DHHL polling beneficiaries about Kapolei casino proposal

The Hawaiian Homes Commission last month made a controversial decision to help address the Department of Hawaiian Homes Lands' "dire financial state."

Commissioners approved a draft legislative proposal to authorize limited gaming in the form of a single integrated resort property on department lands designated for commercial use in Kapolei, Oahu.

Funds for DHHL would be generated through a land lease agreement with the licensee and direct collection of a majority share of the proposed state tax on gross gaming revenue.

"We have heard the voices of our community and the desire to provide feedback on the bold, yet desperately needed legislation being proposed," said Commission Chair William J. Aila Jr.

"We are at the point in the process now that we bring a commission-approved proposal to our beneficiaries to engage in a meaningful way. The department has already gone through extensive consultation regarding the land use designation for potential parcels being considered as part of this measure during island and regional planning efforts. Now, we are engaging with the community to express the need for a project such as this and relevant details. We ask that you come with the desire to engage in a way that benefits both our community and the trust."

To gain feedback, DHHL will host virtual meetings through an online portal on Monday, Jan. 18, at 6 p.m. and on Tuesday, Jan. 19, at noon.

The consultation meetings will be open to beneficiaries statewide and can be accessed by visiting dhhl.hawaii.gov/government-relations on the scheduled day and time.

To view the draft legislation, visit dhhl.hawaii.gov/government-relations.

Based on feedback so far, the prospects look grim for a casino. If you are a beneficiary, what do you think?