



Climate Change Commission

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

650 South King Street, 11th Floor • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

COMMISSIONERS

Charles Fletcher, Ph.D., Chair
Rosanna Alegado, Ph.D., Vice Chair
Makena Coffman, Ph.D.
Melanie Islam, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP BD+C, LFA
Victoria Keener, Ph.D.

Climate Change Commission Friday, March 4, 2022, 9:00 AM Zoom Virtual Meeting Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Chair Charles Fletcher, Vice Chair Rosie Alegado, Makena Coffman, Melanie Islam, Victoria Keener

Members Absent: None

Public: Matthew Gonser, Hayley Cook (Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency); Courtney Sue-Ako (Corporation Counsel); Walter Billingsley, Terry Chan (Department of Design and Construction); Kainoa Azama (Honolulu Youth Commission); Dyson Chee (Hawai'i Youth Climate Coalition); Kayla Palmer (Hawai'i Department of Transportation); Nancy McPherson (Hawai'i Department of Hawaiian Homelands); Leah Laramée (Hawai'i Department of Forestry and Wildlife); Valerie LaFerney (Hawai'i Local2030 Hub); Alicia Thompson; Ryan Ringuette; Brad Romine; Nelson Armitage; Dean Nakano; Jill Edelman; Susan Mukai.

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Fletcher called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM.
2. **Roll Call:** All five Commissioners were present. Quorum was established.
3. **Approval of the Meeting Minutes of January 21, 2022:** Approval of the meeting minutes of January 21, 2022 were deferred until the next Commission meeting.
4. **Communications and Correspondence from the Public:**
 - A. Chair Fletcher relayed an email from Chris Carthern of Mystery Dinner Studios regarding a science and climate change focused documentary called Concerned Global Citizens: Ecotourists. Mr. Carthern communicated about potential collaboration with the Commission on the film, which will be submitted to film festivals by September 2022.
5. **Report on the Activities of the Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency (CCSR):**

Executive Director Matthew Gonser presented the following report:

- A. The City's fiscal, operating, and capital improvement (CIP) budgets were introduced to the Honolulu City Council, and CCSR will engage the Council on the budget until approved in June.
- B. Starting in March of 2022, CCSR will conduct additional outreach and education around the Climate Ready O'ahu project after recognizing some geographic and demographic gaps from previous engagements. CCSR will work with Mālama Learning Center to connect with other community groups to increase direct engagement with households, families, and youth. Direct engagement will run for about two months with the partners (Mālama Learning Center, Ma'ō Farms, Ka'ala Farms, Mālama Loko Ea, and Mālama Pūpūkea-Waimea) who will then do the outreach to individuals and households.
- C. Director Gonser met with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Deputy

- Administrator, Janet McCabe, and had an open discussion regarding preparedness around the Infrastructure Bill and EPA resources and programs.
- D. CCSR joined a number of other City agencies, the Mayor, and other partners to promote the “flipping of the switch” e.g., completion of a number of electric bus chargers at the Kalihi-Palama transit center for the City’s 17 new electric buses (e-buses).
 - E. CCSR bid farewell to three AmeriCorps VISTAs. CCSR will shortly begin a next round of recruitment for VISTA positions to start in May.
 - F. CCSR anticipates introducing the Building Benchmarking Program to City Council soon.
 - G. Judge Crabtree in Hawai’i Circuit Court released the third and final ruling in the City’s fossil fuel litigation, denying the defendants’ motions to dismiss. Honolulu is now leading in decisions nationwide and is first to be at this stage in terms of confirmation and affirmation from a State Court on the merits of the City’s claims.
 - H. CCSR testified in support of the following state legislation: HB1463 to clarify the counties’ role with regards to transfer of development rights; HB2088 relating to property assessed financing for cesspool conversion and other clean energy initiatives; and SB2169 relating to increased funds for food banks. CCSR also supported SB2720 relating to increasing the flexibility to administer electric vehicle (EV) rebates and offered comments to suggest that EV-ready be included as a program use to support EV-ready for affordable housing. CCSR is also monitoring: HB1672 relating to special improvement districts and HB 2278 relating to a carbon tax.
 - I. The Commission submitted testimony for City Council Bill 48 (2021), which is now Ordinance 22-1, signed by the Mayor on March 1, 2022. The Commission also submitted a report for periodic review, on which the Council has yet to take action. The Council Committee will discuss the report further at its next meeting on March 21, 2022.
 - J. Director Gonser attended the University of Hawai’i climate data portal presentation. He asked if Commissioners had any additional thoughts on next steps or how-to’s on any elements applicable through the data portal.

Questions and comments that followed:

- 1. Chair Fletcher asked for an update on the carbon tax bill from Commissioner Coffman. Commissioner Coffman clarified that the bill going through the legislature is different from the social cost of carbon guidance paper the Commission authored. She referenced two available studies: (1) Carbon Pricing Assessment for Hawaii Economic and Greenhouse Gas Impacts prepared for the Hawai’i State Energy Office by the University of Hawai’i’s Economic Research Organization (https://energy.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/HawaiiCarbonPricingStudy_Final_Apr2021.pdf) and (2) Hawai’i Carbon Pricing Study: Additional Scenarios & Administrative Considerations prepared by Dr. Makena Coffman, Dr. Paul Bernstein, Maja Schjervheim, and Dr. Sumner La Croix for the Hawai’i Tax Review Commission 2020-2022 Report (http://files.hawaii.gov/tax/stats/trc/docs2022/Appendix_A.pdf).
- 2. Chair Fletcher asked about the number of e-buses, charging opportunities for the e-buses outside of the urban core, and the e-bus range. Director Gonser answered that there are 17 total e-buses in the City fleet. He also noted that the only current e-bus chargers are at the Middle Street Transit Station, although construction is underway at the Pearl City Transit Station, and planning and design is underway for the Alapa’i Transit Station, with more investigation for places along the rail corridor. He shared that e-bus range is good and takes only a couple of hours to charge when a bus’s battery is nearly depleted.
- 3. Commissioner Alegado asked for clarification on HB1672. Director Gonser responded that the bill provides enabling legislation for counties to create special improvement districts for purposes as defined by the legislation. Current special improvement districts are mainly for economic reasons (i.e., Fort Street Mall, Waikiki), but could be expanded to include other reasons (e.g., watershed management). Commissioner Alegado noted that the Hau’ula Community Association applied for federal Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) funding unsuccessfully and asked whether Hau’ula could become a special improvement district. Director Gonser replied that the creation of a special improvement district is done through City ordinance and would require an in depth community discussion.
- 4. Commissioner Islam asked whether Commission support would help the benchmarking program. Director Gonser replied that it would be up to the Commission whether it wanted to offer support.
- 5. Commissioner Coffman asked for additional details on the house that fell onto the shore at Rocky

Point. Director Gonser replied that he has received numerous calls and photos about the situation. The fire department and inspectors have assessed health and safety concerns, and they are making sure information is shared among all City and state agencies such that coastal jurisdiction can be figured out.

Comments and public testimony that followed:

1. Nancy McPherson described a webinar she attended regarding the American Planning Association's (APA) Sustainable Communities Division initiative called Planning 2050. She encouraged Commissioners to check it out because it included a GIS-based correlation between highways and urban heat islands. The APA will launch this at its planning conference in San Diego at the end of April 2022.

6. Presentation on Honolulu Youth Commission Goals and Priorities by Bronson (Kainoa) Azama, Chair:

- A. Mr. Azama described focus areas for the Youth Commission including: more research into biofuels, especially because of the prevalence of invasive algae in Hawai'i; more regenerative forms of agriculture; and the Red Hill fuel tanks. At its last meeting, the Youth Commission recognized land, air, and water as sources of life. Mr. Azama mentioned receiving comments on its interests and priorities from the City, as the Youth Commission decided to push for resolution on those focus areas.
- B. Mr. Azama described discussions the Youth Commission had regarding the future of emergency preparedness. The Youth Commission passed a resolution regarding emergency shelters, as there are not enough in Ko'olauloa and Waiialua, which was especially apparent during recent floods. He sees climate change similar to the Red Hill incident where we must start to take steps now rather than react and change is made in phases.
- C. Mr. Azama shared that the Youth Commission is taking steps to bring in and learn from kupuna.
- D. Mr. Azama discussed microgrids and mentioned the Hau'ula community is looking at the thermal conversion of organic material into carbon pellets to feed soil and to use for fuel.
- E. Mr. Azama noted the Youth Commission's work on a resolution for change within the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA), so that HTA acts with more aloha. He mentioned that this could take the form of a quality assurance program similar to Aotearoa, New Zealand's.
- F. Mr. Azama shared mo'olelo to describe themes of surviving today while preparing for tomorrow. He shared desires to change systems so that input is aloha and output is aloha, move towards holistic approaches, and hold ourselves accountable for our children's children. He mentioned that an empty chair is never empty because it was filled by people in the past and will be filled by people in the future.

Questions and comments that followed:

1. Chair Fletcher agreed that Hawai'i needs to grow more self-reliant and asked how we can scale this up. Mr. Azama responded that normalizing civic engagement and being involved can bring back collective resurgence. Rather than getting stuck speaking to the choir, we can encourage people to speak up for themselves.
2. Chair Fletcher asked how we move shoreline communities away without it being in the framework of disposition and land theft. Mr. Azama responded that there is a federal program setting aside funds to purchase coastal properties, but recognized Hawai'i's uniqueness in its ability to participate in such a program because of the high cost of land.
3. Commissioner Coffman asked Mr. Azama about moving the Youth Commission's resolutions forward. Mr. Azama responded with the example of the Youth Commission's Red Hill resolution and county Historic Preservation Commission resolution and commented on strengthening the Youth Commission's voice by leveraging relationships and working with different youth organizations to build a larger collective voice.
4. Commissioner Islam asked whether the Youth Commission has looked at potential impacts to our infrastructure and how our cities and communities are shaped. Mr. Azama responded that the Youth Commission hasn't had in-depth conversations.
5. Commissioner Keener asked whether the City Council or Mayor had reached out for the Youth Commission's input on issues and whether that is reflected in any of the Youth Commission's resolutions. Mr. Azama responded that they haven't had much input from the City in creating

their resolutions, and that it's been mainly Youth Commissioners and community that have driven the resolution creation. Commissioner Keener suggested the Commission and the Youth Commission work together to put guidance forward on some of these resolution topics. Mr. Azama noted his support for collective action.

Comments and public testimony that followed:

1. Courtney Sue-Ako asked the Commission to send in a request for legal services, so that the City can look into the possibility of a joint guidance document from the Commission and the Youth Commission.

Chair Fletcher moved to amend the agenda to add an agenda item on updates on Commission working papers. The agenda was amended (**AYE:** Keener, Alegado, Islam, Fletcher, Coffman; **NAY:** None; **ABSTAIN:** None).

7. Updates on Commission Working Papers:

- A. Commissioner Coffman has provided comments on the Urban Heat Guidance Document and has taken on the second author role. Commissioner Coffman commented that she would like to get a draft on the agenda for the Commission's April or May meeting to share the document with the public and have a discussion with the Commission.
- B. Commissioner Keener gave a brief update on the Climate Change and the Construction Industry Guidance Document. Currently, new sections of the draft are being reviewed and will be tentatively available for review by the Commission in June after additional stakeholder outreach.
- C. Commissioner Islam asked about the typical process and timeframe for guidance documents. Chair Fletcher replied that there is usually a lead author and second author from the Commission, and Ryan Ringuette supports the creation of a draft until it is ready for the Commission to comment on. Then the draft document is added to a Commission meeting agenda, where, at the meeting, the Commission can discuss and work on edits and then adopt.

Comments and public testimony that followed: None.

Chair Fletcher called a recess while waiting for the second presenter to arrive to the meeting. Chair Fletcher called the meeting back to order at 10:25 AM.

8. Presentation on Hawai'i Youth Climate Coalition (HYCC) Goals for Climate Policy by Dyson Chee, Executive Director

- A. Mr. Chee provided some background on himself and the HYCC. He described his love for the ocean at a young age and how it shaped his involvement with the environmental movement. He described HYCC as a local nonprofit that is youth-led and youth-run. He defined youth as mainly high school age students and some college students.
- B. Mr. Chee described HYCC's advocacy work for climate-related legislation, climate strikes, and education and networking opportunities.
- C. Mr. Chee discussed HYCC's efforts to collect signatures in support of the shut down and removal of the Red Hill fuel tanks.
- D. Mr. Chee noted HYCC's network, where it acts as a hub for climate clubs after people graduate from high school so that clubs don't fall apart after founding students leave.

Questions and comments that followed:

1. Chair Fletcher asked if HYCC had any actions coming up. Mr. Chee replied that HYCC is working on an Earth Day event.
2. Commissioner Islam asked if HYCC is following anything locally that would be important for the Commission to be aware of. Mr. Chee replied that HYCC is following the Red Hill fuel tank legislation; issues regarding food security, climate justice, and environmental justice; and climate action plans. He mentioned some of HYCC's biggest priorities as generating capacity and organizing youth. He mentioned that to develop legislation, they partner with others that have drafted legislation aligned with HYCC goals. He mentioned that the high turnover rate is difficult, and that it's difficult to keep high school graduates involved if they leave for the mainland.

3. Commissioner Keener asked whether the club network can be expanded to other pacific island youth climate groups. Mr. Chee replied that it is not something they've considered but will do so.
4. Commissioner Alegado asked about the City's AmeriCorps VISTA program's connection to youth spaces as an opportunity to grow local leadership. Director Gonser noted CCSR's desire to learn from other AmeriCorps programs that have had better success in recruiting local candidates. He shared the desire for VISTA members to be in more direct contact with community during their service, but that has not been done in the past few years due to COVID-19.

Comments and public testimony that followed: None.

9. Public Input for Matters Not on the Agenda: None.

10. Tentative Next Meeting Date: The next meeting is scheduled for April 8, 2022 at 9:00 AM via Zoom.

11. Announcements:

- A. Commissioner Islam announced internship opportunities with the U.S. Green Building Council Hawai'i.
- B. Commissioner Alegado announced that Hale Kuamo'o has received a grant to create STEM based mo'oleo books and has contacted her about a book for climate change. She mentioned this may become a more formal Commission topic later.

12. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 10:52 AM.