

REGULAR SESSION

Merit Appeals Board
Hilo Council Chambers
Hawai'i County Building
25 Aupuni Street, First Floor, Room 1401
Hilo, Hawai'i
November 21, 2025 (Friday)

Call to Order (Item 1)

The regular meeting of the Merit Appeals Board, County of Hawai'i, was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chair Gabriella M. Cabanas, at the Hilo Council Chambers, Hawai'i County Building, 25 Aupuni Street, First Floor, Room 1401, Hilo, Hawai'i, on Friday, November 21, 2025.

Roll Call – Present

Ms. Gabriella M. Cabanas, Chair
Ms. Suzi Bond, Vice-Chair
Mr. Gilbert J. Aguinaldo, Member
Mr. Daniel “Niel” Thomas, Member

Also Present

Mr. J Yoshimoto, Assistant Corporation Counsel, Office of the Corporation Counsel
Ms. Sommer J. Tokihiro, Director, Human Resources Department
Ms. Trisha C. Gibo, Deputy Attorney General, Department of the Attorney General (via Zoom)
Ms. Sherilyn K. Tavares, Deputy Corporation Counsel, Office of the Corporation Counsel
Mr. Mark Disher, Deputy Corporation Counsel, Office of the Corporation Counsel
Mr. Ted H. S. Hong, Esquire, Attorney at Law
Ms. Glynis Yamada, Secretary-Reporter, Human Resources Department

Call to Order (Item 1)

CHR. CABANAS: Good morning, everyone. It is 9:00, the Merit Appeals Board meeting is called to order on this day, November 21, 2025.

We have quorum with all four Board members present. I'm Gabriella Cabanas, Chair of the Merit Appeals Board. Sitting here in the Hilo Council Chambers with me, at the Hawai'i County Building, at 25 Aupuni Street, First Floor, Room 1401—our Vice-Chair Suzi Bond.

MS. BOND: Good morning.

CHR. CABANAS: Fellow Board member, Gilbert Aguinaldo.

MR. AGUINALDO: Good morning.

CHR. CABANAS: And fellow Board member, Daniel "Niel" Thomas.

MR. THOMAS: Good morning.

CHR. CABANAS: Good morning, everyone. And also with us is our Assistant Corporation Counsel, J Yoshimoto.

MR. YOSHIMOTO: Good morning, everyone.

CHR. CABANAS: Our Secretary-Reporter, Glynis Yamada.

MS. YAMADA: Good morning.

CHR. CABANAS: Sitting in the gallery are Ted Hong, Esquire; our Director of Human Resources, Sommer Tokihiro; and Mr. Mark Disher from the Office of the Corporation Counsel. Good morning, everyone.

Do we have anyone appearing via Zoom? I know our Deputy Attorney General will be joining us, Trisha Gibo, from O'ahu—but I don't see that she's on yet. Okay, so we will wait for her.

MS. GIBO: I'm here, Chair.

CHR. CABANAS: Oh, there you are. Hi, Trisha, good morning. How are you?

MS. GIBO: Good.

CHR. CABANAS: Good. I think it was just the connection—it was slowly coming on. So, nice to see you on this *aloha* Friday.

Addendum to Agenda (Item 2)

CHR. CABANAS: Let's see. We do not have any addendum to the agenda.

Statements from the Public (Item 3)

CHR. CABANAS: Any "Statements from the Public?" No? Okay.

Our Director of Human Resources, Sommer Tokihiro, has asked that we take her "Director's Report" out of order. Is that okay with our Board? It is? I need a motion.

MR. THOMAS: So moved.

CHR. CABANAS: A second?

MS. BOND: Second.

CHR. CABANAS: Thank you. Any discussion? If not, rollcall vote starting with Suzi Bond.

MS. BOND: Aye.

CHR. CABANAS: Mr. Aguinaldo.

MR. AGUINALDO: Aye.

CHR. CABANAS: Mr. Thomas.

MR. THOMAS: Aye.

CHR. CABANAS: Ms. Cabanas—aye.

Four ayes. Motion carried.

So, Sommer, if you'd like to approach the—I'm sorry? Not before—oh, you want to do it after? Oh, okay, I thought you wanted to push it. Yeah, I thought you wanted to push it before the "Approval of Minutes." Okay, my apologies. That's okay, no problem. Okay, so we'll take it after the updates from the Deputy Attorney General. Okay, very good. Thank you so much. So, the motion still carries, and the vote still carries.

Approval of Minutes (Item 4)

August 26, 2025

CHR. CABANAS: Okay, going back to “Approval of Minutes” for August 26, 2025. Has everyone had the opportunity to review the minutes? If so—and you have—may I have a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

MS. BOND: So moved.

CHR. CABANAS: Is there a second?

MR. AGUINALDO: Second.

CHR. CABANAS: Any discussion?

MR. AGUINALDO: No.

MR. THOMAS: Should a member, like me, who did not attend the meeting abstain?

CHR. CABANAS: As long as you read the meeting minutes—

MR. THOMAS: Oh, I did.

CHR. CABANAS: Yeah—and you don’t have any concerns, you can still vote.

MR. THOMAS: I don’t. No.

CHR. CABANAS: Okay. So, I’ll start a rollcall vote with Ms. Bond.

MS. BOND: Aye.

CHR. CABANAS: Mr. Aguinaldo.

MR. AGUINALDO: Aye.

CHR. CABANAS: Mr. Thomas.

MR. THOMAS: Aye.

CHR. CABANAS: Ms. Cabanas—aye.

Four ayes. Motion carried.

Director’s Report (Item 5)

MAB Monthly Divisional Activity Report: December 2025 (Administrative Services Division, Classification & Pay Division, Equal Opportunity/ADA Division, Health & Safety Division, Labor Relations Division, Personnel & Organizational Development Division, Recruitment & Examination Division, Workers’ Compensation Division)

(The “Director’s Report” was taken out of order and moved to follow Item 9 regarding an informational briefing/update from Deputy Attorney General Trisha C. Gibo.)

Communications (Item 6)

CHR. CABANAS: Okay, so we are—no “Communications.”

New Business (Item 7)

CHR. CABANAS: There’s no “New Business.”

Unfinished Business (Item 8)

CHR. CABANAS: There’s no “Unfinished Business.”

Informational Briefing (Item 9)

CHR. CABANAS: We are on “Informational Briefing.”

Informational Briefing/Update From Deputy Attorney General Trisha C. Gibo Concerning The Matters Listed Below (Items A, B, And C). The Briefing/Update Is Limited To The Status Of The Appeals Only And Shall Not Include The Discussion, Details, Or Merits Of The Appeals (Executive Session: The Merit Appeals Board Anticipates Convening One Or More Executive Meetings Regarding The Above Matters (Items A, B, And C), Pursuant To HRS Sections 92-4, 92-5(a)(2) And 92-5(a)(4), For The Purpose Of Evaluating An Officer Or Employee Of The County Of Hawai‘i, Where The Consideration Of Matters Affecting Privacy Will Be Involved And Consulting With The Board’s Attorney On Questions And Issues Pertaining To The Board’s Powers, Duties, Privileges, Immunities, And Liabilities. A 2/3 Vote Of The Members Present Pursuant To HRS Section 92-4 Is Necessary To Hold An Executive Meeting).

A. Communication No. 25-02.10, Received On October 27, 2025, From Deputy Attorney General Trisha C. Gibo, Requesting To Provide An Informal Update Concerning The Following Matter: APP Kaye V. Merit Appeals Board (MAB) – Stipulation To Dismiss Notice Of Appeal To Circuit Court Filed On April 9, 2025, With Prejudice And Order (3CCV-25-0000139); And APP Kaye V. Merit Appeals Board – Amended Notice Of Briefing And Oral Arguments Schedule (3CCV-25-0000139). Reference: MAB Communication Nos. 24-14 And 25-02.

B. Communication No. 25-03.16, Received On October 27, 2025, From Deputy Attorney General Trisha C. Gibo, Requesting To Provide An Information Update Concerning The Following Matter: PPC133 Tony Enriquez In The Matter Of Merit Appeals Board – Order Granting Petitions For Intervention; Notice Of Hearing On The Petition For Declaratory Ruling (Case No. 25-DR-00-133). Reference: MAB Communication Nos. 24-13 And 25-03.

C. Communication No. 25-08, Received On November 13, 2025, From Deputy Attorney General Trisha C. Gibo, Requesting To Provide An Information Update Concerning The Following Matter: SCWC Loyola V. County Of Hawai‘i (SCWC-22-0000641) ((1) Application For Writ Of Certiorari From The June 27, 2025 [Dkt.54] Summary Disposition Order Of The Intermediate Court Of Appeals 2) Appellee-Appellee County Of Hawai‘i Response To Application For Writ Of Certiorari From The June 27, 2025 [Dkt.54] Summary Disposition Order Of The Intermediate Court Of Appeals, Filed On September 25, 2025 [Dkt.1]; And 3) Appellant’s Reply To Appellee Appellee-Appellee County Of Hawai‘i Response To Application For Writ Of Certiorari From The June 27, 2025 [Dkt.54] Summary Disposition Order Of The Intermediate Court Of Appeals, Filed On September 25, 2025 [Dkt.1])

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CHR. CABANAS: The first one is “A.” Communication number 25-02.10.

(At this time, Chair Cabanas proceeded to read Item A into the record.)

CHR. CABANAS: Shall we take each one separately before I read the others?

MS. GIBO: Sure, Chair.

CHR. CABANAS: Okay. Do we need to go into executive session, anyone?

MS. GIBO: For all three, I didn’t know if you folks wanted to provide a public—just a status for the public meeting, but with respect to the advice that I’ll give you on how to move forward with all three, it should be in executive session, Chair.

CHR. CABANAS: Oh, okay, thank you very much for the guidance. If that’s the case, then I’m going to read the executive session language. The Merit Appeals Board anticipates convening one or more executive meetings regarding the above matters (Items A, B, and C), pursuant to

HRS sections 92-4, 92-5(a)(2) and 92-5(a)(4), for the purpose of evaluating an officer or employee of the County of Hawai‘i, where the consideration of matters affecting privacy will be involved and consulting with the Board’s attorney on questions and issues pertaining to the Board’s powers, duties, privileges, immunities, and liabilities. A 2/3 vote of the members present pursuant to HRS section 92-4 is necessary to hold an executive meeting.

So, I’m going to go back and read Communication B and C, since we’re going to go into executive session—once I have a motion that’s approved.

B. Communication No. 25-03.16, Received On October 27, 2025, From Deputy Attorney General Trisha C. Gibo, Requesting To Provide An Information Update Concerning The Following Matter: PPC133 Tony Enriquez In The Matter Of Merit Appeals Board – Order Granting Petitions For Intervention; Notice Of Hearing On The Petition For Declaratory Ruling (Case No. 25-DR-00-133). Reference: MAB Communication Nos. 24-13 And 25-03

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(At this time, Chair Cabanas proceeded to read Items B and C into the record.)

CHR. CABANAS: I’m assuming “Dkt.” is “Docket”—is that correct? Yes—okay. Thank you very much.

Okay. So we have three communications here—A, B, and C. We, upon advice of our Deputy Attorney General, there is a need for us to have a Board discussion with her in executive session and, therefore, may I have a motion for the Board to go into executive session.

MS. BOND: So moved.

MR. THOMAS: Second.

CHR. CABANAS: Okay—Glynis has provided me with a little clarification that our Director of Human Resources, do you want to give us an update in an open session? Oh, okay—so it’s not the Director, it’s actually the Deputy Attorney General for an update in an open session. Is that correct, Trisha—for you to give an update in an open session or is it—

MS. GIBO: I don't need to—I, certainly, can do the advising entirely in executive session, if necessary.

CHR. CABANAS: Okay, that's kind of what I thought but I just want to make sure I'm doing it right.

Okay, so if that's the case, do I have a motion to go into executive session?

MS. BOND: I did that—yeah, so moved.

CHR. CABANAS: Thank you. Is there a second?

MR. THOMAS: Second.

CHR. CABANAS: Thank you. Any discussion? If not, I'll start a rollcall vote with Ms. Bond.

MS. BOND: Aye.

CHR. CABANAS: Mr. Aguinaldo.

MR. AGUINALDO: Aye.

CHR. CABANAS: Mr. Thomas.

MR. THOMAS: Aye.

CHR. CABANAS: Ms. Cabanas—aye.

Four ayes. Motion carried. The Board will go into executive session once the Council Chambers is secured by our Secretary. Thank you all for waiting outside of the Council Chambers. It's 9:12 a.m.

RECESS: The Chair called for a recess at 9:12 a.m.

RECONVENE: The meeting reconvened at 9:38 a.m. in open session.

Informational Briefing/Update From Deputy Attorney General Trisha C. Gibo Concerning The Matters Listed Below (Items A, B, And C). The Briefing/Update Is Limited To The Status Of The Appeals Only And Shall Not Include The Discussion, Details, Or Merits Of The Appeals (Executive Session: The Merit Appeals Board Anticipates Convening One Or More Executive Meetings Regarding The Above Matters (Items A, B, And C), Pursuant To HRS Sections 92-4, 92-5(a)(2) And 92-5(a)(4), For The Purpose Of Evaluating An Officer Or Employee Of The County Of Hawai'i, Where The Consideration Of Matters Affecting Privacy Will Be Involved And Consulting With The Board's Attorney On Questions And Issues Pertaining To The Board's Powers, Duties, Privileges, Immunities, And Liabilities. A 2/3 Vote Of The Members Present Pursuant To HRS Section 92-4 Is Necessary To Hold An Executive Meeting)

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CHR. CABANAS: Welcome back, everyone. It is now 9:38 a.m. and the Merit Appeals Board is back in open session. All four Board members are present with our Secretary, Glynis Yamada. In the gallery we have Mr. Ted Hong, Esquire: and our attorneys from the Office of the

Corporation Counsel, Mr. Mark Disher and Ms. Sherilyn Tavares; and we also have our Director of Human Resources, Sommer Tokihiro; and from O‘ahu via Zoom, we have Ms. Trisha Gibo.

And so, thank you, everyone for waiting while we were in executive session. I’d like to request Ms. Gibo provide all of us, in open session, an update on all three Communications A, B, and C, under Number 9 on the agenda. So, you may proceed, Ms. Gibo.

A. Communication No. 25-02.10, Received On October 27, 2025, From Deputy Attorney General Trisha C. Gibo, Requesting To Provide An Informal Update Concerning The Following Matter: APP Kaye V. Merit Appeals Board (MAB) – Stipulation To Dismiss Notice Of Appeal To Circuit Court Filed On April 9, 2025, With Prejudice And Order (3CCV-25-0000139); And APP Kaye V. Merit Appeals Board – Amended Notice Of Briefing And Oral Arguments Schedule (3CCV-25-0000139). Reference: MAB Communication Nos. 24-14 And 25-02

MS. GIBO: Thank you, Chair. So, very brief for the open session. With respect to Item A involving the appeal for Jonah Kaye, the parties have stipulated to dismiss the appeal in the Circuit Court, so that matter will be closed moving forward.

B. Communication No. 25-03.16, Received On October 27, 2025, From Deputy Attorney General Trisha C. Gibo, Requesting To Provide An Information Update Concerning The Following Matter: PPC133 Tony Enriquez In The Matter Of Merit Appeals Board – Order Granting Petitions For Intervention; Notice Of Hearing On The Petition For Declaratory Ruling (Case No. 25-DR-00-133). Reference: MAB Communication Nos. 24-13 And 25-03

MS. GIBO: With respect to Item B, involving the appeal of Mr. Tony Enriquez, the petition for declaratory relief that was submitted to the Hawai‘i Labor Relations Board was heard on hearing earlier this month and has been dismissed by the Hawai‘i Labor Relations Board. And so, further action will be taken if and when—not if and when—but when the Order on that hearing has been issued by the Hawai‘i Labor Relations Board.

C. Communication No. 25-08, Received On November 13, 2025, From Deputy Attorney General Trisha C. Gibo, Requesting To Provide An Information Update Concerning The Following Matter: SCWC Loyola V. County Of Hawai‘i (SCWC-22-0000641) ((1) Application For Writ Of Certiorari From The June 27, 2025 [Dkt.54] Summary Disposition Order Of The Intermediate Court Of Appeals 2) Appellee-Appellee County Of Hawai‘i Response To Application For Writ Of Certiorari From The June 27, 2025 [Dkt.54] Summary Disposition Order Of The Intermediate Court Of Appeals, Filed On September 25, 2025 [Dkt.1]; And 3) Appellant’s Reply To Appellee Appellee-Appellee County Of Hawai‘i Response To Application For Writ Of Certiorari From The June 27, 2025 [Dkt.54] Summary Disposition Order Of The Intermediate Court Of Appeals, Filed On September 25, 2025 [Dkt.1])

MS. GIBO: And, finally, with Item number C involving the appeal related to Mr. Loyola and Mr. Medeiros, that case has been petitioned—excuse me—that case has been accepted for Certiorari by the Hawai‘i Supreme Court and briefing has been set for that particular appeal, and will continue on until further notice.

CHR. CABANAS: Thank you, Ms. Gibo. So, may I have a motion to close Mr. Jonah Kaye’s case—it’s Communication number 25-02.10.

MS. BOND: So moved.

MR. AGUINALDO: I second.

CHR. CABANAS: Thank you. Any discussion? If not, I’ll start a rollcall vote with Ms. Bond.

MS. BOND: Aye.

CHR. CABANAS: Mr. Aguinaldo.

MR. AGUINALDO: Aye.

CHR. CABANAS: Mr. Thomas.

MR. THOMAS: Aye.

CHR. CABANAS: Ms. Cabanas—aye.

Four ayes. Motion carried.

Moving along to the Communications listed as B and C, under Number 9 on the agenda, may I have a motion to keep these two open and keeping it postponed until a further date.

MS. BOND: So moved.

MR. AGUINALDO: I second.

CHR. CABANAS: Any discussion? If not, I’ll start a rollcall vote with Ms. Bond.

MS. BOND: Aye.

CHR. CABANAS: Mr. Aguinaldo.

MR. AGUINALDO: Aye.

CHR. CABANAS: Mr. Thomas.

MR. THOMAS: Aye.

CHR. CABANAS: Ms. Cabanas—aye.

Four ayes. Motion carried. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Hong, Ms. Tavares, and Mr. Disher—have a happy holiday season—

MS. BOND: Happy Thanksgiving.

CHR. CABANAS: —yes, Happy Thanksgiving to all of you and your families.

Director’s Report (Item 5)

MAB Monthly Divisional Activity Report: December 2025 (Administrative Services Division, Classification & Pay Division, Equal Opportunity/ADA Division, Health & Safety Division, Labor Relations Division, Personnel & Organizational Development Division, Recruitment & Examination Division, Workers’ Compensation Division)

CHR. CABANAS: Okay, we are now on the “Director’s Report” with Ms. Sommer Tokihiro.

(At this time, Ms. Sommer J. Tokihiro, Director, Human Resources Department, came forward.

CHR. CABANAS: Oh, thank you, Trisha. So, we’re going to proceed with our—the rest of our agenda and we’ll probably see you at next month’s meeting. Meanwhile, have a Happy Thanksgiving to you and your family.

MS. GIBO: Thank you all.

CHR. CABANAS: Thank you. Thank you for today.

Okay, we now have our Director’s Report—welcome, Sommer.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Thank you.

CHR. CABANAS: And this report concerns MAB’s Monthly Divisional Activity Report for November 2025—and this is for the eight divisions that are listed here.

Have you all had the opportunity to read her report? Okay. Sommer, any comments for us?

MS. TOKIHIRO: No, just happy to answer any questions that you may have about the report. The department has been very busy with a variety of different activities, so I’m happy to answer questions.

The CoHnect Project always comes to the forefront of what's happening in HR. We're in the employee training phase now, and so we're working with the Implementor—reviewing all the training slides, making necessary corrections, and then helping employees get registered so that they can complete the training and the different aspects that they need to become familiar with.

So, we're fast-approaching December 16th which is when people will start having to enter their time in the new system. Yeah—so, it's right around the corner, but we're excited and just really focused on trying to get people trained and then making sure that once the go-live occurs that there's enough supports for people to be able to have their questions answered.

CHR. CABANAS: Any questions, Board members—Niel?

MR. THOMAS: In the Labor Relations Division report—that fourth paragraph—maybe I'm reading or hearing too many podcasts from (inaudible) in Tudor, England—but the last sentence there says that they're in the process of routing an agreement for execution. So, who or what is being executed?

MS. TOKIHIRO: So, it's an agreement. We're adjusting the work hours for Fire Captains who work in the Dispatch Center. And so, because we're changing their work schedule, an agreement has to be executed with the Union.

MR. THOMAS: Oh. Okay.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah. So, that agreement is being—we're working with the Hawai'i Fire Fighters Association to execute that agreement.

CHR. CABANAS: So, are those captains going to work shifts, I mean—8-hour shifts? So, how is that—

MS. TOKIHIRO: They actually—

CHR. CABANAS: —can you say that? Can you talk about it or—

MS. TOKIHIRO: That agreement would actually follow the 24-hour schedule that they would follow in the field.

CHR. CABANAS: Oh, okay.

MS. TOKIHIRO: So, originally, those captains in the Dispatch Center would have been working 8-hour shifts but we found—or the department found it difficult to fill that, because that 24-hour schedule is something that they are used to and really appreciate. And so, in order to fill those positions, we're changing those work shifts to 24-hours.

In the Labor Relations Division, I'm happy to note that we've started doing an "LR Notes" newsletter. So, we've been noticing some consistency in questions regarding certain labor

relations issues. And so, in order to provide reminders and make sure that we're all on the same page, Lee has started doing an LR Notes so that it's a quick way to get information out where we're not necessarily having to wait for an HR Quarterly meeting with all of our HR reps.—and it's a good way to put things in writing and provide that guidance that reminds our departmental HR reps. how to handle a variety of situations or reminders about documentation that needs to occur in letters, et cetera.

So, I'm really happy to see that because I like that proactive approach where we're getting that information out—and an issue that's occurring in one or two departments is probably occurring in several others. So, I look forward to continuing to provide that on a quarterly basis.

We also, recently, completed our last HR Quarterly meeting with all of the HR reps. It's the last quarterly meeting for this year. And, of course, the focus was on CoHnect, primarily, but also good opportunity—very well-attended meeting. We had about 51 participants to give updates on what is happening in the current system and what's changing going forward, because some of our processes will change with the workflow with CoHnect. So it was good to be able to provide those updates in-person and then be able to answer questions.

And then, the Admin. Services Division will be setting up a series of their own training once the software implementor finishes their training. Admin. Services will do their own training and then set up a series of Zoom meetings, so that we can regularly work with our HR reps., and they can be on their computer practicing entering this information as we're providing the guidance.

So, I think that's going to be a really good tool to help ensure that everybody is on the same page and everybody understands the new terms—and you can say, “This is where you entered the information in Fresh, this is where it goes in CoHnect”—“This is what this means”—so, looking forward to that.

CHR. CABANAS: So, the employees themselves are going to enter their timesheets—did you say December 16th?

MS. TOKIHIRO: Beginning December 16th—yeah.

CHR. CABANAS: Everybody?

MS. TOKIHIRO: Everybody.

CHR. CABANAS: Oh. What's the sentiment out there?

MS. TOKIHIRO: I—in the first training—so the software implementor, they wanted to do an initial training that was very general, very broad—saying, “This is what's coming”—to, kind of, just give that overview. And then, this next phase of training, which begins on Monday, is when they'll actually learn the details of, “This is how I request leave. This is how I enter my timecard.” So, we'll see.

I mean, I attended the original—the first set of meetings. I went down and attended one of the sessions at Shultz Siding—the Base Yard. So, that’s a room where everybody’s watching it on a monitor. We didn’t have workstations set-up for people to enter, ‘cause there really wasn’t anything for them to enter in that course. But I was happy to attend that session and be able to answer questions because, certainly, once you start talking about something—then there’s more and more questions.

So, it’ll be interesting to attend the trainings beginning next week and, again, hear what the questions are. And we have regular meetings between HR and Finance and the software company to regularly evaluate where we’re at and what we may need to change or do differently, so that we can answer questions and just make sure that we’re getting everyone’s feedback—and then, getting responses to them. So, it’s a work-in-progress.

CHR. CABANAS: Okay, sounds good. Any other questions? Niel, go ahead.

MR. THOMAS: I have an unrelated question. In a couple places in the reports there’s mention of this Myers-Briggs training—that there was, apparently, a lunch-n-learn and there was a request pending for further training by Fire Dispatchers. Can you tell us a little bit more about how that’s done? Do we hire consultants or what?

MS. TOKIHIRO: So, actually, Jennifer Sakamoto in our Personnel and Organizational Development Division—she became certified to administer the Myers-Briggs, which is a personality inventory.

And so, that training is focused, basically, on teams—helping—the personality inventory helps provide insight into, for example—“Are you an introvert or an extrovert? Are you more sensing or feeling”—or thinking or feeling—I’m sorry, I’m forgetting what each of the letters actually is.

But the way that she uses it is you take the inventory yourself and she provides you with a confidential report of your results. And the first part of the training is to explain what that means, so the people can see if they actually feel that that is them, or if they would change some of their answers and feel like, “No, I’m more feeling than thinking”—et cetera.

The second half of the training that she provides is group exercises where she breaks down the groups based on how you answered those questions. And then, you answer a set of questions and look at the differences between, say, how an extrovert would see a situation versus an introvert. And so, it’s focused on helping you to understand yourself and gain awareness about other people that you work with, with the goal of, hopefully, improving communication and as a further effort in improving the teamwork.

My team did it in HR—we did the first training session in August and then we followed up with the second part of the training in October—and my staff really enjoyed it. It was really insightful, and they enjoyed it—they enjoyed seeing how their results came out but then, also understanding their co-workers, and learning how their communication style may be impacted or the way that we perceive deadlines. There are those of us that really appreciate deadlines and, if

you give a due date, then we'll work towards that. Whereas other people may naturally be, somewhat, more of a procrastinator—so they need that deadline to inspire them to do it. They may be thinking about the project the whole time, they just may not actively be working on it—and then, they're going to work on it at the very last minute.

And so, it helps to just, kind of, understand what some of those tendencies may be because, if then I'm working with someone who responds better to deadlines because they're going to work on it as the deadline approaches, I may give more deadlines along the way during the process because that may inspire that person or help that person to accomplish those things.

So—and, again, it was all—it's all based on if the employee wants to share and wants to participate. So, the training was voluntary. We weren't requiring anybody to share their results, but we let the group know if they wanted to share the results and participate in the activities—it was intended to be a supportive environment where we're learning and building our communication and building the team. But they really enjoyed it—and we've gotten a lot of good feedback from a lot of different departments and a lot of different teams. So, she's gotten more and more requests for that, so—

MR. THOMAS: I remember being involved with this and having this kind of training, it was some years ago—10 or 20 years ago, I think. I remember it being, kind of, a fun parlor game, basically. And kind of, to remind myself of how it works, I went through a Wikipedia article, which turns out to go on for some pages with a lot of footnotes and so forth.

But this one paragraph, which I saw, told me more about its scientific credibility—and it reads this way, it says, “Despite its popularity the Myer-Briggs has been widely regarded as pseudoscience by the scientific community. The validity—statistical validity and test validity of the Myers-Briggs as a psychometric instrument has been the subject of much criticism. Media results have called the test, quote, ‘pretty much meaningless’—and one of the worst personality tests in existence.”

The Psychologist (inaudible) is especially vocal against Myers-Briggs. He called it, “A fad that won't die”—in a Psychology Today article—and these are all footnoted—Psychosomatic Specialist Hogan wrote, “Most personality psychologists regard Myer-Briggs as little more than an elaborate Chinese fortune cookie”—can't be—and comments that, “This is a fascinating example of disguised astrology masquerading as science in order to claim respectability”—so this sort of squares of what I remember of it as what I thought of it as, kind of, a entertainment parlor game that I just question whether the County of Hawai'i really wants to leave people with the impression that this somehow has scientific relevance or should have or be taken more seriously than it should be.

MS. TOKIHIRO: And I don't know that Jenny is—the focus of it, really, is on that individual understanding of themselves. I mean, we're not trying to do anybody's psychological profile. It's really being used as just a tool to identify, kind of—are you more this or this—in your preference, right.

So, for example, I know when I got my results which showed that I'm introverted—my Deputy, Danny, he was like, “No way. No way. That is wrong”—and I was like, “No”—and he's like introvert versus extrovert is where your energy comes from. It may not necessarily be like—during the day for my position, I need to be more extroverted—and then, that zaps all my energy. But my preference in my free time is quietly listening to an audio book, or reading a book, or doing something by myself. I get my energy from more singular things.

So, we're using it like that as opposed to using it as an indicator of somebody's psychological status, I guess.

MR. THOMAS: But the op-ed reports to be a management tool and that's part of what concerns me is that people will take it more seriously, perhaps, then they should.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah, I mean, I—

MR. THOMAS: It's almost as if there should be some kind of disclaimer.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah—and when she does the training and provides the background, she discusses where it came from—what the origins are—but, again, it's not something that is part of anybody's personnel file. It's not being used as a tool to identify whether or not someone should be employed or whether or not someone should be promoted. It's really being used as a tool to, kind of, foster that communication and understanding.

MR. THOMAS: Perhaps, if she's encouraged—perhaps, if she's just encouraged to read some of the literature about this test, she will come up with some ideas about how to put it to best advantage, if she decides to continue to use it.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Mm-hmm.

MS. BOND: Well, it's mostly for training exercises, right?

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah.

MR. THOMAS: Yeah, it's billed as training, which if it's scientifically so problematic when asked—has to ask whether this is something we should really (inaudible).

MS. BOND: But there's the training exercises where you get a parachute and everybody jumps underneath—and I mean, I—it's more about teamwork and getting people to work together than it is about the scientific—the merits of it. I think it's about how you get people to engage as a group. And I've done the Myers-Brigg thing—and every time I've done it, I have a different result. I have never gotten the same result twice.

So, I mean, it depends on your mood that day—how you answer the questions. It's all—there's a whole lot of things that go into it. And if anybody—I mean, I don't know—I guess, there are people out there that take it super seriously but I think—and especially in something like this, it's

more a training tool to get people—it just gives you a nut to start with—and then you work out—it's a hub, and you work out from that hub to the exercise.

Yeah, you could do it with the parachute, and everybody runs under it (inaudible). So, I've been—in all my years, I've been to some very strange group activities to get people to work together. And it—there was one for—it was one of the Revitalize Puna in the very, very beginning. And there was this thing where we had to touch different trees and I was like, “Why am I wondering around touching trees, I have other things to do with my time”—and it was—people—the whole thing was how you described touching that tree and how different peoples' opinions work together to create what we were working towards, which was the Revitalize Puna thing.

So—but—and I've done so many of them that are like—so, like with this one—like I said, every time I've taken it, I've gotten a different result. So, I've never, ever thought that it was something that was “science-cy”—I thought it was more a parlor game as you described it.

So—and I think that a lot of these training exercises, when you're trying to build team—they are parlor games. It's like Charades or anything else—you build a team. And so, I mean—yeah, maybe this one is not specifically the best, but it is—it's just a tool. It's a tool in your toolbox.

CHR. CABANAS: Because I've taken it myself in the course of my work, but it was really utilized when we did it for the department—how we can connect and work better as Suzi says—as a team in our work unit.

So, while we didn't share it with the whole department, I shared by “style”—if you want to use that word—my “working style” with those that I worked with closely in my division. And then, we shared so that, “Okay, we can understand what's your communication style, what's your communication style”—and it just creates an awareness. That's, basically, what it is. It's not a label to an individual. It's to create awareness on how individuals work or how they communicate. It's just like have four love languages and what is your love language? Well, mine is service. So I do things to serve others more than serving myself. And so, I'm aware of that and my family is aware of that. So, it's just to be aware and nothing else.

And as Suzi says, it's really a tool. It's an indicator—it's a type indicator. It's not labeling anyone. So, for us, back then when we did it, I found it very helpful. Yeah.

Okay, so anything else? If not, may I have a motion to accept and file—you had a question?

SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

CHR. CABANAS: May I have a motion to accept and file the Director's Report?

MR. THOMAS: Move to accept and file the report.

CHR. CABANAS: Thank you. A second?

MS. BOND: Second.

CHR. CABANAS: Okay, any discussion? If not—start a rollcall vote with Ms. Bond.

MS. BOND: Aye.

CHR. CABANAS: Mr. Aguinaldo.

MR. AGUINALDO: Aye.

CHR. CABANAS: Mr. Thomas.

MR. THOMAS: Aye.

CHR. CABANAS: Ms. Cabanas—aye.

Four ayes. Motion carried to accept and file the Director’s Report. And please extend a big *mahalo* to your staff. This is really, a very nice report. I’m happy to say that—to see the LR Notes—I think it’s very helpful to the department and it’s a proactive approach. And I’m very happy to hear the radio ads on the radio station. I hear it throughout the day and evening. Good job.

MS. TOKIHIRO: I’m glad. Will do. I will, definitely, let them know.

CHR. CABANAS: Okay, and then going back to the agenda.

Announcements (Item 10)

CHR. CABANAS: Any “Announcements” anyone?

Schedule Next Meeting Date (Item 11)

The Merit Appeals Board Will Convene Its Next Meeting On Thursday, December 18, 2025, At 9:00 A.M., At The Hilo Council Chambers, Hawai‘i County Building, 25 Aupuni Street, First Floor, Room 1401, Hilo, HI 96720

CHR. CABANAS: If not, our next meeting date will be Thursday, December 18, 2025, at 9 a.m., at the Hilo Council Chambers of the Hawai‘i County Building, at 25 Aupuni Street, First Floor, Room 1401, in Hilo.

Adjournment (Item 12)

CHR. CABANAS: And so, may I have a motion to adjourn today’s meeting?

MS. BOND: So moved.

MR. AGUINALDO: I second.

CHR. CABANAS: Thank you. Any discussion? If not, may I have a rollcall vote starting with Ms. Bond.

MS. BOND: Aye.

CHR. CABANAS: Mr. Aguinaldo.

MR. AGUINALDO: Aye.

CHR. CABANAS: Mr. Thomas.

MR. THOMAS: Aye.

CHR. CABANAS: Ms. Cabanas—aye.

Motion carried—four ayes. Today’s meeting is adjourned at 10:06 a.m. Thank you everyone and have a very Happy Thanksgiving! Be safe, stay well, drive carefully.

Respectfully submitted,

Glynis Yamada, Secretary-Reporter

APPROVED:

Gabriella M. Cabanas, Chair
Merit Appeals Board