

AAC Minutes

2/27/2024

Place Pueo Conference room and via zoom

25 aupuni stre Ste 2601 Hilo HI 96720

Call to Order at 11:04 AM

Mark Odell

Leonard Bisel

Jonathan Sudler

Jill Wagner via zoom

Bobby Command

Jean Campbell

Approval of the minutes

LB Correction header of Agenda November 16 "Not vice chair"

LB approved JS second, all approved

Old Business

Bobby Coomand says the mayor approved the arborist position

MO the corporation council approached me to fill the position, however I am concerned about a conflict of interests.

LB Right before Mitch came onboard Public works appropriated funds but decided against it. And Parks and recs decided they would take that position under their umbrella

JS Parks and recs had agreed to share the arborist position with Planning dept. to share responsibility of arborist position per the final *agreement at the end of Harry Kim's term as Mayor*.

BC shared News paper article from 6/2/2016 that the arborist had been approved, but why hasn't it been filled?

MO when Neil from Public Works walked thru Banyan Drive he was asking for help/guidance.

BC the AAC can not help, we can only make recommendations regarding Exceptional Trees.

JS criticized the AAC for not exceptionalizing the Grove of Banyan Drive in spite of the fact that the Outdoor Circle who created the program has Banyan Drive listed in Their book Majesty II published in 1991. He challenged the board why they have not moved forward with exceptionalizing this grove

JC clarified the committee is only able to research and forward Exceptional Tree applications, recommend proper procedures. She recommended requesting County council review state statute and see if we could expand our authority that route. In the meantime our actions are limited.

MO Therefore this committee cannot assist public works, the arborist position must be filled and direction come from that position.

LB the county has thousands of trees that require an arborist's attention. We need a dedicated arborist position to oversee their care.

BC if an arborist is not on the job request, they cannot do anything

MO An arborist is needed for preventative care.

BC if the county takes on the position then only they could do that.

MO An arborist cannot have their own company because of conflict of interest. I have been put in this awkward position.

LB An in-house arborist makes the recommendations and then contractors follow their advise

MO tighten up the specs of the Arborist position and have them on the American Society of Arborist so they understand the legal ramifications of your risk analysis.

BC we need to rely upon the AAC to define what we are looking for in the arborist position.

LB friends from Honolulu county have already defined the position. We could present that definition to speed up the process.

BC that would be very helpful

LB I can get a couple of examples for consideration

JC You need to approach County Council for recommendation and you can ask them for an expansion of your responsibilities.

LB I will get those samples

BC I can help you with that and it needs to align with the new budget cycle and financial impact statement

MO Public works needs help with care and maintenance of the trees.

JC we can make a request to County Council to recommend how we should handle this area of concern.

JS Defining the scope of the Banyan drive could be a good place to start.

BC I will look for the exceptionlization. DLNR has to give input. Maybe there is something they need to tell us. I will have to reach out to Dawn Chang.

JW Last time we had a meeting we talked about assessing the status of trees on the list. Want access to list of trees. Where are we with that.

JC Put the check of the Exception trees on on the next agenda.

BC Orange tree from Kona is alive and well.

MO do we want to expand our responsibilities.

BC be an advisory committee to both the mayor AND the arborist position

Also Jean, would having Mark on the list of providers be a conflict?

JC we need to consider the code.

BC Mark, you can approach the board of ethics

LB Mike Kraus used to be on this committee but he would abstain if there was a perceived conflict.

Jill Laukahi.org is going to nominate new exceptional trees for the month of April. We have a lot of trees over 700 years old which are considered Ancient trees.

BC does Exceptional Tree legislation require the trees being available to the public once a year like it does with historic buildings?

JS I do not believe it does. I will Check.

MO New Business

Our next meeting will be:

Mar 26 11am -1pm for next meeting

JC     Draft Arborist position  
          Expanding scope of committee  
          Review Exceptional trees  
          Breifing from DLNR