

## MINUTES

### WATER BOARD PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED NEW COST OF POWER ADJUSTMENT CLAUSE

April 23, 2024

Department of Water Supply, Hilo Operations, 889 Leilani Street, Hilo, Hawai'i

PRESENT: Mr. Stephen Kawena Lopez, Chairperson, Dist.8  
Mr. Michael Pono Kekela, Vice-Chairperson, Dist. 4  
Mr. Benjamin Ney, Water Board Member, Dist. 9  
Ms. Emily Taaroa, Water Board Member, Dist. 5  
Mr. Keith Unger, Water Board Member, Dist. 6  
Mr. Keith K. Okamoto, Manager-Chief Engineer,  
Department of Water Supply (ex-officio member)

ABSENT: Mr. Michael Bell, Water Board Member, Dist. 7  
Mr. Thomas Brown, Water Board Member, Dist. 3  
Ms. Kea Keolanui, Water Board Member, Dist. 1  
Mr. James Kimo Lee, Water Board Member, Dist. 2,  
Director, Planning Department (ex-officio member)  
Director, Department of Public Works (ex-officio member)

OTHERS PRESENT: Ms. Diana Mellon-Lacey, Deputy Corporation Counsel  
Mr. Jeff Bray, guest  
Ms. Nancy Bray, guest  
Mr. Jeff Zimpfer, National Park Service, guest

#### DEPARTMENT OF WATER SUPPLY STAFF:

Mr. Kawika Uyehara, Deputy  
Mr. Kurt Inaba, Engineering Division Head  
Ms. Candace Gray, Waterworks Controller  
Mr. Gregory Goodale, Chief of Operations  
Mr. Alvin Inouye, Water Operations Superintendent  
Mr. Eric Takamoto, Operations Division  
Mr. Warren Ching, Energy Management Analyst  
Ms. Ka'iulani Matsumoto, Private Secretary  
Ms. Nora Avenue, Recording Secretary

(Chairperson Lopez called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m.)

CHR. LOPEZ: Good morning. Will the public hearing of the Water Board on the proposed new cost of Power Adjustment Clause please come to order? I am Stephen "Kawena" Lopez, Chairperson of the Water Board; and I would like to take this opportunity to have the Secretary take a roll call for who is in attendance from the Board.

MS. AVENUE: Good morning. Mr. Bell? (no response) Mr. Brown? (no response) Ms. Taaroa?

MS. TAAROA: Present.

MS. AVENUE: Mr. Kekela?

MR. KEKELA: Eō.

MS. AVENUE: Ms. Keolanui? (absent). Mr. Lee? (absent). Mr. Ney?

MR. NEY: Present.

MS. AVENUE: Mr. Unger?

MR. UNGER: Eō.

MS. AVENUE: Chair Lopez?

CHR. LOPEZ: Here.

MS. AVENUE: Chair, you have five present with four absent.

CHR. LOPEZ: Thank you. Notice of this public hearing was published in the Hawai‘i Tribune-Herald and in the West Hawai‘i Today on April 1, 2024.

The Department of Water Supply is operated and controlled by this Water Board as provided by the Hawai‘i County Charter. Section 63 of Part III, Chapter 54, Hawai‘i Revised Statutes, reads as follows:

“The Board of Water Supply may fix and adjust rates and charges for the furnishing of water and for water services so that the revenues derived therefrom shall be sufficient to make the waterworks and water systems self-supporting and to meet all expenditures authorized by this part; the Board may establish variable rates among the several districts of the County, or among the areas served by the individual water systems within the County, for the purpose of establishing charges as closely as possible to the necessary amount required for the maintenance and operation of the particular individual water systems; provided no rates and charges shall be fixed or adjusted prior to the holding by the Board of a public hearing, public notice of which shall have been given not less than twenty days before the date set for the hearing. The notice shall state the time and place for the hearing and the proposed rates and charges to be considered thereat. The time within which the notice shall be given shall be computed by including the first day (the day of notice) and excluding the last day.”

We are here to receive comments or testimony on the proposed amendment to the Power Cost Charge. The Department recommends increasing the Power Cost Charge from \$2.37 to **\$2.77** per thousand gallons to reflect the increase in power costs.

As stated in the hearing notice, all comments or testimony were to be filed in writing before the time of the hearing or register to have testimony included via web conference application. We would like to follow this format as closely as possible; however, because there may be some of you who do not have any written statements but would like to testify or comment, we would like to afford you this opportunity to do so but would like to limit such presentations to three minutes because of the time limit.

The hearing is now open for comments from the floor. Secretary, is there anyone registered to provide oral testimony or is there any written testimony?

CHR. LOPEZ: Submitted by Ms. Mariah Potts, dated April 22, 2024, transmitting written testimony, in opposition to the rate increase in power costs, was read and circulated.

At this time, I would like to entertain a motion that this public hearing be closed.

MR. KEKELA: Pono Kekela, so moved.

MR. NEY: Second, Ben Ney.

CHR. LOPEZ: It has been moved and seconded the public hearing be closed. All those in favor say “aye.” (Board Members: Unanimous Ayes) Any opposed? (None) Motion is carried. Thank you.

*(Public Hearing adjourned at 9:52 a.m.)*

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Recording Secretary

APPROVED BY WATER BOARD  
(MAY 28, 2024)