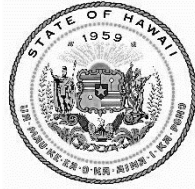


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY  
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G. KUNSTMAN  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

MARICAR PILOTIN-FREITAS  
ADMINISTRATOR

**STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS  
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION**

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**EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT  
COMMITTEE MEETING  
Thursday, October 12, 2023  
1:00 P.M. – 2:30 P.M.  
In-person and Online via Zoom**

*Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, protecting the health and welfare of the community is a priority. The meeting was held in-person and remotely, with Board members and staff participating in-person and via an online meeting venue.*

**MINUTES**

**ATTENDEES:**

Manu Bermudes, Committee Chair, Vice President of Human Resources and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Hawaiian Dredging Construction Company  
Derek Kanehira, Committee Vice Chair, Senior Vice President, Human Resources, Alexander and Baldwin  
Cary Miyashiro, President, Quad D Solutions LLC  
Cheryl Cross, Principal Owner, C.A. Cross & Associates, LLC  
Scott Murakami, (Designee for James Tokioka, DBEDT)  
Rona Fukumoto, President & CEO, Lanakila Pacific  
Leslie Wilkins, Chair, Maui County Workforce Development Board; Vice President, Maui Economic Development Board

**GUESTS:**

Mark Menard, Business Services Coordinator, American Job Center, City and County of Honolulu  
Adele Manera, Manager, Kauai County Workforce Development Division

Gwen Navarrete Klapperich, Chief Learning Consultant, Klapperich International Training Associates LLC  
Crissy Kuahine, Director of Clinical and Patient Informatics, Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center  
Alex Kuch, Director of Human Resources, Kualoa Ranch Private Nature Reserve

**STAFF:**

Bennette Misalucha, DLIR, Workforce Development Council, Executive Director  
Jacqueline Lodge, DLIR, Workforce Development Council  
Katrina Ramos, DLIR Workforce Development Division  
Daven Kawamura, DLIR Workforce Development Division

- I. Call to Order.....Committee Chair Manu Bermudes**  
The Employer Engagement meeting was called to order at 1:02 p.m. by Committee Chair Manu Bermudes.
  
- II. Approval of Minutes**
  - A. July 13, 2023 Meeting Minutes**  
Committee Chair Manu Bermudes requested a motion to approve the minutes for the July 13, 2023 meeting. Cheryl Cross moved to approve the minutes of the July 13, 2023 meeting. Vice Chair Derek Kanehira seconded the motion. There were no objections or abstentions. The motion to approve the minutes was approved unanimously.
  
- III. Introduction of New Employer Engagement Chair Manu Bermudes**  
Chair Bermudes announced that she will be stepping down as Committee Chair due to work commitments. Bennette Misalucha wished her well.
  
- IV. Introduction of New Committee Vice Chair Derek Kanehira**  
Bennette Misalucha introduced Derek Kanehira as the new Vice Chair. Vice Chair Derek Kanehira has been with Alexander and Baldwin since 2020. Before that, he was with Hawaii Employers Council and Hawaii National Bank. Vice Chair Kanehira will serve as the acting Chair until a new Chair is found.
  
- V. Executive Director’s Report and Updates from July 13, 2023 to October 12, 2023**  
Bennette Misalucha shared a presentation. The presentation can be viewed at this link: [WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL \(hawaii.gov\)](https://www.hawaii.gov/workforce-development-council/)  
  
Vice Chair Kanehira asked how to spread the word about upcoming Future of Work 2024 Conference on October 30, 2023. Bennette Misalucha confirmed that attendees can register on The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii (COC) website.  
  
Bennette Misalucha confirmed that the speaking event with Jaime Cruz at the American Job Center on October 26, 2023 will be posted on the Hawaii State e-calendar soon.
  
- VI. Presentation on Challenges and Opportunities in Workforce Development**  
Alex Kuch shared presentation. The presentation can be viewed at this link: [10122023-WFD-Council-Kualoa-Ranch.pdf \(hawaii.gov\)](https://www.hawaii.gov/workforce-development-council-kualoa-ranch.pdf)

Vice Chair Kanehira asked what relationships Kualoa Ranch has with schools on the Windward side of the island. Alex Kuch confirmed that they have an on-site Education Center that hosts school visits as well as a Fun Run. They also offer internships to students.

Bennette Misalucha asked how Kualoa Ranch pivoted from tourism to an agriculture-focused business model, and what difficulties they faced. Alex Kuch noted that it has been difficult to fill agriculture positions and that they have had to broaden their search to find qualified candidates. He underscored that no matter what the position they are trying to fill, whether its in agriculture or operational positions, they focus on their values and purpose, which is to connect to the land. They promote teamwork and collaboration to foster tenure. They support and work with Go Farms to train and teach people how to run their own farms.

Cheryl Cross helped to introduce Alex Kuch to Mark Menard, Leslie Wilkins, Rona Fukumoto, Scott Murakami, and Cary Miyashiro in hopes they can connect and partner in the future.

Vice Chair Kanehira noted that Alex Kuch is an active member of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) Hawaii Chapter.

**VII. Updates from the State Workforce Development Division from July 13, 2023 to October 12, 2023**

Bennette Misalucha presented on behalf of Maricar Pilotin-Freitas, who was unable to attend today's meeting. Maricar Pilotin-Freitas' presentation can be viewed at this link: [Workforce-Development-Division-Update-10.4.2023.pdf \(hawaii.gov\)](#)

**VIII. Announcements and Public Testimony**

There were no announcements or public testimony.

**IX. Next Meeting**

The Employer Engagement Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 11, 2024 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

**X. Adjournment**

Vice Chair Kanehira adjourned the meeting at 2:03 p.m.