



HO'OU LU LĀHUI  
Regenerating Oceania  
13th Festival of Pacific Arts & Culture  
Hawai'i 2024

MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION ON THE 13<sup>TH</sup> FESTIVAL OF  
PACIFIC ARTS & CULTURE (FestPAC) MEETING

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2021 AT 2:30 PM**

VIA VIRTUAL APPLICATION ZOOM: VIDEO / AUDIO CONFERENCE

Commission Members Present were:

Kalani Ka'anā'anā, Chair	-	Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) Designee
Maenette Ah Nee-Benham	-	Governor's Designee
Makanani Salā	-	City and County of Honolulu Designee
Māpuana de Silva	-	Community Member At-Large
Jamie Lum	-	Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT)
Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu	-	Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Designee

Guests:

Maka Casson-Fisher	-	Hawai'i Tourism Authority
Jackie Burke	-	Public Member
Eric Chang	-	Public Member
Ilihia Gionson	-	Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association
Lynn Martin Graton	-	Public Member
June Matsumoto	-	Public Member
Monte McComber	-	Royal Hawaiian Center
Ngahiraka Mason	-	Public Member
Kīhei Nahale-a	-	Public Member
Aaron Salā	-	University of Hawai'i/Royal Hawaiian Center
Malia Sanders	-	Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association
Kanoe Takitani-Puahi	-	Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association
Pris Texeira	-	Public Member
Margo Vitarelli	-	Public Member

Staff:

Margaret Ahn	-	Deputy Attorney General
Marlene Hiraoka	-	DBEDT
Timothy Tiu	-	DBEDT
Scott Tome	-	DBEDT

Apologies:

Snowbird Bento	-	Community Member At-Large
Jarrett Keohokālole	-	Senate President's Designee

Richard Onishi - House Speaker's Designee

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kalani Ka'anā'anā at 2:33 p.m., who welcomed everyone present via ZOOM and Facebook Live.

Chair called upon Mr. Kīhei Nahale-a to do the *wehena* (opening).

Mr. Nahale-a introduced Project Kuleana to Commissioners. He shared that the organization's efforts were created on the concepts of music as well-being for the *lāhui* (nation/community of people) and *kuleana* (responsibility) as what makes music Hawaiian. The Project formulated a process that resulted in the creation of 12 videos that featured artists of Hawai'i. The philosophy of generational change and response reflects their beliefs that what we do today will sustain us in the future. Project partners are represented by community members from all walks of life and skill sets. He shared the behind-the-scenes video of Nani Kaua'i and emphasized that the people of Hawai'i are a special gift to the world. He thanked the FestPAC Commissioners for doing the important work that will instill a sense of a thriving *lāhui*.

Chair and other Commissioners thanked Mr. Nahale-a for sharing information and the video about Project Kuleana. He commented that the messages are important as Hawai'i shares and receives cultures from other Pacific Island nations during FestPAC who, in turn, will be sharing their kuleana, too.

### **PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON AGENDA ITEMS**

Chair invited members of the public to testify on the agenda items. Hearing none, he continued with agenda items.

Chair noted that a written testimony was received in advance of today's meeting and distributed to Commissioners prior to today's meeting.

### **APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 7, 2021 MEETING MINUTES**

The minutes were distributed and reviewed by Commissioners. Chair asked if there were any comments or changes to the minutes. Hearing none, he asked for a motion and a motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. Ah Nee-Benham and seconded by Ms. de Silva. A roll call vote was requested with the following Commissioners approving the motion to approve the minutes: Chair Ka'anā'anā, Ms. Salā, Ms. de Silva, Ms. Lum, Ms. Ah Nee-Benham, Ms. Wong-Kalu.

Motion was unanimously approved.

### **REPORT ON PERMITTED INTERACTIONS, PURSUANT TO ACT 103, SESSION LAWS OF HAWAI'I 2021**

Chair reported that there were Permitted Interaction Group meetings held, pursuant to Act 103, and he stated that the Administrative Committee and Venues Committee Chairs will provide an

updated report that will be part of today's agenda. Printed reports of both committee meetings were distributed to Commissioners prior to today's meeting.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Chair noted that for today's meeting, they will be reporting the overall general process that has been completed. As such, no candidate names will be mentioned. He turned over this portion of the meeting to Ms. Ah Nee-Benham.

Ms. Ah Nee-Benham referred to the Administrative Committee's meeting minutes which commissioners received. She reported that during the Committee's meeting, the Festival Director recruitment process was discussed. She acknowledged NaHHA's team led by Ms. Sanders for distributing the Festival Director Job Description (JD) to a number of community organizations. She also indicated that it was distributed, internally, within the UH System. She also requested contact names and organizations of Commissioners' respective community contacts that the JD was sent to in order to document the distribution of the announcement of the position. She requested that Commissioners submit those lists to Ms. Sanders. Ms. Ah Nee-Benham mentioned that three applications have been received to date. She encouraged Commissioners to distribute the JD widely since the deadline to apply is noon on October 5, 2021.

Ms. Ah Nee-Benham noted that the Administrative Committee (AC) and NaHHA, who will be hiring the Festival Director, will be meeting on October 9, 2021, to screen all applications received by the closing date and time. The AC will be using a template entitled "Candidate Assessment Sheet", which was previously circulated to commissioners and included in the meeting materials for today as an assessment tool which is completely derived from the details of the JD. The AC will report back to the full Commission at the October 11, 2021 FestPAC Commission meeting and will be requesting an agenda item for an Executive Session. After the October 11, 2021 Commission meeting, the AC and NaHHA will be interviewing candidates directly. A final recommendation will be made by the AC and NaHHA and will be shared with the full Commission on October 25, 2021 as an agenda item for an Executive Session. The AC is requesting a 45-minute time frame for the October 25, 2021 Executive Session in which they will invite the finalist. On November 8, 2021, the AC and NaHHA will be making a recommendation to the full Commission to request for ratification regarding the candidate selected.

Ms. Ah Nee-Benham also reported that she and Mr. Aaron Salā met with East-West Center executives to reconnect the work of FestPAC with the East-West Center. They met Ms. Mary Hatori, Interim Director of Pacific Island Development Programs and Ms. Jill Hamasaki who conducts marketing and advance communications for the East-West Center. Along with Mr. Richard Vuylsteke, President of the East-West Center, they expressed their interest in FestPAC and in working with the Commission again. Ms. Ah Nee-Benham indicated that they will be looking to the East-West Center for connections to the Pacific as well as for office space for the Festival Director once they are officially onboarded.

Chair asked that Commissioners send the JD to their networks to achieve a rigorous outreach to attract as many qualified candidates as possible. HTA distributed the announcement to its entire database of 18,000 individuals in addition to publicizing the JD through social media.

### **DISCUSSION AND ACTION REGARDING MAIN FESTIVAL VILLAGE VENUE**

Chair turned over to the next portion of the agenda to Vice-Chair Salā who reported that the Venues Committee (VC) met on September 16, 2021, and that the VC report was distributed to Commissioners prior as well as included as meeting materials for today's meeting. She reported on each of the locations noted on the meeting agenda – Location A/Magic Island/Ala Moana Park; Location B/University of Hawai'i (UH); Location C/ Hawai'i Convention Center. Ms. Salā indicated that she is awaiting cost estimates from the Honolulu Police Department (HPD) and should be receiving estimates soon. Security costs for conducting a long-term event at Magic Island and Neighborhood Board support for events that are held seven days in a row are challenges to anticipate if these locations are selected. She expressed that the FestPAC Manual noted that locked storage must be provided onsite of the Festival Village. With respect to UH/Location B, the VC discussion was very positive and informal discussions were held with UH. UH expressed some reservations because upper campus is considered "ceded lands" so they will need to identify what might be subject to the Office of Hawaiian Affairs' (OHA) requirements. FestPAC's mission may not fall under UH's educational mission which will then involve additional requirements. The VC expressed that UH is still an excellent candidate for consideration. Location C/Hawai'i Convention Center's (HCC) limitations regarding offering a main stage on the 'āina (land/earth) was discussed. To overcome this challenge, Thomas Square was a possible site for the primary stage. The City and County of Honolulu recently completed multimillion dollar renovations at Thomas Square which is currently underutilized but culturally significant for this commission's purposes.

Ms. Ah Nee-Benham asked about whether it would be possible to utilize funding from the HCC for other venues, however it was mentioned that it is unlikely that that would be allowable. Ms. Salā noted that if the Festival Village is located at the HCC, it may be necessary to host remote stages around the island and allow mini marketplaces to be constructed for performing delegations.

Chair expressed that he does not think the HCC should be the location for the main Festival Village because he feels that it would be important for the Festival Village to be located in an open and accessible environment for the community to access. Thomas Square, being located in the urban core, poses concerns such as traffic congestion and community safety. The Chair commented that while Thomas Square is in close proximity to the Neil Blaisdell Complex, when will the Department of Enterprise Services would be relocating? Ms. Salā reminded Commissioners that Honolulu is very urbanized compared to other FestPAC locations that have hosted in the past. Although we are unable to offer the same feeling, we can offer a Festival that would be economically viable for artisans from the Pacific through the marketplaces.

Ms. de Silva commented that it would be useful to identify what events will require a stage at UH. She asked that consideration be made to decide upon the best location for Hawai'i to host FestPAC and welcome the Pacific nations as opposed to focusing on where funding is currently available. She recommended that UH be given top priority as the primary Festival Village location but that doesn't mean that the HCC would not be used. The HCC could be used for culinary demonstrations, symposia, panel discussions, etc. The Commission should identify

activities that should not be held at the HCC such as the Festival Village. It would be embarrassing to build the Festival Village at the HCC. We could also consider holding a day or two of events around the island in Waianae, Kapolei, Lāie, Kāneʻohe, etc. Those communities could host some of the delegations.

Chair said he recognizes that HCC has funding available, however, fundraising will still need to be made for the overall event. He does not believe the HCC should be the main driver because of available funding. He further stated that the main Festival Village needs to become the *piko* (center) of the Festival and that people are what will add to the authenticity of the Festival. Regional and satellite offerings such as film, a reception, etc. could be held at the HCC. He added that there is a myriad of uses that the HCC offers, however, the main Festival Village and stage should not be located there.

Ms. de Silva also expressed concerns about Thomas Square similar to the Chair's comments. She believes that the main stage must be located in the Festival Village.

Ms. Ah Nee Benham said more formal conversations with UH System is required. She commented that the HCC could be used for storage. She supports using a variety of venues around Oʻahu and added that Kapiʻolani Community College (KCC) also has a great lawn that could be considered in addition to Andrews Amphitheater for the main stage and McCarthy Mall for the marketplace.

With respect to weather considerations, Ms. de Silva expressed that part of the charm of being in the country of FestPAC is being outdoors and experiencing weather of the location.

Ms. Wong-Kalu offered her thoughts that walking and performing through the elements is part of the *ʻāina*. She understands what it means to dance on hot gravel rocks. She agreed with Chair that being outside is essential to the event. Ms. Wong-Kalu expressed that this would be the last meeting she will be attending in the capacity as a representative of OHA. Chair thanked Ms. Wong-Kalu for her time and work on the Commission. He offered her best wishes in whatever *kuleana* she will be pursuing.

Ms. Salā thanked everyone for their input. She understands that the HCC is guaranteed because of many reasons, however, that an outside venue is preferable for the Festival Village. Although she has had informal conversations with UH, she will be making a formal request to meet with the UH System's leadership. Chair commented that the options are UH Mānoa/West Oʻahu as a System and Magic Island as Plan B but that the HCC could be taken off the list. The funding that is reserved there is non-negotiable, however, he will work with Ms. Salā as to how funds there could be used. She would still like to keep HCC on the list with the understanding that UH or Magic Island be considered as potential locations for the Festival Village.

Ms. Wong-Kalu added that Kualoa Ranch is another consideration. She would not be acting in a capacity of a representative of OHA, however, would be able to assist Commissioners regarding respective locations.

Ms. Ah Nee-Benham restated that we are requesting the VC to meet with UH System President and his team to determine whether UH is a possibility. HCC will be held for other appropriate uses that need to be determined.

Ms. de Silva asked whether she would be able to join in on the meeting with UH. She believes that our request to UH is workable, however, it needs to be presented/approached from a win-win situation so that UH is amenable to our request. Ms. Salā agreed and asked if Ms. de Silva could also join her in presenting to the Neighborhood Boards regarding other requests. Chair suggested that he, Vice-Chair Salā, Ms. de Silva as the CPAC representative, and Ms. Ah Nee-Benham serve on this Committee. Ms. Ah Nee-Benham stated that she would be wearing two hats – as Vice-Chair of FestPAC and as a UH member. Ms. Ahn stated that provided she does not have a conflict of interest, it would not be a problem; however, if she feels she is unable to serve because of a conflict in terms of who she is representing, she should take that into consideration. Ms. Ah Nee-Benham commented that she would like to be most effective and would like some time to consider her options. Regarding the Neighborhood Boards, Ms. Salā feels that it would be good to make a presentation to ask for the Board's support should a request be made to use Magic Island.

Ms. Wong-Kalu invited Commissioners to contact her if testimony from a community member may be needed. Chair thanked her for the offer.

Chair commented that the Committee will pursue UH and the City formally. Both tracks have processes and people that will require time for decision-making. He asked that if Commissioners agreed, the Committee will move forward in pursuing UH as the primary Festival Village location and Magic Island as a secondary location. Ms. Salā confirmed that she will be proceeding with formal request to UH and the City.

Hearing no further comments during the formal discussion, Chair suggested that decision-making be deferred until the next Commission meeting.

### **PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON AGENDA ITEMS**

Chair Ka'anā'anā invited the public to again offer comments. He noted that one written testimony was received and distributed to Commissioners.

Hearing no further comments from the public, Chair continued with announcements and the next meeting date.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chair reminded Commissioners to encourage their network of contacts to apply for the Festival Director's position.

Ms. de Silva acknowledged and thanked the Chair for being a great leader. She also thanked Commissioners for continuing to do the work needed.

Chair thanked Ms. Wong-Kalu for her service to the Commission representing OHA and looks forward to her continued service as a community member in the future.

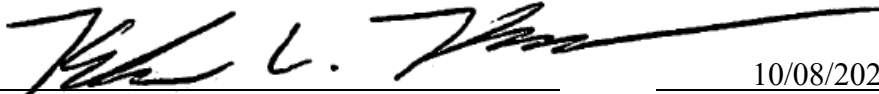
**NEXT MEETING – OCTOBER 11, 2021**

Chair commented that October 11<sup>th</sup> is Indigenous People’s Day.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Ka’anā’anā adjourned meeting at 3:56 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Kalani Ka’anā’anā  
Chair

10/08/2021

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Date