



POLICE COMMISSION

LAURIE YOSHIDA, CHAIR
MARY K. HERTOG, VICE CHAIR

MERRILEE "MIA" AKO, MEMBER
JOHN CALMA, MEMBER
LISA KNUTSON, MEMBER
WALTON HONG, MEMBER
VACANT, MEMBER

Meetings of the Police Commission will be conducted as follows until further notice:

- Meetings will be publicly noticed pursuant to HRS Chapter 92.
- Minutes of the meeting will be completed pursuant to HRS Chapter 92 and posted to the Commission's website upon completion and approval.

Public Comments and Testimony:

26 JAN 16 P12:22

- **Written testimony** will be accepted for any agenda item herein.
 - Written testimony indicating your 1) name or pseudonym, and if applicable, your position/title and organization you are representing, 2) the agenda item that you are providing comment on, and 3) contact information (telephone number and email address), may be submitted to mrromo@kauai.gov or mailed to the Police Commission, c/o Office of Boards and Commission, 4444 Rice Street, Suite 300, Lihue, Hawaii 96766.
 - Written testimony received by the Police Commission at least 24 hours before the meeting will be distributed to all Police Commissioners before the meeting.
- **Oral testimony** will be taken during the public testimony portion of the meeting in-person at the public meeting.
 - It is recommended that anyone interested in providing oral testimony register at least 24 hours before the meeting by emailing mrromo@kauai.gov or calling (808) 241-4920. Any request to register shall include 1) your name or pseudonym, and, if applicable, your position/title and the organization you are representing, 2) the agenda item you are providing comment on, and 3) your contact information (telephone number and email address).
 - Per the Police Commission and Chair's practice, there is a three-minute time limit per testifier per agenda item.
 - Individuals who have not registered to provide testimony will be given an opportunity to speak on an agenda item following speakers who have registered.

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

IF YOU NEED AN AUXILIARY AID/SERVICE, OTHER ACCOMMODATION DUE TO DISABILITY,
OR AN INTERPRETER FOR NON-ENGLISH-SPEAKING PERSONS
CONTACT THE OFFICE OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS AT (808) 241-4917 OR
ADAVIS@KAUAI.GOV AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. REQUESTS MADE AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE WILL
ALLOW ADEQUATE TIME TO FULFILL YOUR REQUEST. UPON REQUEST, THIS NOTICE IS
AVAILABLE IN ALTERNATIVE FORMATS, INCLUDING LARGE PRINT, BRAILLE, OR AN ELECTRONIC
COPY.

REGULAR MONTHLY POLICE COMMISSION MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

Friday, January 23, 2026

9:00 a.m. or shortly after

4444 Rice Street, Moikeha Conference Room 2A/2B, Lihue, Hawaii 96766

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

ROLL CALL TO ASCERTAIN QUORUM

26 JAN 16 PM 2:22

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next regular monthly meeting is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on **Friday, February 27, 2026**, in the Moikeha Meeting Room 2A/2B, followed by an Executive Session. This is subject to change.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON ANY AGENDA ITEMS

Individuals may testify on any agenda item or wait until the item comes up.

KAUAI POLICE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH FOR JANUARY 2026

Officer Joseph Himongala

APPROVAL OF THE OPEN SESSION MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION'S

November 21, 2025, Meeting

December 19, 2025, Meeting

CHIEF'S MONTHLY REPORTS FOR DECEMBER 2025

- **Office of the Chief** – Notable Highlights, Special Projects, Community Engagement, Significant Meetings, Public Information Officer.
- **Support Services Bureau, Criminal Investigations Division, and Field Operations Division** – Budget Summary Estimate, Personnel Status, Recruitment Status, DARE Classes, KPAL Programs, Training Provided by Outside Agency: Off-Island, Training Provided by Kaua'i Police Department, Training Provided by Outside Agency: On-Island, Firearms Registered, Handgun Applications, Long Gun Applications, Licenses to Carry Applications, Crime Scene and Laboratory Section - Biometric Identification Facial and Ten Print, Crime Scene and Laboratory Section - Call Out Lab Request, YTD Death Statistics, Person Crimes Section Statistics, Person Crimes Section Enforcement, Property Crimes Section Statistics, Property Crimes Section Enforcement, Property Crimes Section Types, and Vice Section Statistics.
- **Preliminary Point & Time Data** – Crime Summary and Activity Summary

- **Agency Statistics** – Calls for Service/Incident Summary, Citation Summary, Arrest Summary, Legal Services, Warrant Type – All Divisions, and Warrant Tracking – All Divisions.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Letter from Julie Antolin, SHOPO State Board Administrative Secretary, dated January 15, 2026, to Laurie Yoshida, Chair of the Kauai Police Commission.

Letter from Nick Schlapak, SHOPO President, dated December 22, 2025, to Walton Hong, Chair of the Kaua'i Police Commission.

BUSINESS:

OS KPC 2026-1:

Discussion and possible action regarding a communication dated December 22, 2025, from Nick Schlapak, SHOPO President, to Chair Walton Hong, requesting immediate public disclosure of the Commission's hiring actions.

Attachment: Draft letter dated January 23, 2026, from members of the Police Commission in response to a communication dated December 22, 2025, from SHOPO President Nick Schlapak.

OS KPC 2026-2:

Discussion, possible action, and a briefing by a representative from the Department of Human Resources on the results of the Chief of Police selection process, including Rudy Tai's drug test, polygraph, and physical and psychological assessments.

OS KPC 2026-3:

Discussion, possible action, and a briefing by a representative from the Office of Boards & Commissions on the results of a background investigation regarding Chief of Police-select Rudy Tai.

OS KPC 2026-4:

Discussion and possible action on extending the final offer of employment, including determining a salary amount and an anticipated start date, to Rudy Tai for the Chief of Police position.

EXECUTIVE SESSION CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC

Under the Hawai'i Revised Statutes §§ 92-4, 92-5 (a) (2) and (4), the purpose of this executive session is for the Commission to review and discuss charges brought against an officer in the Kauai Police Department, where consideration of matters affecting privacy will be involved, provided that if the individual concerned requests an open meeting, an open meeting shall be held; and to consult with its attorney on issues related to the Commission's powers, duties, privileges, immunities, and liabilities as they may relate to these items:

ES KPC 2026-1:

Regular Monthly updates by Interim Police Chief Elliott Ke or his designated representative related to the Office of Professional Standards, Monthly Report on the status and/or Disposition of formal notarized citizen complaints that were filed with the Kauai Police Commission and referred to the Office of the Chief for disposition and/or report back to the Police Commission. **(Nothing to Report)**

ES KPC 2026-2:

Regular Monthly updates by Interim Police Chief Elliott Ke or his designated representative of any significant adverse incidents/events involving personnel in the Kauai Police Department that could potentially impact the County, the Police Commission, and the Kauai Police Department. **(Nothing to Report)**

ES KPC 2026-3:

Under Hawai'i Revised Statutes §§ 92-5(a)(2) and (4), the purpose of this executive session is for the Commission to receive a briefing by a representative from the Department of Human Resources on the results of Chief of Police- select Rudy Tai's drug test, polygraph, and physical and psychological assessments, where consideration of matters affecting privacy will be involved, provided that if the individual concerned requests an open meeting, an open meeting shall be held, and to consult with its attorney on questions and issues pertaining to the Commission's powers, duties, privileges, immunities, and liabilities as it relates to this agenda item.

ES KPC 2026-4:

Under Hawai'i Revised Statutes §§ 92-5(a)(2) and (4), the purpose of this executive session is for the Commission to receive a briefing by a representative of the Office of Boards & Commissions on the results of a background investigation regarding Chief of Police-select Rudy Tai, where consideration of matters affecting privacy will be involved, provided that if the individual concerned requests an open meeting, an open meeting shall be held, and to consult with its attorney on questions and issues pertaining to the Commission's powers, duties, privileges, immunities, and liabilities as it relates to this agenda item.

ES KPC 2026-5:

Under Hawai'i Revised Statutes § 92-5(a)(4), the purpose of this executive session is for the Commission to consult with its attorney on questions and issues pertaining to the Commission's powers, duties, privileges, immunities, and liabilities and it relates to extending a possible final offer of employment, which includes a salary amount and anticipated start date, to Rudy Tai for the position of Chief of Police.

ES KPC 2025-23:

Under the Hawai'i Revised Statutes §§ 92-4, 92-5(a)(2), (a)(4), and 92-9(b), the purpose of this executive session is for the Commission to approve or amend the Executive Session minutes of the November 21, 2025, meeting, as publication of the executive meeting minutes would defeat the lawful purpose of the meetings they reflect, including the purposes set forth in HRS §§ 92-5(a)(2) and (a)(4). *(Deferred on December 19, 2025)*

ES KPC 2026-6:

Under Hawai'i Revised Statutes §§ 92-4, 92-5(a)(2), (a)(4), and 92-9(b), the purpose of this executive session is for the Commission to approve or amend the Executive Session minutes of the December 19, 2025, meeting, as publication of the executive meeting minutes would defeat the lawful purpose of the meetings they reflect, including the purposes set forth in HRS §§ 92-5(a)(2) and (a)(4).

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION TO RATIFY THE ACTIONS TAKEN IN EXECUTIVE SESSION

- Executive Session Report by County Attorney Tyler Saito pursuant to HRS § 92-4(b).

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Under HRS § 92-7(a), the Commission may, when deemed necessary, hold an executive session on any agenda item without a written public notice if the executive session was not anticipated in advance. Any such executive session shall be held pursuant to HRS § 92-4 and shall be limited to those items described in HRS § 92-5(a).

ADJOURNMENT

cc: County Attorney Tyler Saito
Deputy County Attorney Kimberly Torigoe
Chief of Police Elliott Kalani Ke
Deputy Chief of Police Mark Ozaki

OPEN SESSION MINUTES

Board or Commission	Kauai Police Commission	Meeting Date	November 21, 2025
Location	Moikeha Building, Meeting Room 2A and 2B 4444 Rice Street, Lihue, Kauai, Hawaii 96766	Start of Meeting: 8:00 a.m.	End of Meeting: 12:18 p.m.
Present	Chair Walton Hong; Vice Chair Laurie Yoshida; Commissioners Mia Ako, John Calma, Mary K. Hertog, and Lisa Knutson. Also present: Boards and Commissions Support Staff: Boards and Commission Administrator Ellen Ching; County Attorney Tyler Saito; Support Clerks Kevin Mince and Mercedes Omo; Commissions Background Investigator Dave Carmichael. Human Resources Manager III Jill Niitani. Interim Chief of Police Elliott Ke, Deputy Chief Mark Ozaki, and rank-and-file members of the Kauai Police Department, along with SHOPO Vice President Jonathan Fyre and Business Agent Roy Asher. Police Chief Finalists: <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Former Police Chief Teresa Ewins, Lincoln, Nebraska Police Department.○ Captain Roderick Green, Kauai Police Department.○ Captain Robert Larson, Reno, Nevada, Police Department○ Deputy Chief of Police Rudy Tai, San Diego Police Department.		
Testifiers	Pastor Tom Iannucci, Mr. Hiro Shimada, SHOPO Vice President Jonathan Fyre, Mr. Christian Jenkins, Mr. Will Walsh, Ms. Cheryl Lum, Salvation Army Lieutenant Faaoloviti (Nalo) Faasavalu Corps Officer, Ms. Natalie Ryan, Councilmember Felicia Cowden, and Mr. Bruce Hart.		

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
Meeting Called to Order/Roll Call to ascertain quorum	At 8:00 a.m., Chair Walton Hong called the Police Commission meeting on November 21, 2025, to order. Support Clerk Mercedes Omo verified attendance by roll call. Commissioner Mia Ako replied present. Commissioner John Calma replied present. Commissioner May K. Hertog replied present. Commissioner Lisa Knutson replied present. Vice Chair Laurie Yoshida replied present. Chair Walton Hong replied present.	

Kauai Police Commission Open Session Minutes
Of November 21, 2025, Meeting

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SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	A quorum was established with five (5) Commissioners present.	
Approval of Agenda	Chair Hong called for a motion to approve the agenda.	Vice Chair Laurie Yoshida made a motion to approve the agenda of the November 21, 2025, Police Commission meeting as circulated. Commissioner Mary K. Hertog seconded the motion, and the agenda was approved as circulated.
Chair's Announcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The next Police Commission meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, December 19, 2025, in the Moikeha Building, Meeting Rooms 2A and 2 B. Executive Session to follow. Subject to change. 	
Public Testimony	<p>Chair Walton Hong stated that the Commission has received three (3) written testimonies to date, which were distributed to each Commissioner. He noted that any individual may testify on any agenda item now or wait for it to come up, and that everyone will have a 3-minute time limit per agenda item. If the three minutes are up, the person may be given an additional three minutes to testify after all registered testifiers have had the chance to speak.</p> <p>Chair Hong stated that there were two requests for testimony, one from Mr. Hiro Shimada and the other from SHOPO Vice President Jonathan Fyre. He believes those requests relate to agenda item KPC 2025-31, which involves discussion and possible action on the appointment and conditional employment offer for Kauai County's next Chief of Police. He asked whether they wanted to testify now or wait until the agenda item was discussed. When there was no response, Chair Hong noted that he would assume the parties preferred to wait until the item came up for discussion.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Chair Hong asked if anyone in the audience wanted to give testimony at this time. If so, he asked them to come up.</p> <p>The Commissioners heard from Pastor Tom Innanucci.</p> <p>Pastor Tom Iannucci introduced himself to the Commission. He is a former police commissioner who served 6.5 years on the Police Commission, including 1 year as chair. After his term ended, he served as a chaplain for the Kauai Police Department. He has lived in Kauai for 38 years and is married to a Westside girl whose uncle was a retired police chief. During his time on the Police Commission, many changes were implemented. As a haole (excuse the term) from New York, he had to learn to navigate steep curves, which he thinks should be considered when hiring a new police chief. Looking at the Department and the logistics of where the candidates came from, it may be like Kauai, but Kauai has a unique social and political culture, and so does the Kauai Police Department, which can be a significant learning curve for someone.</p> <p>It concerns him that prior police chiefs have returned to the mainland, suggesting that whoever becomes the next chief of police could hold the position for a couple of years before deciding to leave. Where is the investment in the position? His heart is with someone from the island, someone who shares its culture, has a life here, and is invested in it. They know the people and politics.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>He asked the Commission to focus on local candidates and stop considering outsiders who come in with their friends. The job of the police commission is to determine what's best for the island. The commission represents him and the entire community, and it needs to prioritize what's best for the island. Having someone from outside come in, stay for four or eight years, then retire and leave is not ideal.</p> <p>His testimony comes from the heart, and he wanted to share his experience as a former police commissioner during difficult times when the Department was under investigation. He speaks of it lightly because the Kauai Police Department is an outstanding Department that deserves excellent leadership from someone who understands it and its culture. In the end, Pastor Iannucci thanked the Police Commission for the opportunity to testify.</p> <p>There being no further testimony, Chair Hong moved to approve or amend the meeting minutes.</p>	
Approval of Minutes	Chair Hong called for public testimony; since there were no testifiers, Chair Hong called for a motion to approve or amend the Open Session minutes of the Police Commission's October 24, 2025, meeting.	Commissioner Mia Ako made a motion to approve the Open Session minutes of the Police Commission, October 24, 2025, Meeting. Vice Chair Laurie Yoshida seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved.
Chief of Police Selection	Before moving to agenda item KPC 2025-31, Chair Hong explained how the selection process will work, beginning with the introduction of the finalists: former police chief Teresa Ewins, Police Captain Roderick Green, Police Captain Robert Larson, and Deputy Police Chief Rudy Tai. Following the interview portion of the selection process, each finalist will have the opportunity to deliver a closing statement.	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Additionally, Chair Hong stated that he wanted to make the following disclosure. In the selection process, many stakeholders are involved, including the SHOPO union. To avoid any criticism, he feels it is necessary for him to state for the record. As a part-owner of the Dynasty Court Building in Lihue, he was informed by building management that the SHOPO union had expressed interest in renting office space. He stated that he has no knowledge of the terms being discussed and is not involved in them. He is making this disclosure for complete transparency. He wants everyone to know that SHOPO's potential as a tenant at the Lihue Dynasty Court Building will not influence his decision in selecting the next police chief.</p> <p>Chair Hong once again called for public testimony. He reiterated that testimony would be limited to three minutes. If, after the three minutes are up, the person may be given another three minutes to testify after all registered testifiers have had the chance to testify.</p> <p>As a courtesy, he would like to invite Mr. Hiro Shimada to testify first, as Mr. Shimada was the first to submit a written request to do so.</p> <p>The Commission heard from Mr. Hiro Shimada.</p> <p>Mr. Shimada greeted the commissioners with a good morning, addressed staff, department officials, and the public, and then introduced himself to the commission. He is here today to testify in support of Rudy Tai as the next chief of police for Kauai County. He provided background information about himself; he is currently a law enforcement officer on Oahu and, until July of this year, was a Sergeant with the Kauai Police Department.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>He is here today to share his perspective based on his experience and understanding of what the Kauai Police Department needs. He first met Rudy Tai nearly two years ago during a training session in San Diego. He and a few other officers from Hawaii were introduced to Rudy because of his deep connections to Hawaii. Rudy was born and raised on Oahu, and he truly understands Hawaii's culture and values. From the beginning, Rudy treated him and his fellow officers like family. Rudy's interest in Hawaii was not just professional. It was personal; he wanted to find out what was going on with the people at home. He took the time to ask thoughtful questions about law enforcement in Hawaii, and more importantly, he genuinely cared about the people he was talking to.</p> <p>Over time, he learned that Rudy was deeply involved in his community. Rudy and his friends, many of whom have ties to Hawaii, started a nonprofit organization supporting charitable causes, such as giving bicycles to children in need during the holidays and working with the San Diego Police Department to distribute them. That is precisely the kind of person Rudy is—someone who not only talks about giving back but actively commits time to do so. That is a value we hold dearly on Kauai and throughout Hawaii: family and community.</p> <p>Whenever he runs into Rudy at other trainings, Rudy always takes a moment to ask how he is doing and how his family is doing. His caring and respect for others, especially those from Hawaii, are attributes that will make him a perfect fit for Kauai. He emphasized that the police commission has a unique opportunity to select someone who not only has a remarkable track record but also has a deep love for Hawaii.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Rudy rose to become a leader in one of the country's largest police departments, and under his leadership, the city of San Diego has become one of the safest large cities in the nation. Now, he (Rudy) is eager to return home to share his experience, expertise, and connections, and to give back in a meaningful way. He (Shimada) truly believes that Rudy's leadership will help the Kauai Police Department set a new standard for excellence in policing and ultimately improve the lives of everyone in Kauai. Mr. Shimada stated that he loves the Kauai Police Department and cares about it deeply, or he wouldn't be here today if he didn't believe everything he just testified to. He thanked the Commission for its time.</p> <p>The Commission heard from Jonathan Fyre, SHOPO Vice President for the State of Hawaii Organization of Police Officers.</p> <p>Mr. Fyre stated that he flew this morning because the decision the commission makes today on the next chief of police for Kauai will determine whether the Kauai Police Department can finally heal and move forward, or whether it will repeat the struggles of the last several years.</p> <p>In his role, he directly hears from officers across the state, including those here in Kauai. Through SHOPO's morale and retention survey and the follow-up work commissioned by the police commission, SHOPO learned how deeply trust and leadership were damaged, and how employees felt abandoned and ignored. Those results were painful, but they were honest. It was a starting point for understanding what kind of police chief Kauai needs next.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>From SHOPO's perspective, several critical traits the next chief should have. First, Kauai needs a leader who has deep roots in the Department and on this island. Someone who has spent an essential part of their career in the Kauai Police Department and who understands the culture, the community, and the history of its workforce, and what it has been through.</p> <p>The type of experience that allows the chief to speak the same language as the officers they are leading and will make decisions with real context instead of theory. Secondly, the next chief must already have credibility with the people who are here now. It makes a difference when captains, line officers, and staff who served under that leader and watch how they handled a crisis see them follow through.</p> <p>When there is already a foundation of trust, the chief can focus immediately on boosting morale and enhancing service to the community, rather than spending the first year proving they are trustworthy. Third, Kauai needs a chief whose focus can be entirely on the Department's future, rather than on defending unresolved controversies from elsewhere at a time when employees are still recovering from a difficult chapter. Bringing in a leader who is caring and significant, rather than one with ongoing litigation or a major public scandal from another jurisdiction, risk shifting the spotlight away from Kauai and its needs back to old problems from elsewhere.</p> <p>Finally, the next police chief must be someone who can work collaboratively with police captains and frontline supervisors because when executive staff and captains are genuinely included in the process to address schedule changes and operational reform, progress is possible. When they are excluded, everything stalls and morale suffers.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Mr. Fyre stated that he is not here to endorse any specific individual because the decision is up to the commission. He asked the commission to select a chief who is rooted in KPD and Kauai, has already earned the department's trust, is free of major unresolved controversies elsewhere, and has demonstrated a collaborative leadership style with captains and staff. If the commission chooses a leader with those qualities, it will give the Kauai Police Department the best chance to heal, retain good people, and deliver the level of service the people of Kauai deserve. He thanked the commission for its consideration.</p> <p>Commissioner Mary Hertog asked for a moment to read a statement regarding the 70-page testimony from SHOPO. Chair Hong granted her request.</p> <p>Administrator Ellen Ching interjected to point out that someone in the audience wanted to testify. Chair Hong asked Commissioner Hertog to hold off on her statement until a member of the public had a chance to testify. Commissioner Hertog replied Sure.</p> <p>The Commission heard from Christian Jenkins.</p> <p>Mr. Jenkins greeted the Commission with a good morning and stated that his testimony today is as a civilian. He said he's honored to offer his strong, unequivocal recommendation for Rod Green as the next chief of police. He's known Rod for many years, and during that time, Rod has consistently demonstrated integrity, honor, and exceptional character. He is steady, thoughtful, and fair, and is a leader who listens before he speaks and acts with purpose. His professionalism, work ethic, and strong moral compass</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>make him the type of individual any department would be proud to have at the helm.</p> <p>Rod's extensive history with the Kauai Police Department, his deep understanding of the community, and respect for Hawaii's culture make him uniquely qualified for the role. He brings institutional knowledge, operational experience, and genuine commitment to creating trust between the department and the community. Those qualities are essential as the Kauai Police Department works to address past challenges to move the department forward.</p> <p>Beyond his professional strengths, Rod is an active, engaged community member. He has had the privilege of playing basketball and broadcasting high school sports, giving him a close-up view of how Rod interacts with people from all walks of life. Rod is patient, encouraging, humble, and always willing to help. He truly cares about Kauai and its people. Rod is highly respected not only in the department but throughout the community and leads by example. He mentors others and always strives to bring out the best in those around him. His dedication, compassion, and steady leadership style are precisely what the Kauai Police Department needs. Mr. Jenkins stated that Rod has the full support of himself and many in the community, who believe in his vision, integrity, and ability to lead. He thanked the commission for its time and consideration.</p> <p>The Commission heard from Mr. Will Welsch.</p> <p>Mr. Welsch stated that he came to Kauai in 1965. Some of the commissioner's kids may know him; he taught at Kapaa High School for many years. He went to graduate school in 1970 (University of Hawaii),</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>came back, and entered a program that introduces English to different grade school programs. He taught English at Kapaa High School, and they taught him pidgin. He knew Rod in many roles.</p> <p>As a former vice principal at Kauai High School for a brief period, he has experienced issues common at the time. Teachers would come into his office to report seeing a strange weed in the ditch and ask him if it was marijuana. After checking, it turned out to be fake half the time. There was a lot of gambling and setting off fireworks in the restrooms, but he was fortunate to have a KPD school resource officer, Howard Carvalho, on campus. They worked closely to tackle the problems of that era, some of which came from outside influences. He's glad to know that the Kauai Police Department is addressing other issues in the schools as well.</p> <p>He was lucky to be the principal of Koloa School, and after that, he went into real estate. His wife, Jo Grande, owns a couple of jewelry stores in Kauai. He met Rod Green while playing basketball, and Rod is an excellent athlete. The commission knows more about Rod's police qualifications than he does, and Rod has the scope.</p> <p>Mr. Welsch's three minutes were up, and Chair Hong invited him to provide additional testimony after all testifiers had had their chance.</p> <p>The Commission heard from Ms. Cheryl Lum.</p> <p>Ms. Lum greeted the commissioners with a good morning. She thanked the commission for the opportunity to speak. She is a member of the community and is here to support Rod Green. She has known Rod Green from the community in various roles, including her work in healthcare,</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>education, and her current role working with victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.</p> <p>She supports Rod Green because, as a community leader, it is important to have someone who understands the community, has been here for a while, and can embrace the culture while advancing their career locally. She believes the person who becomes police chief must receive support, appreciation, and love from the community. She knows and has seen Roderick in various roles within the community, offering his time. When discussing potential leaders for the Kauai Police Department, people tend to support Roderick Green. He has integrity, insight, and clarity. When faced with critical issues, Rod shows kindness while maintaining authority.</p> <p>Knowing Rod's ability to act and react, she believes he is the candidate the community will embrace and love as its police chief. She thanked the commission for their time and hopes the commission can find the next best police chief.</p> <p>The Commission heard from Lieutenant Faaoloviti G. Fassavalu (Nalo), Corps Officer, Salvation Army Lihue Corps.</p> <p>Lt. Fassavalu (Nalo) from the Salvation Army greeted the commission with an Aloha Kakahiaka. He stated that the Salvation Army supports all the candidates, including the first responders present and those in the community. He also acknowledged the community leaders. He is here to support Roderick Green. In his first year with the Salvation Army, he experienced Mr. Green's support. Typically, the Army does 300 tree angels during the Christmas season, but with the help of Rod Green, they reached almost 600 last year. This year, they are projecting the exact number, and</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>with Captain Rod Green's support again, they have a good chance of meeting that goal.</p> <p>Captain Green is a charismatic community leader. Once, he and his wife watched a YouTube video of a high school game and recognized a familiar voice: Captain Green, broadcasting the game. While driving, they also heard Captain Green's voice on the radio; he's known in the community as Captain Crash. Captain Roderick Green actively engages with and supports the community; therefore, he endorses Rod Green's candidacy for Kauai County chief of police. He thanked the commission for its time.</p> <p>The Commission heard from Ms. Natalie Bryan.</p> <p>Ms. Bryan greeted the commission with an Aloha Kakahiaka. She owns a consulting firm in Kauai and is here today to express her support for Captain Rod Green. She serves on the Kauai Community Players Board with him. Captain Green has played a key role in helping the KCPB prepare for a performance at the Kauai Community Performing Arts Center in Puhi. During chaotic times, Captain Green's calm demeanor, ability to see the big picture, and talent for bringing together different sides when making decisions are impressive. His skill in mitigating risk and helping people understand various issues has helped everyone see the bigger picture. She thanked the commission for allowing her to share her support for Captain Green.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>The Commission heard from Councilmember Felica Cowden.</p> <p>Councilmember Cowden stated she is speaking as an individual member of the county council. She will support whatever decision the commission makes because it falls within its purview. She's here today to listen to every candidate with an open mind, although it's hard for her not to follow what's been out in the media. She has worked with the county during its homeless community sweeps, including other community crises.</p> <p>Captain Green is always willing to return her calls or resolve conflicts. He is skilled at managing cultural disputes over the phone. She supports Captain Green because he collaborates well and responds promptly. She hasn't had the chance to work with the other three finalists, and she is not trying to influence the commission's decision. All she is saying is that Captain Green has always done a good job whenever she works with him.</p> <p>The Commission heard from Mr. Bruce Hart.</p> <p>Mr. Bruce Hart said his name for the record. The commission is familiar with him because he has been present at every commission meeting over the last couple of years. He's already made it known to the commission about the characteristics of the next police chief he would prefer. But this morning, he would like to focus on the commission to thank the commission and its supporting staff for doing such a good job. The commission has put a lot of dedication into the hiring process and would like to remind the community that the police commission members are volunteers who ultimately decide who the next police chief will be. He believes that the Lord God is overseeing the hiring process and is giving the commission the choice to select the next chief of police. He hopes that</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>whoever the next police chief is, everyone will work together to support them.</p> <p>At this point, a technical issue with the recording equipment arose. At 8:33 a.m., Chair Hong called for a brief break to allow staff to fix the issue. At 8:39 a.m., Chair Hong called the meeting back to order.</p> <p>Chair Hong noted that, due to a technical problem with the recording equipment, Mr. Hart's testimony had to be cut short. He would like to invite Mr. Hart back to finish his testimony with 1.5 minutes remaining.</p> <p>The Commission heard from Mr. Hart.</p> <p>Mr. Hart continued with his testimony. Whatever candidate the commission selects, he hopes that the commission, the community, and the Kauai Police Department will work together to support the new police chief and the Kauai Police Department. This is what everything up to this point is about. He hopes that the new chief will take the testimonies to heart, be dedicated to addressing the issues that need improvement in KPD, and have the courage, integrity, and strength to do what is necessary to make it happen. The new chief should be patient, understanding, and firm in their resolve to make KPD one of the best police departments in the nation. He cares deeply for KPD. He cares about every officer. He thanked the commission.</p> <p>There being no new testimony, Chair Hong called for additional testimony. He also noted that when item KPC 2025-31 comes up on the agenda, he will allow for more testimony.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>The Commission heard from Mr. Bill Welsch.</p> <p>Mr. Welsch thanked the commission for indulging an old man. He fully endorses what he has heard about Captain Green because it says a lot about Rod, which is unusual. Rod understood what was happening; he asked people here and there if they would come in to speak on his behalf, and they did. It shows an understanding of the situation. He's seen Rod in other situations, and he has a breath of talent which a few know about. He's remarkable, a fine actor. He can testify that acting is important to Rod, and so is police work. Rod is an unusual person. Mr. Welsch mentioned that he came to Kauai in 1965 as a haole and is still a haole. Kauai is part of the world now, and a quarter of the computers that helped launch the moon are still in power. The kids are the ones who are dealing with it right now. It's important that whoever the commission selects as the police chief has a worldview, not just for the complexity right now, but also for the ones being imported. The local culture is valuable, which is why he is still here. Kauai is a beautiful place in so many ways. The people still have aloha, but they also have the warrior. The police department faces a balance every day. He has a hearty endorsement for Rod Green, in the many ways he knows him, and the many ways everyone here knows him.</p> <p>There being no further testimony, Chair Hong called on Commissioner Hertog to address her concerns about the 70-page testimony submitted by SHOPO.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Commissioner Hertog stated that she is speaking as an individual Commissioner, not on behalf of the entire commission. The testimony provided was intended to negatively influence the commission, the public, and KPD's officers, and to impugn the candidates' reputations and question their qualifications. In the letter, you also questioned whether the Police Commission did its due diligence. Her perception from reading the testimony is that you do not believe any of those candidates are qualified to be the new Chief and that the Commission has not done its due diligence in vetting them. I assure you we have.</p> <p>You state that your research found no derogatory information on two of the candidates at the table, but you do not believe they have the proven executive skills to serve as the chief.</p> <p>All four candidates have about 120 years of law enforcement experience between them, and each is qualified under the requirements of the Kauai County Charter. The residents of Kauai approved that Charter change by vote several years ago when the Police Commission increased the qualifications required of a Kauai Chief of Police.</p> <p>As for the other two candidates, you provided pages and pages of allegations from newspaper articles, many unfounded, many dismissed, some decades old, and some still in litigation. You claim you draw no conclusions about the truthfulness of the statements and comments captured in your research, but you are concerned that these comments could be a distraction as our new Chief seeks to build trust. Well, you contributed to that future problem with this testimony.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>She hopes that SHOPO shares the Commission's goals, regardless of who is selected as the new chief. She also hopes for a collaborative, non-confrontational relationship that results in the most important outcome, namely, taking care of our officers and employees in KPD, or, as your motto says, serving those who serve Hawaii. I hope and pray you open your minds and hearts, give whoever we select a chance, and be open to working with them, not against them. Thank you.</p> <p>Commissioner Ako thanked Commissioner Hertog for having the courage to address her concerns. She shares the same sentiments and frustrations, especially after reading SHOPO's written submission. She's deeply disappointed that SHOPO relied on third-party information available online (which everyone here could have found by googling) rather than providing the Commission with direct information. It's like you went to Brotherhood Union and, instead of giving the Commission solid, firsthand information, you gave the Commission unsubstantiated information.</p> <p>There being no further comments, Chair Hong moved on to item KPC 2025-31.</p>	
KPC 2025-31	<p><u>Discussion and possible action regarding the appointment and conditional employment offer for the next Chief of Police for Kauai County.</u></p> <p>Chair Hong opened the floor for testimony. None was offered.</p> <p>The agenda item documents the final interviews and selection process for the new Chief of Police of the County of Kauai. Four finalists—Chief Teresa Ewins, Captain Roderick Green, Captain Larson, and Deputy Chief Rudy Tai—were interviewed and evaluated by the Commission. The proceedings</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>included in-depth discussions on leadership, traits, community engagement, accountability, retention strategies, and personal qualifications. Key Sections of the interview are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background and Career Progression • Promoting accountability and Trust • Division and Leadership Experience • Community Engagement Strategies • Community & Cultural Engagement • Internal Affairs & Investigations • Education and Professional Development • Leadership Philosophy • Examples from careers • Closing Statements: Each finalist expressed gratitude, passion for service, and a commitment to supporting the department and community. <p>Chair Hong called for a motion and a second to begin deliberation.</p> <p>Vice Chair Yoshida stated that before a motion is made, she would like clarification on when the appropriate time is to conduct a background check. County Attorney Tyler Saito explained that under Hawaii Law, a background check is usually conducted after a conditional offer is made to a successful candidate to safeguard the finalist's privacy interest.</p> <p>Vice Chair Yoshida thanked County Attorney Saito for clarifying the background check process. She noted that before she makes A motion, she would like to take this time to thank the candidates for their time and effort, because as much time the Commission has put into the process, the Commission also knows they, too, have put in time, as it has been a long</p>	<p><u>Motion:</u></p> <p>Vice Chair Laurie Yoshida proposed appointing finalist Rudy Tai as the next Chief of Police for Kauai County, with a conditional employment offer included. Commissioner Hertog seconded the motion.</p>

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>process. The dedication they bring to public service, and their unwavering commitment to serving your community, are truly valued. The Commission can select only one person to serve as chief; therefore, she would like to make a contingent offer to candidate Deputy Chief Rudy Tai to serve as chief of police.</p> <p>Commissioner Hertog seconded the motion.</p> <p><u>Discussion</u></p> <p>Chair Hong stated that at this time, he would like to give each Commissioner the opportunity to make any comments they wish regarding the motion.</p> <p>Vice Chair Yoshida thanked all four candidates. Each of them is well qualified, and, fortunately for Kauai, there isn't a wrong decision, because based on the interviews, each candidate has the experience to be chief. The Commission has done its due diligence in reviewing the resumes and candidates' written responses; that is why she made the motion.</p> <p>Commissioner Hertog stated that she agreed with the motion. She liked what Deputy Chief Tai had to say. The Commission needed to find the right fit and believes that he is the right fit. She particularly liked what he said about being community-focused and building those bonds with the community. She also liked what he said about succession planning and growing KPD's replacements from within. They have been criticized for that because they haven't been able to do it for many reasons. The fact that just one contact with a police officer sets the stage for a young person as to what they think about policing in the future. Every candidate is eminently qualified.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Commissioner Hertog stated that she liked what Captain Green said: regardless of who is selected, his heart and soul will support that person. As for her reasons for seconding the motion, she liked what Deputy Chief Tai said about getting KPD officers involved in community projects and about not forgetting his vast experience with a large police department. She feels that Deputy Chief Tai is qualified to move into the chief's position because he talked about being a servant leader, one who focuses on the well-being of people and the community they belong to. She kept hearing that throughout his interviews, which makes her feel that it's part of him to be that servant leader.</p> <p>Commissioner Knutson stated that KPD will benefit from that leadership style and then thanked all four candidates. Her question, though, is what are the elements of a conditional offer?</p> <p>Human Resources Manager Jill Niitani explained that, as County Attorney Saito mentioned earlier, steps must be taken beforehand, such as conducting interviews and conducting due diligence; those steps must be completed before the Commission can move forward with other matters. As Mr. Saito mentioned, this is to protect privacy interests, as it involves drug testing and other requirements. A background check cannot be conducted until after a conditional offer is made. The same process applies to regular police officers, including drug testing.</p> <p>Commissioner Knutson stated that, based on what she heard, the two criteria are drug testing and background checks.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Ms. Niitani noted that there is also the physical assessment, which is medical-related, but again, all those cannot be done until a conditional offer is made.</p> <p>Ms. Niitani stated that, to her understanding, Dave Carmichael is the background investigator, so he would meet with the selected person to explain the process and what a background check requires, including conducting a thorough review of the selectee's history and experiences. So, again, first and foremost, we need to make sure it's consistent with other pre-employment requirements.</p> <p>Commissioner Knutson noted that the most important thing is to do a psychological evaluation.</p> <p>Ms. Niitani stated that, in her experience, those are the only criteria used for regular officers and for the chief's position, and that no other criteria have ever been used in a conditional job offer.</p> <p>Commissioner Knutson noted that after everything is completed, the Commission will receive a packet that excludes certain details for privacy reasons.</p> <p>Vice Chair Yoshida stated that the Commission doesn't need to know everything, but it does need to know whether they passed. Then the Commission can move to the next step and make a formal offer, or if the information comes back abnormally, decline to make a formal offer and take another course of action.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Ms. Niitani stated that if the background reveals things that the Commission didn't foresee, the Commission can convene and formally withdraw the offer of employment.</p> <p>Mr. Carmichael added that it is not uncommon for a background check to reveal something, especially for someone with a long employment history. The Commission may find that there's nothing potentially disqualifying, or it may reveal issues that are outright disqualifying. Again, it is very uncommon to have findings that are not outright disqualifying. However, there may be some things to consider; you cannot predict what you'll find, but the Commission will certainly have some information to go on.</p> <p>Chair Hong asked the Commissioners if they had any further questions or comments. If not, he would like to say a few things.</p> <p>Chair Hong stated that he also chose Deputy Chief Rudy Tai and would have seconded the motion if he had been able to. All the other candidates are well-experienced, come from different police departments, and are well-qualified to lead any other organization. He thanked them for participating in the hiring process and for giving the Commission the opportunity to review it. There are no losers. You are all winners, but unfortunately, only one can be the next chief of police. He appreciates all the effort they spent applying and going through the hiring process.</p> <p>Chair Hong commented that he will support the motion because Deputy Chief Tai was born and raised in Hawaii, but it shouldn't give him an automatic pass over the other finalists. But when he reviewed his letter of introduction, his responses to the essay questions, and observed his demeanor during the interview process, he revealed a cultural sensitivity</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>that is needed to address the issues facing the Kauai Police Department. Deputy Chief Tai also reviewed the Gallup Survey and recognized the need to build the Police Department from within, and through police and community programs such as KPAL. Deputy Chief Tai is a proponent of servant leadership, a form that puts the needs of employees and the community above a person's own ambitions. He recognizes the need to communicate openly at all levels rather than dictate what must be done.</p> <p>Deputy Chief Tai's 35 years with the San Diego Police Department have exposed him to an impressive list of assignments, adequately preparing him for the job as chief of police for Kauai County. His participation with a variety of Asian and Pacific Islander community groups can only be a plus when dealing with Kauai's diversity of cultures.</p> <p>He is aware of and has considered claims that Deputy Chief Tai has shortcomings, including failing to file a report of an officer's misconduct. This is in reference to a federal lawsuit stemming from that incident, as reported in a San Diego Union-Tribune news article dated March 2019, and 2014, more than 10 years ago. The article states that nine (9) San Diego police supervisors were dismissed from that federal lawsuit, and Deputy Chief Tai was one of the nine. The charges/claims were dismissed. There was also another reference to a letter to the editor of the San Diego Union-Tribune, dated February 4, 2029, in which the writer criticized Deputy Chief Tai, a criticism he finds somewhat humorous.</p> <p>Chair Hong stated that he does not give too much weight to such objections as grounds for not selecting Deputy Chief Rudy Tai as Kauai's next chief of police, especially when weighed against his outstanding work and accomplishments over 35 years with the San Diego Police Department.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Commissioner Knutson thanked the four (4) candidates for applying. She appreciates all of them for taking the time and energy to allow the Commission to fill the chief's position. In her 35 years of human resources experience, she will abstain from making a recommendation or voting. She doesn't believe in building a position to fill it. In her opinion, having the interim team continue until the Commission can appoint someone with what she feels (in her gut) is the right fit is in the best interest of the Department and the community.</p> <p>Commissioner Ako requested a recess to consider her decision.</p> <p>At 11:54 a.m., Chair Hong called for a recess. At 12:07 p.m., Chair Hong called the meeting back to order.</p> <p>Chair Hong asked whether the Commissioners had any further comments; if not, he would call for a roll-call vote to extend a conditional employment offer to Deputy Chief Rudy Tai.</p>	<p><u>Roll Call Vote</u> Support Clerk Mercedes Omo conducted a roll-call vote to confirm the motion to select Deputy Chief Rudy Tai as the next Chief of Police for Kauai County, with a conditional employment offer included.</p> <p>A roll call vote ensued with: Commissioner Mia Ako - Aye. Commissioner John Calma - Aye. Commissioner Mary K. Hertog - Aye. Commissioner Lisa Knutson - <i>abstained</i>. Vice Chair Laurie Yoshida - Aye. Chair Walton Hong - Aye.</p> <p>The motion carried 5:1.</p>

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Chair Hong noted that the vote was five (5) in favor of the motion and one abstention. Before the Commission goes into Executive Session, he would like to call for another recess to congratulate Deputy Chief Tai and to have the Commission express its appreciation to the other candidates.</p> <p>At 12:15 p.m., the meeting was reconvened.</p> <p>Chair Hong called on Chief Tai-select to say a few words.</p> <p>Chief Tai stated that when he woke up this morning, you just never know what goes through your mind, you know, and I was lying there in bed, thinking and kind of reflecting on my life. And thinking about where I was and where I am right now, I get emotional. My family was from Kauai, and I was talking to some people. My last name, our family name, used to be Tai Hook. But when they moved, they dropped the hook, and we went with just Tai. He doesn't know who his family is because he hasn't met any of them. He remembers his great-uncle, Henry, whom he met when he was a young boy.</p> <p>He's looking forward to connecting with his family. He's so excited to be part of this. He wants to serve every single day, and he is going to bring it; that's what he does.</p> <p>For him, he's going to have to take it a few notches back because of his speedy mentality, but he's going to adjust.</p> <p>He is very honored to serve the people of Hawaii. He told his friend, who drove him around, that he wanted to see the Tip Top Hotel.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Because, as a boy, playing in a KPAL basketball tournament, his team stayed at the Tiptop Hotel. He remembers how beautiful the island is. He can't believe he got to experience it as a young kid. He remembers the cookies because they left a positive impression.</p> <p>It's a great honor to come to live and work with all of you. He wants to make a difference and impact, especially for young people along the way, helping them find direction early on by providing good role modeling.</p> <p>He wants his officers out there, and, hopefully, together, they can create a pipeline to start recruiting in-house. He wants to look at different ways of how KPD can recruit in-house. It will be challenging, but he's sure there's a lot of great information available. Mahalo, Nui Loa, Kako.</p> <p>Commissioner Hertog - Deputy Chief Tai, soon to be Chief Tai, hopefully. Congratulations. As the Chair said, you rose to the top. You said all the right things, but words are one thing, actions are another. The Commission is putting great faith and trust in you to take the department to the very next level. He mentioned the Gallup survey. Many improvements have been made since the survey was conducted. There were many people in the room who had invested a lot of time and effort in doing that, and they are depending on you to take it to the next level. She liked that he wanted to mentor or torment his officers to help them reach the next level. To develop them in-house. That is one thing the Commission lacked and was criticized for failing to hire someone from within the Department. But quite frankly, they were not ready at that point in time, and we are going to depend on you to get them up to that last bar.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>She has been on and off this police commission for ten years; many people think it's too long. She thinks it's too long, too. But she's excited to work with him over the next year to get him on board and get you situated. He needs to keep the Commission informed about what's going on, because, you know, by the charter, the Commission cannot interfere with the Department's day-to-day business. She likes the fact that they'll have your cell phone number, too. She wished Deputy Chief Tai Good luck.</p> <p>Chair Hong asked the Commissioners if they had any more to say.</p> <p>Commissioner Calma congratulated Deputy Chief Tai and stated that the Commission is looking forward to working with him. Good applicants, hard to choose, but there were no losers; they're all winners, as far as he's concerned.</p> <p>Once again, Vice Chair Yoshida congratulated the Commission on all their hard work. She stated that Deputy Chief Tai's journey is just beginning, and hopefully, the potholes won't be too big, and he'll be able to traverse them without too much trouble, but there will be potholes.</p> <p>Chair Hong stated that next on the agenda is the executive session. He doesn't see anyone in the audience, but he will state for the record. If there's anybody in the audience who wants to testify or provide testimony on any item in the executive session, you have three minutes. None was offered.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
Executive Session Closed to the Public	<p><u>ES KPC 2025-23:</u> Under Hawai'i Revised Statutes §§ 92-4, 92-5 (a) (2), and (4), the purpose of this executive session is for the Commission to consult with its attorney on questions and issues related to the Commission's powers, duties, privileges, immunities, and liabilities as they may pertain to the hiring of a Police Chief. (No discussion, No action)</p> <p><u>ES KPC 2025-24:</u> Under Hawai'i Revised Statutes §§ 92-4, 92-5(a)(2), (a)(4), and 92-9(b), the purpose of this Executive Session is for the Commission to approve or amend the minutes of the October 24, 2025, executive session meeting. Publishing these minutes would defeat the lawful purpose of the executive meetings they represent, including the purposes in HRS §§ 92-5(a)(2) and (a)(4).</p>	<p>At 12:17 p.m., Chair Walton Hong called on County Attorney Tyler Saito to cite the Hawaii Revised Statutes to take the meeting to the Executive Session. Chair Hong called for a motion to go into Executive Session.</p> <p>Vice Chair Laurie Yoshida made a motion to enter the Executive Session. Commissioner Lisa Knutson seconded the motion. At 12:13 p.m., the Commission entered the Executive Session.</p>
Return to Open Session	<p>At 12:17 p.m., the Commission reconvened in the Open Session.</p> <p><u>ES KPC 2025-23:</u> No discussion. No action taken.</p> <p><u>ES KPC 2025-24:</u> The Commission voted to approve the Executive Session minutes of the October 24, 2025, meeting. The discussion and publishing of the minutes would defeat the lawful purpose of the executive meetings they represent, including the purposes in HRS §§ 92-5(a)(2) and (a)(4).</p>	
Ratification of Action Taken in Executive Session	Chair Hong called on County Attorney Saito to read the Executive Session Report pursuant to HRS §§ 92-4(b).	Vice Chair Yoshida moved to ratify the action taken in the Executive Session. Commissioner Ako seconded the motion. Hearing no objections, the motion carried 6:0.

Kauai Police Commission Open Session Minutes
Of November 21, 2025, Meeting

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SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<u>ES KPC 2025-23:</u> No discussion. No action taken. <u>ES KPC 2025-24:</u> The Commission voted to approve the Executive Session minutes of the October 24, 2025, meeting. The discussion and publishing of the minutes would defeat the lawful purpose of the executive meetings they represent, including the purposes in HRS §§ 92-5(a)(2) and (a)(4).	
Adjournment	There being no further business, Chair Hong called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.	Vice Chair Yoshida moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Knutson seconded the motion. At 12:18 p.m., the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by: _____
Mercedes Omo, Staff Support Clerk

Reviewed and Approved by: _____
Walton Hong, Chair

() Approved as circulated on

() Approved as amended. See minutes of _____ meeting.

OPEN SESSION MEETING MINUTES

Board or Commission	Kauai Police Commission	Meeting Date	December 19, 2025
Location	Moikeha Meeting Room 4444 Rice Street, Lihue, Hawaii 96766	Start of Meeting: 9:00 a.m.	End of Meeting: 10:45 a.m.
Present	Chair Walton Hong, Vice Chair Laurie Yoshida; Commissioners Mia Ako, John Calma, and Mary K. Hertog. *Commissioner Lisa Knutson entered the meeting at 9:45 a.m. Also present: Boards and Commissions Staff, Administrator Ellen Ching, County Attorney Tyler Saito, and Support Clerks Kevin Mince and Mercedes Omo. Kauai Police Department: Chief's Office, Interim Police Chief Elliott Ke; Deputy Chief Mark Ozaki; Chief's Secretary Kim Tamaoka; Office of Professional Standards Lieutenants Kevin Gras and Brad Candido; Lieutenant/Lihue District Commander Michael Nii; Acting Lieutenant/Detective Jason Muraoka; Lieutenant/Waimea District Commander Anthony Abalos; Officers Branden Barroga; Public Safety Workers Ronald Aceret and Ernest Ganiron; and Officer Desmond Thain; KPD's Public Information Officer Tiana Victorino; members of the Kauai Police Department; SHOPO Business Agent Roy Asher; Councilmember Felicia Cowden.		
Excused			
Absent			

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
Meeting Called to Order/Roll Call to ascertain quorum	Chair Hong called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. A roll call to ascertain quorum ensued, and a quorum of five (5) Commissioners was ascertained to conduct business. It was noted that Commissioner Lisa Knutson would arrive at approximately 10:00 a.m. or sooner.	
Approval of Agenda	Chair Hong called for a motion to approve the agenda.	A motion was made by Vice Chair Yoshida to approve the agenda as circulated. Commissioner Hertog seconded the motion, and the agenda was approved as circulated.
Chair's Announcement	Chair Hong announced the next Police Commission meeting will be on Friday, January 23, 2026, in the Moikeha Meeting Room 2A/2B. Executive Session to follow. Subject to change.	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
Public Testimony	Chair Hong stated that individuals may testify on any agenda item now or wait until it is called. There was no testimony offered at this time.	
Kauai Police Department Employees of the Month of October, November, and December 2025.	<p>Chair Hong called on Chief Ke to address the Kauai Police Department Employees of the Month.</p> <p>Chief Ke acknowledged the Commissioners and then called on Acting Lieutenant/Lihue District Commander Michael Nii to present the commendation for the October Employees of the Month, Officers Branden Barroga and Kevin Kamakahi.</p> <p>Officers Barroga and Kevin Kamakahi were commended for their outstanding investigative work in an incident that occurred on August 1, 2025. Officer Kamakahi responded to a report of a vehicle stolen in the Lihue area. Through witness interviews, officers identified the suspect and later located the abandoned vehicle at the base of a 60-foot cliff. The following day, Officers Kamakahi and Barroga, Lihue patrol officers, located the suspect inside another vehicle in a residential area. The suspect was detained without incident, and the officers recovered a loaded firearm and illicit drugs. Officer Barroga later executed a search warrant that resulted in the recovery of narcotics, ammunition, and evidence connected to multiple felony cases.</p> <p>Following the presentation, each Commissioner took turns congratulating both Officers on their outstanding and exemplary service in keeping the community safe. Chief Ke and Deputy Chief Ozaki presented Officers Barroga and Kamakahi with a certificate recognizing their dedication and outstanding investigative work that led to the capture of the suspect.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Chief Ke called on Acting Lieutenant/Detective Jason Muraoka to present the Commendation Report for November Employees of the Month – PWS (Public Safety Workers Ernest Ganiron and Ronald Aceret).</p> <p>PSWs Aceret and Ganiron were recognized for their exceptional professionalism in overseeing the well-being and safety of an individual detained in KPD's cellblock. On October 21, 2025, the individual expressed gratitude to PSWs Aceret and Ganiron for their support during a challenging period. Because of their intentional care and empathy, the individual achieved sobriety, secured employment, and secured stable housing.</p> <p>Chief Ke called on Lieutenant/Waimea District Commander Anthony Abalos to present the Commendation report for December's Employee of the Month – Officer Desmond Thain.</p> <p>Officer Thain was commended for his keen investigative skills and proactive service. In a recent case, Officer Thain's keen observations led to the seizure of a vehicle containing a loaded firearm, ammunition, and illicit drugs. In another investigation, Officer Thain successfully resolved a credit card fraud case, resulting in the suspect's arrest. He helped maintain the safety of Kauai's roadways by making over 20 OVUII arrests. Last year, he was recognized by Mothers Against Drunk Driving and the Department of Transportation for his critical role in reducing injuries and fatalities caused by drunk and drugged drivers.</p> <p>Councilmember Cowden expressed her utmost appreciation for the Employees of the Month. Their hard work and dedication are a true reflection of their character.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>The Commission presented each honoree with an orchid lei and then took turns congratulating the employees on their outstanding investigative skills, professionalism, dedication to keeping the community safe, and promotion of the well-being of individuals.</p> <p>Chief Ke and Deputy Chief Ozaki also presented the five honorees with a certificate of exemplary service, a kukui nut lei, and special pins in recognition of their outstanding service. The honorees were also given the opportunity to address the Commission.</p>	
Recess	At 9:38 a.m., Chair Hong called for a 15-minute recess to allow the KPD's PIO to take a group photo of the Employees of the Month and to give fellow officers, family members, and friends time to congratulate them and present them with leis.	
Approval of Minutes	At 9:53 a.m., Chair Hong called the meeting back to order. Chair Hong called for a motion to defer the approval or amendment of the Police Commission's November 21, 2025, Open Session meeting minutes.	A motion was made by Commissioner Ako to defer the minutes of the November 21, 2025, Open Session meeting. Vice Chair Yoshida seconded the motion, and the minutes were deferred.
Chief's Monthly Reports for the months of October and November 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Office of the Chief – Notable Highlights, Special Projects, Community Engagement, Significant Meetings, Public Information Officer. ○ Support Services Bureau, Criminal Investigations Division, and Field Operations Division – Budget Summary Estimate, Personnel Status, Recruitment Status, DARE Classes, KPAL Programs, Training Provided by Outside Agency: Off-Island, Training Provided by Kaua'i Police Department, Training Provided by Outside Agency: On-Island, Firearms Registered, Handgun Applications, Long Gun Applications, Licenses to Carry Applications, Crime Scene and 	<p>Chair Hong asked the Commissioners if they had any questions on any of the data reflected in the Chief's Monthly Reports. Since there were no questions, Chair Hong called for a motion to receive the Monthly Reports.</p> <p>A motion was made by Commissioner Hertog to receive the Chief's Monthly Reports for the record. Vice Chair Yoshida</p>

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Laboratory Section - Biometric Identification Facial and Ten Print, Crime Scene and Laboratory Section - Call Out Lab Request, YTD Death Statistics, Person Crimes Section Statistics, Person Crimes Section Enforcement, Property Crimes Section Statistics, Property Crimes Section Enforcement, Property Crimes Section Types, and Vice Section Statistics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Preliminary Point & Time Data – Crime Summary and Activity Summary ○ Agency Statistics – Calls for Service/Incident Summary, Citation Summary, Arrest Summary, Legal Services, Warrant Type – All Divisions, and Warrant Tracking – All Divisions. 	<p>seconded the motion, and the Chief's Report was accepted.</p>
<p>Correspondence</p>	<p>Chair Hong noted that the three correspondences were included in the Commissioners' meeting packets for review. Before the Commission addressed those correspondences, he called for public testimony, but no one in the audience offered any. He then asked the Commissioners whether they had questions regarding the correspondence; hearing none, he called for three separate motions to acknowledge receipt of the three pieces of correspondence without further action.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Correspondence dated November 14, 2025, from Congressman Ed Case, Hawaii-First District, to Chair Walton Hong, Kauai Police Commission, writing to thank the Police Commission for supporting S. 725, the Enhancing First Response Act. 2. Correspondence dated November 24, 2025, from Gary Yabuta, Executive Director, Hawaii High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area, writing to congratulate the Police Commission for selecting 	<p><u>Motion No. 1:</u> A motion was made by Commissioner Hertog to receive the correspondence dated November 14, 2025, for the record. Vice Chair Yoshida seconded the motion, and the motion to receive carried 6:0.</p> <p><u>Motion no. 2:</u> A motion was made by Commissioner Ako to receive the correspondence dated November 24, 2025, for the record. Vice Chair Yoshida seconded the motion, and the motion to receive carried 6:0.</p>

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Rudolph (Rudy) Tai as the next Chief of Police for the Kauai Police Department.</p> <p>3. Correspondence dated November 26, 2025, from Nicholas R. Schlapak, SHOPO President, to Chair Walton Hong of the Kauai Police Commission, regarding the correction of an official record related to the Police Chief selection process.</p>	<p><u>Motion No.3:</u> A motion was made by Commissioner Ako to receive, for the record, the correspondence dated November 26, 2025. Commissioner Knutson seconded the motion, and the motion to receive carried 6:0.</p>
<p>BUSINESS KPC 2025-31</p>	<p><u>Election of Chair and Vice Chair for the 2026 Calendar Year.</u></p> <p>Chair Hong called for public testimony, but none was offered.</p> <p>Chair Hong opened nominations for the Chair position. Commissioner Hertog stated that she would like to nominate Vice Chair Yoshida for the Chair position. Hearing no other nominations for Chair, Chair Hong called for a motion.</p> <p>Chair Hong opened the nominations for Vice Chair. Commissioner Ako stated that she would like to nominate Vice Chair Yoshida for the Chair position. Hearing no other nominations for Chair, Chair Hong called for a motion.</p>	<p>A motion was made by Commissioner Hertog to elect Vice Chair Laurie Yoshida as the new Chair for Calendar 2026. Commissioner Calma seconded the motion. Hearing no objections, the motion carried 6:0.</p> <p>A motion was made by Commissioner Ako to elect Vice Chair Yoshida as the new Chair for Calendar Year 2026. Commissioner Knutson seconded the motion. Hearing no objections, the motion carried 6:0.</p>
<p>Executive Session</p>	<p>Under Hawai'i Revised Statutes §§ 92-4 and 92-5 (a) (2) and (4), the purpose of this executive session is for the Commission to review and discuss charges brought against an officer in the Kauai Police Department, where consideration of matters affecting privacy will be involved, provided that if the individual requests an open meeting, an open meeting shall be held; and to consult with its attorney on issues related to the Commission's powers, duties, privileges, immunities, and liabilities as</p>	<p>At 10:02 a.m., County Attorney Tyler Saito began to read the Hawaii Revised Statutes to take the meeting to Executive Session.</p>

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	they may relate to the following items:	
ES KPC 2025-1	<p><u>Regular Monthly updates by Interim Police Chief Elliott Ke or his designated representative related to the Office of Professional Standards, Monthly Report on the status and/or Disposition of formal notarized citizen complaints that were filed with the Kauai Police Commission and referred to the Office of the Chief for disposition and/or report back to the Police Commission.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The notarized complaint numbered KPC 2025-005 was received on August 20, 2025, at the Office of Boards and Commissions. The incident that occurred on July 16, 2025, involved a Kauai Police Department officer. The complainant alleges misconduct, including failing to perform a sobriety test or asking for the individual's license after the person rushed toward the complainant's van and threatened to harm the complainant's dog. <i>(Referred on September 26, 2025, to the Chief of Police for investigation and to report back to the Commission with findings for disposition.)</i> 	
ES KPC 2025-2	<p><u>Regular Monthly updates by Interim Police Chief Elliott Ke or his designated representative of any significant adverse incidents/events involving personnel in the Kauai Police Department that could potentially impact on the County, the Police Commission, and the Kauai Police Department. (Nothing to Report)</u></p>	
ES KPC 2025-23	<p><u>Under Hawai'i Revised Statutes §§ 92-4, 92-5(a)(2), (a)(4), and 92-9(b), the purpose of this executive session is for the Commission to approve or amend the Executive Session minutes of the November 21, 2025, meeting, as publication of the executive meeting minutes would defeat</u></p>	Chair Hong called for a motion to convene in the Executive Session.

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p><u>the lawful purpose of the meetings they reflect, including the purposes in HRS §§ 92-5(a)(2) and (a)(4).</u></p>	<p>Motion A motion was made by Commissioner Hertog to convene in the Executive Session. Vice Chair Yoshida seconded the motion. At 10:04 a.m., the Commission entered the Executive Session.</p>
<p>Return to Open Session</p>	<p>At 10:39 a.m., the Commission reconvened in the Open Session.</p>	
<p>Ratification of actions taken in the Executive Session</p>	<p>Chair Hong called on County Attorney Tyler Saito to read the Executive Session Report in accordance with HRS § 92-4 (b).</p> <p><u>ES KPC 2025-1:</u> The Commission received a briefing from the Investigator on a formal, notarized citizen complaint, KPC 2025-005, which was filed with the Office of Boards and Commissions on August 20, 2025. The Commission deliberated on the Investigative findings and voted on the allegations as follows:</p> <p>Allegation (1a) – The Commission voted and found it unfounded. Allegation (1b) - The Commission voted and found it unfounded. Allegation (1c) – The Commission voted and found it unfounded. Allegation (1d) – The Commission voted and found it unfounded. Allegation (1e) – The Commission voted and found it unfounded. Allegation (1f): The Commission voted and found it unfounded.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p><u>Allegation 2:</u> The Commission deliberated on the investigation's findings and made the following decisions on allegations 2 a, 2b, 2c, 2d, and 2e, as unfounded.</p> <p>The discussion is not subject to disclosure because disclosure would defeat the purpose of the executive session under HRS 92-5(2) and (4).</p> <p><u>ES KPC 2025-2:</u> No discussion. Nothing to Report. No action taken.</p> <p><u>ES KPC 2025-23:</u> The minutes were not available for the Commission to act, so the Commission voted to defer any action on the minutes of the November 21, 2025, Executive Session meeting.</p> <p>Administrator Ching asked because the Report was not part of the record Does the Commission need to state specifically what the letters a,b,c, and d he referred to are?</p> <p>County Attorney Saito said no, as it would frustrate the purpose of the Executive Session.</p> <p>Before Chair Hong called for a motion to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Hertog took the time to express her appreciation to Chair Hong, Vice Chair Yoshida, and County Attorney Tyler Saito for their hard work. She also expressed appreciation to Administrator Ellen Ching for her leadership and to Support Clerks Mercedes omo and Kevin Mince for their hard work throughout this challenging year.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Vice Chair Yoshida expressed her appreciation for Chair Hong for stepping up.</p> <p>Chair Hong noted that County Attorney Saito made it easy, and he appreciates his guidance. He also thanked his fellow Commissioners for their hard work throughout the year.</p> <p>With no further comments, Chair Hong called for a motion to ratify the actions taken in the Executive Session.</p>	<p><u>Motion</u> A motion was made by Vice Chair Yoshida to ratify the actions taken in the Executive Session. Commissioner Hertog seconded the motion; the motion carried 6:0.</p>
Adjournment	<p>There being no further business, Chair Hong called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.</p>	<p>A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner Hertog. Commissioner Knutson seconded the motion. At 10:45 a.m., the meeting was adjourned.</p>

Submitted by: _____
Mercedes Omo, Staff Support Clerk

Reviewed and Approved by: _____
Laurie Yoshida, Chair-elect

- () Approved as circulated on _____
- () Approved as amended. See minutes of _____ meeting.



KAUA'I POLICE DEPARTMENT

POLICE COMMISSION MONTHLY REPORT

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

REPORTING
PERIOD
December 2025

Notable Highlights

	DATE	EVENT DESCRIPTION/LOCATION	BUREAU
1	12/01/25	Investigated multiple UEMV incidents in the Līhu'e and Kōloa Districts involving 14 entered vehicles and one stolen vehicle; a juvenile was detained. Investigation ongoing.	POB
2	12/07/25	Responded to a major traffic collision involving a motorcycle fatality. Traffic Safety Section assumed the investigation.	POB
3	12/09/25	Investigated a missing person report involving a 30-year-old male; follow-up investigation confirmed he returned safely to California.	POB
4	12/14/25	Investigated a drowning incident at Kōloa Landing Resort involving a juvenile. No foul play suspected.	POB
5	12/21/25	Responded to a vehicle versus pedestrian collision in Kōloa involving three victims. Operator was arrested; TSS assumed the investigation.	POB
6	12/22/25	Responded to a suspicious person complaint involving an intoxicated male with active warrants who fled on foot. Suspect was arrested on December 25, 2025; one officer sustained a minor injury.	POB
7	12/23/25	Responded to a single-vehicle collision in Wailua involving the ejection of a juvenile with severe injuries. Traffic Safety Section assumed the investigation.	POB
8	12/23/25	Responded to an unresponsive male visitor at Lāwa'i Beach; an autopsy determined the death was accidental and drowning-related.	POB
9	12/26/25	Arrested an adult male on an active warrant; subsequent vehicle search revealed drug paraphernalia and a user amount of fentanyl.	POB

Significant Meetings

	DATE	EVENT DESCRIPTION/LOCATION	BUREAU	ATTENDEES
1	December	Weekly Online Accreditation Meeting for Crime Scene Lab Section	SSB	2
2	12/02/25	Meeting with County Council Members regarding parking enforcement in the Ho'okipa Falls area.	POB	15
3	12/04/25	Meeting with Liquor Commissioner Gerald Rapozo.	POB	8
4	12/11/25	SANE/SAFE Team Meeting	POB	6
5	12/15/25	Monthly Section Meeting	SSB	3
6	12/16/25	KPD Spillman Administrator Training/Planning Meeting	SSB	
7	12/30/25	Virtual Meeting Regarding Federal Earmark Grant coordinated/facilitated by the Department of the Attorney General's Crime Prevention and Justice Assistance Division	POB	2
8	12/30/25	Met with new Pilina Coffee owners in Hanapēpē Town to discuss community concerns and potential Coffee with a Cop event in 2026.	POB	6

Public Information Officer (PIO)

ACTIVITY	COMPLETED	COMMENT
Press Releases	11	
Media Inquiries	42	
Special Projects	2	Monthly Newsletter, Various Multimedia Projects

Special Projects

	DATE	EVENT DESCRIPTION/LOCATION	HOURS	PERSONNEL	BUREAU
1	12/05/25 – 12/11/25	OVUII Project with TSS	4	6	POB
2	12/05/25	Waimea High Winter Ball Event	5	2	SSB
3	12/06/25	Kapa'a High Winter Ball Event	5	2	SSB
4	12/12/25	Kaua'i High Winter Ball Event	5	2	SSB
5	12/16/25-12/18/25	American National Standards Institute: External Proficiency Test – Friction Ridge Development	24	2	SSB
6	12/31/25	New Years Eve Ops	6	5	POB

Community Engagement

	DATE	EVENT DESCRIPTION/LOCATION	HOURS	PERSONNEL COUNT	BUREAU	AUDIENCE COUNT
1	12/02/25	Kaua'i High School Evacuation Drill	1	4	SSB	1200
2	12/03/25	Kalāheo Elementary School Walking School Bus Program	1	5	SSB/POB	100+
3	12/05/25	Lights on Rice Parade	4	10+	SSB/POB	10,000+
4	12/05/25-12/19/25	DARE - Kapa'a Middle School	6	1	SSB	200
5	12/08/25	Kalāheo Elementary School Station Tour	1	4	SSB	30
6	12/09/25	Kalāheo Elementary School Evacuation Drill	1	5	SSB/POB	100+
7	12/11/25	Heroes and Helpers - Target	2.5	9	SSB/POB	200+
8	12/11/25-12/17/25	DARE - Chiefess Kamakahelei Middle School	7	1	SSB	114
9	12/12/25	Makahiki Championship Games @ KCC	5	3	SSB	100
10	12/15/25	Mock Job Interview / CKMS	4	1	SSB	6
11	12/20/25	Waimea Town Christmas Parade	4	11	POB	
		Total	36.5+	54+		12,050+



KAUA'I POLICE DEPARTMENT

POLICE COMMISSION MONTHLY REPORT

SUPPORT SERVICES BUREAU • CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION • FIELD OPERATIONS DIVISION

REPORTING
PERIOD
**December
2025**

Budget Summary Estimate: Period of December 2025

BUREAU/DIVISION	BUDGET	EXPENDITURES TO DATE	ENCUMBRANCES TO DATE	BALANCE 11/30/25	% OF BUDGET
Chief's Office	\$46,474,407.00	14,313,891.70	4,755,323.86	\$30,374,293.44	39%
Support Services Bureau	\$3,499,781.00	1,339,326.18	1,033,688.15	\$1,777,487.67	57%
Criminal Investigations Division	\$595,975.00	215,221.75	183,576.21	\$472,224.04	46%
Police Operations Bureau	\$547,728.00	158,401.10	191,621.41	\$473,732.49	42%
Total General Fund	<u>\$51,117,891.00</u>	<u>16,026,840.73</u>	<u>6,164,209.63</u>	<u>\$28,926,840.64</u>	40%
Asset Forfeiture Funds	<u>\$100,008.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$100,008.00</u>	0%
Salary, Overtime & Fringe Benefits Breakdown Summary					
Salary & Wages	\$21,975,345.00	\$6,970,853.67		\$15,004,491.33	32%
Overtime	\$2,538,207.00	\$1,276,265.28		\$1,261,941.72	50%
Fringe Benefits	<u>\$18,633,794.00</u>	<u>\$5,443,540.77</u>		<u>\$13,190,253.23</u>	29%
Total Salary, OT, Fringe	<u>\$43,147,346.00</u>	<u>\$13,690,659.72</u>		<u>\$29,456,686.28</u>	32%
Payroll % of Budget	93%	32%		68%	

Personnel Status as of December 31, 2025

	AUTHORIZED	ACTUAL	VACANT
Appointed	2 1-Chief 1-Deputy Chief	2	0
Sworn	164 2-Assistant Chief 5-Captain 12-Lieutenant 37-Sergeant 108-Officer	126	38 2-Captain [Pos 403, 433] 3-Police Lieutenant [Pos 394, 405, 535] 2-Police Sergeant [Pos 411, 457] 36-Police Officer [Pos 367, 383, 407 (John), 437, 447, 449, 453, 468, 500, 503, 505, 508, 509 (Ale), 515, 516 (Dean), 517 (Ray), 519, 521, 522, 524, 525, 533, 534, 540 (Paddy), 542, 543, 547, 551, 552 (Miller), 576, 587 (Ken), 599, 1317, 1318, 1321, 1322] +5-Temporary #476, 479, 477, 482, 485
Non-Sworn *3 – Dispatchers Grant funded	70 4-Accountant 5-Admin Asst. 1-Business Administrator 1-Contracts Specialist 4-Criminalist 1-DV/AV Coord. 1-DVIC 19-Emergency Services Dispatcher 3-Evidence Custodian 1-Fiscal Officer II 1-Fleet Coord. 1-IT Prog. Coord. 1-Secretary 1-Public Safety Manager 2-Parking Enforcement Worker 1-Police Inv. Ops. Asst. 1-Police Records Supervisor 5-Police Records Technician 4-Prog. Support Asst. 2-Public Information Officer 9-Public Safety Worker 1-Weapons Clerk 1-Dept. Staff Asst.	45	25 8-Emergency Services Dispatcher [Pos 311, 314, 315, 473, 536, 537 (Donn), T565, T566] 6-Public Safety Worker I [Pos 378, 379, 380, 1307, 1315, 1947] 1-Police Evidence Clerk [Pos 491] 2-Parking Enforcement Worker [Pos 339, 384] 1-Fiscal Officer II [Pos 564] 1-Information & Education Specialist [Pos 561] 2-Administrative Assistant II [Pos. 300, 1314] 1-Police Records Technician [Pos. 588] 1-Department Staff Assistant [Pos. 306] 1-Public Safety Comms. Manager [Pos. 353] 1-Crime Scene Specialist [392]
Total	236	173	63
Hourly Positions *Does not factor into vacancy totals *Special-Duty Clerk not County funded	9 2-Background Investigator 6-Sex Assault Forensic Nurse Examiner 1-Clerk (Special-Duty)	8	1 *Does not factor into vacancy totals 1-Clerk (Special-Duty) [Pos T475]
Total – Including Hourly Positions that do not factor into vacancy totals	245	181	64

Recruitment Status as of December 31, 2025

POSITION	VACANCIES	COMMENTS
Police Services Officer (102 nd Recruit Classes)	31	<u>Posted: December 1, 2024 – December 31, 2025</u> 12/17/2025 Written Exam: 13 scheduled, 4 took exam, 2 passed & referred Referred – 43 Disqualified – 28 Withdrew – 4 Background Investigation Phase – 7 <u>Hired 103rd Recruit Class 02/01/2026 – 4</u>
Captain	2	Pending Promotional Announcement
Police Lieutenant	3	Promotion Date 1/11/2026 – 1
Detective/Sergeant	2	Promotion Date 1/11/2026 – 7
Emergency Services Dispatcher I	8	<u>Posted: July 14, 2025 – Continuous</u> Referred – 10 Background Investigation Phase – 10
Public Safety Worker I	6	<u>Posted: July 3, 2023 – Continuous</u> Referred – 3 Disqualified – 1 Background Investigation Phase – 2
Police Evidence Clerk	1	<u>Posted: Continuous</u> Referred – 1 Background Investigation Phase – 1 <u>Hired 12/16/2025 – 1</u>
Parking Enforcement Worker	2	<u>Posted: July 14, 2025 – Continuous</u> Referred – 3 Background Investigation Phase – 3
Fiscal Officer II	1	<u>Posted: Sept 29-Oct 8, 2025</u> Interview scheduled December 1, 2025 – 1
Information & Education Specialist	1	<u>Posted: July 21, 2025 – Continuous</u> Interview scheduled December 2, 2025 – 1
Administrative Assistant I	2	<u>Posted: Sept 22, 2025 – Continuous</u> Referred – 18 Disqualified – 5 Withdrew – 2 Background Investigation Phase – 11
Police Records Technician	1	Pending recruitment announcement
Public Safety Communications Manager	1	<u>Posted: November 26, 2025 – December 5, 2025</u>
Department Staff Assistant II	1	<u>Posted: December 31, 2025 – January 9, 2025</u>
Crime Scene Specialist	1	Pending recruitment announcement

KPAL Programs

PROGRAMS	LOCATION	#CLASSES	#REGISTERED	#PERSONNEL
Jiu Jitsu	Hanapēpē	8	214	2
Boxing	Hanapēpē	8	77	2
Boxing	Līhu'e	4	108	2
Wrestling	Līhu'e	4	108	2
Wrestling	Kapa'a	8	54	2

Training Provided by Outside Agency: On-Island

	ORDER NO:	START:	END:	TRAINING DESCRIPTION:	PERSONNEL TRAINED:	COURSE HOURS PER TRAINING:
1	25-25135	12/13/25	12/13/25	Initial Actions Search Management Training	3	5
Total					3	5

Training Provided by Outside Agency: Off-Island

	ORDER NO:	START:	END:	TRAINING DESCRIPTION:	PERSONNEL TRAINED:	COURSE HOURS PER TRAINING:
1	25-25117	12/01/25	12/05/25	New Detective and Criminal Investigator Training	1	40
2	25-25134	12/08/25	12/12/25	K9 Training Conference	1	40
3	25-25130	12/15/25	12/19/25	UAS Advanced & Nighttime Operator Course	2	40
4	N/A	12/18/25	12/18/25	KEMA Alert and Warning Training	1	4
Total					4	120

Training Provided by Kaua'i Police Department

	ORDER NO:	START:	END:	TRAINING DESCRIPTION:	PERSONNEL TRAINED:	COURSE HOURS PER TRAINING:
1	24-24124	09/01/25	09/31/25	SRT Training	22	16
2	24-24125	09/01/25	09/31/25	HIBS Training	2	32
3	25-25062	09/01/25	09/31/25	CAST Training	12	8
4	25-25063	09/01/25	09/31/25	CNT Training	6	8
5	25-25140	12/09/25	12/30/25	TASER 10 Operator Training	32	8
6	25-25133	12/11/25	12/11/25	HPD SIS Road Show	14	8
7	25-25131	12/01/25	12/15/25	Advanced FTO Training	14	3
8	N/A	11/01/25	11/30/25	102 nd Recruit Academy	4	176
9	N/A	12/01/25	12/31/25	CSLS New Hire Training	2	8
10	N/A	12/31/25	12/31/25	PDMS Online Hazmat Certification Re-Training	1	1
Total					109	268

Crime Scene and Laboratory Section - Biometric Identification Facial and Ten Print

LATENT PRINT DEVELOPMENT	FACIAL RECOGNITION PROCESSING	TEN PRINT QUALITY CONTROL	TEN PRINT EXAMINATION
0	57	580	0

Crime Scene and Laboratory Section - Call Out, Lab Request

AUTOPSY	DIGITAL EXAM	SEX ASSAULT KITS	FORENSIC TEST RESULTS INTERPRETATION	KPD WARRANTS	FORENSIC CONSULTATION	CALL OUT TOTAL	TOTAL NEW CASES
1	2	5	3	2	1	8	8

YTD Death Statistics

DEATH TYPES	RESIDENT	UNHOUSED RESIDENT	VISITOR
Natural Death Involving Autopsy	55	2	8
Accidental Deaths	15	1	8
Undetermined-Pending Toxicology Results	5	2	0
Drug Overdoses	17	1	0
Suicide	6	0	1
Homicide	0	1	0

Person Crimes Section Statistics

	ASSIGNMENT				CASE DISPOSITION							
(5) DETECTIVES	Carry Over Last Month	Cases Assigned/ Follow Up	Total Offenses	Total Case	Unfound	RTP	Record Only	Arrest Self	Arrest Other	Cases Closed/%	PFD	Carry Over Next Month
TOTAL	42	15	64	57	2	3	6	4	0	21.05%	3	42

Person Crimes Section Enforcement

Felony Arrest	MD Arrest	Vio Arrest	Total Arrest	Search Warrant	Special Projects	Arrest Warrant	Grand Jury	Surveillance	Follow Ups	Info Charging
1	4	0	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

Property Crimes Section Statistics

	ASSIGNMENT				CASE DISPOSITION							
(6) DETECTIVES	Carry Over Last Month	Cases Assigned/ Follow Up	Total Offenses	Total Case	Unfound	RTP	Record Only	Arrest Self	Arrest Other	Cases Closed/%	PFD	Carry Over Next Month
TOTAL	44	103	180	147	3	18	8	12	0	36.05%	51	51

Property Crimes Section Enforcement

Felony Arrest	MD Arrest	Vio Arrest	Total Arrest	Search Warrant	Special Projects	Arrest Warrant	Grand Jury	Surveillance	Follow Ups	Info Charging
1	0	0	1	13	0	1	0	5	25	2

Property Crimes Section Types

	CASES	ADULT ARREST	JUVENILE ARREST	REFER TO PROSECUTORS	PENDING FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS	UNFOUNDED
Criminal Property Damage (CPD)	9	0	0	0	9	0
Unauthorized Entry into a Motor Vehicle (UEMV)	17	5	0	3	8	1
Unauthorized Control of a Propelled Vehicle (UCPV)	8	3	0	1	4	0
Burglary	21	3	0	2	15	1
Theft	21	1	0	0	19	1

Vice Section Statistics

	COCAINE	FENTANYL	METH	HEROIN	MARIJUANA	VEHICLES	CURRENCY	FIREARMS	SEARCH WARRANT	ARREST
DEC	1.3g	0	11.5g	0	0	3	\$0	0	5	3
YTD	223.4g	215.4g	2,451.9g	16.1g	442.6g	24	\$29,566.00	4	50	44



Kauai Police Department Firearms Registration Summary Comparison

For Dates Between: 12/01/2025 and 12/31/2025

For Districts: ALL

Print Date: 01/05/2026 04:00

	YTD 2025	YTD 2024	Percent Change	12/01/2025 TO 12/31/2025	11/01/2025 TO 11/30/2025	12/01/2024 TO 12/31/2024
Total Firearms Registered:	2,901	3,009	-3.6%	237	205	261
Handguns:	1,110	1,305	-14.9%	100	82	100
Rifles:	1,503	1,438	4.5%	110	94	131
Shotguns:	288	266	8.3%	27	29	30
Total Firearms Imported:	1,487	1,591	-6.5%	128	100	100
Handguns:	589	763	-22.8%	57	48	32
Rifles:	748	701	6.7%	55	40	56
Shotguns:	150	127	18.1%	16	12	12
Handgun Applications:	586	373	57.1%	72	35	37
Handgun Permits To Aquire Issued:	532	399	33.3%	36	45	61
Handgun Permits To Aquire Rejected:	1	0	100.0%	0	0	0
Handgun Permits To Aquire Voided:	2	3	-33.3%	1	0	0
Longgun Applications:	566	416	36.1%	62	48	46
Longgun Permits To Aquire Issued:	503	423	18.9%	31	30	65
Longgun Permits To Aquire Rejected:	1	1	0.0%	0	0	0
Longgun Permits To Aquire Voided:	5	10	-50.0%	0	1	1
Permit to Carry Applications:	147	316	-53.5%	5	20	12
Permit to Carry Applicants:	111	234	-52.6%	5	16	11
Security Licenses Issued:	7	8	-12.5%	1	0	1
Security Licenses Denied:	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0
Citizen Licenses Issued:	141	322	-56.2%	21	5	29
Citizen Licenses Denied:	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0
Total Licenses to Carry Issued:	148	330	-55.2%	22	5	30
OC Citizen Applications:	0	1	-100.0%	0	0	0
OC Citizen Licenses Issued:	0	1	-100.0%	0	0	0
Citizen Licenses Denied:	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0
Total Firearms Registered By Dealers:	1,247	1,119	11.4%	111	89	82



Kauai Police Department
Crime Summary - Preliminary Point & Time Data
for dates between 12/01/2025 & 12/31/2025

Crimes						
Crime Category	YTD 2025	YTD 2024	Percent Change	12/01/2025 TO 12/31/2025	11/01/2025 TO 11/30/2025	Percent Change
Violent Crimes						
Murder	---	---	---	---	---	---
Completed	1	2	-50.0%	0	0	0.0%
Murder Total	1	2	-50.0%	0	0	0.0%
Rape	---	---	---	---	---	---
Family	18	19	-5.3%	1	4	-75.0%
Known to Victim	25	39	-35.9%	0	1	-100.0%
Stranger	4	7	-42.9%	1	0	100.0%
Undetermined	16	9	77.8%	3	0	300.0%
Rape Total	62	74	-16.2%	5	5	0.0%
Robbery Total	7	11	-36.4%	1	0	100.0%
Aggravated Assault	---	---	---	---	---	---
04A - Firearms	0	4	-400.0%	0	0	0.0%
04B - Knife or Cutting Instrument	11	11	0.0%	3	0	300.0%
04C - Other Dangerous Weapon	23	33	-30.3%	2	1	100.0%
04D - Hands, Fist, Feet, Etc	52	52	0.0%	2	5	-60.0%
Other - Unknown	34	36	-5.6%	4	8	-50.0%
Aggravated Assault Total	120	132	-9.1%	11	14	-21.4%
Total Violent Crimes	190	219	-13.2%	17	19	-10.5%
Property Crimes						
Burglary Total	208	216	-3.7%	24	19	26.3%
Larceny Theft Total	1,133	1,268	-10.6%	100	92	8.7%
Motor Vehicle Theft Total	131	121	8.3%	8	20	-60.0%
Total Property Crimes	1,472	1,605	-8.3%	132	131	0.8%
Total Crime	1,662	1,824	-8.9%	149	150	-0.7%
Arrests						
Violent Crimes						
Murder Total	2	0	200.0%	0	0	0.0%
Rape Total	12	3	300.0%	1	0	100.0%
Robbery Total	3	6	-50.0%	1	0	100.0%
Aggravated Assault Total	73	87	-16.1%	8	8	0.0%
Total Violent Crimes	90	96	-6.3%	10	8	25.0%
Property Crimes						
Burglary Total	51	45	13.3%	3	4	-25.0%
Larceny Theft Total	230	262	-12.2%	19	20	-5.0%
Motor Vehicle Theft Total	53	24	120.8%	6	9	-33.3%
Total Property Crimes	334	331	0.9%	28	33	-15.2%
Total Arrests	424	427	-0.7%	38	41	-7.3%



Kauai Police Department
Activity Summary - Preliminary Point & Time Data
for dates between 12/01/2025 & 12/31/2025

Call Statistics

	YTD 2025	YTD 2024	Percent Change	12/01/2025 TO 12/31/2025	11/01/2025 TO 11/30/2025	Percent Change
Calls for Service						
Law Total	47,269	49,073	-3.7%	4,061	3,682	10.3%
Fire Total	8,257	8,292	-0.4%	755	681	10.9%
EMS Total	7,466	7,214	3.5%	698	620	12.6%
Total Calls for Service	62,992	64,579	-2.5%	5,514	4,983	10.7%

Officer Initiated

Total Traffic Stops	6,200	8,124	-23.7%	467	448	4.2%
Total Citations	13,965	18,656	-25.1%	750	965	-22.3%
Total Warnings	2,629	2,514	4.6%	185	184	0.5%
Total FI's	661	596	10.9%	129	64	101.6%

Incidents by District

Lihue	6,036	6,169	-2.2%	500	466	7.3%
Waimea	2,229	2,086	6.9%	179	173	3.5%
Koloa	2,207	2,430	-9.2%	183	191	-4.2%
Kawaihau	4,354	4,449	-2.1%	318	336	-5.4%
Hanalei	1,979	1,808	9.5%	244	146	67.1%
Not Specified	5	4	25.0%	0	0	0.0%
KPD	11	7	57.1%	1	0	100.0%
Total Incidents	16,821	16,953	-0.8%	1,425	1,312	8.6%

Crash Statistics

Tc Major	493	491	0.4%	35	42	-16.7%
Tc Minor	507	455	11.4%	34	33	3.0%
Total Fatalities	10.00	8.00	25.0%	1.00	1.00	0.0%
Total Crashes	1,000	946	5.7%	69	75	-8.0%



Kauai Police Department Agency Statistics For dates between 12/01/25 00:00 & 12/31/25 23:59

CALLS FOR SERVICE / INCIDENT SUMMARY

Total Calls for Service: 4,754

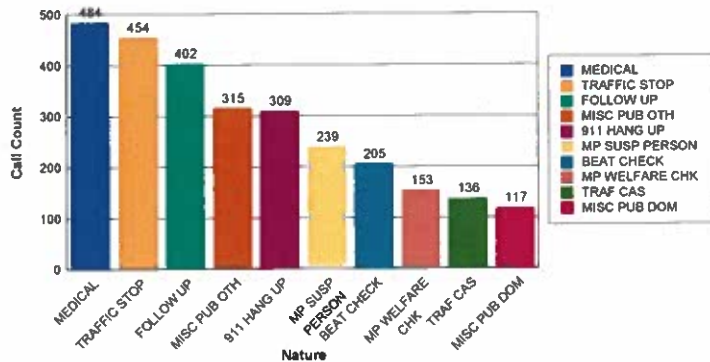
Total Law Calls for Service: 4,061

Total Incidents: 1,424

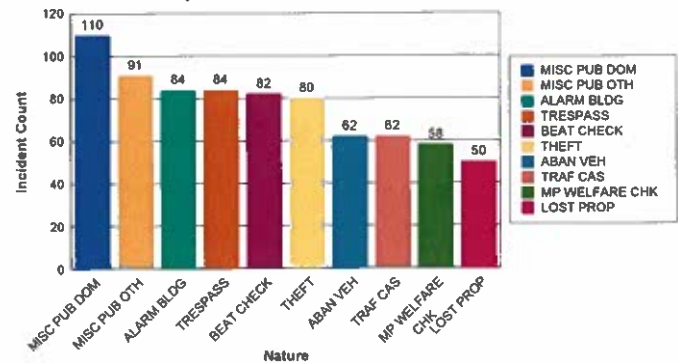
All Units: 5,288

Primary on Incidents: 1,424 Charges Initiated: 1,441

Top 10 Calls for Service



Top 10 Incident Natures



CITATION SUMMARY

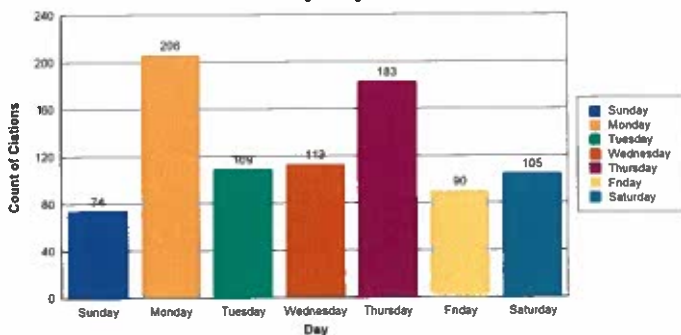
Total Traffic Stops: 467

Total Traffic Warning Issued: 182

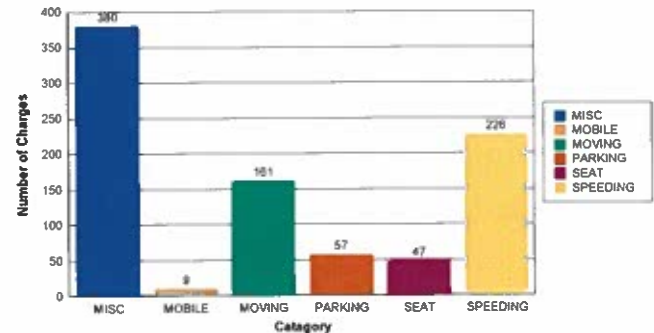
Total FI's: 126

Misc	Mobile	Moving	Parking	Seat	Speed	Covid	Totals	Viol	Non
371	9	153	57	43	98	0	731	289	95

Citations by Day of the Week



Charges By Category





Kauai Police Department Agency Statistics

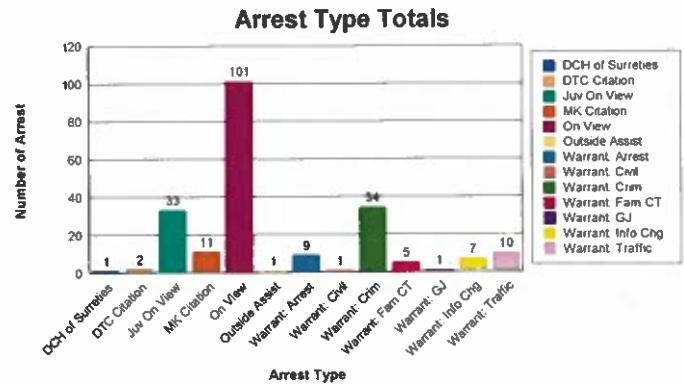
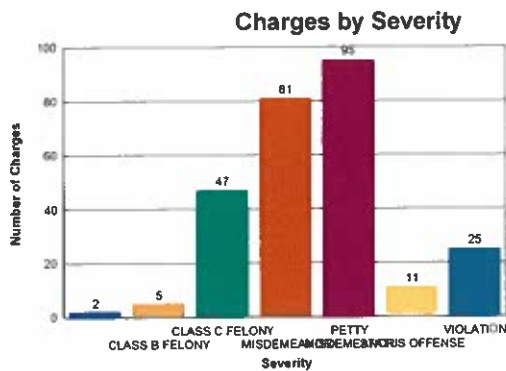
For dates between 12/01/25 00:00 & 12/31/25 23:59

ARREST SUMMARY

Total Arrests: 216 - Juvenile: 33 - Adult: 181

Total Charges: 263 - Felonies: 51 - Total Misdemeanors: 81 - Total Petty Misdemeanors: 95 - Total Others: 36

Total OVUI Arrest Charges: 13



LEGAL SERVICES

Summons / Other	TRO		Protective Orders		Subpoena	Total
	Family	Civil	Family	Civil		
8	0	14	0	2	10	34

WARRANT TYPE All Divisions

Arrest Warrants	Bench Warrants	eBW Traffic	eBW Criminal	Juvenile Warrants
15	1	71	58	1

WARRANT TRACKING All Divisions

Warrant Intake	Served	Recalled	Outstanding
18	106	87	1,874



STATE OF HAWAII ORGANIZATION OF POLICE OFFICERS
" A Police Organization for Police Officers Only "
Founded 1971

RECEIVED

JAN 15 2026

BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

January 15, 2026

Chair Laurie Yoshida
Kauai Police Commission
c/o Office of Boards and Commissions
Pi'ikoi Building, Suite 300
4444 Rice Street
Lihue, HI 96766

Dear Chair Yoshida,

On behalf of the State of Hawaii Organization of Police Officers, I am pleased to introduce our President, Don Faumuina, and our Executive Director, Malcolm Lutu. Both are looking forward to engaging with the Commission and strengthening our collaborative efforts moving into the new year.

We respectfully request to be placed on the Commission's meeting agenda for January 23, 2026, to allow our leadership the opportunity to formally meet the Board, provide updates, and discuss areas of mutual interest.

Please let us know if any additional information is needed in advance of the meeting. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to the opportunity to appear before the Commission.

Sincerely,

JULIE ANTOLIN
SHOPO State Board Administrative Secretary

Cc: DF/ML/JA File

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1717 Hoe Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96819-3125
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Tel: (808) 248-8911

Maul Chapter Office
1887 Wili Pa Loop, Suite 2
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793-1253
Tel: (808) 242-6129
Fax: (808) 242-9519



STATE OF HAWAII ORGANIZATION OF POLICE OFFICERS

" A Police Organization for Police Officers Only "
Founded 1971

December 22, 2025

Walton Hong, Chair
Kaua'i Police Commission
c/o Office of Boards and Commissions
4444 Rice Street, Suite 300
Lihu'e, Hawai'i 96766

SUBJECT: Request for Immediate Public Disclosure Regarding Commission Hiring Actions

Chair Hong and Commissioners,

We are writing to seek immediate public disclosure regarding the Kauai Police Commission's (KPC) hiring actions following an official news media statement made by the County of Kaua'i concerning the selection process for the Chief of Police.

In one of the only public responses we've seen to inquiries regarding the vetting and selection of finalist Rudy Tai, the County issued the following statement to Hawaii Public Radio:

"The Commission is required to follow a process guided by the laws of this State. This process entails a conditional offer of employment be made to a candidate before any background investigation is conducted."

Is this statement, that State Law *prohibits* the Commission from conducting a background investigation prior to a conditional offer, an accurate reflection of the Commission's position regarding its selection process? Is this statement an accurate depiction of the action you took in selecting your finalist for Chief?

This Commission has chosen to conduct itself and this process at a level of secrecy that is unprecedented. You are a public body. While confidentiality is permitted for specific purposes, the hiring of the Chief of Police is a public process. Both the Commission and the process are governed by Hawaii's Sunshine laws. However, the Commission has treated public disclosure as an obstacle versus a value.

The County's statement is deeply troubling because either it is purposely false or **demonstrates a serious misunderstanding of the statutes governing police employment in Hawaii and an ignorance of the County's hiring practices, past Commission practice, and current Commission actions.**

It is imperative that the Commission address this public statement made on its behalf, considering the following:

- Employment of **law enforcement officers is exempt** from the state law referenced,
- General public records and non-criminal conviction records are **not covered by the state law referenced,**
- The County of Kauai (KPD specifically) conducts **criminal background checks** of law enforcement applicants **prior to employment offers** being made,
- The Kauai Police Commission **conducted general public records backgrounding** in the early stages of the 2018 Police Chief hiring process.
- The Kauai Police Commission required the "finalists" during the 2018 process to be **fingerprinted and polygraphed prior to participating in their final interview.**
- The Kauai Police Commission voted to adopt the 2018 process and **took specific votes to authorize pre-offer backgrounding.**

There is no reason for confusion on this issue. The question being asked is very simple: Did the Commission conduct pre-screening/backgrounding checks before it voted to select its top candidate for Chief of Police?

Below, we provide more detail on pre-offer backgrounding, more for the benefit of the public, given that the Commission is familiar with all of this information.

1. State Law Explicitly Exempts Police Agencies

While Hawai'i's "Ban the Box" law (HRS § 378-2.5) generally limits inquiries into criminal convictions until after a conditional offer, **HRS § 378-2.5(d) and HRS § 831-3.1(f) explicitly exempt employment that requires the "exercise of police powers."** The position of Chief of Police falls squarely within this exemption. State law allows, and public safety demands, that police agencies conduct thorough background checks before extending an offer.

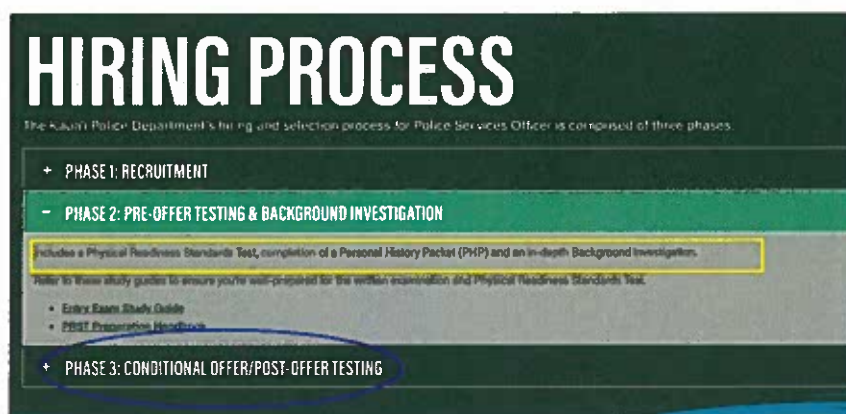
Further, the law does not restrict assessing a candidate's past performance through publicly available information such as news stories and press releases.

2. It Contradicts KPD's Own Hiring Practices

The Kaua'i Police Department's own standard operating procedure for hiring recruits utilizes the exemption described above. KPD's recruitment process places the "In-Depth Background Investigation" in Phase 2, specifically before the "Conditional Offer of Employment" in Phase 3. If State Law prohibits pre-offer background checks, then the Department's entire hiring process for rank-and-file officers would be invalid.

It is illogical to suggest that State Law permits the Department to background check a rookie recruit before making a conditional offer but forbids the Commission from doing the same for the Chief of Police.

The image below is from the Kauai Police Department's website (<https://joinkauaipd.com/faq/>).



3. Kauai Police Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure

There is no prohibition against conducting due diligence or background investigations on finalists prior to a vote in the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure. The Rules only discuss "mandatory follow-up examinations" (Rule 4-3 (3)).

4. Kauai Police Commission Received Extensive Information on Past Practice of Pre-Offer Backgrounding

The County spokesperson's erroneous statement regarding the Commission's restrictions is even more extraordinary once you examine the public record. In fact, they are entirely false.

Attached to the Commission's May 9, 2025, agenda packet is a memorandum from Kevin Mince, dated May 6, 2025, to the Commission detailing the 2018 Police Chief selection process, which includes a detailed timeline of the 2018 Commission's activities. **The timeline clearly shows that the Commission conducted background screening of the candidates well before a conditional offer was made to the selected candidate.**

**AUGUST 2 thru
SEPTEMBER 12:**

PIG screens applications – PIG members work independently

As part of the screening process PIG members did a search of publicly available information from newspapers, government records and court records to ascertain if there was 'Factual Information' that reflected positively or negatively on the applicants suitability to be KPD Chief.

Spreadsheet developed to record ratings

Applicants are rated as:

- Does not meet Minimum Qualifications
- Meets MQs – Lacks adequate law enforcement management experience
- Meets MQs – Has some law enforcement management experience
- Meets MQs – Has extensive law enforcement management experience

As you can see above, the description of the research conducted is essentially the same research SHOPO was forced to conduct on its own because it was evident the Commission did not take such prudent steps in its hiring process.

The Commission did not just passively “receive” the report. The minutes show that Mr. Mince presented the "2018 Selection Process" report to the Commission. He walked them through the phases, explaining how the previous PIG screened and rated applicants.

5. Commission fingerprinted and polygraphed finalists in 2018.

In 2018, the KPC did more than put a candidate’s name in a Google search; they strapped a polygraph machine on them. As you can see from this excerpt of the 2018 Commission’s timeline, finalists were “taken to KPD for fingerprinting and a polygraph examination. Required steps for hiring a peace officer position.” This occurred “prior to their interviews” and was required of “each applicant.”

**NOVEMBER 11
THRU**

12; Interviews conducted. Only 5 Commissioners present. One had resigned shortly before the interview process and one was out of the country.

Prior to their interviews each applicant was taken to KPD for fingerprinting and a polygraph examination. Required steps for hiring a peace officer position. The polygraph examiner was on loan from Maui PD

Following the final interview all Commissioners revealed their scores in a group setting.

Commissioners were unanimous, both by OBJECTIVE point score, and SUBJECTIVE ranking in the number 1 choice.

And to confirm that there is a difference between pre-offer backgrounding and post-offer backgrounding, the next steps in the timeline show that after a conditional offer was made, an additional backgrounding process was conducted by a backgrounding investigator.

NOVEMBER 12:

Commission Chair makes "Conditional Job Offer" to #1 finalist.

That begins a process requiring Boards and Commissions and HR to contract with a mainland background investigator and psychologist. Applicant required to undergo medical exam by his doctor.

JANUARY 2019:

Commission Executive Session to review Chief – Select background investigation, psychological report, and medical exam.

Commission votes to extend formal offer to selectee

APRIL 22, 2019:

New chief takes office

6. Kauai Police Commission Deliberates and Votes on Approving Pre-Offer Screening
Based on the May 9 meeting minutes, the Commission voted to follow the 2018 process (which had the pre-offer backgrounding). Commission members proceeded to discuss the screening process from 2018, being told that the Commission members on that PIG did the screening themselves. Rather than completing that conversation in public view, the Commission chose to retreat behind closed doors. You can see the discussion below (purple boxes indicate discussion to move to closed session).

Kauai Police Commission Open Session Minutes
of the May 9, 2025, Meeting

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SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	the Commission does not ethically screen themselves from the screening process, the Commission would need to create a PIG to screen applications and possibly create a second PIG to score the essays. Additional discussion could occur, but Mr. Saito recommended that any further discussion be done in Executive Session.	
	Vice Chair Yoshida asked Mr. Mince if the initial screening in 2018 was done by the Department of Human Resources. Mr. Mince responded that it was not done by the Department of Human Resources, but by the three members of the PIG.	
	Ms. Hertog stated that she feels additional discussion is needed in Executive Session.	
	Vice Chair Yoshida asked if there was anything remaining on the agenda that the Commission could entertain before going into Executive Session. She noted that chronologically, the remaining items would need to be addressed after a decision is made on KPC 2025-20.	
	Mr. Saito stated that a roll call vote would need to be taken to go into an <u>unanticipated Executive Session</u> .	Ms. Hertog moved to go into Executive Session. Mr. Calina seconded the motion. Motion carried 5.0 by roll call vote.
	There being no objections, the Open Session meeting was recessed at 9:38 a.m. for the Commission to enter Executive Session.	
EXECUTIVE SESSION	Mr. Saito read into the record the Executive Session language noted below: Under HRS § 92-7(a), the Commission may, when deemed necessary, hold an executive session on any agenda item without a written public notice if the executive session was not anticipated in advance. Any such executive	

By this point, it is abundantly obvious that pre-screening is allowed as the Commission is desperately trying to find ways to keep their process secret and legal counsel **only suggests** going into closed session after the Commission discusses not doing the candidate screening themselves.

Commission's Emerges from Closed Session Unified to Authorize Pre-Offer Backgrounding

Before we analyze the Commission's Closed-Session actions, we will revisit the County's official spokesperson's public statement to a major news outlet:

*"The Commission is **required** to follow a process **guided by the laws of this State**. This process entails a conditional offer of employment being made to a candidate **before any background investigation** is conducted." (Emphasis added)*

As you can see, the focus of the County's statement is the legality of the Commission's actions and what they are required to do by law.

Fortunately, the Commission did receive legal guidance on the issue of pre-offer screening. Based on the minutes, the Commission voted to go into "unanticipated Executive Session," meaning it was not agendized for the public. As you can see below, the Commission went into Executive Session specifically to meet with its attorney to discuss the board's powers, duties, etc.

Kauai Police Commission Open Session Minutes
of the May 9, 2025, Meeting

Page 18

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION
	session shall be held pursuant to HRS § 92-4 and shall be limited to those items described in HRS § 92-5(a).
	The Executive Session was for KPC 2025-20 pursuant to HRS 92-5(a)(4) to consult with its attorney concerning the board's powers, duties, immunities, privileges, and liabilities as it relates to this agenda item.
RETURN TO OPEN SESSION	There being no objections, the Open Session meeting was reconvened at 9:49 a.m., and continued as follows: Mr. Saito noted that the Commission is returning from an Executive Session after consulting with its attorney and that the discussion is not subject to disclosure as disclosure would defeat the purpose of the Executive Session pursuant to HRS 92-5(a)(4). Mr. Saito further noted that no action was taken in Executive Session.
KPC 2025-20	Discussion and possible action on reviewing and scoring the applications

Having conferred with their legal counsel immediately following a discussion regarding pre-offer screening, the Commission wastes no time in taking **three votes** to officially establish a process for pre-screening:

- **First, remove the Commission from the screening process; (5-0 Roll Call Vote)**
- **Second, delegate the screening process to Human Resources, and (5-0 Roll Call Vote)**
- **Third, establish a PIG *after* the pre-screening process to score essays, and complete other tasks . (5-0 Roll Call Vote)**

VOTE 1

Vice Chair Yoshida explained that after convening in Executive Session, the Commission is now back on KPC 2025-20 regarding whether to form a PIG to review and score the applications for Chief of Police.	Ms. Hertog moved that the Commission ethically wall themselves off from the initial screening of the applications for the Chief of Police position. Ms. Knutson seconded the motion. Motion carried 5:0 by roll call vote.
Vice Chair Yoshida confirmed the vote that the Police Commission is going to wall themselves off from the initial screening of the applications for the Chief of Police position.	

VOTES 2 & 3

Ms. Hertog asked if the inclusion of Mr. Mince in the initial screening process needed to be added to the motion or if that was included in the establishment of criteria by the Commission. Mr. Saito confirmed that that would be included in the criteria set by the Commission.	Ms. Knutson moved to delegate the screening process to the Department of Human Resources pursuant to the Charter and other criteria established by the Commission. Mr. Calma seconded the motion. Motion carried 5:0 by roll call vote.
Vice Chair Yoshida asked the Commission whether they wanted to form a PIG for the remaining process to include scoring the essays, etc. after the initial screening by the Department of Human Resources.	Ms. Hertog moved that the Commission establish a Permitted Interaction Group for the work needed to be done after the initial screening is completed by the Department of Human Resources. Ms. Knutson seconded the motion. Motion carried 5:0 by roll call vote.

7. Kauai Police Commission Votes to formally approve Pre-Offer Screening Forms

Further solidifying and operationalizing their decision to do pre-offer screening, at their next meeting (May 23, 2025), the Commission voted unanimously to approve the Pre-Offer Screening Forms, which specify that publicly available records will be evaluated. Ensuring that their actions were legal, Mr. Mince informed the Commission that these forms were being submitted for the Commission's approval "following the County Attorney's advice."

Kauai Police Commission Open Session Minutes Of May 23, 2025, Meeting	
Page 18	
SUBJECT	DISCUSSION
	management; these categories are currently on the KPD's chief's annual evaluation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For public information, the screeners will verify if any public records reflect negatively or positively about an applicant. The evaluators will deem their opinion of each applicant. Screeners will make a recommendation. Color coded spreadsheet was used in 2018. The last page explains what a full-service police agency is.
	Vice Chair Yoshida thanked Mr. Mince for his outstanding work, noting that the documents provided the Commission with an overview of the type of requirements a police chief applicant must have, and it also offered the screeners with an explanation of what constitutes a full-service police agency.

After there were no further comments or questions, Chair Hong requested the Commissioners to express their preferences.
Vice Chair Yoshida moved to approve and adopt the screening criteria, attachments 1 – 4, and the Boards and Commissions Staff Report. Commissioner Knutson seconded the motion. Hearing no objections, the motion carried 5:0.

Based on an examination of the minutes, there should now be no question that the KPC was aware of the pre-backgrounding issue, supported pre-backgrounding, consulted their attorney regarding pre-backgrounding, and took several votes to ensure pre-backgrounding could happen. Given these facts, the public deserves an explanation as to why the County issued the statement to the contrary?

Conclusion

This process has unnecessarily been shrouded in secrecy. The public deserves to know the steps you took to make this critical decision. Again, the issue is simple. Did you conduct pre-offer backgrounding or not? Following the answer to that question, it's the Commission's duty to inform the public on what actions it took.

We urge you to respond thoroughly and publicly as soon as possible so the public is not left in the dark any longer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nick Schlapak".

Nick Schlapak
President

[POLICE COMMISSION LETTERHEAD]

January 23, 2026

Nick Schlapak, President
State of Hawaii Organization of Police Officers
1717 Hoe Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96819

OS KPC 2026-1

RE: Response to Letter dated December 22, 2025 regarding "Request for Immediate Public Disclosure Regarding Commission Hiring Actions"

Dear Mr. Schlapak,

This letter is in acknowledgement of your letter dated December 22, 2025, regarding the Police Commission's selection process to appoint the next chief of police. You asked: "Did the Commission conduct pre-screening/backgrounding checks before it voted to select its top candidate for Chief of Police?"

The Police Commission, in conformance with Chapters 78, 378, 831, and 846, of the Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS), did not conduct any criminal background checks or investigations before it voted to extend a conditional offer of employment to the top candidate. The Police Commission did, however, delegate to the Department of Human Resources the task of preliminarily screening all submitted applications to ensure the candidates met the minimum qualifications for chief of police under Section 11.04 of the Charter of the County of Kaua'i and the criteria adopted by the Police Commission at its public meeting on May 23, 2025. The Police Commission also tasked the permitted interaction group formed on May 9, 2025, with screening submitted candidate essays in accordance with the criteria adopted by the Police Commission at its public meeting on June 27, 2025.

The Police Commission conducted this selection process pursuant to Sunshine Law and in a manner that appropriately balanced the public's interest to know the Police Commission's business, the privacy of the candidates who put forth their names to serve, and the ability to consult with the Commission's attorney.

The Police Commission thanks the public for its testimony regarding the finalists and values this input as part of its public decision-making. The Police Commission also expresses its earnest hope that next chief of police is afforded a fair opportunity to lead the Police Department into its next chapter.

Sincerely,

Laurie Yoshida, Chair

Mary Kay Hertog, Vice Chair

Merrilee "Mia" Ako, Member

John Calma, Member

Walton Hong, Member

Lisa Knutson, Member

[POLICE COMMISSION LETTERHEAD]

DRAFT