



SALARY COMMISSION

JOSHUA UYEHARA, Pro Tem, CHAIR
WAYNE KATAYAMA, VICE CHAIR

BERNADETTE AKIONA-ARRUDA, MEMBER
STACIE CHIBA-MIGUEL, MEMBER
PAUL TONER, MEMBER
VACANT, MEMBER
VACANT, MEMBER

RECEIVED

Meetings of the Salary Commission will be conducted as follows:

- Meetings will be publicly noticed under Chapter 92, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS).
- Minutes of meetings will be completed under Chapter 92, HRS, and posted to the Salary Commission's website.

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Public Comments and Testimony:

- **Written testimony** will be accepted for any agenda item herein.
 - Written testimony indicating your 1) name, 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 mromo@kauai.gov or mailed to the Salary Commission, c/o Office of Boards and Commission, 4444 Rice Street, Suite 300, Lihue, Hawaii 96766.
 - Written testimony received by the Salary Commission at least two business days before the meeting will be distributed and available as part of the Commission's packet and written testimony submitted thereafter will be distributed at the meeting.
 - Any written testimony received after this time and up to the start of the meeting will be summarized by the Clerk of the Commission during the meeting and will be provided to the members and added to the record thereafter.
 - Any written testimony received during the meeting and before the decision-making on the corresponding agenda item will be distributed to the members before such decision-making.
- **Oral testimony** will be accepted for any agenda item herein.
 - It is recommended that anyone interested in providing oral testimony register at least 24 hours before the meeting by emailing mromo@kauai.gov or calling (808) 241-4920. Any request to register may include your 1) name, and if applicable, your position/title and organization you are representing, 2) the agenda item you are providing comment on, and 3) contact information (telephone number and email address).
 - Per the Salary Commission's Oral Testimony Policy there is a three-minute time limit per testifier for each agenda item.
 - Individuals who have not registered to provide testimony will be allowed to speak on an agenda item following the registered speakers.

OFFICE OF
THE COUNTY CLERK
COUNTY OF KAUAI

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

If you need an auxiliary aid/service or other accommodation due to a disability, or an interpreter for non-English speaking persons, contact Anela Davis 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 alternate formats such as large print, Braille, or electronic copy.

SALARY COMMISSION MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

Thursday, March 12, 2026

9:00 a.m. or shortly after

Piikoi Building, Boards and Commissions Conference Room, Suite 300
4444 Rice Street, Lihue, Hawai'i 96766

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CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

ROLL CALL TO ASCERTAIN QUORUM

OFFICE OF
THE COUNTY CLERK
COUNTY OF KAUAI

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

ELECTION OF NEW CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2026

PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON ANY AGENDA ITEMS

Individuals may testify on any agenda item or wait for the item to come up.

CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENT

- The next Salary Commission meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, April 9, 2026, in the Office of Boards and Commissions Conference Room, Suite 300.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

July 10, 2025, Open Session Meeting

July 10, 2025, Executive Session Meeting

CORRESPONDENCE

Communication dated August 22, 2025, from Commissioner Patrick Ono to Boards and Commissions Administrator Ellen Ching, informing her that he will step down from his position as a member of the Salary Commission in September 2025.

BUSINESS:

SC 2026-1:

Discussion and decision-making on submitting a Salary Resolution to establish maximum salary caps for certain County officers and employees are included in Section 3-2.1 of the Kauai County Code for Fiscal Years 2026/2027 and 2027/2028.

SC 2026-3:

Presentation by the Permitted Interaction Group (PIG) on recommendations for performance-based increases.

SC 2026-4:

Presentation by the Permitted Interaction Group (PIG) on recommendations to develop a plan for salary increases that address each department's unique challenges, rather than applying broad percentage increases across all elected and appointed positions.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

ES SC 2026-1:

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 July 10, 2025, meeting. Publishing the executive meeting minutes would undermine the lawful purpose of these meetings, including the purposes outlined in HRS §§ 92-5(a)(2) and (a)(4).

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

- Executive Session Report pursuant to HRS § 92-4(b).

EXECUTIVE SESSION CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC: 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: Deputy County Attorney Andrew Michaels

DRAFT To Be Approved

OPEN SESSION MEETING MINUTES

Board or Commission	Kaua'i Salary Commission	Meeting Date	July 10, 2025
Location	Piikoi Building, Boards and Commissions Conference Room Suite 300 4444 Rice Street, Līhu'e, Hawai'i 96766	Start of Meeting: 9:03 a.m.	End of Meeting: 11:22 a.m.
Present	Chair Joshua Uyehara; Vice Chair Wayne Katayama; Commissioners Bernadette Akiona-Arruda and Commissioner Stacie Chiba-Miguel. Also present: Boards and Commissions Support Staff: Administrator Ellen Ching and Support Clerk Mercedes Omo; Deputy County Attorney Andrew Michaels (<i>via Microsoft Teams</i>).		
Excused	Commissioners Patrick Ono and Paul Toner		
Absent			

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
MEETING CALLED TO ORDER/ROLL CALL TO ASCERTAIN QUORUM	<p>Chair Uyehara called the Salary Commission Meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.</p> <p>Support Clerk Mercedes Omo verified attendance by roll call: Commissioner Bernadette Akiona-Arruda replied present. Commissioner Stacie Chiba-Miguel replied present. Commissioner Patrick Ono was excused. Commissioner Paul Toner was excused. Vice Chair Wayne Katayama replied present. Chair Joshua Uyehara replied present.</p> <p>Deputy County Attorney Andrew Michaels (Mr. Michaels) was present via Microsoft Teams. Administrator Ellen Ching was present at the meeting.</p>	<p>A quorum was established with four Commissioners present.</p>

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
APPROVAL OF AGENDA	<p>Chair Uyehara asked for a motion to approve the agenda.</p> <p>There was no one from the public present who wished to testify on this agenda item. Administrator Ching noted that there was no one present from the public wishing to testify on any agenda item, and therefore, Chair Uyehara would not have to ask for public testimony going forward.</p>	<p>Ms. Chiba-Miguel moved to approve the agenda, as circulated. Ms. Akiona-Arruda seconded the motion. Motion carried 4:0.</p>
CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENT	<p>The next regular monthly Salary Commission meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, August 14, 2025, in the Office of Boards and Commissions Conference Room, Suite 300.</p>	
PUBLIC TESTIMONY	<p>Individuals may testify on any agenda item or wait for the item to come up on the agenda.</p> <p>There was no one from the public present who wished to testify on any agenda item.</p>	
APPROVAL OF MINUTES	<p>Administrator Ching noted that if there were no amendments to the Executive Session minutes, Chair Uyehara could proceed with calling for a motion to approve both minutes. Chair Uyehara requested a motion to approve or amend the Open Session Minutes and the Executive Session Minutes from the June 12, 2025, Meeting.</p>	<p>Vice Chair Katayama moved to approve the Open Session and the Executive Session Minutes of the June 12, 2025, Meeting, as circulated. Ms. Chiba-Miguel seconded the motion. Motion carried 4:0.</p>
MEMORANDUM	<p><u>Memorandum dated May 5, 2025, from Kā'aina Hull, Planning Department Director, to Joshua Uyehara, Chair Salary Commission, regarding follow-up requests relating to the Planning Department's recognitions and achievements.</u></p> <p>Chair Uyehara called for a motion to accept the memorandum into the record.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Chair Uyehara commended the Planning Department for their accomplishments. Administrator Ching added that she is very proud of the Department for being a leader across the nation for various planning initiatives. This is the reason why the County of Kaua'i is not in the same situation as other jurisdictions related to transient vacation rentals (TVRs).</p>	<p>Vice Chair Katayama moved to receive the memorandum from Kā'aina Hull, dated May 5, 2025, for the record. Ms. Chiba-Miguel seconded the motion. Motion carried 4:0.</p>
<p>BUSINESS: SC 2025-1</p>	<p><u>Discussion and decision-making on submitting a Salary Resolution to establish maximum salary caps for certain County officers and employees included in Section 3-2.1 of the Kaua'i County Code for Fiscal Years 2025/2026, 2026/2027, and 2027/2028.</u></p> <p>Chair Uyehara stated that agenda items SC 2025-8 and SC 2025-9 will be addressed to hopefully assist the Commission in moving forward with this agenda item. With no objections, the Commission proceeded to the following agenda item.</p>	<p>No action was taken regarding this agenda item.</p>
<p>SC 2025-7</p>	<p><u>Discussion and action on adopting guidelines for the Salary Resolution. (Deferred on June 12, 2025)</u></p> <p>Administrator Ching stated that her Office sent out emails to the Commissioners regarding suggestions for guidelines, but they have not received a response. Administrator Ching further noted that she was unsure whether the Commission wanted to keep this agenda item on future agendas or remove it from them. The Commission could also defer the item pending the recommendations from the permitted interaction groups (PIGs). Chair Uyehara stated that he would like to see the item deferred until the PIGs have completed their work and provided feedback.</p>	<p>Ms. Chiba-Miguel moved to defer SC 2025-7, pending the outcome of the work done by the PIGs. Ms. Akiona-Arruda seconded the motion. Motion carried 4:0.</p>

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
<p>SC 2025-8</p>	<p><u>Discussion and action on making recommendations to include performance-based increases in the salary resolution by forming a permitted interaction group (PIG) pursuant to HRS § 92-2.5(b)(1) relating to performance-based increases and if so, the assignment of commission members to the PIG, the determination of the scope of the PIG, and the defining of each member's authority. (Deferred on June 12, 2025)</u></p> <p>Administrator Ching stated that the Commission should first make a motion to form the PIG. Chair Uyehara summarized that this PIG would be focused on performance-based adjustments to the salary cap. One clarification would be that performance could be based on any objective metric, potentially including the attainment of qualifications relevant to the position. The scope is broad, covering potential adjustments that the Commission is considering addressing some of the concerns discussed in past Commission meetings.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama inquired whether the performance-based adjustments were limited solely to department heads and deputies. Chair Uyehara responded that the Salary Commission's purview is over department heads and deputies only.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama asked if performance-based measures were implemented, whether they would cascade down through the ranks. Vice Chair Katayama also asked if that might be subject to collective bargaining. Chair Uyehara responded that he believes it is subject to collective bargaining for the staff covered by it, as all their compensation must be bargained. Chair Uyehara also mentioned that it would be helpful to ensure that incentives are aligned for department heads and deputies.</p>	<p>Ms. Chiba-Miguel moved to form a PIG. Ms. Akiona-Arruda seconded the motion.</p>

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Vice Chair Katayama stated that he had a technical question. He asked whether the PIG, as covered under agenda item SC 2025-8, is sufficient to address the scope of work that Chair Katayama is describing.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara responded that part of the motion aims to define the scope of the PIG.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama stated that part of the challenge is to make the scope as broad as possible to give the PIG as much leeway; however, if it is too wide, issues may arise based on his experience with PIGs.</p> <p>Administrator Ching stated that Vice Chair Katayama's advice is wise and very accurate. Operationally, the Commission should aim for the PIG's scope to be as broad as possible; however, due to the Sunshine Law, it must be specific enough to comply with the law. Administrator Ching also mentioned that Mr. Michaelis is present to ensure the Commission follows the Sunshine Law.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara stated that the Commission may want to consider the end goal in mind, so that the goal of the PIG is to produce a set of recommendations and address the issues that are the subject of the PIG. Those issues include potential performance-based or qualification-based incentives beyond the minimum qualifications. The PIG should determine which sources and resources need to be reviewed to develop those recommendations. Those sources could include the Department of Human Resources (HR), the Administration, and others. Administrator Ching stated that she feels the discussion about the PIG identifying resources is a good one, but she would not include that as part of the PIG's scope. This limits the PIG as to what resources they can access.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Regarding the scope, the Commission should concentrate on the specific task(s) of the PIG.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama asked who had written the job descriptions for the department heads and deputies.</p> <p>Administrator Ching responded that for commission- or board-appointed department heads, it would be the responsibility of the commission/board to write the job description. For everyone else, Administrator Ching stated that those job descriptions would come from the Mayor, Managing Director, or the appointing authority, in consultation with HR. Chair Uyehara further responded that there is some level of detail in a job description layered within the County Charter. There is also a minimum qualification noted in the Charter. Administrator Ching added that the appointing authority will create the job description. The person they directly report to would make the job description.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama asked whether the focus of the PIG would be department heads and deputies. Chair Uyehara responded that the focus would be on any position that is within the scope of the Salary Resolution. Administrator Ching concurred and added that the department head would formulate the job descriptions for the deputies. Vice Chair Katayama asked who reviews job descriptions and whether they are sent to HR for sign-off.</p> <p>Administrator Ching responded that Vice Chair Katayama was correct.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Vice Chair Katayama asked whether he was correct in stating that commissions are responsible for the job descriptions of positions like Chief of Police, Fire Chief, and County Engineer.</p> <p>Administrator Ching confirmed that Vice Chair Katayama was correct, although the Mayor or Managing Director would oversee the job description for the County Engineer. Most department heads have their minimum qualifications outlined in the Charter. However, the minimum qualifications for deputies are less detailed in the Charter. Boards and commissions serving as appointing authorities are limited by the Charter in defining minimum qualifications; however, this limitation does not extend to job descriptions.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama asked whether, for the PIG's consideration, regarding licensing requirements for a specific position, whether that was strictly by statute or if the Commission could set minimum and maximum amounts layered into their pay structure.</p> <p>Administrator Ching responded affirmatively. Generally, the Charter specifies the minimum years of experience required for certain positions. Administrator Ching noted that she recently reviewed the minimum qualifications for positions in the County of Hawai'i and the City and County of Honolulu, finding similar experience requirements for their department heads. Due to recent Charter Amendments, there is no longer a minimum requirement for the Department of Water Manager, Engineer, and County Engineer to hold engineering licenses. The only positions covered under the Salary Resolutions that require a graduate-level degree are those of attorneys in the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney and the</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Office of the County Attorney, all of whom must be practicing attorneys.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama stated he believes they must be licensed attorneys in the State of Hawai'i.</p> <p>Ms. Chiba-Miguel asked whether the requirement for attorneys to be licensed and practicing was mandated through the Charter. Administrator Ching responded that she believes it is mandated in the Charter.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama stated that recently, there has been a requirement for the Chief of Police to hold a four-year college degree. He also inquired how that was implemented.</p> <p>Administrator Ching explained that the requirement was added to the Charter through a Charter Amendment in 2020. The qualifications were significantly raised. The Police Commission found that when they sought applicants, some were serving as bailiffs or in other law enforcement-related roles who applied because they met the minimum years of experience. However, the Police Commission believed these candidates were not the right fit for Chief of Police. They recommended that the Chief of Police have at least 15 years of experience in a police department, with some years at a management level, along with a four-year degree. The Police Commission is considering proposing another Charter Amendment to modify the degree requirement, which currently specifies a need for a degree in criminal justice or a similar field. They are exploring the possibility of amending it to keep the degree requirement but make it less narrow or specific about the field of study, as the current restriction has limited applicants. There has been considerable testimony from the Police</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Department stating that a degree is not necessary and that years of experience are more valuable. Discussions at the Police Commission have been lively, especially given recent issues involving the Chief of Police positions in Maui County and the City and County of Honolulu. Vice Chair Katayama added that the County of Hawai'i is also experiencing problems with its Chief of Police. Administrator Ching also noted that, nationally, a degree is typically required for the position of Chief of Police.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama stated that when discussing the PIG process, the baseline must be the qualifications outlined in the Charter. Administrator Ching agreed with Vice Chair Katayama's statement.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara stated that the Charter will provide the minimum qualifications, but additional adjustments can be made, similar to what was found in Salary Resolution No. 2020-3. Given situations where an employee came from a bargaining unit, the maximum salary was adjusted accordingly. The Commission could also note that if someone has a specific requirement, then the cap for that position would be higher.</p> <p>Ms. Chiba-Miguel noted that what Chair Uyehara pointed out would not be a minimum qualification, but rather something above and beyond that.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara responded that what he describes would act as an incentive. For example, if the County Engineers are truly Professional Engineers, they might qualify for a license adjustment. The Commission could also acknowledge that the relevant appointing authority can set an incentive of up to a certain percentage for merit-based increases. The PIG could recommend a specific adjustment for a position or propose a process for the appointing authority to award merit-based increases up to a certain</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>amount.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama asked how the 95% rule would impact positions where the deputy may qualify for the incentive, but having that incorporated into their salary would violate the 95% rule.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara responded that the Commission could specify that the incentive is available if it does not violate the rule. While Chair Uyehara stated that if there are corresponding incentives for the department and deputy, Vice Chair Katayama interjected and said that he would assume that the incentive would cover both positions, as that falls within the Commission's charge.</p> <p>Administrator Ching stated that the scenarios being described may arise with the Department of Water, as well as with the Planning Department. The Deputy Director of the Planning Department is also an attorney.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama asked if there was a path forward around that happening. Chair Uyehara responded that the Commission could set the cap for the department head high enough that it would not matter, or provide an alternative set of requirements. Vice Chair Katayama stated that the Commission may be getting ahead of itself.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Ms. Chiba-Miguel stated that the Commission could determine that if someone has a specific license, their maximum salary range could be set at a higher level. Ms. Chiba-Miguel noted that she does not believe that inversion will ever be remedied in specific situations, such as what is occurring at the Department of Water. In that situation, there are Deputy or even regular engineers who hold degrees that qualify them for the added bonuses. In contrast, the department head is not required to have the same type of degree or license. Ms. Chiba-Miguel noted that in such situations, she does not see the inversion going away unless the incentive is also given to the department head or deputy to obtain a raise in their salary level to an amount above that of those below them.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama responded that he believes that would be the ideal situation. Vice Chair Katayama also said that he does not think the department head's salary could be inflated enough to avoid an inversion situation, especially if the deputy is at the higher end of the scale. He further stated that he does not believe that would be fair. Chair Uyehara replied that there could be actual performance-based metrics that come into play to reward someone who meets specific benchmarks and does their job very well.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara stated that it is preferable to reward actual performance. Vice Chair Katayama mentioned that performance-based incentives should not involve significant increases in compensation. However, he noted that if, for example, someone in the Planning Department is a licensed attorney with a Ph.D. in the field, that would justify an incentive. There may also be department heads with performance metrics that could surpass the usual qualifications or licensing incentives.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Vice Chair Katayama acknowledged he might be jumping ahead in the discussion. He asked the Commission to take these considerations into account.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara added that what Vice Chair Katayama is describing is part of what the designated PIG will need to explore. Jokingly, Vice Chair Katayama asked if the Commission was smart enough to figure all of that out.</p> <p>Administrator Ching stated that in coordinating the meetings with PIGs, her recommendation would be to include HR in those discussions immediately. Their participation at the beginning and end will be key. HR should have the ability to vet any potential recommendations before the PIG reports back to the full Commission, ensuring that the recommendations are on solid ground. Administrator Ching stated that she heard from a discussion with HR that the Commission should not get fixated on the inversions. That leads her to believe that what they feel is within the realm of possibility is keeping pace with the inflation, bargaining units, etc., and to come close to or within the ballpark of addressing inversions without getting so fixated with it that it deters the Commission from doing the good work it intends to do. According to her previous discussions with HR, Administrator Ching noted that HR believes addressing every single inversion issue will be a complicated task, especially with the various statutes that must be followed.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Vice Chair Katayama asked how the Commission could assess the satisfaction of department heads and deputies with their jobs, considering the current salary structure. Vice Chair Katayama also showed interest in determining whether the County is assigning the right people to the right positions. Administrator Ching responded that she believes this is a conversation the Commission should have with the Managing Director.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara stated that the discussion is one that the PIG could undertake. Vice Chair Katayama mentioned that the discussion is one the Commission definitely needs to have. Chair Uyehara, agreeing with Administrator Ching, further added that the conversation could naturally follow from the discussion of a performance-based incentive structure. Are there performance indicators the Commission could consider as a basis for salary cap adjustments?</p> <p>Administrator Ching stated that the PIG having those types of discussions with HR and separately with the Managing Director will promote honest conversations, especially since these meetings are not required to be held in public.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama inquired if there is a way for the Commission to determine the exempt versus non-exempt status of department heads compared to collective bargaining members. Administrator Ching responded that the question should be directed to HR, as they handle all human resource decisions and actions. She added that HR is very efficient, and whenever she has questions about processes, she always calls them for guidance and advice.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Vice Chair Katayama stated that the last Salary Resolution blurred the line between exempt and non-exempt employees. Chair Uyehara responded that the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) exemption means that the employer is not required to pay overtime, but they could. Typically, it is not mandatory. Just because someone receives overtime pay does not mean they are non-exempt. Vice Chair Katayama asked the Commission how strongly they felt about that. If the response is that no one cares or that they are indifferent, the discussions might take a different direction.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara noted that a key to discussions is to consider what will be structurally beneficial for the County of Kaua'i in the long term. Vice Chair Katayama agreed. Chair Uyehara also pointed out that each Administration will have different priorities and perspectives on which political risks they're willing to take. Administrator Ching mentioned that when she observes other jurisdictions, the County of Kaua'i is very fortunate to be financially stable. Under Mayor Carvalho's administration, they considered cutting departments due to decreased funding. The County experienced about two years of the pandemic, yet revenues remained relatively stable throughout that period.</p> <p>Administrator Ching pointed out that politically, whenever the Commission has to go before the Council to pass a Salary Resolution, the public often reacts strongly when someone earns \$100,000. She mentioned that Chair Uyehara had previously said that \$100,000 now and what that amount could buy before are two different comparisons, and that idea has really stuck with her. Once the public sees a salary over \$100,000, it tends to become a contentious issue. This leads to public confusion because people often blame the Council or Mayor for setting those salaries, not realizing it's the Salary Commission that makes those</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>decisions. Regarding the discussion about exempt versus non-exempt employees, Administrator Ching said that public perception might be less favorable if someone earns over \$100,000 in salary but is also allowed to earn overtime. All those factors together could undermine public support. Vice Chair Katayama responded that the information from Administrator Ching is helpful to understand. She also added that she knows each Commissioner is aware of how the public perceives these salaries and what can be verified.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama mentioned that a key challenge will be for the Commission to accurately understand the current market and set the highest salary levels to attract the right talent for the necessary work in the future.</p> <p>Administrator Ching responded that, as the Planning Director had alluded to in previous meetings, the Planning Department itself is attracting applicants simply because they want to work for that specific department, due to its reputation. Those applying there have bypassed considering the exact salary for the opportunity and the experience required to work in that award-winning department. Vice Chair Katayama jokingly stated that the Planning Department can be the "poster child" department.</p> <p>Administrator Ching explained that the Planning Commission needed to be cautioned about the most recent Salary Resolution, which was passed because they had voted to approve all future increases in a single motion. HR asked Administrator Ching to speak with the Planning Commission to inform them that their approach might not be advisable, as future Planning Commissions may want the ability to evaluate and approve salary increases in subsequent years. By granting all increases for the current</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>year, they effectively undermine the authority of future Planning Commissions. What their decision will be remains unknown. The Board of Water Supply also applied the same approach for its department heads. For all other boards or commissions with appointing authority responsibilities, they conducted performance evaluations and then added an agenda item to decide on salary increases. Not all employees receive increases every year, as determined by the historical practices of these boards and commissions with appointing authority.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara stated that to address some concerns raised by Administrator Ching, the Commission could decide to establish mechanisms that would need to be set annually. The specific board or commission would then have these mechanisms available, requiring them to set up the mechanisms each year before broadly approving all future salary increases. If such a mechanism exists, it would make it impossible for a board or commission to guarantee a future increase. Each year, that board or commission would need to decide whether to grant that year's salary increases.</p> <p>Administrator Ching stated that the Commission should set the framework and then let the appointing authority handle the detailed work. He noted that the Police Commission of the City and County of Honolulu was audited and heavily criticized for not conducting annual reviews. All boards and commissions with appointing authority responsibilities set yearly goals and objectives for their appointees. These are discussed and approved during their meetings. There is also an annual review of how well the appointees perform in relation to these goals and objectives. The Police Commission decided to delay the former Police Chief's yearly evaluation because he was planning to retire.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Chair Uyehara mentioned that another aspect that could be included in the scope of the PIG would be to determine whether the board, commission, or appointing authority, if it sets performance requirements for the appointee and communicates them to the County Council by a specific date, then submits the evaluation at year's end, then, based on their decision, the appointee would receive a 10% increase (as an example). This would tie the mechanism to the appointing authority, whereas if they do their job in setting clear goals and objectives and then follow up with the results of the appointee meeting those goals, there would be a financial incentive linked to that mechanism. There is a reason for the appointing authority to do this beyond just an annual requirement. The appointee will also want to encourage their appointing authority to complete it, because there is a financial incentive for them as well. There are many ways this could be implemented if the PIG is creative enough to explore it, including qualifications, performance processes, performance objectives, etc.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama asked if the Commission had to convene in Executive Session to go over Mr. Michaels' memorandum to the Commission. Administrator Ching responded that the Commission would need to convene into Executive Session for that discussion. Vice Chair Katayama stated that he would like to convene an Executive Session to understand the contents of the memorandum from Mr. Michaels, so that he can grasp the full scope of what needs to be discussed and scoped out for the PIG.</p> <p>Ms. Chiba-Miguel stated that she would need to step out of the meeting at around 10:15 a.m.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Administrator Ching stated that there is currently a motion and a second to form the PIG. The Commission still needs to define the scope of the PIG and identify its members, but those details can be addressed in subsequent motions. The Commission could also go into Executive Session first and then handle the other motions afterward.</p> <p>There being no objections, agenda item ES SC 2025-3 was taken out of order.</p>	<p>The motion to form a PIG was then put to a vote and carried by a vote of 4:0.</p>
<p>EXECUTIVE SESSION</p>	<p><u>ES SC 2025-3: Under Hawaii Revised Statutes §94-4 and §92-5 (a) (4), the purpose of this Executive Session is for Deputy County Attorney Andrew Michaels to brief the Commission on which positions should be included in the Salary Resolution.</u></p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama asked whether the Commission needed to invite Mr. Michaels, Administrator Ching, and Ms. Omo into the Executive Session. Administrator Ching agreed in response.</p> <p>Administrator Ching read the language of the Executive Session agenda posting into the record.</p> <p>There being no objections, the Open Session meeting was recessed at 9:51 a.m. for the Commission to convene in Executive Session.</p> <p>There being no objections, the Open Session meeting was reconvened at 10:42 a.m. and proceeded as follows:</p>	<p>Ms. Chiba-Miguel moved that the Commission enter an Executive Session, along with Mr. Michaels, Administrator Ching, and Ms. Omo, as resource people. Ms. Akiona-Arruda seconded the motion. Motion carried 4:0.</p>

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
<p>RETURN TO OPEN SESSION TO RATIFY THE ACTIONS TAKEN IN EXECUTIVE SESSION</p>	<p>The Commission reconvened the Open Session Meeting after exiting the Executive Session, which had been held for Mr. Michaels to brief the Commission on the positions to be included in the Salary Resolution, as posted.</p> <p>There being no objections, agenda item SC 2025-8 continued as follows:</p>	<p>No formal action was taken in Executive Session.</p>
<p>SC 2025-8 (CONT.)</p>	<p><u>Discussion and action on making recommendations to include performance-based increases in the salary resolution by forming a permitted interaction group (PIG) pursuant to HRS § 92-2.5(b)(1) relating to performance-based increases and if so, the assignment of commission members to the PIG, the determination of the scope of the PIG, and the defining of each member's authority. (Deferred on June 12, 2025) cont.</u></p> <p>Chair Uyehara clarified that when the Commission recessed the meeting to go into Executive Session, it was on the verge of deciding the scope of the PIG. The scope might include providing recommendations on modifications to the maximum salary for positions subject to the Salary Commission based on qualifications and performance criteria. Chair Uyehara asked Mr. Michaels if that summary was sufficient. Vice Chair Katayama added that it could be expanded to include that the positions are as defined in Kaua'i County Code Sections 3-2.1 and 3-3.1. Mr. Michaels responded that Chair Uyehara's scope was sufficient. Chair Uyehara replied to Vice Chair Katayama, expressing his preference to keep the scope broad and stating that it relates to positions subject to the Salary Commission.</p>	<p>Ms. Chiba-Miguel moved that the PIG's scope of work includes the production of recommendations to the Salary Commission regarding modifications to the maximum salary based on additional qualifications or performance metrics and objectives for positions subject to the Salary Commission. Ms. Akiona-Arruda seconded the motion. Motion carried 4:0.</p>

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Chair Uyehara stated that the subsequent motion would be on the PIG's membership and its authority. Chair Uyehara asked if Vice Chair Katayama would be willing to chair the PIG. Vice Chair Katayama jokingly stated that perhaps Ms. Chiba-Miguel would want to chair the PIG. Vice Chair Katayama volunteered to chair the PIG.</p> <p>Ms. Omo clarified that the Commission is defining each member's authority of the PIG as being given to Vice Chair Katayama as the Chair of the PIG. Administrator Ching and the Commission were in concurrence.</p>	<p>Ms. Chiba-Miguel moved that Vice Chair Katayama chair the PIG, and its membership includes Ms. Chiba-Miguel and Ms. Akiona-Arruda. Ms. Akiona-Arruda seconded the motion. Motion carried 4:0.</p>
<p>SC 2025-9</p>	<p><u>Discussion and action on making recommendations to formulate a plan to provide salary increases that will address the unique challenges in each department as opposed to broad percentage increases across all elected and appointed positions by forming a permitted interaction group (PIG) pursuant to HRS § 92-2.5(b)(1) relating to an individualized plan for increases and if so, the assignment of commission members to the PIG, the determination of the scope of the PIG, and the defining of each member's authority. (Deferred on June 12, 2025)</u></p> <p>Chair Uyehara stated that the first item would be a motion to form the PIG.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara stated that the next step would be to identify the scope of work for this specific PIG. Chair Uyehara noted that the scope would be to develop recommendations for the Salary Commission regarding how to address the individual challenges of each department and position, subject to the Salary Commission. This would be done individually, rather than the historical practice of blanket increases. As was discussed previously, Chair Uyehara stated that he would expect things like how Salary Resolution No. 2020-3 would be rolled back and address the specific challenge it was intended to address for the Police Department, how to do that in a</p>	<p>Ms. Chiba-Miguel moved to form a PIG. Ms. Akiona-Arruda seconded the motion. Motion carried 4:0.</p>

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>different way that does not run afoul of the issues previously discussed, etc.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama asked if it would be better to focus on the departments that have inversions and, specifically, identify those departments.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara responded that a part of the Pigs' role is to identify which departments need that specific attention first. Ms. Chiba-Miguel stated that the scope should also be broad enough to encompass all departments. Vice Chair Katayama responded that the first PIG is looking at the range of salaries for department heads and deputies. Chair Uyehara added that the first PIG would examine performance- or qualification-based modifiers. Vice Chair Katayama stated that the first PIG will not address inversion issues. Chair Uyehara was in concurrence.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara stated that inversion is the first example of department-specific issues. He further mentioned that he does not know if there are other department-specific issues and noted that the PIG will talk to HR and the Administration to identify additional concerns.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara mentioned that the mechanisms might not be just a one-year adjustment. For instance, the inflation tracking proposal could last for three years; however, each year, there would be a closer look at specific departments to address other issues. It may not be practical for the Commission to conduct a department-specific review every year for every department. There might need to be a way to schedule these reviews, especially since the Salary Commission has not met every year in the past.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Vice Chair Katayama stated that the main challenge for this specific PIG is the actual implementation. Chair Uyehara agreed. Vice Chair Katayama again brought up the exempt versus non-exempt status issue and encouraged maintaining the internal culture. She also noted that the first PIG will be determining recommendations on what salary levels should be to be competitive in the marketplace, ensuring they attract the skill set needed to run an efficient department given the size of Kaua'i County. The second PIG will review those recommendations and figure out how to blend them in. This will be a challenge, especially when trying to persuade people to move from a bargaining unit position to a non-bargaining unit position.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama stated that for the first PIG, whatever performance-based benefits are identified will hopefully cascade down to people in the collective bargaining units. An engineer with a professional engineering license would get paid more than someone without that credential.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara stated that Vice Chair Katayama's discussion brings up a practical question. Chair Uyehara noted that he understands that PIGs can meet with individuals but wondered if the two PIGs could meet with each other.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Administrator Ching responded that the two PIGs cannot meet with each other because such a meeting would violate the Sunshine Law. Vice Chair Katayama added that the work done by each PIG will be communicated to the entire Commission through its reports. Administrator Ching further noted that the two PIGs seem to be very interactive, with decisions by one PIG potentially affecting the work of the other. The Commission might face a situation where, after the PIGs' work is completed and reports are issued, it feels the need to form another PIG to develop recommendations based on the original PIGs' work. Administrator Ching stated that, as the staff person for the PIGs, she hopes to help reduce the need for additional work by the Commission and to support a cohesive process for everyone.</p> <p>Ms. Chiba-Miguel asked if a commissioner could sit on two separate PIGs. Administrator Ching responded that a commissioner can definitely sit on two separate PIGs. Vice Chair Katayama wondered whether the number of Commissioners constrains the PIGs.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara responded that the number of members must be less than the amount needed for a quorum. Administrator Ching replied that a PIG can only have three members. Administrator Ching stated that Vice Chair Katayama, for example, could serve as the Chair of both PIGs. Vice Chair Katayama jokingly responded that the Commission needs four votes to act, so that recommendation would be difficult to pass.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Ms. Chiba-Miguel suggested that perhaps the two PIGs could be formed, but that the second PIG does not begin moving until the first PIG has reported back to the Commission.</p> <p>Administrator Ching said that Ms. Chiba-Miguel's suggestion is a possibility. Vice Chair Katayama mentioned that the second PIG also has a lot of work to do, so they might not have the option to wait until the first PIG finishes. Both may need to operate at the same time.</p> <p>Administrator Ching stated that she sees the second PIG as forming the foundation for the Commission to advance on a Salary Resolution. If the Salary Resolution can include a performance-based structure, that would be ideal, but it is not a deal-breaker if nothing results from the PIG. Administrator Ching further explained that the second PIG being foundational will pave the way for how to proceed if the Commission chooses to move forward with another Salary Resolution.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama stated that the Commission's difficult task is to change the paradigm.</p> <p>Administrator Ching mentioned that she received a call from HR early this morning expressing concern about the potential direction of the Salary Commission. HR advised that the Commission review the County of Maui's Salary Study to see how different positions were weighted according to their responsibilities. Administrator Ching explained that the tiering in the Kaua'i Salary Resolution was based on the Nash Study, conducted in 2007. That Nash Study is quite outdated, and the tiering caused significant dissent among cabinet members over their specific tiers and how the Commission validated their jobs. These issues are things the second PIG</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>might want to examine to predict what could happen if the Maui Study is used and the Kaua'i figures are applied. The Maui Study ranked positions on a weighted scale based on each job's responsibilities, categorizing employees into either the 50th or 75th percentile. This could be a way to address some of the issues previously discussed by the Commission. HR recommends that the Commission not even consider the inversion issue, as they believe it cannot be reasonably addressed. The inversion primarily affects the Police Department, and to some extent, the Fire Department. There are also a few inversion issues in other departments, but they are less severe than in Police and Fire. The reason inversion is not observed in the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney or Office of the County Attorney is that most upper management salaries are included in the Salary Resolution.</p> <p>Administrator Ching stated that the other issues identified by the Commission during its discussions were recruitment and retention challenges for attorneys and engineers. They do not have an inversion problem, but they face a different issue.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara stated that those positions were benchmarked almost twenty years ago, and different roles experience varying levels of inflation. The increase in graduate degree costs is significantly higher than other inflation components. Licenses or credentials, such as a professional engineering license or an attorney's license, require specific educational qualifications. Entry-level employees graduating from programs now carry much higher student loan debt than those from twenty years ago. The impact on those departments differs from others. Chair Uyehara expects to see a few additional issues arise once the PIG begins its work.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Vice Chair Katayama stated that the Commission is only looking at senior management positions within the County. Chair Uyehara clarified that the Commission is only examining positions in the Salary Resolution.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama further stated that the Commission's fiduciary responsibility is to ensure that the County has the right people managing its affairs and to determine whether the County can afford any proposed increase. Administrator Ching responded that Vice Chair Katayama had previously brought up the question about how the Administration feels about the performance of its cabinet members.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama stated that, although these discussions are challenging, they are essential for the Commission to better understand its role and how to support the County's success most effectively.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara stated that the bottom line is that the Commission has its work cut out for it.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara asked for a discussion about the authority and membership of the PIG. He stated that he would serve as the PIG's Chair unless another member wanted the position. Chair Uyehara explained that it was initially thought Mr. Ono and Mr. Toner could serve as PIG members. He then asked the Commissioners if anyone wanted to serve on both PIGs. Administrator Ching recommended that the Chair consider removing Mr. Ono from the PIG due to concerns about time commitment. Chair Uyehara responded that, given those concerns, he would volunteer to chair the PIG with Ms. Akiona-Arruda and Mr. Toner as members.</p>	<p>Ms. Chiba-Miguel moved that the PIG's scope of work would be to come up with recommendations for the Salary Commission regarding how to address the individual challenges of each department and position subject to the Salary Commission. This would be done individually instead of the historical practice of blanket increases. Ms. Akiona-Arruda seconded the motion. Motion carried 4:0.</p> <p>Ms. Chiba-Miguel moved that the PIG be chaired by Chair Uyehara and its membership include Ms. Akiona-Arruda and Mr. Toner. Vice Chair Katayama seconded the motion. Motion carried 4:0.</p>

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Vice Chair Katayama inquired about when Chair Uyehara expected the work product to be ready. Chair Uyehara replied that part of it will depend on collective bargaining negotiations. The PIGs cannot engage in substantive discussions with HR and others until negotiations are finished.</p> <p>Administrator Ching further stated that she would call both Chair Uyehara and Vice Chair Katayama to schedule PIG meetings, including identifying who the PIGs would want to have present. Ms. Omo would work with the other PIG members to determine their availability and the resources they are requesting. Administrator Ching noted that one upcoming meeting would involve an honest discussion with the Managing Director about the performance of the department heads and deputies under her supervision, aimed at gaining a better understanding. Another separate discussion could be scheduled with HR and department heads. Administrator Ching also mentioned that she might excuse herself from the meeting if the Managing Director believes it is necessary to promote open and honest discussion by the Commission.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama expressed that what would help him is understanding the minimum qualifications required by statute and having the opportunity to interview department heads or the appropriate appointing authority to determine what the ideal candidate for each position would look like. Ms. Chiba-Miguel suggested that instead of calling each department head, the Managing Director could be asked about the ideal qualifications for each role. Vice Chair Katayama added that he would like to know the minimum qualifications necessary for each position to be successful. For instance, he questioned whether the Planning Director would be better suited to have a master's degree in urban and regional planning or a law degree.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Ms. Chiba-Miguel stated that she still believes that might be a question for the Managing Director, and the department heads could ask the same question to their deputies. Vice Chair Katayama responded that he would ask both questions.</p> <p>Administrator Ching reminded the Commission that Mayor Kawakami was very different from other mayors in that, when he was elected, he decided to ask anyone wanting to be appointed to fill out an application and submit a resume. Before that, Mayor Baptiste appointed a Blue-Ribbon Committee to recommend potential department heads and deputies. Essentially, when mayors are elected, aside from those two outliers, they appoint anyone they wish to fill the positions.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama stated that the process the mayor chooses is acceptable, but if someone only has a high school diploma, they should be at the lower end of the scale compared to someone with a Ph.D., who would be at the higher end. Of course, this depends on whether that level of education is necessary and appropriate for the specific position. Once the Commission understands the qualifications and education needed for the top candidate, the maximum salary can be determined based on surveys or analysis of what individuals with those qualifications earn in the marketplace. This could potentially be adjusted based on the size of Kaua'i County to establish a suitable range.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Administrator Ching stated that, as part of the mayor's cabinet, she believes an ideal department head is someone who solves problems efficiently. They do not wait for issues to escalate. Instead, they anticipate potential problems, recognize when things might be going off track, and address them early—this is key to effective management. She thinks that this skill is something every mayor would value. Vice Chair Katayama responded that such traits should be evident during the annual performance review. He noted that if someone meets the minimum qualifications, they could start at a certain level, with the possibility of increasing their pay based on outstanding reviews. If they perform exceptionally well, that department head or deputy might earn even more than the standard percentage increase typically granted according to the structure set by the Commission.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara noted that what Vice Chair Katayama was describing would fall under the responsibility of the PIG that he is chairing. That PIG could engage in discussions with everyone and return to the full Commission with possible recommendations. Vice Chair Katayama noted that by doing what he is suggesting, it gives an appointing authority a compensation scale to work with. Vice Chair Katayama also explained that he hopes to move away from offering a set maximum salary and instead provide ways to entice those with advanced degrees or credentials to work for the County, as they could receive a higher salary structure.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>Chair Uyehara stated that two separate discussions need to take place. Does the County want to pay more for credentials because they are good enough for themselves, or does the County need to pay more if it wants to obtain specific credentials because it can't work for less due to factors like student loans? These are two different issues, but Chair Uyehara hopes that the first PIG will explore these questions.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama responded that he believes the PIG will emerge from the discussion in the same place. If a professional engineering license is required for the department head to sign contracts, then they must possess it. Vice Chair Katayama noted that there could be professional engineers at the staff level. Still, one would probably not want those engineers to earn more than a department head with an experienced engineering license. Administrator Ching mentioned that she recently heard a discussion about whether the Director of Finance should hold an accounting degree. She pointed out that in the past, some Directors of Finance had accounting degrees while others did not. Considering that the Director of Finance is the only person legally authorized to bind the County, that is a significant responsibility. Even the Mayor cannot legally bind the County; only the Director of Finance can.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara pointed out that the main challenge in identifying the right degrees or certifications comes from the example given by Administrator Ching. Since finance and accounting are different fields, it might be better to have an attorney comfortable with numbers rather than an accountant. Vice Chair Katayama responded that this is why the Commission needs to talk with those who hold or are responsible for these roles. Different professional qualifications might be needed for a particular position. For finance roles, candidates could include tax attorneys, trust attorneys,</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>licensed CPAs, or those with MBAs or Ph.D.'s. An additional concern is whether the County can afford to hire people with these qualifications and attract them from the private sector.</p> <p>Ms. Chiba-Miguel asked if the PIG meetings need to be publicly noticed. Administrator Ching responded that the PIG can meet at any time and place. Ms. Chiba-Miguel asked if the meetings are recorded. Administrator Ching said they are not recorded and that she staff the PIG meetings. The meetings can also be held virtually. Vice Chair Katayama explained that discussions must stay within the scope set beforehand. Chair Uyehara clarified that there is no quorum requirement. Administrator Ching mentioned she has personally met with PIG members or asked them to submit their work separately for her to compile because of scheduling conflicts. This work is then presented to the full Commission. She also noted that while this has been done before, it's not the most efficient or effective way to carry out PIG work. Often, discussion and conversation are missed when done that way.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara stated that his PIG needs to hold a meeting to let Mr. Toner know that he was appointed to serve on the PIG.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama asked what resources from the Office of Boards and Commissions would be needed to staff the PIGs. Administrator Ching stated that she would serve as the staff resource to support the PIGs. When she had to manage 5 or 6 PIGs at once, Administrator Ching stated that she got so busy that she sometimes forgot where she was with certain PIGs but has been able to manage the staffing responsibility during her tenure.</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>The Commission discussed coordinating meeting schedules. Ms. Chiba-Miguel stated that she would like to try to avoid meetings scheduled for Thursdays, unless the meeting begins after 2:00 p.m. Administrator Ching asked Vice Chair Katayama and Ms. Akiona-Arruda if they had any days that were off limits for PIG meetings to be scheduled. Vice Chair Katayama stated that his other commitments occurred on Wednesdays. Ms. Akiona-Arruda stated that she is typically free during the morning hours of the work week.</p> <p>Administrator Ching asked Chair Uyehara what his schedule looked like. Chair Uyehara responded that his schedule is really set week by week. Administrator Ching said that she would send a monthly schedule with available times and for the Commissioners to respond with times that they are available by indicating their availability with their initials in the block for that respective day. Administrator Ching can then set up a schedule of meetings and if a meeting is not needed, then future meeting days can be canceled.</p> <p>Ms. Chiba-Miguel stated that she prefers having frequent meetings as opposed to long meetings less frequently. It is difficult for her to block out two to three hours in one day. Chair Uyehara stated that he feels the same about his schedule. Ms. Chiba-Miguel also added that mornings work best for her. Administrator Ching stated that she typically only blocks an hour for PIG meetings.</p> <p>Vice Chair Katayama asked if the other Commissioners were open to meeting via Zoom. Ms. Chiba-Miguel and Ms. Akiona-Arruda indicated that they could meet via Zoom. Vice Chair Katayama suggested that perhaps their first PIG meeting could be done via Zoom to create the</p>	

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION
	<p>framework for how the PIG intends to address the scope that was assigned to them. Administrator Ching stated that she would first work on a meeting schedule and then the PIG can meet via Zoom to look at the proposed meeting schedule to track out a path forward.</p> <p>Chair Uyehara stated that for his PIG he would like to meet in-person so that they can get Mr. Toner caught up with the PIG's scope of work. Administrator Ching stated that she would email Mr. Toner to give him an update of what occurred at this meeting.</p>	
ADJOURNMENT	Chair Uyehara asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.	<p>Ms. Chiba-Miguel moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Akiona-Arruda seconded the motion. Motion carried 4:0.</p> <p>There being no objections, the meeting was adjourned at 11:22 a.m.</p>

Submitted by: _____
Mercedes Omo, Staff Support Clerk

Reviewed and Approved by: _____
Joshua Uyehara, Chair

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

From: Patrick Ono <POno@matson.com>

Sent: Friday, August 22, 2025 8:30 AM

To: Ellen Ching <eching@kauai.gov>

Subject: It has been an honor...

CORRESPONDENCE

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the County of Kauai. Do not click links or open attachments even if the sender is known to you unless it is something you were expecting.

Dear Ms. Ching,

I appreciate you making the time the past week for our short visit. It was with a heavy heart that I came by to thank you & personally let you know that my wife Lori & I will be moving to Oahu in September. I will not be immediately retiring from Matson, but will stay on to ensure transition for my position here on Kauai through the end of the year. However, in September, I will need to step down from the County of Kauai – Salary Commission.

Almost 29-years...from Honolulu, to Phoenix, San Francisco, Portland, Seattle and Kauai. My journey with Matson has taken me to many places, experienced many things and met amazing people, to which I will be forever grateful. However, I knew in my heart that there would be a path back to the islands. To reconnect with partners, businesses and communities. But this time playing a much stronger role for Matson, understanding that it would also be my time to give back and do my part to help make Hawaii a better place. And through these years, on this journey, I have been blessed to have my wife Lori by my side. She has always provided her love and support on our many adventures...and this time, our move back to Oahu will be for family.

And although my time with your team will be coming to an end, I believe Matson's connection with the County of Kauai and our community remains strong...both in terms of our support, and in understanding the needs of our island families and communities that Mayor Kawakami and his administration helps to support. It has been honor to have represented Matson here on Kauai, and to have served alongside you and your team. A Hui Hou.

Much Love & Aloha,
Patrick Ono
Matson Kauai District Manager
Phone #246-9494

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SALARY COMMISSION

JOSHUA UYEHARA, CHAIR
WAYNE KATAYAMA, VICE CHAIR

BERNADETTE AKIONA-ARRUDA, MEMBER
STACIE CHIBA-MIGUEL, MEMBER
PAUL TONER, MEMBER

MEMORANDUM

SC 2026-3

TO: Joshua Uyehara, Chair and
Members of the Salary Commission

FROM: Vice Chair Katayama and Commissioners Akiona-Arruda and Chiba-Miguel
Members of the Permitted Interaction Group (PIG)

DATE: September 11, 2025

RE: PIG Report on Performance-Based Increases

On July 10, 2025, the Commission established a PIG to provide recommendations on modifications to the maximum salary, based on additional qualifications or performance metrics and objectives, for positions subject to the Salary Commission. The members of the PIG selected were Vice Chair Katayama and Commissioners Akiona-Arruda and Chiba-Miguel, with Vice Chair Katayama serving as chair of the PIG.

The PIG met on September 11, 2025, to discuss timelines and potential recommendations. One of the issues discussed was the current Police Union contract negotiation, which would increase the salary of the Deputy Police Chief, thereby requiring an increase for the Police Chief to comply with Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) §46-24.

HRS §46-24 stipulates salary adjustments for the department head to ensure that the first deputy or first assistant position does not exceed 95% of the maximum Salary of the relevant department head position.

When the union contract negotiation takes effect, it will mandate an increase to the current Police Chief's salary.

Due to the complexity of this issue and others, the PIG makes the following recommendations:

1. Commission a classification and compensation study similar to Maui County's study by MGT.
2. Submit a Salary Resolution specifically to address the salary issues related to the Chief of Police, the Deputy Chief, and HRS §46-24.



SALARY COMMISSION

JOSHUA UYEHARA, CHAIR
WAYNE KATAYAMA, VICE CHAIR

BERNADETTE AKIONA-ARRUDA, MEMBER
STACIE CHIBA-MIGUEL, MEMBER
PAUL TONER, MEMBER

MEMORANDUM

SC 2026-4

TO: Wayne Katayama, Vice Chair and
Members of the Salary Commission

FROM: Chair Uyehara and Commissioners Akiona-Arruda and Toner
Members of the Permitted Interaction Group (PIG)

DATE: October 3, 2025

RE: PIG Report on Individual Department Challenges

On July 10, 2025, the Commission formed a PIG to make recommendations to address the individual challenges of each department and position subject to the Salary commission vs. the historical practice of blanket increases. The members of the PIG selected were Chair Uyehara and Commissioners Akiona-Arruda and Toner with Chair Uyehara leading the PIG.

The PIG met on August 14th and on October 3, 2025. They discussed a variety of issues including Maui County's Classification and Compensation Study. One of the suggestions included taking an average of the tiers (State, City/County of Honolulu, Maui, and Hawaii) from the Maui study as a starting point for Kaua'i salaries.

Ultimately, the PIG decided that the next best step would be to expedite a similar compensation study that in particular emphasizes the cost of living, performance and the consideration of cost-of-living increases (COLA).

Thus, the PIG makes the following recommendations:

1. Commission and expedite a Classification and Compensation Study similar to Maui County's study by MGT.