



# 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

September 16, 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)  
Alan Hilton (RAC Chair)  
Dennis Lin (County of Hawaii)  
Dave Molinaro (DBEDT Director Office)  
Neil Sims (Tenant Representative)  
Nathan Tsao (Tenant Representative)  
Dr. Chad Walton (University of Hawaii)  
Dr. John Wiltshire (RAC Secretary)

### **Board Members Not Attending and Excused**

Jaclyn Kaina (HTDC)  
Ian Hirokawa (DLNR)

### **Guests/Staff Present**

Riley Saito (NELHA)  
Laurence Sombardier (NELHA)  
Bryan Babbitt (NELHA)  
Faustine Edge (NELHA)  
Pam Madden (NELHA)  
Sherry Ortiz (NELHA)  
Rae Nguyen (NELHA)  
Jennifer Rasmussen (NELHA)  
John Cole (AG)  
Justin Sugiyama (Cades Schutte LLP)  
Sarah Karner (Hatch)  
Tom Fee (HHF Planners)  
Jeff Zimpher (National Park Services)  
Sophia Morgan (Watanabe Ing LLP)  
Joyce Tam-Sugiyama (Watanabe Ing LLP)

**Full Board meeting recording available at:** <https://youtu.be/BfI39DnLp6k>

73-4460 Queen Kaahumanu Hwy., #101, Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i USA 96740-2637  
Phone: (808) 327-9585 Email: [nelha@nelha.org](mailto:nelha@nelha.org) Website:  
<http://www.nelha.hawaii.gov>

- **Item 1. (1:01 p.m. video run time 0:0:00) Call to Order.**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Noe Kalipi (Chair Kalipi) at 1:01 p.m. Chair Kalipi asked Deputy Director Laurence Sombardier (DD Sombardier) for a roll call of Board members and NELHA staff. Reference to Act 220. Ten members present and two excused.

- **Item 2. (1:04 p.m. video run time 0:02:54) Approval of NELHA Board Directors' August 19, 2025 Meeting Minutes.**

Chair Kalipi opened this item for discussion. Director Lin moved to approve the August 19, 2025 Meeting Minutes, and the motion was seconded by Director Tsao (1:04 p.m. video run time 0:03:01). The minutes were approved. (9-0) (1:04 p.m. video run time 0:03:26).

- **Item 3. (1:04 p.m. run time 0:03:31) Public Testimony.**

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

**Director Molinaro joined the meeting at 1:04 p.m.**

- **Item 4. Old Business.**

None

- **Item 5. New Business.**

None.

- **Item 6a. Financial. (1:05 p.m. video run time 0:04:31) Fiscal Year 2025 Report: Approval and Decision Making.**

DD Sombardier presented this agenda item, and the Board and Public were given an opportunity to ask questions or discuss. Director Hilton moved to approve the Fiscal Year 2025 Report and Director Bruce seconded the motion (1:20 p.m. video run time 0:19:23). Chair Kalipi called for an aye/nay vote. The motion passed and the report was approved 10-0 (1:21 p.m. video run time 0:19:42).

- **Item 6b. Financial. (1:21 p.m. video run time 0:19:59) Fiscal Year 2026 Budget: Approval and Decision Making.**

Executive Director Riley Saito (ED Saito) presented this agenda item, and the Board and Public were given an opportunity to ask questions or discuss. Director Lin moved to approve the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget and Director Bruce seconded the motion (2:10 p.m. video run time 1:08:37). The motion passed and the budget was approved (10-0) (2:10 p.m. video run time 1:09:16).

- **Item 7. Executive Director's Informational Status Report on ongoing projects including: 2026 Legislative session, FY26 budget planning, 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; contracts and agreements including master plan and EIS update.\* . (2:10 p.m. video run time 1:09:26).**

**Director Lin left the meeting at 2:12 p.m.**

ED Saito provided his summary, and the Board and Public were given an opportunity to ask questions or discuss.

- **Item 8. (2:23 p.m. video run time 1:22:28 Announcements**
  - a. Date of the next regularly scheduled meeting is Tuesday, November 18, 2025 at 1:00 p.m.
- **Item 9. (2:23 p.m. video run time 1:22:23) Adjournment.**

Chair Kalipi adjourned the meeting at 2:23 p.m. (video runtime 1:22:23).

###