



WAHIAWA-WHITMORE VILLAGE NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD NO. 26

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REGULAR MEETING MINUTES MONDAY, JUNE 22, 2009 WAHIAWA RECREATION CENTER

OPENING CEREMONIES: Vice Chair Jyun Yamamoto welcomed everyone to the meeting, opened with a moment of reflection of the past week, and led everyone in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

I. CALL TO ORDER: Vice Chair Yamamoto called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. with a quorum of seven (7) members present. Note - This nine (9) member Board requires five (5) votes to have a quorum and take official Board action.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Joe Francher, Dean Harvest, Jeanne Ishikawa (arrived 7:38 p.m.), Silvia Manley Koch, Mary Jane Lee, Bob Lormand, and Jyun Yamamoto.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ben Acohido, Vee Chuensanguansat

GUESTS: Captain Richard Ochoa (HFD), Lieutenant Ben Ballesteros (HPD), Commander James Darenkamp, Lieutenant Miguel Macias Captain (NCTMAS-PAC), John Chang (Mayor's Representative), Keanu Young (Councilmember Donovan Dela Cruz's office), Representative Marcus Oshiro, Virginia Richards, Geri Tramontano (Wahiawa Satellite City Hall), Larry Lau (Governor's Representative), Hugh Lowery, Daniel Neyer, Alesia Au, Dayna Sanchez, Cindy DeCastro, Alicea DeGuzman, Patricia Tupino, and Peter Salbiejo (Neighborhood Commission Office staff).

Chair Acohido announced that there has been a proposed change in the agenda format for Neighborhood Board meetings. In an effort to increase participation by residents instead of conducting Board business first as has been the norm, the City and State government representatives will give their reports, followed by residents' concerns, and then Board business.

II. CITY MONTHLY REPORTS

HONOLULU FIRE DEPARTMENT (HFD) - Captain Butch Ochoa from #16 Wahiawa Fire Station reported the following:

Statistics for the month of June include: 35 total fire runs, with 2 structure fires, 8 wildland fires, 2 rubbish fires, 2 vehicle fires and 76 medical emergencies.

Fire Safety Tip: Summer is upon us, and our island will be at a higher risk for fires due to dry vegetation and the hot weather. Historically, wildland fires were referred to as brush fires; the term wildland fire is more nationally recognized.

Please use caution when utilizing flame-producing devices, such as fireworks, matches, and/or lighters, around wildland vegetation; the smallest spark and/or flame can ignite the dry vegetation. As a reminder, the law states that children under age 18 shall not possess or have access to fireworks, matches, and/or lighters, except under adult supervision. Flame-producing devices are not safe for young children. Always follow the manufacturer's directions on the label. As Independence Day nears, consider leaving fireworks displays to pyrotechnic professionals and enjoy one of several public fireworks displays offered by various communities.

HONOLULU POLICE DEPARTMENT (HPD) - Lieutenant Ben Ballesteros reported the following:

1. Statistics for the month of May 2009 compared to April 2009: 14/13 burglaries, 19/14 unauthorized entrance to a motor vehicle (UEMV), 24/24 thefts, 6/4 auto thefts.
2. Introduced Officer Gerald Scoville from the Community Policing Office out of the Wahiawa Police Station and another officer who will be attending future Board meetings in place of Lieutenant Ballesteros.



Questions, comments, and concerns followed:

Harvest asked if Lieutenant Ballesteros was aware of a number of accidents occurring around 730 Wilikina Drive and 1830 Wilikina Drive. Lieutenant Ballesteros replied that he had not heard of any accidents happening around those areas on Wilikina Drive. He also said that the crime statistics do not include that area. He agreed to investigate if there were any accidents that had occurred at those locations and report his findings to the Board at next month's meeting.

MAYOR'S REPRESENTATIVE - John Chang passed out a newsletter from the Mayor and was available to address any concerns.

COUNCILMEMBER DONOVAN DELA CRUZ - Keanu Young from Councilman Donovan Dela Cruz's office passed out his newsletter and highlighted the following:

Proposed fee increases:

1. Bill 20 relates to increasing the motor vehicle weight tax from 3 cents to 4 cents per pound on January 1, 2010 and raises it again to 5 cents per pound on January 1, 2011.
2. Bill 21 increases the highway beautification and abandoned vehicles fee. The current fee of \$5 per vehicle will be raised to \$6 per vehicle on September 1, 2009 and raises it again to \$7 per vehicle on July 1, 2010.
3. Bill 22 proposes a restructuring of TheBus fares, increasing the price for adults and youths. Beginning July 1, 2009 a single fare for adults will be raised from \$2 to \$2.25, four-day passes will cost \$25 from \$20, monthly passes increase from \$40 to \$50 and annual passes will increase from \$440 to \$550.
4. Bill 23 will increase the fees at municipal golf courses, including Kahuku Golf Course. The fee for adults with a golf ID card and golf cart fees would be raised from \$16 to \$19 and \$9 to \$12 for youths starting July 1, 2009. For Kahuku, adults with a golf ID card will be charged \$13, up from \$10; youths will be charged \$8, up from \$5.
5. Bill 24 increases the entrance fee at the Honolulu Zoo. Children under the age of three, instead of five, will be free. Children from four to 12 years of age will be charged \$3 instead of \$1. It would cost Hawaii residents 13 years and older \$6 instead of \$4 and non-residents would be charged \$12 instead of \$8. Annual family passes would no longer be sold.
6. Bill 25 proposes to increase the fee for attendant and custodial services, Honolulu Zoo parking meter rates and Hanauma Bay Nature Preserve. The fee for organizations using city facilities which require an attendant and custodial services would increase from \$10 to \$15. The non-resident entrance fee for Hanauma Bay would increase from \$5 to \$7.50. Parking fees at the Honolulu Zoo and on Kalakaua Avenue would be raised to \$1.50 from \$.25 an hour.
7. Bill 42 which relates to defraying some of the costs incurred in running the Neighborhood Board Meetings by charging a fee to entities requesting multiple appearances on the same Neighborhood Board agenda.

Regarding request to replace the light meter that operates the lights for the volleyball courts at Kaala Neighborhood Park – Department of Parks and Recreation reported that they have discontinued the use of the light meters and will replace them with an electrical timer that will turn the lights on and off at a pre-set time.

Request that HPD investigate and take necessary action to mitigate speeding on Ohai Street. – HPD is aware of the problem and will be monitoring and enforcing speed limit infractions.

Update on the Wahiawa Transit Center – Council Member Dela Cruz sent a letter to Governor Lingle urging her to release the \$2.5 million the legislature appropriated for the Transit Center.

Questions, comments and concerns followed:

1. Lee asked if recent fee and tax increases will result in a balanced budget for the City and County of Honolulu. Young replied that he believes that a balanced budget will be the result of the fee and tax increases. Lee also stated that she believes that the bus fares for children should not be increased and the senior citizens fare should be increased instead.

2. Harvest requested clarification on Bill 42 that the fee will be charged to entities that request to appear before a Board. If a Board requests a group to appear more than twice then there is no fee charged. Young confirmed that was correct.
3. Francker said that he thought the money for the Wahiawa Bus Transit Center was going to be released. He asked if the funds were released. Young responded that the funds had not yet been released and his office had been requested to write and send such a letter so it was done. Yamamoto asked if the project will be stopped if the appropriated funds are not released by the governor. Young said that he does not think so because he funds were appropriated for the construction of the two level parking structure to be shared with the State Judiciary, not for the Transit Center itself.

By unanimous consent Vice Chair Yamamoto moved agenda item VI, D, 1 thru 7 up in the order to be heard at this time.

WAHIAWA SATELLITE CITY HALL - Geri Tramontano reported that the City's Pet Sterilization Program has resumed with the Hawaiian Humane Society. They have partnered with a number of veterinarians to provide deeply discounted sterilization services. Certificates are available at all Satellite City Halls or at the Humane Society. Owners who have their dogs neutered qualify for a discounted price for dog licenses.

GOVERNOR'S REPRESENTATIVE – Larry Lau did not have anything to report back and was available to take questions and hear concerns.

Questions, comments and concerns followed.

Harvest reported that he heard from another Neighborhood Board that there used to be a landfill or a hardfill located on Schofield Barracks that is now closed. He asked if any contaminated soil or debris was transported to any City or private landfill. Lau replied that he was not aware of any landfill located at Schofield Barracks but he agreed to check with his staff and report his findings at the next Board meeting.

Representative Marcus Oshiro – Rep. Oshiro was in attendance and was available to take questions and hear concerns.

U.S. NAVY NCTAMS PAC – Commander James Darenkemp reported the following:

1. Last weekend made 460 consecutive days without a DUI citation issued to Navy personnel.
2. On Wednesday May 17, 2009 there will be a 5K fun run on base. The event is a fund raising activity for the Ronald McDonald house
3. Operation Aloha's canned goods drive is continuing with five months to go before ending. So far 6,500 pounds of canned goods have been collected.

III. RESIDENTS' CONCERNS:

Maxie Asagi from Asagi Fresh Foods informed the Board and other interested parties in attendance she intends to open a poultry slaughter and processing operation at the old Del Monte facility in Kunia. She is aware of the desire of the community to preserve and promote the unique cultural traditions of Wahiawa and Kunia and will conduct her operations mindful of those aspects. She informed the residents that live close to the facility about her plans and invited them to appear at the Neighborhood Board meeting. The purpose of her appearance is to answer any questions and address any concerns that people may have about her company and operations.

Questions, comments and concerns followed:

1. Vice Chair Yamamoto asked how many people she would be employing. Asagi replied that in the beginning her family will make up the bulk of her employees with about five to seven new people. As operations increased she would be hiring workers to meet the demand.
2. Harvest asked what would be the hours of operation. Asagi said that in the beginning they would be slaughtering between 100 and 500 chickens one day a week and as the demand increases they will adjust their operational hours accordingly.
3. Lormand asked what will happen to the waste products as a result of the processing. Asagi replied that the waste products will be taken away by another company which will then recycle it and use it for compost, animal feed, etc. The waste products will be taken away daily and not allowed to sit at the site.

4. Dan Nakasone, First Vice President of the Wahiawa Community and Business Association, submitted a letter to the Board showing the unanimous support of the Association for Asagi Fresh Foods' processing plant. He also testified that, as an employee of Chef Alan Wong's restaurant, they fully support her operation and are looking forward to her product being available.
5. Glenn Shigeta, whose family owned one of the last poultry farms that closed on Oahu a few years ago, testified that his family was approached by Maxi Asagi to raise the chickens needed for the operation. He said his family fully supports the efforts of Maxi and the Asagi family to provide fresh poultry to the residents of Oahu.
6. Brandon Bajo-Daniel, president of the Kunia Association, asked if representatives of the community would be able to visit the facility when her office is opened at the site. She stated that absolutely the community would be able to visit.

Francher moved and Lormand seconded, that Asagi Fresh Foods met their requirement and presented to the Wahiawa Neighborhood Board their plans for opening a processing plant in Kunia and satisfactorily addressed all concerns brought up by board members and residents in attendance. The motion passed unanimously.

Samson Reiny, a reporter from The Hawaii Independent introduced himself and invited anyone to e-mail him information about community events, family events, and other newsworthy items relevant to the Wahiawa and Whitmore Village community. The Hawaii Independent is a new online and once a week publication committed to providing stories and information to specific communities.

Francher reported that the increasing amount of homeless people that have been congregating at the Wahiawa Civic Center since being moved out of the area at Wahiawa Bridge is becoming a problem. He is concerned about the sanitary problems that may occur as a result of too many people gathered in an area not designed to comfortably accommodate them. **Francher moved and Vice Chair Yamamoto seconded, that this item be placed on this evening's agenda to be addressed. The motion passed unanimously.**

Francher moved and Lormand seconded, that a special meeting be scheduled on Monday June 29, 2009 at 7:00 pm to address the problem. Discussion followed:

1. Lee asked if this meeting could be conducted with the Committee of the Whole meeting on July 6, 2009. Francher replied it could not because the special meeting would deal only with the homeless problem.
2. Ishikawa asked if the meeting will address the homeless only in the Civic Center or in general. Francher replied that the intention of the meeting would be to address the homeless in the Civic Center but admitted that because the issues of homelessness is almost the same everywhere they may end up addressing the homeless in general.
3. Koch agreed that a meeting a necessary but opined that a specific goal needs to be set with the right people invited that can help make it happen. Otherwise, it will turn into a gripe session with everyone airing out their concerns but no answers are found. She was also concerned that two weeks notice was not enough time to notify everyone about the meeting. Francher said that he already has been contacting organizations these past two weeks about this meeting.
4. Harvest suggested taking the time to contact everyone who needs to be at this meeting and informing them about what we want to happen at this meeting. Then if they want to be involved asking them about their availability for a date. He suggests not rushing into scheduling the meeting and being thorough in contacting the right people and making sure they can attend. Francher replied that he feels that something needs to start happening now. If certain groups are not able to attend this meeting he feels that there will be others scheduled. The important thing is to start meeting now, whoever is available.
5. Koch asked a police officer who was still at the meeting if they have received instructions to remove people who trespass into the Civic Center area. The police officer replied that a certain dynamic exists for the homeless in the Civic Center area. There are hard core drinkers there who do cause problems. The police do try hard to clear them out of there because of the trouble they cause. He suggested having signs posted informing everyone when the area is supposed to be closed. He also said in his opinion about ten percent of the homeless will respond to offers of help and take advantage of programs designed to help them. The other ninety percent are hared core with no desire to take advantage of offers of help. A good number of that ten percent are those that are staying at the Civic Center. Because it is visible, provides some protection from the elements, and is close to the hospital people feel safe there. Most of the occupants are women and children. He suggested focusing any offers of help to those staying there.

Vice Chair Yamamoto called for a vote on the motion that a special meeting be scheduled on Monday June 29, 2009 at 7:00 pm to address the problem. The motion failed 3-4 (Aye: Francher, Yamamoto, Lormand. Nay: Lee, Harvest, Ishikawa, Koch).

Harvest moved and Koch seconded, to defer the decision of the date of this special meeting to July 20, 2009 and allow the new Board to choose the meeting date. The motion passed 5-2 (Aye: Lee, Harvest, Ishikawa, Koch and Yamamoto. Nay: Francher and Lormand).

Francher moved and Lormand seconded, that the establishment of a Permitted Interaction Group (P.I.G.) to study the homeless issue be placed on tonight's agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

Francher moved and Lormand seconded, that the Board establish a Permitted Interaction Group (P.I.G.) to study the homeless issue. The motion passed unanimously.

Without opposition, the members are Joe Francher, Jyun Yamamoto, Bob Lormand, Sylvia Koch and Jeanne Ishikawa.

David Aki, president of the Launani Valley Association, wanted to express the concerns of the residents of Launani Valley to the military which fly helicopters back and forth over the valley. Because of the recent crash landing of a military helicopter at Wheeler Air Base they wanted to be sure that the military has taken all possible steps to ensure that none of the helicopters that over-fly Launani Valley would crash. Since the representatives from the military had left the meeting Mr. Aki was given the phone number of the Public Affairs Office at Wheeler Air Base to contact directly.

A resident observed that because of parking on both sides of California Avenue near the water tower the bus has a hard time passing through. A question was brought up whether that area is supposed to be a "No Parking" Zone on one or both sides of the street. Residents of the area recall there used to be signs prohibiting parking but are not sure if it is one or both sides of the street. Vice Chair Yamamoto asked John Chang, the Mayor's Representative, to find out whether no parking is allowed and, if so, can signs be erected to inform the public or aid police in their enforcement.

IV. The Regular Meeting minutes of May 18, 2009 were unanimously approved with the following correction:

1. Page 1, under "Call to Order", first sentence, change "eight (8)" to "six (6)". Sentence should read "Chair Acohido called the meeting to at 7:03 p.m. with a quorum of six (6) members....."

V. BOARD BUSINESS

A. Presentations:

1. Ku Tree Reservoir Status Report – No representative and report. Francher reminded everyone that the USAG Garrison Representative attended last month's Board meeting and said the status report was not yet completed.
2. Glenn Yasui, State Department of Transportation (DOT), State Highways Administrator presented an update of ongoing State Highway projects in this area and answered questions relevant to State DOT Highways projects.
 1. They are in the process of restriping Kamehameha Highway between Weed Circle and Wahiawa Town. The project is scheduled to be completed in two months.
 2. H-2 rail lighting project is 70% completed with the installation of low rail lights and fixtures scheduled to be completed at the end of August 2009.
 3. Homeless clean up of the Wilson Bridge area was completed in March 2009.
 4. The "Welcome to Wahiawa" sign will be installed in the same place as the previous one. They are currently working with the Lions Club to complete this project.

Questions, comments and concerns followed:

1. Harvest asked if the lighting in the area along H-2 where thieves disabled the lights and stole the copper wire contained in them will be replaced anytime soon. Yasui replied that

the estimate of the cost of repairing the damage and replacing the missing components will run into the hundreds of thousands. There isn't enough money now in the department's budget to pay for this project.

2. Harvest reported the request of a constituent to see if a guardrail can be erected at the turn by Kemoo Farms on Wilikina Drive as there have been several accidents along that bend. Yasui said that a study can be done to see if a guardrail would help alleviate the amount of accidents in that area. He will arrange to have the results reported to the Board but reminded Harvest that budgetary concerns may prevent the erection of a guardrail there even if it is warranted.
3. James Burke, Director of the Public Transit Authority, which oversees TheBus and the Handivan Services for the City Department of Transportation Services answered questions related to City Department of Transportation Services projects.

Questions, comments and concerns followed:

1. Burke agreed to find out about whether there are parking restrictions along California Avenue up by the water tower.
2. Ishikawa expressed the concerns of a resident who reported that just past the intersection of Kilani Avenue and Kamehameha Highway there is a gas station on the Southwest Corner of Kilani that has cars waiting to enter. Because of the popularity of the station cars are usually staked waiting to enter and end up bunching up and blocking the intersection. She asked if there is anything that can be done to alleviate the situation. Burke agreed to look into it.
3. Francher asked Burke to please give a status report on the Wahiawa Bus Transit Center project. Burke reported that the Governor has refused to release the funds for the project. The bids for the project opened earlier this month and many companies submitted very competitive bids for the project. The department will look to other sources to try and find funds to replace the ones that haven't been released.
 - A. Francher asked if the design of the building might attract the homeless to occupy it just as they now occupy the Civic Center. Burke replied that it might but because it is a transportation center security becomes a priority. The building is designed to be open and have very few walls.
 - B. Harvest asked if the Transit Center will become a hub for bus services in the area.
 - C. Francher asked if it was proper for the bid to go out for the Transit Center if the funds are not available. Burke responded that there were reasonable assurances from the State Department of Accounting and General Services and other departments that the funds would be made available. The City Administration then sent a letter to the Governor's Office asking that the funds be released. The Governor then replied that she would not release the funds.
4. Burke addressed the request for extended TheBus service to Whitmore Village in the evening hours.
 - A. During a meeting between some Board members and others and Division Chief Burke and Department Director Wayne Yoshioka it was agreed that more bus services into Whitmore Village was warranted.
 - B. The process to design and implement a new bus route or to make changes to a current one will take about six months. He did say that a temporary adjustment in one of the current bus routes is in the works as a stopgap measure.
 - C. Because of budgetary concerns if changes result in adding a new route somewhere then changes or eliminating a route somewhere else may occur.
 - D. Burke commended Virginia Richards on the petition that was submitted because it wasn't filled with fictitious or duplicate names. Burke wants to contact everyone on the petition along with Board members and receive their input into the new services that is currently being planned. Burke wanted the permission of the Board to begin the formal process in planning and implementing extended bus service to Whitmore Village in the evening

Harvest moved and Francher seconded, to allow the Public Transit Authority and the Department of Transportation Services to begin the process in designed and implementing extended bus service to the Whitmore Village area in the evening. The motion was unanimously approved.

VI. REPORTS

1. Treasurer's Report – Harvest reported a beginning balance of \$3198.71 with \$31.09 expenses incurred resulting in a current balance of \$3167.62. The report was accepted subject to audit.
2. Chair's Report - deferred
3. Permitted Interaction Groups and/or Committee Reports – deferred
4. Elected Officials/Community Organizations – moved up in the agenda by unanimous consent.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The next Committee of the Whole meeting is scheduled for July 6, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. at the Wahiawa Recreation Center Ceramics Room.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Submitted By:

Peter Salbiejo
Neighborhood Assistant