



NATURAL ENERGY LABORATORY OF HAWAII AUTHORITY

An Authority of the State of Hawaii attached to the Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

January 21, 2025
1:00 p.m.

**An Interactive Conference Technology Meeting was held at
NELHA OceanView Conference Room
Hale Iako Building
73-970 Makako Bay Drive
Kailua-Kona, HI 96740
and via Zoom Video Conferencing Software.**

Members/Designees in Attendance

Noelani Kalipi (Gov. Appointee/Chair)
Cyd Miyashiro (Gov. Appointee/Vice Chair)
Gordon Bruce (Gov. Appointee)
Nathan Tsao (Tenant Representative)
Alan Hilton (RAC Chair)
John Wiltshire (RAC Secretary)
Dennis Lin (County of Hawaii)
Dick Jones (Tenant Representative)
Jaclyn Kaina (HTDC)
Russell Tsuji (DLNR)
Dave Molinaro (DBEDT)

Board Members Not Attending and Excused

Dr. Vassilis Syrmos (University of Hawaii)

Guests/Staff Present

Laurence Sombardier (NELHA)
Alexander Leonard (NELHA)
Keith Olson (NELHA)
Pam Madden (NELHA)
Jennifer Rasmussen (NELHA)
Rae Nguyen (NELHA)
Sherry Ortiz (NELHA)
Faustine Edge (NELHA)
John Cole (AG)
Kaliko Chun (DHHL)
Tom Fee (HHF)
Gerald Heslinga (Indo-Pacific Sea Farms)
Mark Ladao (Hawaii Public Radio)
Malia Louis (County of Hawaii)
Jeff Zimpher (National Park Services)
Joe Coury (Sea Dragon Energy Inc.)
Stefan Sillen (Sea Dragon Energy Inc.)
Adrian Barfield (Sea Dragon Energy Inc.)
Suzanne Shaske (Sea Dragon Energy Inc.)
Alexia Akbay (Symbrosia)

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Full Board meeting recording available at:

Video Recording Part A: <https://youtu.be/hNIhkt7hVK4>

Video Recording Part B: <https://youtu.be/OTkYDcehtWs>

- **Item 1. (1:00 p.m. Video Part A run time 0:03:01) Call to Order.**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Noe Kalipi (Chair Kalipi) at 1:00 p.m. Chair Kalipi asked Interim Executive Director (ED) Sombardier for a roll call of Board members and NELHA staff. Reference to Act 220. Eleven members present and one excused.

Director Hilton joined the meeting at 1:02 p.m.

- **Item 2a. (1:05 p.m. Video Part A run time 0:08:09) Approval November 19, 2024, NELHA Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes.**

Chair Kalipi opened this item for discussion. Director Wiltshire moved to approve the November 19, 2024, meeting minutes, and the motion was seconded by Director Tsuji (1:05 p.m. Video Part A run time 0:08:32). The minutes were approved. (11-0) (1:06 p.m. Video Part A run time 0:08:50).

- **Item 2b. (1:06 p.m. Video Part A run time 0:08:56) Approval December 11, 2024, NELHA Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes.**

Chair Kalipi asked for a motion to approve the December 11, 2024, Non-Executive Session Meeting Minutes. Director Tsao made the motion and Director Wiltshire seconded the motion (1:07 p.m. Video Part A run time 0:09:01). The minutes were approved. (11-0) (1:08 p.m. Video Part A run time 0:10:45).

- **Item 2c. (1:08 p.m. Video Part A run time 0:10:53) Approval December 11, 2024, NELHA Board of Directors' Executive Session.**

Chair Kalipi asked for a motion to approve the December 11, 2024, Executive Session Meeting Minutes. Director Wiltshire made the motion and Director Tsao seconded the motion (1:08 p.m. Video Part A run time 0:10:59). The minutes were approved. (11-0) (1:09 p.m. Video Part A run time 0:11:24).

- **Item 3. (1:09 p.m. Video Part A run time 0:11:37) Public Testimony.**

Chair Kalipi opened the floor to any public testimony or any open items not on the agenda. No one came forward.

- **Item 4a. Old Business. (1:12 p.m. Video Part A run time 0:14:42) Decision Making regarding candidates for the NELHA Executive Director Position for the Hiring of the NELHA Executive Director. ****

Chair Kalipi called for a motion to go into Executive Session. Director Hilton made the motion and Director Tsuji seconded the motion (1:12 p.m. Video Part A run time 0:14:52) The motion was approved (11-0) (1:13 p.m. Video Part A run time 0:15:22)

- **Item 4b. Old Business. (1:44 p.m. Video Part B run time 0:00:48) Approval and Decision Making for Sea Dragon Energy, Inc. five-year project to demonstrate technology producing fuels from seawater.**

Chair Kalipi introduced this agenda item. Director Tsao motioned to table this agenda item to the next scheduled board meeting. Director Tsao explained that he was voted to the Board by NELHA Tenants, and that a tenant made the request to him because they did not have ample time to review, nor did they receive notification before this board meeting. Director Jones seconded the motion. (1:45 p.m. Video Part B run time 0:01:12). After public and board discussion on this motion, the Board decided to proceed with hearing the presentations and at that point decide whether decision making would be differed. (1:55 p.m. Video Part B run time 0:10:56).

ED Sombardier presented the staff summary and recommendations, and turned over to Mr. Adrian Barefield, Program Manager, SDEI to present an overview of the project. Director Hilton provided the Research Advisory Committee's review summary of the project. Chair Kalipi opened to Public Testimony, and Ms. Alexia Akbay, CEO Symbrosia testified. The Board Members and meeting attendees were provided with the opportunity to ask questions. After some discussion, a roll call vote was taken (2:43 p.m. Video Part B run time 0:59:30) to defer decision making till the March meeting: Aye – Directors Jones, Molinaro and Tsao. Nay – Chair Kalipi, Vice Chair Miyashiro, Directors Bruce, Hilton, Kaina, Lin, Tsuji and Wiltshire. The motion did not pass (3-8) (2:45 p.m. Video Part B runtime: 1:01:50).

Director Hilton moved to approve SDEI's five-year project to demonstrate technology producing fuels from seawater. Director Tsuji seconded the motion. Director Hilton amended his motion to include in any NELHA contracts, conditions for water testing and mitigation to ensure the safety and health of the water and natural resources. (2:45 p.m., Video Part B run time 1:01:56). The motion was approved with

amendments with one opposition from Director Jones (11-1) (2:49 p.m., Video Part B run time 1:05:53).

- **Item 5a. (2:50 p.m., Video Part B run time 1:06:18) New Business. Create a Permitted Interaction Group, pursuant to HRS §92-2.5(b)(2), for the purpose of providing guidance and input to the NELHA Master Plan update work under contract by NELHA - Discussion and Decision Making.**

ED Sombardier presented this agenda item. Chair Kalipi asked for any Board Members interested in serving in the Permitted Interaction Group (PIG) for the NELHA Master Plan. Chair Kalipi asked for a motion to establish the PIG for the NELHA Master Plan with the following members: Chair Kalipi, Vice Chair Miyashiro, Director Bruce, Director Tsuji, a Director Representative (Director Wicker or Director Molinaro) from DBEDT Director's Office and a Director Representative from the County. Director Hilton made the motion, and Director Tsuji seconded the motion (3:03 p.m., Video Part B run time 1:19:42. The motion carried (11-0) (3:04 p.m., Video Part B run time 1:20:47).

- **Item 5b. (3:02 p.m. Video Part B 1:18:31) Discussion and Decision Making regarding nomination of Dr. Terry Surles to be appointed to the Research Advisory Committee.**

Due to meeting going over time, deferred to the next scheduled board meeting, March 18, 2025.

- **Item 6. Financial Report (3:02p.m. Video Part B run time 1:18:41): Approval and Decision Making.**

ED Sombardier briefly summarized Item 6. Financial Report as time was limited. She added that there were no pressing issues. There were no questions from the Board.

- **Item 7. (3:05 p.m.) Video Part B run time 1:21:07) Executive Director's Informational Status Report on ongoing projects including: 2025 Legislative session, research campus leases, new leases under discussion; water quality and seawater system maintenance; offshore deep seawater pipe removal planning and design; regional seawater air conditioning planning and design; new potable water supply update; aquaculture accelerator and investment fund initiative; grant applications; new Mauka Research Campus; renewable distributed energy resources initiative for microgrid; and, solar desalination; Executive Director Search; contracts and agreements including master plan and EIS update.***

Due to meeting going over time, ED Sombardier provided a short update on legislative items pertaining to NELHA as the subject was brought up earlier in this board meeting.

- **Item 8. (3:11 p.m. Video Part B Run time 1:25:35) Announcements**

- a. Date of the next regularly scheduled meeting is Tuesday, March 18, 2025 at 1:00 p.m.
- b. Start time for NELHA Board Meetings in 2025 shall be moved to 1:00 p.m. unless otherwise indicated.

- **Item 9. (3:11 p.m. Video Part B runtime 1:26:10) Adjournment.**

Chair Kalipi adjourned the meeting at 3:11 p.m. (Video Part B runtime 1:26:10).

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