

**MINUTES**

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

May 26, 2026

West Hawai'i Civic Center, Bldg. G, 74-5044 Ane Keohokālole Hwy, Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i

PRESENT:                   Mr. Michael Kekela Jr., Chairperson, Dist. 4  
                                  Mr. Keith Unger, Vice-Chairperson, Dist. 6  
                                  Mr. Stephen Lopez, Water Board Member, Dist. 8  
                                  Mr. Philip Aiona, Water Board Member, Dist. 9  
                                  Mr. Keith K. Okamoto, Manager-Chief Engineer,  
                                  Department of Water Supply (ex-officio member)

ABSENT:                   Mr. Colin Miura, Water Board Member, Dist. 1  
                                  Mr. James Lee, Water Board Member, Dist. 2  
                                  Mr. Guy Alameda, Water Board Member, Dist. 3  
                                  Ms. Emily Taaroa, Water Board Member, Dist. 5  
                                  Director, Planning Department (ex-officio member)  
                                  Director, Department of Public Works (ex-officio member)

OTHERS PRESENT:        Ms. Diana Mellon-Lacey, Deputy Corporation Counsel  
                                  Mr. Justin Lee, Deputy Corporation Counsel

DEPARTMENT OF WATER SUPPLY STAFF:

                                  Mr. Kawika Uyehara, Deputy  
                                  Mr. Allan Simeon, Engineering Division Head  
                                  Ms. Shari Uyeno, Assistant Engineering Division Head  
                                  Ms. Candace Gray, Waterworks Controller  
                                  Mr. Eric Takamoto, Mechanical Engineer III  
                                  Mr. Warren Ching, Civil Engineer IV  
                                  Ms. Maraea Keamo, Senior Clerk Stenographer  
                                  Ms. Lindsey Tabandera, Information Systems Analyst IV  
                                  Ms. Kayla Okazaki, Information Systems Analyst I  
                                  Mr. Barry Kobayashi, Information Systems Support Technician II

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

CHR. KEKELA: Good morning. Will the public hearing of the Water Board on the proposed new cost of Power Adjustment Clause please come to order? My name is Pono Kekela, Chairperson for the Hawai'i County Water Board, and I'd like to have the Secretary take a roll call for who is in attendance from the Board.

(A roll call was taken for Water Board Members in attendance. Four Board Members were present: Messrs. Miura, Alameda, Aiona, and Chairperson Kekela.)

CHR. KEKELA: Thank you. Notice of the public hearing was published in the Hawai'i Tribune-Herald and in the West Hawai'i Today on May 5, 2026.

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 decreasing the Power Cost Charge from \$2.84 to \$2.53 per thousand gallons to reflect the excess of power costs recovered since the last Power Cost Charge rate was determined.

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?

MS. KEAMO: There are none.

CHR. KEKELA: Thank you. At this time, I would like to entertain a motion that this public hearing be closed.

ACTION: Mr. Unger moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. Lopez and carried unanimously by voice vote (Ayes: 4 – Board Members Unger, Lopez, Aiona, and Chairperson Kekela).

*(Public Hearing adjourned at 9:49 a.m.)*

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Recording Secretary

APPROVED BY WATER BOARD  
JUNE 16, 2026