

AGRICULTURE WORKFORCE ADVISORY BOARD
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
Wednesday, November 16 , 2022
830 Punchbowl Street, Room 329

MEETING MINUTES

DRAFT

DATE: Wednesday, November 16, 2022
TIME: 1:30pm – 3:30pm

Board Members Present through TEAMS:

JoAnn Vidinhar, Chair, DLIR Deputy Director
(representing Director Anne Perreira-Eustaquio)
Evangeline “Vangie” Casinas (Representing the Superintendent - Department of Education)
David Fuertes (Representative of Farmers)
Bruce Mathews, (University of Hawaii at Hilo)
Brian Miyamoto, (Hawaii Farm Bureau - for Randy Cabral)
Phyllis Shimabukuro-Geiser, (Chairperson, Department of Agriculture)
Anna Wieczorek, (Interim Dean and Director - UH Manoa CTAHR)

Staff:

Maricar Pilotin-Freitas	Staff, DLIR, WDD
Jarret Yip	Staff, DLIR, WDD
Jay Ishibashi	Staff, DLIR, WDD

Guest:

Norman Arancon	University of Hawaii at Hilo
Jeffrey Garvey	Waipahu High School
Ken Kajihara	Waipahu Intermediate School
Katie Kealoha	Waianae High School
Niki Kunioka-Volz	County of Kauai
Maliekekaimaika “Kai” Ward	Molokai High School

I. Call to Order and Introductions

With a quorum of members present, the meeting was called to order by Jay Ishibashi on behalf of Chair JoAnn Vidinhar at 1:37 p.m.

Following the review and approval of the minutes from previous Agriculture Workforce Advisory Board meetings, Chair Vidinhar arrived at the meeting and Jay Ishibashi asked the Board members to introduce themselves.

- II.** The approval of minutes for the board meetings held on September 18, 2019, January 7, 2020 and March 1, 2021 were reviewed and voted on for approval by the Board. There were no edits by Board members to any of the minutes. Board member David Fuertes motioned for approval for each of the past minutes (taken separately) and Phyllis Shimabukuro-Geiser seconded the motions on each of the past minutes. The Board

unanimously voted to approve the minutes for the September 18, 2019, January 7, 2020 and March 1, 2021 Board meetings.

III. FY2021 Project Updates

Jay Ishibashi noted that many of the projects were still experiencing difficulties due to the pandemic and made slight changes to their original submittals.

“Buy One, Give One Program” (DOE - Leilehua High School) – Jay Ishibashi reported that Jackie Freitas was not able to join the meeting due to scheduling conflicts, but a copy of the project’s final report was forwarded to the Board when received and hoped that the Board members had a chance to review. Board member David Fuertes noted that Leilehua’s program is a production facility and helps the surrounding community through programs like this project’s community food assistance program. Board member Phyllis Shimabukuro-Geiser commented that Jackie Freitas is a good educator/mentor and has good community support.

“Aquaculture Workshop” (DOE – Waianae High School) Katie Kealoha thanked the Board for the funding which helped with Waianae High School’s annual week long aquaculture workshop (a CTE program) that allowed students to see other aquaculture operations and talk to experts in the field to learn and get a feel for the various cultural practices and opportunities in agriculture through aquaculture. The students during the workshop were able visit the Oceanic Institute, Aiea fishpond, Kuuloa Ranch oyster and shrimp operations among others and were able to do service learning at a few of the sites. It was the first year back in-person post Covid but still seventeen students participated - down from the normal twenty five and found the workshop very valuable. The project did not use all the funds allotted due to some of the anticipated costs being covered by another grant. Chair Vidinhar congratulated Katie on the success of the project and while the attendance was down the participating students did find value in the program.

“Agriculture Practicum” (UH Hilo) Norman Arancon thanked the Board for approving the project and provided a summary of the UH Hilo agriculture practicum. The hope of the practicum was to revitalize student interest in becoming emerging leaders to help solve problems in the spectrum of food sufficiency - including those that are in production both harvest and consumption. To achieve this goal the program wanted to have each student experience a curriculum through experiential and applied learning that is delivered by competent teaching. At the end of the program, the experiences shared by the students showed that the aims of the program were met as they were able to acquire, integrate, synthesize and apply knowledge of agricultural production concepts through their assigned activities. A total of eleven students participated in the practicum, six of whom graduated with one already in the graduate program and the others working in the industry. The remaining five are seniors and the hope is they continue their education in agriculture.

“Ohana Academy – Food Production and Sales” (DOE - Waipahu High School) – Vice Principal Gary Chun who was attending a conference in Georgia was unavailable to provide an overview of the project. The Board members did receive a final report from Waipahu High School on the project’s highlights.

“Farmers FFA Taro Enterprise” (DOE – Molokai High School) – Maliekekaimaika “Kai” Ward thanked the Board for Molokai High School’s initial funding support and the

opportunity to expand their programs. Kai Ward briefed the Board on the experiences of students with Kalo farming. The students were provided with real world agricultural production experiences on campus at Molokai High School and site visitations to agribusinesses in the community. The students were able to grow a variety of marketable produce and learn the marketing obstacles faced by farmers.

County of Kauai Summer Internships (Kauai County/DOE) – Niki Kunioka-Volz provided a summary of the DOE/County of Kauai FY21 summer internship projects. The program was able to recruit a total of twenty three students from all three high schools on island. Of the twenty three students, sixteen completed the summer intern program. The County of Kauai worked with the Department of Education and the Kauai Economic Opportunity Board to implement the program. The four week internship placed students at Wailua Meat Company, Lydgate Farms, Nonaka's farms, Kumano I Ke Ala, and Iwikua. While the number of applicants and participating interns was down from previous years, the participating interns received high praise from the participating farms.

"Algae and Oyster Farming" (DOE - Waipahu High School) – Jeffrey Garvey reported that while the program was unable to accomplish its initial goal of spawning oysters, the students were provided more engagement in the process and learned the importance of microalgae in the growth of oysters. The funds provided by the DLIR mini grant were instrumental in expanding the school's existing algae production curriculum through the purchase of supplies. And because of the funding the Academy of Natural Resources was able to increase the number of students participating.

"Hawaii FFA AGR Leadership" (DOE – Waipahu Intermediate School) – Ken Kajihara reported that project was unable to have students travel due in part to the pandemic and had to shift their focus to providing to peripherals to more of the FFA chapters.

GoFarm Hawaii (UH Manoa)

Janel Yamamoto, the Director for GoFarm Hawaii due to scheduling conflicts was unable to participate in the meeting but the Board was provided a copy of the project's FY21 final report for review.

IV. FY 2023 Proposal Review and Recommendation for Budget Allocation

At the request of Chair Vidinhar, the Board proceeded to review the proposals submitted for FY 23 funding.

David Fuertes motioned to reduce the recommended proposals by 20% and have the staff make the critical adjustments to meet the allocation ceiling. The motion was seconded by Board member Brian Miyamoto to further discussion. After discussion, Board member David Fuertes withdrew his motion and the Board continued the process of reviewing the proposals individually.

- A. "Agriculture Mentorship at UH Hilo" (UH Hilo) After questioning Norman Arancon regarding staffing, prospective students, demographics, and time commitment for high school students, the Board discussed and recommended to partially fund the proposal noting the possible staffing shortfalls, the number viable proposals, the limited funding available and the program's ability to acquire funds.

- B. "Sustainable Food Growing Systems & Land Management (DOE/Castle High School) After review the Board recommended to partially fund the proposal deleting the budgeted equipment cost.
- C. "Animals on the Farm" (DOE - Leilehua High School) – The Board noted the inability to fund requested forty foot container and a discussion ensued about how to help Leilehua High School with their need outside of the DLIR mini grant. The Board also noted the absence of funding for animals in the budget details. The Board recommended fully funding the proposal but recommended due in part to the strength of school's agriculture program and its partnership with the community to have Leilehua High School revise the budget to include items specific to the animal program.
- D. "GoFarms Hawaii: A Statewide Farmer Development Initiative" (University of Hawaii) – the committee recommended to not fund the proposal citing the number viable proposals, the limited funding available and the program's ability to acquire funds.
- E. Hawaii Future Farmers of America College Careers and Leadership Program (Waipahu Intermediate School) – An update from Ken Kajihara and the subsequent request to reduce the proposals budget, the Board recommended funding the reduced amount.
- F. "Growing Connection" (DOE – Molokai High School) – In speaking with Kai Ward, it was agreed that it was more beneficial for the program to continue upon what they have built to date utilizing DLIR's previous funding and not pursue new ventures such as the drone certification. The Board recommended to fully fund the proposal as a great value added project but recommended as noted to revise the budget to reflect a continuation of the previously DLIR funded Molokai agriculture projects and remove as an example new programs such as drone certification.
- G. "Chicken Farming and Composting" (Waipahu High School) the committee recommended to fully fund the proposal with the noting the small funding request and the success of previous Waipahu High School agriculture projects.
- H. "Ka'u Global Learning Lab" – the committee agreed to entertain reviewing the Ka'u proposal despite the submittal just after the deadline and recommended to partially fund the proposal.

The Board then entertained a motion by Board member Ania Wieczorek for a blanket approval of the recommendations for the funding of fiscal year 2023 DLIR agriculture projects. The motion was seconded by Board member Phyllis Shimabukuro-Geiser. The motion was approved.

David Fuertes commented that since the start of the mini grants provided by DLIR and the Representative Nakashima and the Legislature the FFA program has doubled in size and have made students in grade schools more aware of the opportunities in the field of agriculture.

The Board recommended to give the department the discretion over any revisions to the budgets of the initial proposals as recommended by the Board. The Board concurred and approved a motion by Board member Phyllis Shimabukuro-Geiser and seconded by Board member Brian Miyamoto for the department to be given the authority to approve revised budgets to projects.

V. Announcements and Updates

The Board thanked departing Chair Vidinhar, and Board members Phyllis Shimabukuro-Geiser and Evangeline Casinas for their invaluable work on the Board. Chair Vidinhar thanked the board members for their diligence and knowledge in helping navigate the Board through the years.

VI. Next Meeting

The Board agreed to schedule the next meeting after the beginning of the next fiscal year to discuss FY24 funding if appropriated by the legislature.

VII. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned by Chair JoAnn Vidinhar at 3:45p.m.