



# ELECTIONS ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-3077

**Committee Members**  
Donald Sakamoto, Chair  
Brandon Young, Vice Chair  
Ho'opi'ookalani Balaz  
Ann Lemke

## Minutes

Honolulu Elections Accessibility Needs Advisory Committee Meeting  
Honolulu Hale Room 205 & Virtually via WEBEX  
Friday, September 20, 2024 at 2:30 P.M.

Video recording of this meeting can be found at:

<https://youtu.be/s0fpBJTGoBI>

### Committee Members

Donald Sakamoto, Chair  
Brandon Young, Vice Chair  
Ho'opi'ookalani Balaz  
Ann Lemke

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m. by Chair, Donald Sakamoto

### **II. ROLL CALL**

Ho'opi'ookalani Balaz  
Ann Lemke  
Brandon Young  
Donald Sakamoto

With the formal attendance noted and a quorum present, the meeting continued.

### **III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 14, 2024 MEETING**

- Donald Sakamoto moved, and Brandon Young seconded the minutes of the June 14, 2024 meeting be approved. The motion passed unanimously.

### **IV. INFORMATIONAL DISCUSSION BY THE STATEWIDE ELECTIONS ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS COMMITTEE ON WHAT IS PROPOSED FOR THE NEXT ELECTION**

Mr. James Gashel led the discussion.

- Accessible voting system is available in Hawai'i
- State Elections Office (elections.hawaii.gov) has a demonstration
- Encourages everyone to practice prior to election

- Ballots should be available from October 18<sup>th</sup>
- Ballots must be turned in before 7:00 pm on November 5<sup>th</sup>
- Encourages everyone to sign up for ballottrax

Ann Lemke added that she did not get a confirmation on her vote submission so she called the Office of Elections and was instructed to try again in a few days, which she did. She was able to complete her submission.

## **V. DISCUSSION ON UPCOMING 2026 ELECTION**

Mr. James Gashel led the discussion.

- Voter accessibility needs should be assessed through surveys and mailings to all registered voters.
- Consider expanding communication methods to include text messages and automatic voice response systems.
- Confirmation emails should be sent to individuals who have registered for accessible electronic ballots.

Chair Donald Sakamoto asked if there were any online participants or testimonies. There were none.

- Mr. Gashel noted that the next statewide meeting will be on October 10<sup>th</sup>.

## **VI. OVERVIEW OF PRIMARY ELECTION SEASON**

Mr. Rex Quidilla led the discussion.

- 177,108 votes cast
- 32.3% turnout – lowest turnout ever for a primary election
- 20 used the electronic system
- 5 individuals at Honolulu Hale, 5 individuals at Kapolei Hale, and 2 individuals at the district park pop-ups used the touch writer system for accessibility purposes
- Approximately 466,000 ballot envelopes are being prepared by the state's vendor for mailing in October.
- Voters should start receiving their ballots on October 18.
- Voter service centers and pop-up locations will be open from October 22 to November 2, except on the last day of voting.
- Echoes Mr. Gashel's suggestion for voters to sign up for ballottrax

Chair Donald Sakamoto asked if there were any online participants or testimonies. There were none.

Member Brandon Young asked if there were less last minute turnouts. Mr. Quidilla confirmed. He expects much more public engagement for the general election.

Chair Donald Sakamoto asked how many machines are at the voter center. Mr. Quidilla said there are two at the pop-up, and four machines each at Honolulu Hale and Kapolei Hale.

- Staffing is increased during primary and general elections to handle a large demand for in-person servicing.
- The public is urged to come before the last day to avoid long wait times.
- Assistance is available for individuals with disabilities, but there are limited handicapped stalls in front of City Hall.

Member Ann Lemke would like to make sure there is outreach to assisted living facilities.

## **VII. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING**

- Chair Donald Sakamoto moved the next meeting be held on December 13, 2024 at 1:00 p.m., and Lemke seconded the motion. It was passed unanimously.

## **VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Chair Sakamoto thanked the staff, board members, and Mr. Gashel for their participation in the meeting

## **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

- Chair Sakamoto moved to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Vice Chair Young. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 2:12 pm.