

PUBLIC HEARING

AUGUST 27, 2025

A public hearing of the Council of the County of Kauaʻi was called to order by Mel Rapozo, Council Chair, on Wednesday, August 27, 2025, at 8:50 a.m., at the Council Chambers, 4396 Rice Street, Suite 201, Historic County Building, Līhuʻe, and the presence of the following was noted:

Honorable Addison Bulosan
Honorable Bernard P. Carvalho, Jr.
Honorable Felicia Cowden
Honorable Fern Holland
Honorable Arryl Kaneshiro
Honorable KipuKai Kualīʻi
Honorable Mel Rapozo

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

“Bill No. 2970 – A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. B-2025-905, AS AMENDED, RELATING TO THE OPERATING BUDGET OF THE COUNTY OF KAUAʻI, STATE OF HAWAII, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2025 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2026, BY REVISING THE AMOUNTS ESTIMATED IN THE PUBLIC ACCESS, OPEN SPACE, NATURAL RESOURCES PRESERVATION FUND (*Hanapēpē Monument* – \$215,000.00),”

which was passed on first reading and ordered to print by the Council of the County of Kauaʻi on July 30, 2025, and published in The Garden Island newspaper on August 6, 2025.

The following communications were received for the record:

1. Dizon, JD, Dion on behalf of the Center for Labor Education and Research (CLEAR), dated August 26, 2025
2. Kauai, Trinette, dated August 26, 2025

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any registered speakers?

JADE K. FOUNTAIN-TANIGAWA, County Clerk: Council Chair, we have two (2) registered speakers. The first registered speaker is Evelyn Basnillo, followed by Kealoha Takahashi.

Council Chair Rapozo: Before we start the testimony, I know we received some written testimony as well with a request to restore the original amount. The reason why it was reduced is because it was at the request of the Administration,

who informed us that is the money required for the monument. I just want the public to understand that the Council is supportive of whatever it will take to have the monument erected, but the amended amount was based on the Administration's new information, so that is why it is a lower amount. With that, we can start. I see a lot of new faces. You will have three (3) minutes to testify in the first round. You will see that light bar turn yellow, indicating you have thirty (30) seconds. When it turns red, your time is up. Once we go through all the testifiers, then you will be able to come up for a second round for a second three (3) minutes.

Councilmember Cowden: Push this button right here so it turns green.

EVELYN BASNILLO: I am sorry.

Council Chair Rapozo: That is passion.

Ms. Basnillo: Good morning, Honorable Chair Mel Rapozo and fellow Members of the County Council. My name is Evelyn Basnillo, a resident of Līhu'e and currently the President of the Kaua'i Visayan Club. Our organization was established in 1985, promoting unity, culture, and strength in the community. Out of the sixteen (16) Filipino labor workers who perished, fifteen (15) were from the same region in the Southern Philippines where we originally came from. On behalf of our members, I am deeply grateful to you—the Councilmembers, the Public Access, Open Space, Natural Resources Preservation Fund Commission (Open Space Commission), and the rest of the County agencies for recognizing the hard work of the Filipino plantation workers who courageously stood up for their rights. The bravery of those men who tragically died, including the sheriffs who answered the call of duty, did not go in vain. Over a century later, the recognition of their sacrifices is a long overdue tribute. It makes us reflect as we celebrate Labor Day that the value of labor rights is not just policies; it is a living legacy of sacrifices, courage, and hope. The ultimate loss of life of the twenty (20) souls cannot be equated with any monetary value. With this, we are appealing to this Council that the original amount of three hundred fifteen thousand dollars (\$315,000) be restored in addition to the parcels of land dedicated as a tribute to those who perished. Once again, our debt of gratitude to all of you for your kind consideration. Thank you.

Council Chair Rapozo: Thank you. You can leave it on. Okay. Next.

Ms. Fountain-Tanigawa: The next registered speaker is Kealoha Takahashi.

KEALOHA TAKAHASHI: Aloha Council Chair Rapozo and Members of the Council. I am Kealoha Takahashi. I have a personal interest in this monument. Moses Kua, my great grandfather, known as Moke Kua, was one (1) of the sheriffs who died. As Evelyn eloquently said, he was not the only one. There were twenty (20) others. I want to share an article that was written about my great grandfather in 1924. It is a snippet of who he was. "Moke Kua. Yes, Moke's name is there. The Moke who helped us with our horses when we were little children, who taught us how to saddle and to bridle them, who cinched the girth because we were too small to reach.

The Moke who took care of us on cattle and pig-hunting expeditions, who taught us to be quiet, speechless, so as not to frighten the wary game; who warned against the thoughtless snapping of a twig as against the thoughtless chattering and whistling of careless children. The Moke who gave up his sure shot at a wild pig or goat, so that a youngster could have a chance. He knew the joy of a 12-year-old who could take home a skin that he had bagged himself.” The last part of the article reads, “Had all traits of true Hawaiian. A mighty teller of tales, with a true dramatic instinct and poetic feeling of his race, was Moke. But his gentleness to children, his unassuming dignity and his jovial laughter, all traits of the true son of Hawai‘i, were always the companions of his skill in roping, hunting and the telling of tales. I said before—a typical Hawaiian paniola! This is the Moke whose name you read on that list. Moke Kua—shot over the heart. Shot not once, but with his chest peppered with the wounds of many revolver shots, he died. He is but one (1) of the four (4) brave men who gave their lives at Hanapēpē last Tuesday morning, for the protection of the island that they loved and for its people. They died fearlessly, gamely, as they had lived, and for this we honor them.” I hope that by this little tidbit about my great grandfather that you, too, would consider honoring those who died and who gave their lives that day. Thank you.

Council Chair Rapozo: Thank you so much. Next.

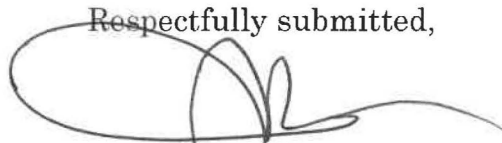
Ms. Fountain-Tanigawa: There are no further registered speakers.

Council Chair Rapozo: Is there anyone in the audience wishing to testify who did not register? If not, thank you. The public hearing is now closed.

(Note: No one from the public testified on the Bill via oral testimony taken at the beginning of the meeting via the Zoom remote technology platform.)

There being no further testimony on this matter, the public hearing adjourned at 8:59 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



JADE K. FOUNTAIN-TANIGAWA
County Clerk