

Kaipo Kukahiko, Chair  
Grant Kagimoto, Vice Chair  
Camron Hurt, Commissioner  
David Sgan, Commissioner  
Sandra Larsen, Commissioner  
Kimberly W. Yoshimoto, Commissioner

# Grants in Aid Advisory Commission

*Kōmike A'oa'o Ho'olako Kāko'o*

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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

## MEETING MINUTES

Monday, July 8, 2024

12:30 p.m.

Kapalama Hale, Conference Room 277  
925 Dillingham Boulevard, Honolulu, Hawai'i  
In-Person and by Zoom

### 1. Call to Order

The meeting of the Grants in Aid (GIA) Advisory Commission (Commission) was called to order by Chair Kaipo Kukahiko at 12:31 p.m. with five (5) Commissioners present.

Chair read from the Meeting Notice/Agenda on the Public Participation, Viewing the Meeting, Oral Testimony and Written Testimony framework for this meeting.

#### Attendance

Commissioners present: By Zoom: Chair Kaipo Kukahiko, Vice Chair Grant Kagimoto, Camron Hurt, Sandra Larsen, and David Sgan. All Commissioners indicated that no one was with them at their location.

Commissioners Excused: Commissioner Kimberly W. Yoshimoto.

#### Staff Resources Personnel present:

By Zoom: Shane Akagi, Administrator, Department of Community Services (DCS), Office of Grants Management (OGM)

Lynn Wakatsuki, Deputy Corporation Counsel, assigned to the Commission

In-Person: Katherine Hutchinson, DCS/OGM

Spenser Kunishige, DCS/OGM

Tammy Ngo, DCS/OGM

Lauren Jagla, DCS/OGM

Guest: By Zoom: none

2. Recognition of 9 years of service by Commissioner Vincent L. Baldemor and good luck wishes to him in his future endeavors.

Chair wanted to recognize Commissioner Baldemor even though he was not on the call today. Chair announced that Commissioner Baldemor will be retiring from the Commission after nine (9) years of service. Chair expressed his thanks and appreciation for Commissioner Baldemor, he shared that Commissioner Baldemor always brought joy and laughter to the group.

3. Approval of Minutes: May 23, 2024 Meeting

Chair asked for a motion to approve and file the Minutes of the May 23, 2024 meeting. Vice Chair Kagimoto made the motion, Commissioner Hurt seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

Hearing no objections or abstentions from the Commissioners present, the minutes were approved unanimously.

4. Oral Testimonies and Written Testimonies from the Public

No oral (in-person or online by Zoom) or written testimony received.

5. Testimony/Comments from Department/Agencies

- a. Presentation from the Department of Community Services for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 – Items for review and, if any, for deletion or revision

Mr. Akagi shared that the division's secretary, Katherine Hutchinson, will be going on maternity leave shortly. Tammy Ngo will provide assistance to the Commission while Ms. Hutchinson is on leave. Mr. Akagi informed the Commission that the City Council (Council) did lower the ceiling for the FY 2025 grants, so there are 78 grants that the OGM staff is currently in negotiations with, to fund at \$150,000.

- b. Proposed City Council Resolution No. 24-118, introduced April 26, 2024, and City Council Resolution 20-263, CD1

Mr. Akagi announced that the Council is looking at lowering the Grants in Aid ceiling (ceiling) via City Council Resolution No. 24-118, which keeps in place City Council Resolution 20-263, CD1, which is the current resolution in place with the GIA policies. The only thing that City Council Resolution No. 24-118 will do is lower the grant ceiling from \$200,000 to \$150,000.

Mr. Akagi shared that he was expecting Councilmember Radiant Cordero's office to participate in today's meeting since we had sent them the meeting link and invitation. Mr. Akagi stated that it would be much appreciated if either Chair

Kukahiko or Vice Chair Kagimoto could come to the budget committee meeting to provide feedback. Chair Kukahiko asked when the meeting will be held and Mr. Akagi responded that he will inform him and Vice Chair shortly, he will check if the public notice agenda has been posted to the City's website yet.

## 6. FOR DISCUSSION: Evaluation and Review of FY2025 Grant Cycle

At the last meeting, the Commission discussed reviewing the GIA application and process. Chair Kukahiko stated that, as the ceiling is dropping down to \$150,000, he would like to look at how the Commission can make the application a little easier for folks to fill out; for instance, if there are any items that is required of the applicants that are unnecessary.

Commissioner Sgan stated that he was unable to find the link to get a copy of the template for the grant application; Mr. Akagi apologized and will provide the information and he will also schedule a meeting with Commissioner Sgan. Mr. Akagi explained that the website link is difficult to find, and part of the reason why it is not online is because the solicitation changes every year and it is posted to the State's Hawaii Awards & Notices Data System (HANDS) website, which is the official page for solicitations because OGM handles the grant solicitation like any other City solicitation so that it is open and fair. OGM works with the Department of Budget and Fiscal Services (BFS) Division of Purchasing, which handles all of the City's procurement requirements.

Chair Kukahiko asked for feedback from non-profit organizations and they shared with him that they felt the GIA grant is a tough grant to manage and that the reporting requirements and fiscal requirements are stringent, making it challenging to manage. He understands that the reporting requirements are within the department and that the Commission does not have any power over that. Some folks also asked if there is a possibility to also offer the option of applying the online application instead of a paper application. Mr. Akagi responded that the City has been looking into that for a while and was also looking at trying to procure an overall grants management software that would allow from origination to closing, but there a few things that we have run into problems with because of the multiple different types of grants that the City has, which includes federal money and housing type grants. The City is trying to get a software that is a standard application and we need to work with our Division of Purchasing, because the online application will need to need to meet State procurement guidelines. Also, we want to make sure that the platform is stable across all city requirements, we do not want to make it more complex where there is different applications for all types of different City grants, and that has been something the City has been working on. Mr. Akagi stated that he had asked the Division of Purchasing regarding whether they would be okay with an electronic origination software. Such software would probably make things a lot easier for the nonprofits and also the Commission because you could just enter it once into a system and that has been something we have been having under consideration for a while but

there are many barriers that we need to overcome before we can get there. Chair Kukahiko stated that the software would make it easier for the OGM staff also, Mr. Akagi agreed that it would make things a lot smoother, especially for the grants management and that the City is in favor of that and would prefer to have a single platform, the issue is trying to get through the state requirements and procurement requirements to make sure that everything is in order so that we can get to that point.

Chair Kukahiko requested clarification regarding the application's required attachments documents. Chair Kukahiko shared that some folks have difficulties with getting their application notarized by their Board Chair, sometimes their Board Chair does not reside on the same island so it's a challenge to get that. Mr. Akagi explained that the Certificate of the Board of Directors No Obligations In Arrears and the Certificate of the Board of Directors Authorization to Sign Authority does not necessarily need to be signed by the Board Chair, it just needs to be signed by somebody on the board who can authorize the person that is executing the contract, because legally they want to see that the person that is signing off on the application is actually authorized to do so on the behalf of the organization. That being said, OGM has been looking into that as one of the things for simplification purposes and we have been working with our Division of Purchasing on whether they would be open to just accepting some sort of Board Resolution or something in the organization by-laws that shows that the person signing off on the application is actually authorized to do so on behalf of the organization. Chair Kukahiko and Mr. Akagi also discussed the organization by-laws requirements; Mr. Akagi explained that the organization by-laws are not required for 501(c)(3) organization and that is stated in the training material and the application checklist.

With regards to tax returns and interim financial statements, Mr. Akagi explained that the purpose of those documents was so that the Commission would have the financial information of the organization to review and determine whether the organizations have the capacity to do the grant program based on the revenue and the expenses that they have that is on the tax returns or interim financial statements. OGM is also looking at trying to simplify. Mr. Akagi shared that one of the challenges that was noticed when doing the non-profit relief program which is the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, is that some non-profit organizations really have difficulty with their financial statements and tax returns, which is understandable but at the same time we want to provide the Commission with this information to review whether the organization is capable of doing what they said they are going to do on their application, based on their current financial position. Chair Kukahiko shared that he does not spend much time reviewing the financials, he may look up the Board and Executive staff information to get a better understanding of the whole organization. Vice Chair Kagimoto commented that when reviewing the application, he looks to see if there is any other monies to see if the organization is dependent on the GIA, but many organizations do not list any other sources of funding even though they are getting funds from somewhere

else, but that does not seem to be an area that all applicants comply with. Mr. Akagi added that we have also noticed that some applicants are not complying with listing their other funding sources, but we have allowed applicants to submit the documents that are not up to par because we are trying to be more lenient with the applicants but we can be stricter about that moving forward. Commissioner Larsen shared that she does not spend much time looking at the financials, but like Vice Chair Kagimoto she does look to see if the applicants have other funding resources or not, and that has been going into her decision making and scoring regarding the organization's capacity and capability to carry out their program long term, so it would be helpful to have more information about that. Commissioner Hurt shared that he does review the financials a lot because he wants to see where the money is going to go, for instance with salaries he wants to see if it the salary competitive, and to see the kind of similar interests and duality of what the organization is doing. Mr. Akagi said that he will look into modifying that portion of the application process and advised that the tax returns may be helpful.

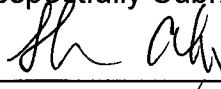
7. Next Meeting Date:

The next meeting will be determined at a later date.

8. Adjournment

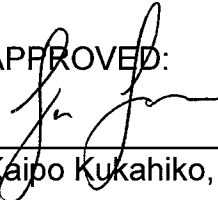
Chair asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting, as there was no additional business on the agenda. Commissioner Hurt made a motion and Vice Chair Kagimoto seconded. Hearing no objections or abstentions, the motion carried unanimously and Chair adjourned the meeting at 1:11 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Shane Akagi, OGM Administrator

APPROVED:



Kaijo Kukahiko, Chair

12/9/24

Date

The minutes of the Commission Meeting on  
July 8, 2024 was approved at the  
Commission Meeting

	<u>Aye</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Comment</u>
Kaipo Kukahiko	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Grant Kagimoto	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Camron Hurt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sandra Larsen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
David Sgan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Kimberly W. Yoshimoto	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	