

## **HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING**

Minutes of March 28, 2023

La`i`Opua 2020 Community Center Complex  
74-5210 Keanalehu Dr., Kailua-Kona, Hawai`i 96740, and  
Interactive Conferencing Technology (ICT) Zoom ID: 609 754 2925

**PRESENT** Kali Watson, Chairman  
Makai Freitas, West Hawai`i Commissioner  
Zachary Z. Helm, Moloka`i Commissioner  
Michael L. Kaleikini, East Hawai`i Commission  
Russell K. Ka`upu, O`ahu Commissioner (ICT)  
Pauline N. Namu`o, O`ahu Commissioner (ICT)  
Patricia A. Teruya, O`ahu Commissioner (ICT)

**EXCUSED** Randy K. Awo, Maui Commissioner  
Dennis L. Neves, Kauai Commissioner

**COUNSEL** Alyssa Kau, Deputy Attorney General

**STAFF** Katie L. Ducatt, Deputy Designate to the Chairman  
Leah Burrows-Nuuanu, Secretary to the Commission  
Richard Hoke, Executive Assistant to the Chairman  
Andrew Choy, Planning Manager (ICT)  
Kahana Albinio, Acting Land Management Division Administrator  
Julie Cachola, Planner  
Lilianne Makaila, Planner  
Michael Lowe, Information Specialist

### **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Watson called the public hearing to order at 7:32 PM. Four (4) members were at the meeting location, and two (2) via Zoom, establishing a quorum.

This hearing is for the Department to provide information and receive comments on a proposed community-based renewable energy project on DHHL land in Kalaoa, Hawai`i Island.

In October 2022, the Commission approved Nexamp Solar, LLC's request for a Right of Entry permit for due diligence purposes and a conditional long-term General Lease (25 years with options to extend) for 27.6 acres at Kalaoa which allowed the development of 1 three megawatt solar plus battery storage project.

Nexamp Solar, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company, is requesting a Right-of-Entry Permit for due diligence purposes and conditional approval for a conditional long-term General Lease (for twenty years with options to extend) for an additional 19.33 acres to the 27.6 acre portion of Hawaiian Home Lands to develop a second 3MW solar plus battery storage project. If the additional acreage is approved Nexamp Solar LLC would develop , 2 "co-located" solar plus battery storage projects, encompassing a total of 46.93 acres of land at Kalaoa that would generate up to 6MW of energy.

The purpose of this hearing is to allow all interested persons to submit data, views, or arguments, orally or in writing, on matters relevant to the issues identified in the Notice of Public Hearing,

which was just read. We will not provide any response to any question asked tonight; we are in listening mode only

## **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

### MOTION/ACTION

Moved by Commissioner Kaleikini, seconded by Commissioner Helm, to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Watson asked if the testimonies given earlier were in the record. Commission Secretary Leah Burrows-Nuuanu stated that it was recorded, but that portion of the hearing was set aside as an informational session allowing for a question-and-answer period. The Commission has moved into the formal public testimony part. The Commission will receive testimony only.

## **PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED LAND DISPOSITION OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS FOR A COMMUNITY-BASED RENEWABLE ENERGY SOLAR PROJECT AT KALAOA ON THE ISLAND OF HAWAI'I**

### **A. PROPOSED KALAOA COMMUNITY-BASED RENEWABLE ENERGY SOLAR PROJECT**

Presentation of proposed solar energy project on Hawaiian Home Lands at Kalaoa, Hawai'i, to be developed by Nexamp Solar, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company. Nexamp Solar, LLC requests a Right-of-Entry Permit for due diligence purposes and Conditional Approval for a 25-year General Lease for an additional 19.33 acres to the 27.6-acre portion of Hawaiian Home Lands previously approved by the Hawaiian Homes Commission at its regularly scheduled monthly meeting held on October 17-18, 2022, to develop a second 3MW solar plus battery storage project. Here, 2 "co-located" solar plus battery storage projects will be developed to generate up to 6MW of energy encompassing a total land area of 46.93 acres of Hawaiian Home Lands. Following the presentation, DHHL staff and Nexamp Solar, LLC representatives will respond to public questions related to the proposed project. **Tax Map Key No. (3) 7-3-010:007 (portion), Kalaoa, Hawai'i Island**

### **B. PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON THE PROPOSED KALAOA COMMUNITY-BASED RENEWABLE ENERGY SOLAR PROJECT**

Public Testimony is limited to (3) three minutes per person.

Chair Watson stated that testifiers would be called in the order of those who signed up ahead via the DHHL website, those who signed up in person, those who signed up via the chat feature, and finally, those who were connected via voice call. Testifiers are asked to unmute themselves when their names are called and to state their name, address, and who they represent.

#### **PT-1 Bo Kahui**

B. Kahui is the Executive Director for La'i `Opua Community Development Corporation and was a Principal Director in the O'oma Homestead Alliance, which also participated in the RFP for this project. La'i `Opua CDC supports the program and believes it is important for native Hawaiians to participate in the renewable energy plan to become self-reliant. La'i `Opua will align itself with the Department to ensure that the beneficiaries understand the process and educate the community so they can make their own decisions.

**PT-2 Claire Loprinzi**

C.Loprinzi testified that she opposes the project and thinks it should be shut down now and everything re-examined. Looking at the cost, the savings is \$240 per year out of \$24,000. She wanted it on record that an archaeologist needs to make the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that is not paid off. She asked that the Commission look at the effects of lithium if a fire broke out. DHHL has a moral obligation and kuleana, but the land is used to support million-dollar industries. She hopes the Commission will make the right decision to stop this.

**PT-3 Cindy Freitas**

C.Freitas testified that she opposes Nexamp. Her rights were taken away from testifying against Item F-2 on the October 2022 agenda because the item was removed. Regarding the beneficiary consultation, she reiterated Commissioner Helm’s question of whether the beneficiaries were favorable or in opposition to the project. She read Planning Manager Andrew Choy’s response, “When they had beneficiary consultation for the Kalaoa project, the participants were supportive of the project and the concept of renewable energy, but would like to see a little more benefits to the community. Commissioner Helm asked how many beneficiaries there were? A. Choy stated the meeting was held virtual and probably less than ten.” C. Freitas stated that was correct as there was not enough time to allow the beneficiaries in the Hawaiian homestead to voice their concern, let alone the materials to understand what was going on. The Commission is not hearing the people. She does not understand the Department’s process. Where is the ag lands, the residential lands and the vacant lots to build their own house on top. She opposed Nexamp.

**PT-4 Kilihea Inaba**

U. Inaba testified in opposition of the project. She would like to see more of the agro-voltaic plan, and another EIS be done by someone other than Pacific Consulting Services who has shown inaccuracies in their assessments and previous projects, namely Mauna Kea. She would like to connect with Nexamp to see if there is agro-voltaic that come through this project.

Chair Watson stated for the record he did receive an email from Noelani Almeida. He will forward that email for the Commission Secretary to include in the record.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT**

**NEXT MEETING**

Chair Watson thanked the participants and announced that the second Public Hearing for this matter is scheduled this Wednesday, March 29, 2023, at 8:30 a.m. at the Courtyard King Kamehameha Kona Beach Hotel, Ballroom #2, at 75-5660 Palani Road, Kailua-Kona, Hawai`i 96740, and on Zoom.

The next HHC meeting – March 29, 2023 – HHC Special Meeting, 75-5660 Palani Road, Kailua-Kona, Hawai`i 96740

**MOTION/ACTION**

Moved by Commissioner Helm, seconded by Commissioner Freitas, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

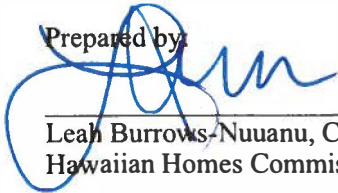
7:51 PM

Respectfully submitted:



Kali Watson, Chairman  
Hawaiian Homes Commission

Prepared by:



Leah Burrows-Nuuanu, Commission Secretary  
Hawaiian Homes Commission

Attachments: