the bud. I am sure you are very familiar with the Coqui Frog. The County spent a few hundred thousand dollars and eradicated them from the island. This year, my counterpart on Maui, their county had to appropriate two million one hundred thousand dollars (\$2,100,000) to deal with the Coqui Frog infestation. Maui has a big problem right now and it got out of control. If they had put money in early and found the problem, it would have been a lot cheaper for the county. Little fire ants—my crew just finished up their surveys today. They laid out hundreds and hundreds of vials. We have to repel off cliffs and it is a pretty big effort. We had one vial that had little fire ants in it, so we almost completely eradicated that species from Kaua'i; it is getting real close. If you look at Hawai'i island, they are spending hundreds of thousands of dollars for their county parks in trying to keep the parks free from these stinging ants. A lot of tourists are complaining. If you talk to some of the farmers that deal with them, if they are picking coffee, they are falling on them; they are arboreal. Again, we nip that one in the bud, so I just would like to have

continued support from the County through the agriculture budget to continue to do what we do. Thank you.

Committee Chair Kaneshiro: Thank you. Next speaker.

Ms. Fountain-Tanigawa: The next speaker is Padraic Gallagher, followed by Fred Styer.

PADRAIC GALLAGHER: Hi, my name is Padraic Gallagher and I am the Director of Disaster Services for the American Red Cross here on Kaua'i. I am just testifying on behalf of the Red Cross for the money that you are giving us for our Fiscal Year 2016 budget. The money that we are getting and requesting from you is mainly for administrative costs. We get a lot of money through donations, which most of our operating budget is through donations. Most of our donations go towards disaster services. Something like administrative costs that this is going to go towards and volunteer recruitment is not something that is pretty that people like to donate money to, so that is why we are requesting the money from you. Right now, we have about ninety (90) volunteers on the island that are active, doing any type of major disaster on the island. We have fourteen (14) shelters and three hundred sixty-five (365) rooms that we need to staff with at least two (2) volunteers per room. Right now with the volume of volunteers that we have, we cannot even come close to opening just a couple of shelters without supplemental help. That is why we are requesting this money from you. If you have any questions, feel free to ask. Thank you.

Committee Chair Kaneshiro: Thank you.

Ms. Fountain-Tanigawa: The next speaker is Fred Styer, followed by Chipper Wichman.

FRED STYER: Good afternoon. Fred Styer, representing myself, but really pretty much Zero Waste Kaua'i. I think you folks are familiar with us. I do have this in writing and it is kind of in a bullet point format. If you folks want a copy of it, I can leave it right here. The purpose of the testimony is to request that the Council redirect funds proposed to be used for evaluation of alternative technologies to handle our waste and direct it back towards funding for the design of the "Materials Resource Facility" and the planning for curbside recycling. The point that is really important for everyone to understand is that if we want to do curbside recycling, you cannot do it without a "Materials Resource Facility."

Councilmember Yukimura: It is actually "Materials Recovery Facility (MRF)."

Mr. Styer: Okay. I like to use the word “resource” because it is really a resource and not a waste. Waste management goals for Kaua‘i is a clean and healthy environment for all, reduce the need for more landfill sites, reduce the waste to maximize recycling, and certainly reduce costs. I know those are the goals that I see. So the path forward would be to establish the MRF, maximize diversion as soon as possible. We are on a timeline here. The landfill that we have out there, as you all know, is sunsetting pretty soon. Get a revenue stream going and actually create jobs. We go ahead and implement curbside recycling. This diverts immediately those materials from the landfill. It is a popular thing for the Kaua‘i people right now if you look at the people and the way they vote and the way they are talking, they say that they want curbside recycling, but we cannot get that without a MRF. Then of course we have job creation there. Last but not least, is a composting program, minimizing the methane at the landfills, producing fertile soil, and job creation. I just wanted to urge you to reconsider whatever funding you have that is going to manage waste. Let us keep the MRF on track and do not divert it from the MRF. It is essential that we get going right away. The longer we wait, the worst it is going to get. Frankly, if you go out there and look for other alternatives, the only one I could think of is thermal. Look at the rates that the Kaua‘i Island Utility Cooperative (KIUC) is offering right now and it is going down, so the payback is not as good. That is my testimony. Thank you.

Councilmember Yukimura: I have a question.

Committee Chair Kaneshiro: Repeat or rephrase.

Councilmember Yukimura: Yes. In your written testimony you say that in Maui County, an agreement with Anaergia Services to build a Waste-to-Energy facility and it was supposed to save Maui County nearly one million dollars (\$1,000,000), will actually cost the county eight hundred thirty-five thousand dollars (\$835,000) more annually than the current landfill operations, according to an audit by CB&i Environmental & Infrastructure.

Mr. Styer: Yes, this is news coming right out of Maui as we speak.

Councilmember Yukimura: I just wanted to get clarity. Do you know who CB&i Environmental & Infrastructure is?

Mr. Styer: I do not.

Councilmember Yukimura: But that is an audit?

Mr. Styer: Right.

Councilmember Yukimura: If you can provide that information afterwards, that would be helpful.

Mr. Styer: I will send it in.

Councilmember Yukimura: Okay. Thank you.

Committee Chair Kaneshiro: Anyone else signed up?

Ms. Fountain-Tanigawa: Yes. The next registered speaker is Chipper Wichman.

CHIPPER WICHMAN: I am kind of new to this. Is this the three (3) minute warning?

Committee Chair Kaneshiro: It will turn yellow to indicate that you have thirty (30) seconds left.

Mr. Wichman: Got it. *Aloha* everyone.

Committee Chair Kaneshiro: Can you please state your name?

Mr. Wichman: Chipper Wichman. I am the Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the National Tropical Botanical Garden (NTBG). I am testifying on the 2016 World Conservation Congress budget item, which is for twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000). I strongly urge your support of this in the budget. The World Conservation Congress—this opportunity will never ever, ever, happen again and it is amazing that it is happening and this is our way of bringing those delegates from Honolulu over here. I have been working with the Mayor's Office to bring together all of our conservation partners on Kaua'i through the Conservation Alliance and others to really create a three (3) day event, the first day being a conservation expo, which will feature everybody, so kind of a one-stop shop, where everybody can come and get exposed to all of the great conservation work. These two (2) and three (3) are small groups, more intimate experiences all the way from Kōke'e to the Community Subsistence Fishery in Hā'ena; everything from *mauka* to *makai*. It is awesome. Kaua'i, because we are a leader in many, many ways in terms of conservation, everything from the work of the Kaua'i Conservation Alliance, helping the *mauka* lands to the Core Based Statistical Area (CBSA) in Hā'ena; we have more endangered species because Kaua'i is the oldest *kupuna* island. We have more endemic and rare species and the work that is going on here is of great interest to the world, so this is a chance for us to really put our best foot forward and to show the world the great work that is happening. I have been working on this for eight (8) years and it is finally coming to fruition. One of my hopes was that putting us on the global map will help attract new funders and new

people who want to invest in protecting the *‘āina* and what makes Kaua‘i so special. I was thrilled that the last couple of days I have been exchanging E-mails with the Hawai‘i Community Foundation, who is bringing together a *hui* of national and international funders and they want to bring them to this expo, because they feel like this is where it is at. If they can bring them here and show them what is going on, on Kaua‘i—we are a microcosm of everything in the State. The funding will be primarily used to promote the expo and there are a lot of expenses associated with coordinating a big event like that. If you have any specific questions on how the money is used, I am happy to answer that. I see the light turning yellow, so I should wrap it up. It is a fabulous opportunity and I appreciate the Mayor’s Office for supporting it and getting it into the budget.

Committee Chair Kaneshiro: Thank you. Councilmember Yukimura, restate or rephrase.

Councilmember Yukimura: No, I just wanted to let Chipper know that he can come back for another three (3) minutes if he has more to say.

Mr. Wichman: I always have more to say. Thank you.

Committee Chair Kaneshiro: Okay. Thank you.

Ms. Fountain-Tanigawa: There are no further registered speakers.

Committee Chair Kaneshiro: Anyone else in the audience wishing to testify on this item? It is the Operating Budget of the County.

Councilmember Yukimura: I think there are people here for Save Kapaia Swinging Bridge, but I think that is a Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) item.

Committee Chair Kaneshiro: No, Kapaia is in the Operating Budget.

Councilmember Yukimura: Okay. If there are people who want to speak, they should come up now.

Committee Chair Kaneshiro: Yes, it is in the Mayor’s budget.

Councilmember Yukimura: Is there anyone who wants to testify?

RON AGOR: *Aloha.* My name is Ron Agor. Hi, Councilmembers. I found out about it, so I volunteered my services to this group. We have a volunteer group that is willing to work in partnership with the government to accomplish something and that is something I wanted to jump on. I

do have the budget for materials and specialty contractors if you would like to see it for the Kapaia Swinging Bridge.

Committee Chair Kaneshiro: Councilmember Yukimura, repeat or rephrase.

Councilmember Yukimura: I just want to be clear that you are speaking of the Kapaia Swinging Bridge.

Mr. Agor: Yes.

Councilmember Yukimura: That is the project you are speaking on?

Mr. Agor: Yes.

Councilmember Yukimura: What does your handout say?

Mr. Agor: My handout shows the projected costs for all of the materials and the specialty labor work.

Councilmember Yukimura: Are they more than what is in the budget now?

Mr. Agor: No. Well, I understand that it is two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000).

Committee Chair Kaneshiro: Two hundred thirty thousand dollars (\$230,000) or something like that.

Mr. Agor: Yes, it is less. We do not need to burden the taxpayers any more than we have to.

Committee Chair Kaneshiro: Okay. Thank you.

Councilmember Yukimura: This is enough to bring the bridge to complete reconstruction?

Mr. Agor: Yes, with volunteer labor.

Councilmember Yukimura: With volunteer labor?

Mr. Agor: Yes. In it, I have enough for a contractor to take the role of providing the necessary insurance for liability.

Councilmember Yukimura: Okay. Thank you.

Councilmember Kagawa: If we have some supporters who are just here to support you, do you have some and could you let us know how much you have here?

Mr. Agor: Yes. They are sitting in the audience.

Councilmember Kagawa: Okay. Thank you.

Committee Chair Kaneshiro: Anyone else wishing to testify on this? Please come up.

ROY GOO: My name is Roy Goo. I am speaking on behalf of the Kapaia Foundation. We are really here because this is the first opportunity we have had to change the money over and change this project over from being a Mayor's Office project to a private project and we have been working on this for over eight (8) to nine (9) years now. We feel really good about this because it is the first...there is the old saying, "Do what you have always done and you will get what you have always gotten." So we have kind of been beating our heads against this and it has been the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access or one thing or another that has kind of stopped it. I really want to urge the Council to consider this becoming a private project so that we can take it into our own hands and finally get the ball rolling and start doing something. It is a really historic site and we really hate to see it degrade anymore. Thank you.

Committee Chair Kaneshiro: Thank you. Would anyone else like to speak for the first time? If not, second time? Chipper, you may come up.

Mr. Wichman: Do I need to restate my name? Chipper Wickman, CEO and Director of the National Tropical Botanical Garden. I am continuing on the support of the budget line item. I am not sure if you have any questions related to that and I know many of you are familiar with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and World Conservation Congress, but I thought just in case for the record, I will elaborate just a little bit on it. IUCN is the world's largest conservation organization. It is based in Switzerland and made up of country members, so one hundred sixty (160) countries are members of IUCN and non-governmental organization (NGO) members. So individuals like myself are not actual members of IUCN, but the National Tropical Botanical Garden is an NGO IUCN member. Individuals interface with IUCN through their specialist commission, so I have been a member for over twenty (20) years of the Hawai'i Plant Specialist Group and that is how IUCN really works to achieve its missions. It has several commissions. The best known is the Species Survival Commission, which publishes the red list and the red list is the international standard of endangered species. Because Hawai'i is part of the

United States, the United States kind of likes to operate a little differently than every other place in the world, so we looked to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Federal Endangered Species Act, and that is the law that really governs and regulates endangered species in the United States. We often talk about how many federally listed endangered species we have. The rest of the world looks to the IUCN red list and one of the real advantages that is coming out of this is NTBG has led an effort to actually red list the Hawaiian flora. It is a very, very complicated, very labor intensive process. We have a team of botanists around the state that have been working on this now for about one (1) year and we will have, by the time the Congress gets here, about four hundred (400) of our plant species red-listed, which really puts us on the map globally and identifies Hawai'i as a significant area of biodiversity, but also an area that is working really hard to conserve our endangered species. IUCN is a really big deal internationally and this is our chance to bring it here to Kaua'i and show them the work that we are doing. Thank you for a second three (3) minutes and sharing a little bit more about how significant this is. *Aloha.*

Committee Chair Kaneshiro: Okay. Thank you. Anyone else in the audience wishing to testify? Seeing none, this public hearing is now adjourned.

There being no further testimony, the public hearing adjourned at 5:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

JADE K. FOUNTAIN-TANIGAWA  
County Clerk

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