



Hope Bennett, Chair
Caroline Kunitake, Vice-Chair
Jennifer Li Dotson, Member
Valerie Lam, Member
Raven Sevilleja, Member
Helen Stewart, Member
Renee Sonobe Hong, Ex-Officio

Honolulu County Committee
on the Status of Women
*Kōmike Kāko 'o Wāhine o ke
Kalana 'o Honolulu*

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

925 Dillingham Boulevard, Suite 200 • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817

MEETING MINUTES

Friday, October 4, 2024

1:00 p.m.

Kapālama Hale, Conference Room 277
925 Dillingham Boulevard, Honolulu, Hawai'i
Via ZOOM

1. Call to Order

Committee Members present: Hope Bennett, Caroline Kunitake, Jennifer Li Dotson, Valerie Lam, Helen Stewart and Ex-Officio Member Renee Sonobe Hong

Committee Members absent: Raven Sevilleja

Staff Resources Personnel for the Committee present at the meeting:

Shane Akagi, Administrator, DCS, Office of Grants Management (OGM)

Katherine Hutchinson, DCS/OGM

Spenser Kunishige, DCS/OGM

Blessing Quon, DCS/OGM

Marsha Tamura, DCS/OGM

Jordana Ferreira, Early Childhood Resource Coordinator, DCS

Tina-Marie Lee, DCS

Kathleen Kelly, Deputy Corporation Counsel, assigned to the Committee

Guest via Zoom:

Emma White, Chair, Kaua'i County Committee on the Status of Women

Ellen Ching, Administrator for the Kaua'i Office of Boards and Commissions

Nicole Woo, Director of Research and Economic Policy, Hawai'i Children's Action Network (HCAN)

The meeting of the Honolulu County Committee on the Status of Women (HCCSW) was called to order by Chair Hope Bennett (Chair) at 1:04 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes: September 6, 2024 Meeting

Chair Bennett asked for a motion to approve the Minutes of the September 6, 2024 Meeting. Member Lam made the motion, Vice-Chair Kunitake seconded. Motion was passed unanimously.

3. Public Testimony on all Agenda Items

There was no oral (in person or online) testimony or written testimony for this meeting.

4. Testimony/Comments from Department Agencies

Mr. Akagi thanked the Committee for their continued service. He stated that some of the Committee Members terms are ending in 2025 and that the Mayor and Managing Directors Office is open to anyone who wants to remain on the Committee and continue their term for another four years. He also mentioned that if the Committee knew someone that may be interested in joining HCCSW, to share their information with the Managing Directors Office. Mr. Akagi shared a brief update on the budget stating that although next year's budget is limited, he is requesting \$30,000 for HCCSW.

Ms. Ferreira shared that the Hawai'i Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance (HECAA) agreed to support the next legislative session related to workforce for childcare. She stated that Hawai'i launched its first Early Childhood Educator Apprenticeship program. Keiki O Ka 'Aina is a community-based organization that will run the program and be both the sponsor and the employer. She shared that all of the Early Resource Coordinators at the County level are looking at how they can support the apprenticeship model and expanding those opportunities. Ms. Ferreira stated they will be working on introducing a bill at the upcoming legislative session to start a program that would provide funding to help incentivize participation in the early learning apprenticeship program with the intention to support apprentices and to support mentorship opportunities for participation in the program. Ms. Ferreira invited the Committee to provide their support, if this was a topic of interest. Chair Bennett thanked Ms. Ferreira for the update and stated the Committee can think and talk about it at a future meeting.

5. Paid Family Leave Project - Updates from Committee Members

Vice-Chair Kunitake thanked Mr. Akagi for connecting her with the Department of Community Services Public Information Officer. She shared that he agreed to publicize the Paid Family Leave poll results with information in the monthly newsletter to the City and County of Honolulu Employees and he will also be updating the HCCSW website with the poll results and accomplishments of the Committee to show the Committee is active.

6. Presentation from Hawaii Children's Action Network

Nicole Woo, Director of Research and Economic Policy for HCAN shared with the Committee that Vice-Chair Kunitake has been working with their organization on the public opinion poll. Ms. Woo did a presentation for the Committee regarding Paid Family Leave.

7. FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION: Draft correspondence from Kaua'i County Committee on the Status of Women and Hawai'i County Committee on the Status of Women regarding urging Governor Green to fill the Executive Director vacancy on the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women.

Emma White, Chair for the Kaua'i County Committee on the Status of Women thanked the Committee for allowing her to be a part of the meeting. She shared that the letter that was provided to HCCSW as meeting materials has been sent to Governor Josh Green this week. They partnered with the Hawai'i Island Committee on the Status of Women to write a letter of support regarding the ongoing vacancy for the Executive Director position for the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women. She shared that the vacancy has been ongoing for 2 years and in research of the issue, they learned that the position is lacking the resources it needs to be successful. Ms. White stated because the position has been vacant for so long, the projects that the Executive Director was overseeing, such as the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women's report, ending sex trafficking and preventing domestic violence unfortunately stalled. Ms. White stated that a couple of months ago, the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women didn't have the staffing resources that it needed to schedule meetings, get agendas posted online, etc. and the recommendation has been made for them to have that support however, for the longevity of the position, they need more resources. The ask that was made of their legislators is to lead the position through the hiring process due to the hiring process being so lengthy. The concern is that it will be stagnated. Ms. White shared that a year ago, 14 candidates were identified but due to the long process and lack of support, the 14 candidates were no longer interested for various reasons so the entire hiring process had to start again. Ms. White stated the purpose for the letter is to encourage the Governor to funnel resources so the hiring process can be completed.

Ellen Ching, Administrator for the Kaua'i Office of Boards and Commissions also thanked the Committee for allowing her to be a part of the meeting and shared an update that the Governor has assigned designated staff specifically to the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women so they now have the support they need to do the work but there is still the push for an expeditious movement towards hiring for the Executive Director position.

Jennifer Li Dotson joined the meeting at 1:21 p.m.

Ms. White shared that they sent a letter together with the Hawai'i County Committee on the Status of Women and The Maui County Committee on the Status of Women

submitted their letter of support independently. She invited HCCSW to join and provide a letter of support on behalf of Honolulu County.

Member Lam volunteered to draft a letter of support on behalf of the Committee regarding the vacancy for the Executive Director position for the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and provide the draft to the Committee for review and approval at the next meeting.

8. FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION: Encouraging all county Committees on the Status of Women to work together to amplify statewide efforts.

Ms. White invited the Committee to partner with them on their continued efforts to combat sex trafficking. She shared that the Kaua'i County Committee on the Status of Women created signs that are currently in every County restroom in efforts relating to a human trafficking awareness campaign. She also shared that a major airline has reached out to their Committee to collaborate with them on these signs. They are working with the airline to get the signs into the bathrooms of the airplanes that are going in and out of the State of Hawai'i. They wish to keep the airline confidential at this time.

Chair Bennett shared that the Committee decided to put trafficking and violence against women topic's aside because the State was leading initiatives in regards to those topics and so in the past several years, the Committee has not looked into it and it is not something they are familiar with. She shared that up until this point, the Committee relied on the State for their support on those topics. She mentioned that HCCSW's resources are limited to volunteers and their time and asked Ms. White if she could share what kind of support they are proposing. Ms. White shared that their thoughts are to collaborate with the Committees across the State to assist in the funding for it and to have all of the Committee logos listed on the signs as a collaboration amongst the Committees to end sex trafficking. Ms. Ching stated that they are unclear of how many airplanes the signs will need to be put in at this time but once they know, they will ask the airline if they are willing to pay for some of the cost.

Chair Bennett thanked both Ms. White and Ms. Ching for sharing the information to the Committee. She stated the Committee can think and talk about it as a possible topic they want to incorporate in the agenda for next year.

Jordana Ferreira left the meeting at 2:05 p.m.

9. FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION: Succession Planning for Committee Members

Chair Bennett gave the Committee Members an opportunity to share their intentions for the future regarding their time with HCCSW on whether or not they are going to extend their term. She stated it would be helpful to know so the Committee can plan to take action on recruiting members. Vice-Chair Kunitake shared with the Committee that she will not be extending her term once it ends. She mentioned that

the Committee should look at the Hawai'i Island County Commission on the Status of Women as they only have 6 meetings a year. She suggested that the Committee look at its structure so it's more attractive to volunteers and so that its not so time intensive.

Chair Bennett thanked Vice-Chair for sharing and stated the Committee can look at how Hawai'i County is structured and provide something in the meeting materials for the next meeting, have a discussion about and decide if they would want to adopt something similar.

10. FOR DISCUSSION: Agenda Setting for the Next Meeting

Chair Bennett stated that the next meeting agenda will include a further discussion about succession planning, the capabilities and limitations as a Committee and the letter of support for the vacancy for the Executive Director for the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women drafted by Member Lam.

Nicole Woo left the meeting at 2:25 p.m.


11. Next Meeting: November 1, 2024

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, November 1, 2024 at 1:00 p.m. as a remote meeting via Zoom with an in-person location at Kapālama Hale.

12. Adjournment

With no further items on the agenda, Chair Bennett adjourned the meeting at 2:30 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:



SHANE AKAGI, OGM Administrator

DATE

11/6/2024

APPROVED:



HOPE BENNETT, Chair