

REGULAR SESSION

Merit Appeals Board  
Hilo Council Chambers  
Hawai'i County Building  
25 Aupuni Street, First Floor, Room 1401  
Hilo, Hawai'i  
March 20, 2026 (Friday)

**Call to Order (Item 1)**

The regular meeting of the Merit Appeals Board, County of Hawai'i, was called to order at 9:08 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, March 20, 2026.

**Roll Call – Present**

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

**Also Present**

Mr. J Yoshimoto, Assistant Corporation Counsel, Office of the Corporation Counsel (via Zoom)  
Ms. Sommer J. Tokihiro, Director, Human Resources Department  
Ms. Glynis Yamada, Secretary-Reporter, Human Resources Department

**Call to Order (Item 1)**

CHR. CABANAS: Good morning, everyone. Today is March 20<sup>th</sup>, and it is 9:08 a.m. The Merit Appeals Board meeting is called to order. We have quorum today with four Board members.

I'm Gabriella Cabanas, Chair of the Merit Appeals Board—and seated with me at the Hilo Council Chambers, at the Hawai'i County Building, at 25 Aupuni Street, First Floor, Room 1401, in Hilo, are our Assistant—not Assistant—our Vice-Chair, Suzi Bond.

MS. BOND: Good morning.

CHR. CABANAS: And Mr. Gilbert Aguinaldo.

MR. AGUINALDO: Good morning.

CHR. CABANAS: And Mr. Niel Thomas.

MR. THOMAS: Good morning.

CHR. CABANAS: Good morning, everyone. We also have our Secretary, Glynis Yamada.

MS. YAMADA: Good morning.

CHR. CABANAS: And our Director of Human Resources, Sommer Tokihiro.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Good morning.

CHR. CABANAS: Good morning. And appearing via Zoom, for the very first time, is our Assistant Corporation Counsel, Mr. J Yoshimoto.

MR. YOSHIMOTO: Good morning, everyone.

CHR. CABANAS: Good morning.

**Addendum to Agenda (Item 2)**

CHR. CABANAS: Okay, so there's no Addendum to the Agenda.

**Statements from the Public (Item 3)**

CHR. CABANAS: And no "Statements from the Public."

**9:00 A.M.: Hearing re Communication No. 25-09**

CHR. CABANAS: Regarding our hearing concerning Communication number 25-09—both parties have agreed to cancel the hearing today and—well, it's postponed, actually, and with the intent to reschedule it to April 23<sup>rd</sup>. But I'm going to read the communications, for the record, and in the event we need to go into executive session—I'll read that verbiage also.

(At this time, Chair Cabanas proceeded to read the verbiage below.)

**Executive Session: The Merit Appeals Board Anticipates Convening One Or More Executive Meetings Regarding The Matter Listed Below, 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.**

**Communication No. 25-09, Received On November 14, 2025, From Appellant, Appealing A Recruitment And Examination Action By The Hawai'i County Human Resources Department; And**

**Communication No. 25-09.01, Received On January 22, 2026, From Ryan K. Thomas, Deputy Corporation Counsel, On Behalf Of Appellee, Regarding Appellee's Pre-Hearing Statement; Witness List; Exhibit List; Exhibits "A" – "M"; And**

**Communication No. 25-09.02, Received On January 22, 2026, From Appellant, Regarding Appellant's Written Statement And Submission Of Exhibits**

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CHR. CABANAS: So, may I have a motion to postpone the hearing concerning Communication number 25-09, and have the hearing rescheduled as agreed upon by both parties, to April 23<sup>rd</sup>, at 9 a.m., in the Hilo Council Chambers of the Hawai'i County Building, 25 Aupuni Street, First Floor, Room 1401, in Hilo.

MS. BOND: So moved.

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. So, the parties will be notified via letter to confirm that the hearing was postponed and is now being rescheduled to April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2026, to allow time for the parties to review and consider other options.

**Approval of Minutes (Item 4)**

**December 18, 2025 (Regular Session); December 18, 2025 (Closed Session); January 16, 2026 (Regular Session)**

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CHR. CABANAS: Okay. Moving along—are our “Approval of Minutes.” We have two regular sessions—December 18 and January 16, 2026.

**December 18, 2025 (Regular Session)**

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CHR. CABANAS: So, let’s take the first one—December 18, 2025. Has everyone reviewed the meeting minutes? Okay. Any—is there a motion to approve and file.

MS. BOND: So moved.

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 to accept and file the December 18, 2025, regular session meeting minutes.

**January 16, 2026 (Regular Session)**

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CHR. CABANAS: The next one is January 16, 2026, the regular session meeting minutes. Have you all read those meeting minutes? Okay. May I have a motion to accept and file?

MS. BOND: So moved.

CHR. CABANAS: Second?

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.

**December 18, 2025 (Closed Session)**

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CHR. CABANAS: The next meeting minutes is December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and that was a closed meeting. Do we have those—

MS. BOND: We didn't get those.

MS. YAMADA: Oh, you don't have the hard copies?

CHR. CABANAS: No.

MS. YAMADA: Oh—but I emailed it to you guys.

CHR. CABANAS: But you emailed it. Oh, okay.

(Ms. Yamada, inadvertently, did not distribute the hard copies of the December 18, 2025, closed session minutes, but did so at this time.)

CHR. CABANAS: So, why don't we pause for a few minutes to glance over the December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, closed session meeting minutes. Okay, so we're going to pause at 9:15 a.m.

**RECESS: The Chair called for a recess at 9:15 a.m.**

**RECONVENE: The meeting reconvened at 9:17 a.m. in open session.**

CHR. CABANAS: Okay, thank you everyone for reading the meeting minutes for the closed session of December 18, 2025. May I have a motion to accept and file.

MS. BOND: So moved.

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 to accept and file the closed session of the December 18, 2025, meeting minutes.

**Director's Report (Item 5)**

CHR. CABANAS: Next on the agenda is our "Director's Report" and she has two—one is the February 2026 MAB Monthly Divisional Activity Report, followed by the March 2026 MAB Monthly Divisional Activity Report.

**A. MAB Monthly Divisional Activity Report: February (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)**

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CHR. CABANAS: So, you can proceed, Sommer.

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

MS. TOKIHIRO: Okay. You guys have all had the report for review. I'm happy to answer any questions but, definitely, a lot of hard work happening within HR, so I'm very appreciative of the staff and all of their efforts to keep up with their daily work.

Also, with the implementation of the HCM Module of our CoHnect system—they're doing a lot of additional trainings, so there's training happening internally, within the office, as everybody gets used to entering electronic timesheets, and requesting leave; but also providing training and support to departments as they learn to enter personnel transactions in the new system.

And then, also support being provided to departments that don't have as much HR support due to vacancies. So, I'm not sure if it's in the February or the March report—but I know we reported on assisting Animal Control and Protection—that agency, with prepping interview questions, interview packets—we've moderated interviews with them—and that's happening for a variety of departments trying to fill in those gaps and help them meet operational needs.

So, the staff in the respective divisions have really stepped up and identified ways that they can provide support to departments when they know that departments are struggling. So, I really appreciate all of their hard work and the teamwork that comes from opportunities like that—so.

CHR. CABANAS: Any comments or questions for Sommer, for the February 2026 report?

MS. TOKIHIRO: You'll note that the reporting format has changed a little bit, and this is to ensure that all of the reports that we're providing are compliant with the new web accessibility standards. So, we have to make sure that all documents are accessible—so that's part of the formatting change. So, the content isn't that different, but this format allows us to more easily make the documents accessible.

CHR. CABANAS: Mm-hmm, I like it. It's easy to read.

MS. BOND: It is easy to read.

CHR. CABANAS: Mm-hmm.

MR. THOMAS: I do have a couple of questions.

CHR. CABANAS: Yeah, go ahead—mm-hmm.

MR. THOMAS: And these reflect the fact that it might be a good idea for some of us, at least, to have some more training on what these different activities are, 'cause it—they get referred to on the way by and I read right over them.

For instance, what is a “position audit?” What is done in that?

MS. TOKIHIRO: So, that's where our Classification and Pay staff will review the duties that a person is completing in a particular position.

So, it could be a desk audit which would be they're just reviewing documentation provided by the department, as far as what the incumbent is doing job-wise. And they're looking to see if the duties that are being performed are consistent with the class of work that the person is—that that position is assigned to.

And what we're evaluating is to ensure that they're properly classified and they're doing work within their class. If it's outside of their class of work, we may need to reallocate the position or have the department reassign duties. There is a position audit happening today where they're actually meeting with the incumbent and talking to them—sometimes they'll—if they have questions that they're not getting just from the written information provided by the department.

And then, we also, at times we'll go and do audits where we actually observe the incumbent doing their job so that we can fully understand what's being described. So, just to ensure—in some instances a department will say, “Oh, we've been assigning this type of work to this position”—and if it's not accurately reflecting the class of work that the person is performing, then that position would need to be reallocated so that the person can be properly compensated for the work that they're doing.

MR. THOMAS: So, how is it initiated? Does the incumbent say, “Hey, I'm being assigned stuff that isn't in my classification” or does the department initiate it?

MS. TOKIHIRO: So, it could be—it will be initiated from the department to HR, but that discussion could start with the employee raising questions within the department, and then the department would ask us to complete that audit.

MR. THOMAS: So, without prejudice in the hearing that's coming up, is that an example of that sort of thing where there's a question about what constitutes supervisory experience and is it included within the position description?

MS. TOKIHIRO: No, in that particular instance, it isn't.

MR. THOMAS: Okay. I know we can't anticipate what the hearing will be about. Another question I had was acronyms escape me because I don't know them.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Oh, sure.

MR. THOMAS: What is "HIOSH?"—(he pronounced it as "HEEOSH".) This is—

MS. TOKIHIRO: Oh, "HIOSH."

MR. THOMAS: "HIOSH."

MS. TOKIHIRO: "HIOSH" is the Hawai'i equivalent of "OSHA"—so, it's "Occupational Safety and Health"—so that's our Hawai'i State Office of—

MR. THOMAS: "Hawai'i Occupational Safety and Health."

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah.

MR. THOMAS: Okay.

MS. TOKIHIRO: That's the state office.

MR. THOMAS: Okay. And then, I think that I've made a joke of this but what happens to a Program Planner II, who is Aging?

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah, so in the Office of Aging—yeah, we have Program Planners.

MR. THOMAS: That's all I have.

MS. TOKIHIRO: I guess we're all aging, right?

MR. THOMAS: Right.

CHR. CABANAS: Okay, anyone else? Suzi.

MS. BOND: Yeah, I actually had, sort of—along the same lines. Is there a plan to do reviews of the—of positions across-the-board? It says—and I know this, sort of, has to do with that hearing, but it triggered something—that the last time that certain positions were—the descriptions were done, evaluate—I don't know what the word is, I want—was, like 2004—that's, like, 22 years ago, and shouldn't a lot of these positions have been, like, looked at between now and then—you know what I mean?

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah, so that's actually one of the MAB goals for this year, is compiling the database where we're looking at all of the class specifications, for all of the classes of work that the County has. So, that's almost 800 different classes of work. And we're documenting the minimum qualifications for each position in a searchable database so that we can quickly gather information about all the different classes.

But then, part of that is also a very important date where we're going to be documenting when that class was last amended. And then, we'll start a systematic review where we're going to go through and look at the oldest ones first—and I will tell you that there are class specs. that haven't been amended prior to even the year 2000.

So, what we're going to do is create a priority list and begin that process, so that we'll—and start a system once we get caught up—but start a system where we're regularly looking at those—every—it's not going to be every year for all 800 class specs.—

MS. BOND: Right.

MS. TOKIHIRO: —but they should be reviewed not less than, say, every three years. Because what we're finding, too, when we're amending classes of work is that just even language changes, right—

MS. BOND: Right.

MS. TOKIHIRO: —or different duties that you don't have anymore. I can't come up with one as an example for right now, but just so that we're looking at the language, looking at the way things are described—we're actually going to be initiating a project to re-title "Clerks." So, instead of being "Clerk III" it would be—I believe we're going to go with something like "Office Assistant." So, something that is more relevant and easier to understand now.

So, that's part of the MAB goal because—yes, I agree that we need to be looking at these things regularly and often—and prior to this database being created, there wasn't one space where we could go in and quickly be able to see when the last time was that classes were amended, and a lot of times those amendments are initiated by the departments. And so, that's fine—but we need to be keeping up with ones where people haven't looked at it or departments haven't changed it in a number of years.

This last year, I actually was putting together information for the budget presentation that we're going to be presenting from the Department to County Council in April. And last—in this last year, we completed 210 class specification amendments, and 300 position re-description reviews. We created—we did 72 initial position allocations, so that's basically new positions that were added; and then 466 position re-allocations.

And position re-allocations could be the result of things, like audits that Niel was asking about, but it's also when we're re-allocating positions either up or down for recruitment

purposes. So, we have, say, “Civil Engineer V”—we can’t fill it at the five level, so we would re-allocate it down, all the way—say, to the “I” level, and then recruit for that position at multiple levels. So, if we’re able to find, say a civil engineer that qualifies at level “III”—they would be hired into that position—and with time and experience and completing—being able to meet the minimum requirements—that position would then be re-allocated back up to the permanent class over time.

So, this demonstrates, from an HR perspective, all the different ways that we’re looking at positions, looking at options, and working with departments to address filling the vacancies—and then, also making sure that when we’re recruiting for positions, that the position description is accurate and that the class specification accurately reflects the work that’s being done—and then the minimum qualifications.

Part of the big amendment to the class specifications last year was the removal of the—on specific degree disciplines for bachelor’s degrees. If there was no statutory or regulatory requirement to have a degree in a certain discipline—we removed that to broaden the applicant pool, so that any bachelor’s degree will qualify for that educational requirement.

MS. BOND: Yeah, no—it’s just that so true that the qualifications change and position reviews really become a thing. It’s funny what you said about the language changing. I was talking to somebody yesterday who was a CNA, and they used to call them “patients”—and now they’re called, “participants” and you’re not allowed to call them “patients” anymore.

I mean, and it’s like what an interesting that all of a sudden it’s not (inaudible) to be a patient—you have to be a participant in their program, and I just was—I, kind of, laughed when she said that—and then I went, “God, the world is just changing”—and every little thing becomes a thing—becomes a bigger thing because you didn’t learn that they’re now called “participants” and not “patients” or—

MS. TOKIHIRO: And even things like having to have a certificate of typing proficiency or being able to type so many words a minute or—so some of those things have just changed over time, too, right, so—

MS. BOND: Yeah.

MS. TOKIHIRO: So, something we need to be looking at regularly.

MS. BOND: (Inaudible.)

MR. AGUINALDO: Sommer, I have a question. As far as, like, positioning in the County, like you just said, like, 800 positions or—

MS. TOKIHIRO: So, it's about 800 different position-type. So, we have over 3,000 positions within the County, but we have 800—about 800 different classes. So, say for example, our “Accountants” or “Account Clerks”—that's a class of work which may represent 20 different positions across the County in a variety of departments.

MR. AGUINALDO: Wow. And making amendments, like, say, qualifications is done internally—not with us, yeah? No—yeah, recommendation—no?

MS. TOKIHIRO: So, we would look at it—our Classification and Pay Division looks at it, but when we are amending class specifications, we're doing that in consultation with all of the other jurisdictions within the State because we have equal pay for equal work. So, the classes of work are generally consistent across the State. We can have different minimum qualifications, but we try and keep that consistent with the other jurisdictions as well.

MR. AGUINALDO: Well, the reason why I asked is, like, my background is construction and, of course, former commissioner in another field—it's more for, like—I love my County. And I look at where we're at today as far as engaging with the community, and not comparing with other counties is more so—with HR, like, hiring.

Like, say—for what I look at is, like, more so on the Building Department side of things—like “Building Inspector,” Building—“Building Inspector,” “Plumbing Inspector,” Electrical. I've been hearing but I don't know how true that there are some that has a contractor license. Now, for me, it's a conflict of interest having that because I think the requirement, if I'm not mistaken—like plumbing or electrical is supervisory, but having your own, like, entity—like a business entity and working for the County—it may not seem like a conflict of interest, but you're in the same department. So, that's something that I want you guys to—just sharing—to look at because you don't want something, a loophole or something, that might affect our County.

At the end of the day, there might be people struggling and we'll do what it takes to do to get by because as far as that there, I know it was said, “Oh, it's better that they have that qualification.” No. I think that's conflicting having your own State of Hawai'i Contractor's License versus just a supervisory.

I don't know if how things change, I haven't looked that long already—but the rule of thumb, like, past inspectors that retired would have stayed—very good, loyal, grassroots inspectors that they froze their contractor license because that was rule of thumb back then from the past, I guess—I forget what Administration—I think it was Warren Lee that time—made mention that, “No, you cannot.” And they're so knowledgeable that they would have froze their license and maybe reactivate it later when they retire. And they left—and I still did have coffee sessions with these old-timers and they're so good, 'cause they know how to engage with the community, they're very fair.

But on social media, it's so vast nowadays that there's an inspector posting that he's building houses and in the West side, this side—it's like, "Oh, my gosh." Like, it's kind of disheartening because I serve for my County, right now, and we have that kind of employees out there—you don't do that.

'Cause sometimes they—you know how people speculate. It's just, for me, I think that's something to really engage and look because "monkey see, monkey do"—and I think it's very important to look at the minimum qualifications, but if you have such a thing is—you're going to have to freeze it on the side or whatnot, but you still going be able for hire—going get people that willing to work. Where I don't want my County to engage in such a thing that, "Whoa"—might hurt us because we're doing so good right now.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah, and I did follow-up because this was a question that you had raised in the past.

MR. AGUINALDO: Yeah.

MS. TOKIHIRO: And so, I followed up with the Department of Public Works and I was informed that there has been employees that have petitioned the Board of Ethics—

MR. AGUINALDO: Right.

MS. TOKIHIRO: —for opinions on those issues.

MR. AGUINALDO: Right.

MS. TOKIHIRO: So, I didn't go in and read the Board of Ethics opinions—

MR. AGUINALDO: Right.

MS. TOKIHIRO: —but from what I understand, they issued decisions regarding whether or not they interpreted conflicts to exist—

MR. AGUINALDO: Right. And I think they allowed it. And it's like, "Oh, my gosh"—I looking at, like, say, you're my inspector—and I know you doing jobs and you inspecting my project and it's, kind of—I don't want that to happen that way. I don't know the mood of that particular Board of Ethics, but I going be honest—they got it totally wrong because it's—in my eyes, if I'm looking at—you're my inspector, you're a contractor also inspecting my project—it's, yeah, that's something that they got to—I think, I don't know if it's a decision that can be looked at because I want transparency.

When we are hired to do our position, we swore to serve—not in that sense. I do get a lot, like, for instance, on the side—I do get along with all my inspectors, but in the back of my head is, like, I hope you doing the right thing, 'cause it's just that.

But, yeah, it's something to really look at 'cause I know there's minimum qualifications in all that we do, but I think there was—there should be some sort of improvement—little bit—on wording because it opens up the door. And if you have general contractors or plumbing contractors, or electrical contractors as inspectors—now, to me, they weren't hired to be contractors—like, say, engineers. You have an engineering degree—that's all you got, is your engineering degree. And in qualifications in the State of Hawai'i, DCCA—in specialty licenses, like plumbing/electrical—you get your journeyman, you get your supervisor; besides that, you become a contractor—you're out in the field as a workforce.

So, I think that's something, I think, is being overlooked because all we need is someone to complain and, oh, my gosh—how we going get out of it now. It's just looking at those little things because it's—we want to promote our workforce, but we don't want to promote something that, “Eh, you know what, I'm going to work there. I get my contractor—they allowing me—I getting the full benefits plus I double-dipping out there in the workforce, and inspected my own jobs”—who knows, you know?

I no like see that happen. And that's something—Sommer, you doing a great job. I tell you, you doing a great job—and I hate to see something, especially, in that field. Why? Because that's my world I live in, but I just keep my *kuleana* to myself because we have a thriving County and there's so much work out there, that a lot of them just—who knows, right?

MS. TOKIHIRO: And it is. I appreciate the feedback and you sharing the concern. It is one of those issues where it involves other multiple—there's multiple levels to that beyond just HR, right.

And so, yes, certainly, we'll be taking a look at the class specs. as we do it all—

MR. AGUINALDO: Right.

MS. TOKIHIRO: —and I did follow-up with Public Works, and they followed that process to go through the Board of Ethics, and there may need to be additional review at other higher levels, if there's concerns about that.

MR. AGUINALDO: Correct. I think that is important. That was the old Administration before Mayor Alameda. I looked at County vehicles and I know the inspector, like, “Ho, what are they doing at the supply house, they should be out in the field. This is not their district.”

And that raises eyebrows, like—but, for me, it's like—I just going not look the other way, but it's like, “Eh, c'mon, you got to look—you got to be better than that”—so, I think that's just my biggest concern is like that—it's just that kind of level is just being transparent and honest to your employer. But, yeah, I just wanted to share that. Yeah, thank you.

CHR. CABANAS: Okay, any other? Niel, you have something to ask?

MR. THOMAS: Well, I think I would like to know a little bit more about Classification and Pay Division. I'm impressed with how many of these audits and other kinds of reviews go on. Is there a backlog in that department? You mentioned that some of the ones that need to be looked at are pretty old, and I wonder how many people are in that division, and what sort of skillsets do you look for—for people who can do that kind of work efficiently but accurately?

MS. TOKIHIRO: So, right now, we just added a position. So, it's a division of three.

MR. THOMAS: I saw that.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah. And so, we're happy to—it was an internal promotional opportunity for one of our current employees in HR. So, Kirsten Chong, from Recruitment and Examination, took advantage of that promotional opportunity and joined Classification and Pay.

So, the qualifications—in addition to the qualifications for the position, it's really important to have someone who, kind of, likes to do the—a little bit of the investigative work to compare and to explore—look at different options, look at classes of work in other jurisdictions. Sometimes we're creating completely new classes of work. So, really being attentive to details and communicating effectively both through talking with employees in their positions, but also in a way that they describe work task being done, and having to do so, like in this written prospect.

As far as the background, the Division, because it was so small and because it supports the entire County—I wouldn't necessarily say there's a "backlog", but I would say that the Division didn't have the opportunity to be as proactive as I would like to see the Division be, as far as reviewing the class specs.

So, as I've mentioned, a lot of the amendments are initiated or were initiated in the past by departments. And so, what we're transitioning to is having the internal review—regular review process within HR where we would be reaching out to departments and after having reviewed class specs. and make recommendations or—for language changes, or ask them—work with them and say, "Is this still accurate"—get their feedback, et cetera.

So, position audits do take time, and it depends on if it's, like, part of a re-org., there may be multiple positions that we would have to audit, there may be new classes of work that result from that. Sometimes if it's just a single position, that can get completed faster—but they are tasked with a lot of work. So, having this additional person on their staff is going to be very, very helpful for them.

MR. THOMAS: So, in proportion to the amount of work to be done, it sounds like you're adequately staffed at this point?

MS. TOKIHIRO: I anticipate, yes, that we're going to be adequately staffed. And I'm sorry, I neglected to include Kim, who is the Technician. So, Kim does a lot of the support processing. So, we'll have Kirsten who's a Specialist, Michele who is also a Specialist, and then the Manager, and a Technician.

MR. THOMAS: Good. Thank you.

MS. TOKIHIRO: You're welcome.

MS. BOND: Just as a funny note, I was flipping through the pages on the thing—that "Pipefitter" position was originally approved on August 19, 1957—

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah.

MS. BOND: —and then it was updated on July 15, 2004. So, it took them 60 years to update them—50 years outdated. It's like, "Dude, shouldn't it be done a little more often."

CHR. CABANAS: Well, but—in the past, we've always advised the departments to—if there's a need to fill a position, to always check the classification specification first, 'cause that's where the position descriptions are drawn from, yeah?

So, if they're going to do a recruitment—like, I'm looking at the continuous recruitments—"Electrical inspector" and "Assistant"—the department who has those vacancies should be, first of all, looking at the class spec.—Number two, check the position description, and if it's outdated, they should update it and send it to HR—that practice still exists, right?

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah. And we, actually, sent out a memo because the position description form was revised, I believe, in 2016. And we were—we still had position descriptions that departments were saying, "Oh, no, it's fine"—'cause there's a box on our RTF Form that says, "Position description is up-to-date"—or something to that affect.

And so, that's—Recruitment's saying, "Okay, you're verifying that you've reviewed the position description, and no changes are needed." And then, when the position description format changed in 2016, everybody was supposed to go through the process of putting their position descriptions in the new format—and they weren't.

So, in January of last year, we sent out a memo that said, "If you're coming in with a Request to Fill and the position description is not on the format"—or "is not in the format

that was revised in 2016, your position description and your RTF is going to be returned to your department so that that can be updated before we'll run the recruitment."

And so, that's where we have all of the position re-description reviews. So, in the last year, there were 300—and that's individual position descriptions—not the overall amendment to a class spec. But, really, we're pushing—and that's part of our effort to get departments to make sure that they're looking at this information with us. I mean, we can look at the class specs., generally, but the department needs to be clear when they're recruiting for a position—"This is your vacant position. This is the position you're trying to fill. You need to be clear"—and applicants need to be clear on—"Are these the duties of the position?"—right?

So, we really have been re-enforcing that effort and we can see results from that. Just in the 300 re-description reviews—and that's people having to re-describe, as far as a format change—but it's also some of these other changes that we're talking about as well—language changes, making sure that percentages of time performing work are accurately reflected—so.

CHR. CABANAS: It's important because it's a flow—class spec. is accurate, position description is accurate, questions for the interview should be in accordance with the position description duties. If your PD and class spec. is not accurate, everything else is flawed because you're not looking for what you really need. You're not looking for the work that's going to be authorized to do. So, it has to be accurate.

And many times, as Sommer said, we held up a recruitment. The worst thing was to us—opening a recruitment and the department now wants to make changes—that's the worst because they should have done it way ahead of time.

SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

CHR. CABANAS: Yeah, and that's what you're trying to accomplish.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah, we can't hold an applicant—we can't have them be responsible for changes that were made by a department after-the-fact. I mean, applicants are applying for a position based on this information that we're providing to them. It's not fair for us to change that after. Yeah.

CHR. CABANAS: Yes.

MS. TOKIHIRO: So, it all has to be done before, so that we're confident that once we open that recruitment and the department is moving forward with their selection process, that it's accurate.

MR. THOMAS: So, Gabriella, is that what you did in the department—

CHR. CABANAS: Mm-hmm.

MR. THOMAS: —that was your job, wasn't it?

CHR. CABANAS: The Recruitment and Examination Manager, yes.

MR. THOMAS: Yeah.

CHR. CABANAS: Yeah. So, yeah, things were returned as Sommer says—they return it because you have to—we have to be accurate. It's a whole sequence. It's a whole chain of events. If this is not accurate, everything else is not going to be accurate. It's going to be flawed.

SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

CHR. CABANAS: Yeah, it is. And so, it really rests with the department to do their—they're the ones authorizing the work. Of course, the class specs. are developed by HR—their HR—but they need to review it because the position descriptions are written in accordance with the class spec. And, as Sommer said, if it changes, then they need to review it because it could be something else.

MS. TOKIHIRO: And it's also a good opportunity to work with departments to reassess operational needs because they may have a vacant position that is an "Account Clerk" but for—maybe the operational needs have changed over time because they—for example, now we have electronic time cards or we're doing—we have some different process where maybe we don't have a need for that position or maybe we want to change it and now it's going to be an "Administrative Assistant" because we're going to incorporate—we want to add maybe some HR duties to that role.

And so, it's a variety of things, as Gabe mentioned—that it is a flow and it's always a good opportunity when we're looking at positions to constantly reassess operational needs, and then reassess what the operation is, and make sure that we're accurately describing that.

CHR. CABANAS: And the two divisions really work close together—Classification, and Recruitment and Exam.—because Classification will develop the class spec., which includes not only the duties, but the minimum requirements.

So, if there's verbiage that's vague in the minimum requirements, Recruitment needs to work with Classification, so they know what that means. If they don't know what it means, you go back to Classification and work it out—define it because Classification is setting that standard in the class spec.

So, it works hand-in-hand. You have to know what it means. If you don't know what it means, how you're going to do everything else, yeah?

MS. TOKIHIRO: And, when they're screening the applications, right—

CHR. CABANAS: Yeah.

MS. TOKIHIRO: —when they receive applications—and here applicants are describing this experience or how their background meets those minimum qualifications— Recruitment needs to understand what all of that means so that they can appropriately screen applications.

We're actually working on a new class of work for the Police Department and that just came up in the office—is making sure that Classification and Pay, and R&E, are on the same page with the department and what their expectation is, so that everybody understands how the process is going to work.

CHR. CABANAS: And a lot of times, staff from both divisions would go do a field audit—go to the worksite, observe what's being done—so when the staff learns that, it's easier to explain to an applicant. You have to know it in order to explain it, if you're going to deal with applicants—and, if you don't know it, well, you got to backtrack because you need to know it.

SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

CHR. CABANAS: Yeah.

MR. AGUINALDO: And you guys to that, Sommer? Sommer, and you guys do that, like, what Gabriella said is like do a field audit?

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah. So, they'll go out and do site visits. I think they've done a number of them so far, just looking at different types of work. I know that they recently went and observed the performance test for the lifeguards, so that they could better understand that process.

I believe they went—they did a site visit to our Highways Divisions and looked at positions there. They really enjoyed that. They got issued safety vests and—because they had to make sure that they were following all the correct safety protocols.

But that really is the best way to understand what that class spec. means, right? There's a lot of positions that we may have more exposure to than others but, say, for example, a "Regulatory Administrator," we just created that class of work for the Department of Environmental Management. So, it would be good for them to have the opportunity to see, "Okay, what does that position involve," right?

So, yeah, we do, do that—get out there and try and connect with our departments—and it is Classification and Pay, and our Recruitment and Examination Division that participate.

MR. AGUINALDO: Wow, that's good.

CHR. CABANAS: Can learn a lot—the employees can really learn a lot.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah.

CHR. CABANAS: 'Cause even, like, when I was working—we went to the landfill. We were on top of the landfill in Hilo. So many stories high—how they compact the rubbish, how they bulldoze it, compact it—it's like fine sand on the landfill and it's stories high on top of the landfill.

We went to the Wastewater Treatment Plant—didn't the staff go there recently?

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yes.

CHR. CABANAS: Yeah, it's good for them to go. It's easier to explain to staff, to a department, to applicants when they see it—especially if you're a visual person. When you see it—and then you start looking at the applications, it's easier to screen. Yeah.

MR. AGUINALDO: And I think that is a good way, Sommer—it's like, Gabriella said—about visual because then you have a better understanding the applicant or that position. Yeah, it's very important.

MS. TOKIHIRO: And even why the minimum requirements are, what they are, right?

MR. AGUINALDO: Yeah.

MS. TOKIHIRO: I mean, if you're looking at "Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator"—

MR. AGUINALDO: Right.

MS. TOKIHIRO: —like, "Okay, what—why is it so difficult for us to fill some of these positions." And so, understanding that, I think, helps get the whole picture.

MR. AGUINALDO: Yeah.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Understanding the "why" is always a big key for me in something that I always encourage the staff to explore—get to understand the "why."

MR. AGUINALDO: 'Cause, like, wastewater is a lot of mechanical and electrical involved.

MS. TOKIHIRO: And chemicals.

MR. AGUINALDO: Yes.

CHR. CABANAS: And chemicals.

MR. AGUINALDO: Yes.

CHR. CABANAS: And the thing with that is when the department gives input, especially to—for a new class of work, they may say, “Okay, it might require two years of this kind of experience”—and I remember us asking them, “What’s magical about two years versus one year?”—because you don’t want to establish artificial barriers when it comes time for experience. So, what’s magical about the two-year minimum requirement?

MS. TOKIHIRO: I’m going to revive that. I’m going to have R&E ask, “What’s magical about”—

CHR. CABANAS: Really good—because it makes them think. Because part of the class spec. is basic knowledge, right—maybe knowledge of operation of mechanical equipment—but what kind of mechanical equipment?

So, they—the department has to give HR this kind of mechanical equipment, as it pertains to this class of work, right. And so, that is important. And I remember asking them, “What’s magical about two years?” And they would say, “Well, they have to have the sufficient knowledge in a two-year period.” But it could also be through a degree—an associate degree at HCC, if they have—

MR. AGUINALDO: Continue education.

CHR. CABANAS: Yeah.

MR. AGUINALDO : Yeah.

CHR. CABANAS: So, that kind of discussion occurs between HR and the employing department or a number of departments, because if it’s an “Equipment Operator” class of work—a number of departments have “Equipment Operators.”

MR. AGUINALDO: ‘Cause I think, like, even like what Gabriella was sharing—one operator—becoming one operator, I think, this guy came in as a laborer—they work from the bottom and flagman or whatever, and they work their way up. And I think that’s the best way for continue education because you make—you might have people that had—make the minimum requirement and County allows for continued education to a certain point—that gives them the drive. And, like, that’s how you might fill positions, like you indicated, like—they don’t have that tier whatever engineering degree, they only

have this. But as time goes by, maybe, evaluations from there and they're doing a great job, and they slowly progressing—and County help them out, like, continued education. They going like stay. They going like stay.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Well, and that's our responsibility, right—

MR. AGUINALDO: Yeah.

MS. TOKIHIRO: —is to uphold the merit principle and create careers in government service for our civil servants.

MR. AGUINALDO: Right.

MS. TOKIHIRO: So, really, it's that opportunity—we're always encouraging and wanting departments to provide promotional opportunities from within, so that people have the opportunity to move up.

MR. AGUINALDO: Right. And that's how you going just—you going be one—the County going be more powerful. It's the same way, like, how we do things, like, I want to get into this, so what we do is there's a trainer, like, say, provide a week's training on certain things, then that's where I, kind of, bring that individual so we can have that certification. But now, it's more so you expand your palate and it's a powerful tool that way—and accountability. It's not like you just going throw the guy do that—next thing you know, he didn't know what he was doing.

And, like, someone mentioned to me says, “Oh, I not learn—he not teaching”—“No, he's not. He's teaching you. Are you allowing yourself to learn?” So, there are differences in society nowadays. And it's—I see other people—I'm content with what I do. I see other businesses they struggle finding employees because either—one, they no like work; or Number two, they don't have the education background or degree; or Number three, they like more pay. It's always those combinations of things, but I see our County progressing each time I come to the meeting and how we can just share our *mana'o* in how we can grow and thrive together.

But you doing a great job. But the roadway, though, whew—oh, they're on it. They really on it, like—they on it. Like, I see their trucks in the morning, like, whoa, when there's a crisis like this—this storm over here, they do their best—and sometimes they go out of their way, and they just do it, and I think that's the right way. I think we're doing a better job than our other tiered dep—the State, in trying to fix our roads. We're doing such a great job right now, and I like it. Yeah. That's it.

CHR. CABANAS: Thank you. Anything else for Sommer? Okay. Sommer, I just have one question—for Equal Opportunity, without getting into the detailed cases, but for February it says, “11 of the 27 were related to EO issues/concerns.” What might that be? Is it equal opportunity—is it seniority?

MS. TOKIHIRO: No. I'm sorry, I didn't look at the log. I can get back to you, 'cause this has come up before and I've told myself—

CHR. CABANAS: Yes, it has.

MS. TOKIHIRO: —that I was going to—

CHR. CABANAS: I was just curious.

MS. TOKIHIRO: —check that log a little bit more often, but—

CHR. CABANAS: 'Cause the only thing that concerns me regarding this is—you know how we had in the past, that relatively equal. So, how does the—how do the departments get training on that to determine relatively equal after an interview is held?

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah. So, that would be training that would be provided by—Recruitment goes through that with departments.

CHR. CABANAS: Right.

MS. TOKIHIRO: But, no, these inquiries are not—

CHR. CABANAS: This is not that.

MS. TOKIHIRO: No?

CHR. CABANAS: It's something else.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yes. Yeah.

CHR. CABANAS: Okay.

MS. TOKIHIRO: And I don't even believe that—well, I'll have to check into the nature, but I don't want to mis-speak—but it is not relatively equal.

CHR. CABANAS: Yeah. Okay.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah.

CHR. CABANAS: Okay. But protocol-wise, has it changed because Recruitment and Exam. used to do the Relatively Equal Training as part of the Interview Training, but that's not what happens now? It's different?

MS. TOKIHIRO: It's different because we had the mandatory training for anyone who's part of an interview panel. But that isn't necessarily—that training, relatively equal, would be provided to HR Reps. in the departments who are helping their department heads do the calculation of scoring, following interviews.

CHR. CABANAS: Okay.

MS. TOKIHIRO: So, that's specific to the HR Reps. in the departments.

CHR. CABANAS: Okay, so how are the HR Reps. getting training?

MS. TOKIHIRO: Through our—they go through training with Recruitment and Examination, Classification and Pay—so all of the different divisions do training with them.

CHR. CABANAS: Okay.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah.

CHR. CABANAS: And so, when an interview is done, the—I'm assuming and I might be wrong now, so you need to update me—the Chair, they tally up the scores?

MS. TOKIHIRO: So, the members of the panel would collectively work with the Chair—

CHR. CABANAS: Right.

MS. TOKIHIRO: —and there's a summary worksheet where they document all of the scores.

CHR. CABANAS: Okay, and then those scores go to the HR person.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yes. So, generally, if they want to make a selection, they're going to be working with HR to make sure that that information is accurate before it's given to the appointing authority to make the final selection.

CHR. CABANAS: Their own HR?

MS. TOKIHIRO: Correct.

CHR. CABANAS: Okay, before it goes to the department head—so, the HR person of that department will determine the relatively equal?

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yes. If there was a situation, they would be providing guidance to the panel—'cause the panel members wouldn't necessarily know how to apply that, so it would be the HR Rep. that would be looking at that information.

CHR. CABANAS: And are the departmental procedures still in effect?

MS. TOKIHIRO: Which departmental—

CHR. CABANAS: Before I left, before I retired, each department had procedures on their Interview and Selection Process.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yes.

CHR. CABANAS: Does that still exist?

MS. TOKIHIRO: It does. Every department has their own—and if they don't have their own, they follow HR's.

CHR. CABANAS: Right.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yes.

CHR. CABANAS: Oh, they follow your departments.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yes.

CHR. CABANAS: Okay.

MS. TOKIHIRO: But they should have their own.

MS. BOND: What's "relatively equal?"

CHR. CABANAS: That's when there's, like a 5% range of scores that fall within the top score.

MS. BOND: Oh, okay.

MS. TOKIHIRO: And it's when seniority would be taken into account.

CHR. CABANAS: If it were a promotional.

MS. BOND: (Inaudible.)

CHR. CABANAS: No, not veteran status. No.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Veterans' preference points are applied at the time that the application is screened, not after the interview. So, that would—those points are at the beginning—

may give someone the opportunity to be in the top five applicants that would be referred to the department.

MS. BOND: So, the relatively equal would be, like, seniority or degrees or (inaudible)—what would give them the advantage, if there (inaudible).

CHR. CABANAS: It's a 5% range—in other words, the scores are close, within a 5% range of the total possible points—

MS. BOND: Yeah.

CHR. CABANAS: If you don't have that, then you don't apply anything. You go with the top—normally, you go with the top—pending background checks and all of (inaudible).

MS. TOKIHIRO: And relatively equal only applies to internals because of that seniority, 'cause that's part of the collective bargaining.

CHR. CABANAS: Oh, yes, that's right.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah.

CHR. CABANAS: That's right. Yeah. That's right.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah. So, it only applies to—

CHR. CABANAS: (Inaudible.)

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah.

MS. BOND: Okay.

CHR. CABANAS: Not for open-competitive recruitment.

MS. BOND: (Inaudible.)

CHR. CABANAS: No, I was just wondering—has those procedures been updated, by any chance?

MS. TOKIHIRO: So, no, not generally. But in the case that you're referring to, the Fire Department has a supplemental agreement with HFFA that, specifically, outlines how the Fire Department is handling relatively equal, and they've actually changed the criteria so that it's not within the 5%.

CHR. CABANAS: Oh, okay. So, they're not applying the seniority.

MS. TOKIHIRO: So, they're applying it, but they—they're applying that seniority to differences that are less than the 5%. So, they've made relatively equal—I think the percentage, it may be within 1% or 1 or—3%, but it had to be through mutual agreement with the Union—so that the Union was in agreement with how it's being applied and understands how the department is applying it.

So, yeah, they entered into a supplemental agreement to clarify that.

CHR. CABANAS: Okay. And that Appellant did get—I saw on social media, he got permanently promoted, which is good for him. Yeah.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah. After they were—they were in the process of consulting with the Union on relatively equal, once they completed—they finished that and then re-did the recruitment and that was the result.

CHR. CABANAS: Okay. Okay, well, there's a lot of questions for Sommer on the February 2026 MAB Report. May I have a motion to accept and file her report?

MS. BOND: So moved.

MR. THOMAS: Second.

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

**B. MAB Monthly Divisional Activity Report: March 2026 (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)**

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CHR. CABANAS: So, we are now moving along to the MAB Monthly Divisional Activity Report for March 2026.

MS. BOND: And I already asked all my questions.

CHR. CABANAS: You asked some questions (inaudible).

MS. BOND: Yeah.

CHR. CABANAS: Mm-hmm.

MS. TOKIHIRO: So, I will announce that we made a selection for the HR Manager II for our Recruitment and Examination Division—that position was vacant after Michelle Simmons left in January.

And so, Stacie Iwasaki was selected.

CHR. CABANAS: She was promoted.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah.

CHR. CABANAS: Oh, nice.

MS. TOKIHIRO: So, Stacie actually is the, kind of, the perfect example of the merit principle because I went back and looked this morning—she actually started with the County as a student hire in 2007; and then, was a Clerk in Research and Development—also in Finance before joining HR; and she's had a long career in HR in a variety of positions. So, she was a Clerk, an HR Assistant, an HR Tech., an HR Specialist, and a Program Specialist—and so, she's got amazing institutional knowledge and I'm proud of her.

And I'm glad that she—a few years ago, I asked her if she was going to apply for the manager position and she self-reflected and said she wasn't ready. She had a young child at the time, and she acknowledged that she didn't feel that she was ready to take on that supervisory role, which can be definitely challenging—supervising employees and addressing issues.

So, when the position became vacant, I texted her and I said, "So, are you going to apply?" And she said, "Yeah, I think I'm ready." And so, I was so excited for her to see

her take on that opportunity. She did Temporary Assignment for three months, while we were kind of evaluating it and talking about it—and talking about expectations and goals, and where that division needs to move, and where we're headed.

And she really took the opportunity during the TA to just jump right in there. And I told her, it's—"If you're going to take on that challenge that's your role. You need to do that"—and she really jumped in and got herself up-to-speed on all of these things that she wasn't totally familiar with. Earlier this week was the first time that she had to come to County Council to have—for a resolution—for a multi-year agreement regarding our NeoGov contract. And then, she's taken on doing the radio ads, and doing social media, and working with departments to change information on applications—and I just seen a maturity in her over the last several months, and I'm excited for her to want to take on that challenge and take her professional career to the next level.

So, she is serving a probationary period where I'm working with her every week, closely monitoring what's happening in the division—but that's what the merit principle is all about. So—

CHR. CABANAS: Please relay our congratulations to her.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Yeah, I will. And then, we have opportunity—so, in HR usually there isn't, kind of, this much movement or these—this many vacancies. So it gives opportunities for others to do Temporary Assignment into other roles as well.

So, Megan Oshiro is on Temporary Assignment to the HR Program Specialist, while we get ready to recruit for that; and then, Kaila Kaaihue, who was the HR Assistant is now on TA to a Specialist position. So, Kaila had the opportunity to screen some of the basic recruitments that we did—the Registration recruitments where all that's required is a driver's license—but now, she's actually being assigned by departments where she'll be given the opportunity to learn the higher level screening, and then Megan will be supervising her in that role.

So, we do have some vacancies that we'll be recruiting for, but it provides opportunities internally for—hopefully, for promotional opportunities—but in the interim, if not for promotions, for other people to get experience and learn new things. So, I'm excited for that. As much as it can become challenging to have vacancies, I enjoy the opportunity to give other people exposure and be able to learn some of these new roles.

CHR. CABANAS: Very good. Okay, any other—any questions, comments? Niel, you have something?

MR. THOMAS: Really not terribly important. I just noted that by the March report, the—that Aging Program Planner was now a month older.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Continuing the theme.

CHR. CABANAS: Okay, anyone else? No? Yeah, I think we covered it with the first report.

MS. BOND: Yeah, I think that was—all the questions went there.

CHR. CABANAS: So, may I have a motion to accept and file the March report?

MS. BOND: So moved.

MR. THOMAS: 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.

Thank you, Sommer. I know we asked you a lot of questions, but I thought it was a good discussion.

MS. TOKIHIRO: Oh, good—I'm just glad I was able to answer most of them with the exception of your EO question, but I will have a full report on that next time.

CHR. CABANAS: Thank you very much—and please relay to our staff, we appreciate all of their hard work—

MS. TOKIHIRO: Will do.

CHR. CABANAS: —sincere efforts and moving it forward.

**Communications (Item 6)**

CHR. CABANAS: So, we don't have any other "Communications."

**New Business (Item 7)**

CHR. CABANAS: No “New Business.”

**Unfinished Business (Item 8)**

CHR. CABANAS: No “Unfinished Business.”

**Announcements (Item 9)**

CHR. CABANAS: And are there any “Announcements”—anyone? No? Okay.

MS. BOND: Nothing that pertains to this.

CHR. CABANAS: Okay.

**Schedule Next Meeting Date (Item 10)**

**The Merit Appeals Board Will Convene Its Next Meeting On Thursday, April 23, 2026, At 9:00 A.M., At The Hilo Council Chambers, Hawai'i County Building, 25 Aupuni Street, First Floor, Room 1401, Hilo, HI 96720**

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CHR. CABANAS: So, for the next meeting, the Merit Appeals Board will convene its next meeting on Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2026, at 9 a.m., at the Hilo Council Chambers of the Hawai'i County Building, 25 Aupuni Street, First Floor, Room 1401, in Hilo.

**Adjournment (Item 11)**

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

MS. BOND: So moved.

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. Today's meeting is adjourned at 10:18 a.m. Thank you, J, very much. See you next month.

Respectfully submitted,

Glynis Yamada, Secretary-Reporter

APPROVED:

Gabriella M. Cabanas, Chair  
Merit Appeals Board