

## Hawaii County LEPC Meeting Minutes

### Civil Defense EOC and via ZOOM

May 22, 2025

**Members Present:** Gerald Kosaki/LEPC Chair, Darwin Okinaka/HFD, Sandor Finkey/HPD, Kilipaki Kanae/HFD EMS, Tom Olson/Civil Defense

**Members Present via Zoom:** Jordan Hara/PGV, Matthew Ho/HFD Hazmat, Casey Kishimori/HECO, Ha Chi/HBMC

**Non-Members Present:** Lauren Williamson/Fire Admin., George Manuel/Civil Defense

**Non-Members Present via Zoom:** Andrew Kendrick/PHMSA-Pipeline Safety Liaison

**Members Absent:** Thomas Gilmore/DOH HEER, David Cummings/Hamakua Energy Partners, Neil O' Heron/BEI Hawaii, Terri Napeahi/Keaukaha Action Network, Eric Honda/DOH, Chris Leonard/Media, Makalani Pina/Dept. of Agriculture, Alfred Leung/Pacific Biodiesel, Orasa Fernandez/DOE, Michael Diehl/Military

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** 09:04AM Called to order.
- II. **STATEMENTS FROM PUBLIC:** None
- III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
- IV. Sandor Finkey moved to approve February 20<sup>th</sup> minutes, Darwin Okinaka seconded. Minutes passed.
- V. **COUNTY REPORTS:**
  - a. **CIVIL DEFENSE George Manuel:** Volcano Eruption and Hurricane season is upcoming.
  - b. **HFD Darwin Okinaka:** Nothing significant. Incidents wise, I will defer to Battalion Chief Matthew Ho. No incidents since the last meeting. 3<sup>rd</sup> CST exercise at the beginning of the month this year. They agreed to go back to lanes training, where they went each day for each shift at the stations. They stopped that for the past few years, so were glad that they are available to do that again because that seems to be the best opportunity. We did the full-scale exercise and had three good days of attendance at KMR.
    - i. **Kosaki to Okinaka:** So, at the last NASTTPO Conference I was talking to a couple guys who do the CAMEO training and are interested in doing them on the islands. I think we should have annual training on that, because you don't use it all the time.

- ii. **Okinaka:** I think we recently did a CAMEO training within the past few years with our Hazmat staff on both sides of the island. We have new people again, so we can reach out when they give an opportunity.
  - iii. **Kosaki:** That's something that LEPC can help with.
  - iv. **Matthew Ho:** CAMEO training is good to revisit every year, because the software upgrades every year and it's hard if you don't know, it's perishable knowledge.
  - v. **Kosaki to Ho:** That too, if CAMEO comes, they can upgrade our computers for us.
  - vi. **Ho:** That and they help with heir CAMEO Date Manager that helps us with Tier II reports.
- c. **HFD Hazmat Matthew Ho:** There was a fuel tanker accident at the beginning of the month, on Saddle Road Hilo side. Not a super significant spill, but Hazmat was there for a couple hours patching and slugging. There was also a propane leak at Kohala Middle School last month. It ended up being a weed eater cut up the line going to the consumer end, so they managed to just shut it off there, so it wasn't a quick leak, only a vapor leak.
- d. **HFD EMS Kilipaki Kanae:** Nothing to Report.
- i. **Kosaki:** Congratulations to Kilipaki Kanae who was recently promoted to Battalion Chief of EMS following Battalion Chief Chris Honda's retirement.
- e. **HPD Sandor Finkey:** Just a few days ago we received the tsunami maps for the Tsunami Response Plan. Since the last meeting, Asia and I have gone back and forth on errors and revisions. I'm going to start reviewing the draft policy for the tsunami response from the department. I also went to Pacific Executive Leadership Professionals Conference last week, thank you to Talmadge. That conference has a lot of speakers who are focused on preparing people for leadership during emergencies and disasters. Met with Mauna Kea for HFD/HPD response with high-altitude rescues and PTA's participation in that. Also opened a cold storage facility, increasing capacity for deceased bodies in Hilo and Hamakua side. Using two containers, each container can hold mid-thirties, essentially doubling capacity with Hilo Medical Center.
- i. **Kosaki to Finkey:** Tsunami drills are important due to storage facilities in Keaukaha that would be affected.

## VI. INDUSTRY PARTNERS:

- a. **BEI Hawai'i Neil O'Heron:** Not Present.
- b. **PGV Jordan Hara:** We got 6 units online. We currently have 4 production wells online and 2 injection wells online. We're a little down in capacity because of one injection well, but other than that we're waiting for some permits to complete some well work. Then we should get that back hopefully by the end of the month, we should be back up to like 30 megs. We're down 30% right now. No incidents.
- c. **HAMAKUA ENERGY PARTNERS Dave Cummings:** Not Present.
- d. **PACIFIC BIODIESEL Alfred Leung:** Not Present.

- e. **HECO Casey Kishimori:** Nothing to Report.
- f. **MEDIA Chris Leonard:** Not Present.
- g. **PHMSA: Andy Kendrick:** Everything is kind of status quo on both Oahu and Big Island. Quiet year for PHMSA inspections. No issues or incidents this year. For our new public awareness, a new flyer is coming out from PAPA to emergency responders. All LEPC, Fire, Police, etc. will be receiving that new brochure we've been working on designing since last year.

## VII. STATE REPORTS:

- a. **DOH HEER/HSERC Sharon Leonida:** Not Present.
- b. **DOH Eric Honda:** Not Present.
- c. **DOE Orasa Fernandez:** Not Present
- d. **HBMC Ha Chi:** Last month we had another of our CERT trainings, certified another 12 of our staff for hazmat decon of patients. And then as far as the facility, no incidents, no change. We're currently still having a high census of patients and noticing a small spike in COVID. We're up to 10 COVID patients just the other week. I think we're back down to 6 or 7 today, but we haven't had those numbers for several months. So not sure if there's anything going on in the community, we just noticed that here in HBMC.
  - i. **Kosaki to Chi:** Do you know if we have any measles cases on this island yet?
  - ii. **Chi:** Nothing confirmed. We had a couple cases where the symptoms matched, and we would take samples and send them to DOH, but we don't hear back from them a lot. So, we're guessing that means none of them were positive.
  - iii. **Kosaki:** The small spike COVID in cases that you had, any of the cases serious? Or was it treated like a cold?
  - iv. **Chi:** There are probably more cases of people coming in and then going home, in the peak of COVID our numbers were much higher, but the number of patients hospitalized currently is unusual because we haven't seen those kinds of numbers in months. Normally we have 2 or 3 people at a time and then it recently jumped in the last couple weeks.
- e. **Dept. of Ag Makalani Pina:** Not present

## VIII. OLD BUSINESS:

- a. National SARA Title III Program Officials (NASTTPO) Workshop
  - i. **Kosaki:** I attended this workshop with Sharon Leonida and Carlton Yamada from Oahu. This workshop is for gaining knowledge on the federal laws for the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act. Timothy Gablehouse is the new incoming NASTTPO president. He's an attorney and he's been working well.
  - ii. **Kosaki:** They also gave a short summary of what's happening with federal regulatory actions coming up. President Trump tried to defund the Chemical Safety board, which is a small body of very smart hardworking people that investigate and research hazardous materials, especially where

there's fatalities, and determine the cause of release and prevent future incidents. Trump also tried to defund CSBA in the past, and he'll try again in the future. Similar to how he's trying to defund Medicaid, Public Radio, etc. FEMA, Legal Aid, and Disaster Victims have been defunded too.

- iii. **Kosaki:** The strategic plan and some grants have been removed, also delays in grants and deductions. One of the grants that affect us is Hazardous Materials Emergency Planning (HMEP) grant. We use this grant for our NASTTPO attendance and our Hazmat training. The HMEP grant is awarded every three years, and we're on year three. Harold Lau, who works for DOH Oahu, is the one who manages the grant. In Hawai'i, we are mainly self-sufficient through the tier II fees, HFD, and the grant cycle to help our LEPC. The grant cycle starts 2025-2027, so that's good. We have the grant up, but they could always take it away. 2025-27 we had \$32 million for the grant and that's federal nationwide. 2026-27 they have \$28 million. ERG is a product of firms of that grant group, so \$1.9 million ERGs were printed last year. The current Trump administration is looking at taking away funding from some agencies. One of them is the Chemical Safety Board. The Chemical Safety Board is an independent federal agency who only does investigations of large chemical releases with injuries and/or fatalities and gives recommendations of their findings. They have videos produced by United States Chemical Safety Board online with great graphics that reveals possible causes and the reasons for them.
- iv. **Kosaki:** The workshop also talks about the functions and FRA laws for LEPC. Section 303 of the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act says to develop and review the Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for our county. Our EAP is developed and reviewed annually. The company, Tetra Tech., has also helped to review plans for each county in the state, taking a heavy burden off LEPC to review the EAP. Another thing is to assess response capability, which helps with training for Fire Hazmat teams. Hazmat team works with CSD team, and CSD works directly with or regarding WMD incidents. CSD has to tailor to WMD for them to get funding. That's how they come and go to every island for training. Another one is evaluating resources and implementing the plan. This is done through tabletops and full-scale exercises like how we've been doing for years. Homeland Security helps to develop these tabletops and exercises, and have evaluators write a report after reviewing the tabletops and full-scale exercises. The number one issue that we always receive feedback on is communication, and that's how we can get better and conduct starter response exercises to evaluate the facts we just talked about. They also talk about who should be on LEPC, which I always try

to get elected officials. One of the elected officials or a representative should be from the mayor's office.

**Okinaka to Kosaki:** I reached out to Clifford Victorine for Mayor's office. He's really the public safety person. Also, I just heard back from Chief Diehl, you got his address wrong by one letter so he was not receiving any e-mails.

- v. **Kosaki:** Other than that, they had a styrene incident that they went over in the workshop, and they had the CSB do an investigation at this conference that was interesting how the monomers polymerized. They had a styrene container in this track trailer. They easily put it on the side before delivering it and something happened, and it exploded.

#### IX. NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Hazmat Annex Update
  - i. **Kosaki:** Supposed to have this update but the people who requested this did not attend.
- b. **Okinaka:** I would like to request to amend our agenda and add in the conversation for the Hazmat Continuing Challenge attendance. I didn't realize that it was so close in timeframe.
  - i. Darwin Okinaka motioned to amend the agenda, Sandor Finkey seconded. Motion approved.
- c. Hazmat Continuing Challenge
  - i. **Darwin Okinaka:** I would like to propose our annual request that we usually submit every year to allow 6 people to attend the Hazmat Continuing Challenge in September for Fire Hazmat personnel and include LEPC representatives. I believe we went up to \$3,000 per person last year because we weren't sure about the travel cost.
  - ii. **Gerald Kosaki:** So, I have the financial statement with me. I can send it to the committee so we can all look at it. It shows many encumbrances, total disbursements and the amount of revenue we got through from the Tier II funding that we get from the Tier II fees from companies. We do also have funding for it, and these are things that the committee is for, is to help promote hazmat training, knowledge, and response. So last year we did 6 people also, and that was good. Matthew Ho attended the conference last year too, Matt if you want to talk about it?
  - iii. **Matthew Ho:** Every year the vendors have a big Expo downstairs which has all the big companies there. Last year was good, we got to look at new decon equipment and methods. We looked at different types of gas monitors and demo them, since our Hazmat teams will need new gas monitors soon. I also like to look at RAD equipment, there's tool monitoring software. The fire departments who go to large hazmat incidents are there putting on classes. Incident Command and hands on classes as far as doing mitigation with propane or ammonia, battery, new

fuel types, and natural gas. We also competed in the last Unknown Sample Challenge. Networking is really good, Maui and Honolulu, San Diego, Sacramento, all those departments. Good to bounce ideas and knowledge off each other.

- iv. **Gerald Kosaki:** There was one incident story that I learned while talking with a Chief that happened in Dillingham. During the rail project, they dug down and hit a major natural gas line that supplies all businesses in the whole district. Fire and Hazmat called the gas company to shut it down when they arrived. The gas company arrived and took a look and said not to. They then explained natural gas is different to propane. Propane is heavy and stays low, which can cause an ignition. However, natural gases rise and dissipate like methane. Instead, they took samples and monitored the area to confirm the gas indeed was rising and dissipating before reaching any ignition. They were able to keep it venting while they fixed the problem overnight. One of those stories and knowledge you learn from talking and networking.
- v. **Okinaka:** You know what we did? Just looked at last year's votes and we actually increased it to \$24,000, \$4,000 per person.
- vi. **Kosaki:** Yeah, this was because it was the last minute, and prices went way up. So hopefully we can solve that problem this year and just in case we can have it at a higher rate. So, instead of \$3,000, we're putting \$4,000. Chances are it's going to be way less for that, but just to be safe so that we don't have to come back and get another approval. If we get approved earlier, and flights are made earlier, it is way cheaper.
- vii. **Darwin Okinaka:** I would like to make a motion to allocate 6 people to attend the Continuing Challenge, with up to \$4,000 per person
  - 1. **Jordan Hara:** Seconded.
- viii. **Gerald Kosaki:** All in favor, moved to approve and passed.

**X. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- a. None

**XI. NEXT MEETING:** Thursday, August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025, 09:00-11:00. EOC confirmed for location.

**XII. ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting Adjourned at 09:55 AM.