

Department of Finance – Operating & CIP

Honorable Addison Bulosan
Honorable Bernard P. Carvalho, Jr.
Honorable Felicia Cowden
Honorable Bill DeCosta
Honorable Ross Kagawa
Honorable KipuKai Kualifi
Honorable Mel Rapozo

The Committee reconvened on April 8, 2024 at 9:00 a.m., and proceeded as follows:

Council Chair Rapozo: Good morning, everyone. Welcome back to the Budget hearings. Today is April 8, 2024. Before we open the reviews, is there anyone in the audience wishing to testify? Seeing none, we will move right into the Department of Finance.

Department of Finance – Administration

There being no objections, the rules were suspended.

Council Chair Rapozo: You can begin with your overview then we will open it up for questions.

MICHELLE L. LIZAMA, Director of Finance: Good morning, Council Chair Rapozo and Councilmembers, Michelle Lizama, Director of Finance. The Department of Finance would like to preface that it has six (6) divisions, Accounting, Purchasing, Real Property Tax (RPT) Assessments and RPT Collections, Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) which includes driver's license and motor vehicle transactions, Treasury, and Information Technology (IT). In the overview of our budget this year, we are requesting a Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Operating Budget of nineteen million three hundred thousand dollars (\$19,300,000), which is a decrease of five hundred eighty-seven thousand dollars (\$587,000) or two-point-nine percent (2.9%). When Deputy Director of Finance Chelsie A. Sakai and I looked at the budget, we wanted to look at how we could help our associates improve their jobs and give them the tools necessary, so we personally met with each division head and their employees. We wanted to hear from them. We had a good grasp of what they needed and wanted. Of course, while we cannot increase their salaries, we can invest in them by offering tools, sending them to training events, and improving their skills and abilities. This, in turn, will improve the entire Department of Finance. A highlight of our budget is some substantial increases in overtime in the DMV. This is in an increase to our premium pay for our DMV staff because they are one of the lowest salary employees in our entire County. We wanted to provide them with an incentive in the form of premium pay, amounting to an increase of three hundred thirty-two thousand dollars (\$332,000). There is also an increase in insurance. The Finance Department is responsible for the insurance for the whole County and with the recent incident of the Maui fires, we looked at our insurance premiums. We had to increase our square footage rate for our insurance, so you will see an increase of seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000) or twenty-four point eight percent (24.8%), which is a ten percent (10%) increase over current year's expenses. We also have the Kaua'i Humane Society under our budget, but they will be up later today. Vehicle equipment lease had a decrease of sixty-six thousand dollars (\$66,000). We are going to procure the vehicles, which will be a decrease in our vehicle equipment lease. As I stated in the beginning of my dialogue, training increased to forty-four thousand dollars (\$44,000) to invest in our employees. Hence, the increase in training. You will also see an IT Arrangement in our budget. That has increased due to additional licensing,

contract adjustments, software for our IT and RPT Divisions to again provide tools for our employees and our associates. I also wanted to highlight the IT Department because they provide services for the whole County of Kaua'i, not just IT within the Finance Department. Now, with cyber security and artificial intelligence (AI), we need to increase our cyber security tools so that is an increase for our IT Division.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any questions on the overview?

Councilmember Cowden: I have some questions, but I do not have to go first.
Members, do you have questions?

Council Chair Rapozo: No, it looks like you are the first.

Councilmember Cowden: In the insurance paragraph, second to the last sentence, it states, "this resulted in an increase of forty-two percent (42%) over last year's budget" while overall, we were able to have twenty-four-point-eight percent (24.8%). I have a needle eye on the insurance because I am expecting that to be problematic for the entire island, not only with the government. Was the increase of the insurance cost for the County forty-two percent (42%) or is twenty-four point eight percent (24.8%) when we put everything together and fixing other things?

Ms. Lizama: The increase in the price square foot for all locations resulted in an increase of forty-two percent (42%) over last year's budget.

Councilmember Cowden: Forty-two percent (42%) is a lot. Maybe when we are on the details, we can ask a little about surety bond insurance because I know that is in the Charter. It is supposed to have surety bond insurance, but you can no longer obtain surety bond insurance. I know that we are trying to call that insurance. I am wondering where that insurance is going to be. I had a question on the second page about the Kapa'a DMV. When will that open? Do we have an opening estimate for that?

Ms. Lizama: Good question. We do not have a specific date. We are nearing the end of the final construction on the Kapa'a DMV. Once the construction is done, hopefully by the end of April or beginning of May, then we will sweep in and put in...

Councilmember Cowden: Maybe summer, then? We are not sure. I had a positive conversation about our increased cyber security protection, and we are really happy with the new hires. That sounds good. This might be when we are discussing IT, but I am looking at this Dell VxRail, Next Generation (Gen.) Virtual Storage. Should I wait until he is up and talk to him about that? I will ask when we are on the details.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any further questions on the overview?

Councilmember Kualii: I have a quick question.

Council Chair Rapozo: Go ahead.

Councilmember Kualii: Out of curiosity, with First Hawaiian Bank, you stated that you negotiated rates to get a better earning of three-point-five percent (3.5%) for idle cash. On average, what is our average idle cash?

Ms. Lizama: That would be a good question for the Treasury Department. We can ask that when we get there.

Council Chair Rapozo: Councilmember DeCosta.

Councilmember DeCosta: I have a constructive comment. I want to commend you on having a decrease in your overall budget. It might be a first. I appreciate that. If anything, department heads usually break even, so thank you for the decrease. It means that you are doing your homework and working hard, and we appreciate it. I am impressed.

Council Chair Rapozo: I have a question. Kaua'i Humane Society will be coming up later, but prior to the budget, we met with them individually. There is a concern about services, I know that they have staffing issues as well. Who oversees that contract and ensures that the contract details are being completed? I will speak for myself; I have to believe that the other Councilmembers received the complaints as well. We are not providing the service to the public that I think the public deserves for the money that they pay. Who in the Administration monitors that we are providing that service?

Ms. Lizama: That is a good question. Budget-wise, the Kaua'i Humane Society does fall under the Finance Department, but as far as ensuring that the Kaua'i Humane Society is doing what they are doing, I would leave that to them. They can answer that question when they are up.

Council Chair Rapozo: We had that discussion and staffing is one of the issues. The other issue is the confusion between them and the Kaua'i Police Department (KPD), whose responsibilities are whose, and that needs to be resolved. I had a discussion with them regarding getting into the KPD training academy to start teaching our officers and dispatchers whose role is what. I do not know; we need to get that fixed. Are there any further questions?

Councilmember Carvalho: I have a clarifying question on the training for all. I like that idea. Overall, can you go into all employees at different levels?

Ms. Lizama: When we met with each of our divisions, they expressed different trainings. It could be networking conferences with those who have the same software or program as the County or training to increase their knowledge with specific programs like Laserfiche Integration or ESRI ArcGIS. We are always looking at increasing the knowledge of our employees.

Councilmember Cowden: I have a short follow-up to that.

Council Chair Rapozo: Go ahead.

Councilmember Cowden: With procurements, who would be overseeing the contract that we have with Kaua'i Humane Society? Usually, procurement looks after all our contracts, maybe we can ask at that level.

Ms. Lizama: We can ask the Purchasing Division.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any further questions on the overview? If not, we will go to page 37. Councilmember Kualii. We have one (1) vacant position.

Councilmember Kualii: I have a question on the one (1) vacant position. Position No. 206 has been vacant since last August...oh, selection made! Did the person accept? Are they going to start, or have they already started?

Ms. Lizama: Yes. The offer has been made and accepted. Start date is June 1, 2024.

Councilmember Kualii: June 1, 2024. Wonderful. Thank you, Chair Rapozo.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any further questions on page 37? Councilmember DeCosta.

Councilmember DeCosta: I have a question on Position No. 207, Budget Administrator, EM-5. How many staff members is the Budget Administrator supervising? Is that a supervisor position?

Ms. Lizama: It is a supervising position.

Councilmember DeCosta: How many positions does that person supervise?

Ms. Lizama: One (1) position.

Councilmember DeCosta: My next question is on the position right below that, Position No. 206, Budget and Grant Analyst. Does that position manage all the grants that come out of the County and go to the Office of Economic Development (OED)? Which grants does that position analyze? Is it only grants within the Finance Department?

Ms. Lizama: No, not only grants within the Finance Department, but they also analyze the grants Countywide.

Councilmember DeCosta: Would this person oversee the grant funding going to the OED?

Ms. Lizama: Correct. Each division has their own grants, but this position does the overall reporting for all grants.

Councilmember DeCosta: Someone is coming up to clarify.

CHELSIE A. SAKAI, Deputy Director of Finance: Good morning, Chelsie Sakai, Deputy Director of Finance. Position No. 206 does not necessarily manage each grant for each department. Each department is responsible for their own grants. This position ensures the setup of receivables for a project and that all the required documents such as Council approval, are already there, that sort of management. Otherwise, it is left to...

Councilmember DeCosta: Thank you for the clarification, Chelsie.

Council Chair Rapozo: Councilmember Cowden.

Ms. Sakai: There are insurance pieces here. I looked at Liability Insurance and Property Insurance, then I saw Excess Workers' Compensation (WC) Liability. It looks like right there, there are about four million three hundred thousand dollars (\$4,300,000) worth of insurance. Basically, the Finance Department reflects the insurance for most of the County. Is that correct? When I am looking across these lines...I am not seeing last years' budget. What is WC? It says Excess WC Liability. What does WC mean?

Ms. Lizama: Workers' Compensation.

Councilmember Cowden: Thank you. I am bad with acronyms. This might be a question for the County Attorney...we do not have the County Attorney here. When there is an effort to change the Charter to drop surety bond insurance, because we are no longer able to get surety bonds insurance...do you know what that is for? I do, maybe you already know. I can explain what it is if you are not clear. Surety bonds are...if commission members, board members, councilmembers were sued for something, and I know that there are mass action and class action lawsuits going that will be naming Councilmembers and elected officials. This was a national effort, and in that same, surety bonds have gone out the window. It is possible that it is a reaction to a lot of amassing action. I wanted to be sure that we are paying attention to that and that we have the policies, because I went to a Commission Meeting for the Charter Review Commission and they simply stated that we have insurance, but I thought that no details were discussed in any way that explained the meaning of insurance. I am wondering if that is self-insurance. I think we need to be prepared if we will be getting a series of lawsuits. That reflects on boards, commissions, and elected officials. We should all be trained in understanding that, I am vague. I have never received any training on that, so I think that we should have a watchful eye.

Ms. Sakai: We can look into that, and we will discuss it with the County Attorney since they now manage the Risk Management Program.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any further questions on Admin? If not, we are moving onto the Accounting Division on page 42. There are two (2) vacant positions.

Councilmember Kualii: The first position, Position No. 202, Central Accounting Analyst has been vacant since last August. The applicant declined. How does that work? Do you have another list to go back to? Do you have a second person?

Ms. Sakai: Once that person declined the position, we looked at the staffing at the Accounting Division and will be proposing a reorganization. This will cover both Central Accounting Analysts, Position No. 202 and Position No. 205. Currently, we are in consultation with Hawai'i Government Employees Association (HGEA) to reorganize the division and bring those two (2) positions down to Accountant Trainee, that way we can work on building up our existing team.

Councilmember Kualii: Position No. 290, Accountant Trainee...you are reorganizing both Central Accounting Analysts, Position No. 202 and Position No. 205 down to Accountant Trainee. We will need to give you time to see if you get it done....and in the next submittal, will you have the adjusted salary to reflect the other position?

Ms. Sakai: If by that time HGEA approves, yes.

Councilmember Kualii: Now, it is showing the low range for the other position.

Ms. Sakai: Correct.

Councilmember Kualii: Okay. Thank you.

Councilmember Cowden: I have a follow-up to that. Is this the new Accounting Administrator? Would you like to introduce yourself? I do not think that you have been in front of us before.

MALIA KAGAWA, Accounting Administrator: Malia Kagawa, I am the new Accounting Administrator.

Councilmember Cowden: Thank you so much.

Council Chair Rapozo: You look familiar.

Councilmember Cowden: Yes, you look familiar, beautiful cheekbones. Have you worked on our County Audited Financial Report (CAFR)? Did you work for the same company?

Ms. Kagawa: I assisted with that for one year, without it being a conflict of interest, but prior to that, I have audited the County of Maui, County of Hawai'i, and various State and County organizations. I came in the month of September with big shoes to fill. As you all know, my predecessors were here for years and had a handle...

Councilmember Cowden: Yes, it is nice to formally meet you in front of the Council. There are big shoes to fill. I very much appreciated the powerful executive summaries that we received in the ACFRs. Welcome and thank you. I am glad that you have the experience that helps me to have the confidence that you will understand what goes on here. It seems like we lost at least four (4) positions.

Ms. Kagawa: Five (5).

Councilmember Cowden: Have we replaced one (1) position...how many have we replaced?

Ms. Kagawa: We have replaced three (3) of the five (5) positions.

Councilmember Cowden: Okay, that feels better. Are we still working with a contracted helper?

Ms. Kagawa: Yes.

Councilmember Cowden: I have to look at our imaginary friend for a moment. For some time, we were contracting some help, right?

Ms. Kagawa: Correct.

Councilmember Cowden: Is that contracted help still occurring?

Ms. Kagawa: Yes.

Councilmember Cowden: Is that written in here that we are paying? Consultant Services, but I only see five thousand dollars (\$5,000). That does not seem very much for contracting help with our bookkeeping.

Ms. Kagawa: It is not necessarily bookkeeping. Our division has a handle on all bookkeeping. It is more so, taking it to the final fund financials and government fund financials.

Councilmember Cowden: Is that the five thousand dollars (\$5,000)?

Ms. Kagawa: No, it is not reflected in our budget.

Councilmember Cowden: Where would that be reflected?

Ms. Sakai: My understanding is, we had it this year while we were filling the positions because we knew that we were going to have vacancies.

Councilmember Cowden: Is it no longer being contracted? It was just a one-time thing. Thank you for that. Do you folks feel confident and ready? Great. Thank you.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any further questions for the Accounting Division? If not, thank you.

Councilmember DeCosta: I have a constructive comment. I noticed very good camaraderie and that you all turned to the past Finance Director. I like that. It seems like you all work well together. Welcome to our team. I am very impressed. Thank you.

Council Chair Rapozo: Okay, thank you. Next up is the IT Department.

Councilmember Cowden: I have one (1) last question on that last discussion topic. On page 43...never mind. I know what it is.

Council Chair Rapozo: Councilmember Kualii.

Councilmember Kualii: I have a question on the Contracts Officer position. It says, "selection made." Did the person accept?

Ms. Sakai: Started on April 1st.

Councilmember Kualii: Started on April 1st. Wonderful.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any further questions on positions, page 47 or page 48?

Councilmember Cowden: I have a question on page 47.

Council Chair Rapozo: Go ahead.

Councilmember Cowden: Is the one hundred ten thousand dollars (\$110,000) for premium pay the cost for employees working in the “off hours”?

Ms. Sakai: Yes.

Councilmember Cowden: How much off-hour service do we have? I usually do not even call during the off-hours. Can you call at 9:00 p.m.? When do we have the off hours?

DEL SHERMAN, Information Technology Manager: Del Sherman, IT Manager, for the record. With IT, we support our public safety components. We have assigned individuals on call twenty-four seven (24/7). They provide coverage around the clock, all week long, and we rotate the responsibility amongst a group of individuals. That arrangement is covered under a standby pay clause in the union contract. These funds pay for that.

Councilmember Cowden: Okay.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any further questions on page 48?

Councilmember DeCosta: I have a question on page 47. I am looking at the salaries for the Informational Technology Specialists IV and the positions going down. You folks earn over one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000). Those are SR-26 positions. I have seen a few EM-3 with a supervisory position earn less than that. Maybe that is a question for Janine, but is SR-26 the highest pay level within the SR pay scale?

Mr. Sherman: Within IT, SR-26 is about the highest you could go. We have one (1) EM-3, an Assistant IT Manager or Project Manager type of position, but if you look across the other counties in the State within IT, SR-26 is typically the highest that you will go. That is the top of the scale. In our case, what we see reflected in our positions and salaries is mostly due to the fact that we have a few long-time employees. In fact, some are upcoming employee recognition, I think that we have four (4) being recognized for lengths of service. The shortest being fifteen (15) years. Over the years...

Councilmember DeCosta: I understand it, now. Thank you, sir.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are these actual salaries or the ceiling pay? This is what these staff members are being paid.

Mr. Sherman: Correct.

Council Chair Rapozo: You have an amazing crew.

Mr. Sherman: They are good. They have been around for a long time. Thank you for that.

Council Chair Rapozo: I will not start naming them in case I accidentally leave someone out, but everyone that I have come into contact with that helps our division's systems has been amazing.

Councilmember DeCosta: I want to comment on this. I am looking at the lower positions here, Information Technologist Specialist I and III and noticed that they are

thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000), forty thousand dollars (\$40,000), up to fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) behind. The growth for these employees within the IT Division is great, your people can grow. There are a lot of divisions within the County where the employee's income is capped at a specific position pay. We have to go through overtime pay or influx in order to reward our employees. I am glad to see that within the IT Division, there is room for growth to help retain our personnel. Thank you for that.

Councilmember Cowden: I have questions on page 48 and page 49.

Council Chair Rapozo: Go ahead. Are there any questions on page 48?

Councilmember Cowden: I am looking at the bottom, under IT Arrangements, two million three hundred thousand dollars (\$2,300,000). When I am looking at the Elements, such as one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000) for Microsoft Enterprise...I do not know what that program specifically does. That is five hundred sixty-four thousand dollars (\$564,000). Are these software payments? Is that like having an employee here, like with Elements Land Information Management System (LIMS), we had a person present to help the County design things? What do these payments reflect?

Mr. Sherman: Taking Elements LIMS, as an example, the moneys reflected in this portion of our Budget do not go to pay for any contract services. This is strictly the subscription cost for a given software license. For our Element LIMS, that is the amount that we pay for that subscription. For Microsoft, that is the amount that we pay for our Office 365 to include Word, Outlook, and those types of software.

Councilmember Cowden: Then, the Cyber Security and Security Information item on page 49 looks to be about four hundred fifty-seven thousand dollars (\$457,000). I am both happy to see that it is reasonably priced...I met with you folks as I was worried about the places that are spending five million dollars (\$5,000,000) for their insurance every year. I received a letter from both Hawai'i Medical Services Association (HMSA) and Department of Water, stating that we have had security leaks and that our data is out there. Before I received those letters, I had to replace my bank account cards and credit cards. I have no idea if it was from that, and I do not know if I have to redo all of it again. Can you explain a little about the Cyber Security payments that we are paying? How much do we pay for the entire thing? Is this what we pay for the whole year? Is that enough?

Mr. Sherman: Yes, I can fill in a little bit of detail. Thankfully, County IT has not been a part of those breaches. We are grateful for that. Thank you all for your support in realizing that Cyber Security is very critical. As far as the amount in our budget that we have identified as being associated with Cyber Security, we are careful not to specifically name the details of that software just as an abundance of caution. However, that amount pays for several different subscriptions to several different companies. All of which monitor our network twenty-four seven (24/7) so essentially, we are paying for a team of individuals in a network operations center that is always watching what is going on within our systems. They can alert us any time of the day, any time of the week if they see an issue. There are about four (4) critical software packages that make up the bulk of that money. If anyone from the Council would like to pay a visit or have an offline chat, I am happy to discuss the details of that.

Councilmember Cowden: Does the Department of Water...HMSA is probably not going to ask for help, but these are our employees and our constituents. When I took the training and met with you folks to discuss what I learned. While I noticed they used the right words, "how do you diminish?" and not cause a panic. They used those words, and I am not panicked, but did they contact us? When our staff does have a leak to piece...if people in here did not notice...it affects every single one of us. I do not know if you folks noticed, but we had breaches. Did they contact you at all? Do we help?

Mr. Sherman: Using the Department of Water as an example, they have been in contact with us and of course, the associated law enforcement agencies were the lead in that investigation, so we deferred to their direction on what to say, when to say it, and who to contact. They were in contact with us from the beginning, so we were aware of what was going on there. We worked closely with them, if for no other reason than to learn from the experience.

Councilmember Cowden: I am curious why the Council was not notified. If it was something within our own, would the Administration be told? It is somewhat alarming to even open the envelope and read it. If I had not taken the training at the National Association of Counties (NACo)...I am giving that organization a shoutout...had I not just gone to that, it probably would not have sat in my "lint filter." Would we be told if there was a data breach?

Mr. Sherman: You folks would be among the first to know. That would be critical because we would need your support in moving forward. It would be foolish to try to somehow downplay that or not tell you. We are partners in this. We would certainly bring this forward if anything of that nature happened within the County.

Council Chair Rapozo: Councilmember Kagawa.

Councilmember Kagawa: I have one (1) question on page 48, Dues and Subscriptions. Current year, you folks are at five hundred seventy-two thousand dollars (\$572,000) and you are requesting only two hundred eleven thousand dollars (\$211,000). What is the reason for that?

Mr. Sherman: Within our budget, there was a bit of shuffling between the Dues and Subscriptions and the Software-Based Information and Technology Arrangements (SBITA). Moneys were moved from one account to another to more appropriately reflect how the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) 96 would want us to report those items. The net change was zero dollars (\$0), just moving money from one account to another.

Councilmember Kagawa: Did you folks mention that before?

Mr. Sherman: We may have discussed it before.

Councilmember Kagawa: Thank you.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any further questions?

Councilmember Cowden: I have one (1) last question. Right now, do we have any consultants working for us full-time, like when Elements LIMS or Tyler was part

of it? Is there someone here helping us with anything? I was trying to see if we have a consulting service where we are paying someone. Are we done with all of that?

Mr. Sherman: No, we are not. However, we do not have anyone onsite or on the premises now. Any consulting services that were presently being utilized are being done remotely and we made that switch because we felt that we could accomplish anything necessary over Microsoft Teams or ZOOM. The cost was much less than having someone onsite. We have a couple of groups supporting us at present, remotely.

Councilmember Cowden: Is that stated in here?

Mr. Sherman: Yes.

Councilmember Cowden: What page is that listed in here?

Mr. Sherman: I think one (1) of them is a Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) budget item, so it is not in our Operating Budget.

Councilmember Cowden: Okay.

Council Chair Rapozo: Councilmember DeCosta.

Councilmember DeCosta: Since we are discussing security breaches and IT's role, I have a question. When we first took office, we were told that a lot of email came through that might not be in reference to the County, State, or folks that we know. They told us to not to click on those emails. Is there something that we could do to cause a breach that we would not know about, like opening an email from another source within the United States or another country? Would simply clicking on it from our email spark a security breach? Would that spark some sort of informational break that could go from our County to another informational system that is possibly looking at us?

Mr. Sherman: If I understand the question correctly, then the potential does exist for us to receive an email and if clicked on or responded in some way that would compromise us. That is possible by simply clicking a link. We try to protect against it with filters and other tools that we have in place. In spite of that, the best defense is good education on behalf of our users and awareness to keep an eye on anything suspicious like that.

Councilmember DeCosta: Thank you for that. I see a lot of those emails come through. I personally do not click on them.

Councilmember Cowden: I have a follow-up to that.

Council Chair Rapozo: Go ahead.

Councilmember Cowden: I do click on it. I try to be careful, and I try to look. I really appreciate those phishing messages and I go through my junk folder daily. A lot of times the phishing messages make it to the junk folder instead of where it should be coming from, which is the main area, but if I did not click on majority of the things that come through, I would not be listening to our constituents. Most of the constituent emails, if there is any link in it at all, it will be flagged and not recommend us to look at it. That is where important

communication happens, and a lot of communication happens from the Federal Government and different places, so I try to be careful, but it is not a breach of contract. It is a breach of security, right? Sometimes. I will forward emails to my personal email if I am a little worried, then I will open it in my own email, but that feels a little strange. If I did not open those emails, then I probably would not open half of what is sent to us, and most of them are valuable. Do you have a comment on what is the best choice?

Mr. Sherman: It is a fine line in determining what is junk and not. Sometimes, the programmatic process that is in place, the machine makes the decision on whether the email is junk when it truly was not. In those cases, we may miss a few things, but we feel that it is best to err on the side of caution. If someone was trying to communicate something of importance to us and they did not receive an answer within a timely period, they would reach out again. We do the best we can, but it is very challenging. We have tried to fine-tune the way that we filter through emails to ensure that the legitimate emails do go through. Sometimes, you are right.

Councilmember Cowden: I am speaking about the flag. It comes through on the input, but it is flagged to not open it. It is like a standard element, it comes through with some sort of flag and if that flag helps me think about, and I pay attention, but most times, I can not remember a time where it was not valuable and legitimate information.

Council Chair Rapozo: I will bring this back in because now, we are discussing internet security. Let us focus on the budget. I have a question about Barracuda Networks. Is that voice recognition software, speech-to-text tool? What is that?

Mr. Sherman: No, the Barracuda Network is a number of different subscription services, all of which are related to email.

Council Chair Rapozo: No, that is fine. Is it that the voice recognition software?

Mr. Sherman: No.

Councilmember Kualii: Chair Rapozo, is this where you will ask about upgrades to our system?

Council Chair Rapozo: We have had the discussion.

Councilmember Kualii: Is there money here to do it?

Council Chair Rapozo: It was in the CIP, but we will have that discussion. I have instructed our Clerk to start looking into redoing the systems because we have many problems with our system. I think we are long overdue, but we will work with IT on that. Are there any further questions on page 49, or are there any further questions for the IT Division in general? That is the last page. If not, thank you.

Mr. Sherman: Thank you.

Council Chair Rapozo: We are moving onto the Treasury Division.
Councilmember Kualii.

Councilmember Kualii: Position No. 283, Tax Collection Supervisor is newly vacant, just over a month. The test was scheduled for March 28th. Did that happen? Did the division select someone? Was someone hired? Is that person starting?

Ms. Lizama: Before starting, can I introduce our new treasurer?

NANCEE A. ROBLES, Treasurer: Hi, Nancee Robles, Treasurer for the County. Yes, that interview was conducted, and an offer was made to a candidate who is presently considering the position.

Councilmember Kualii: Should that person decline, will you be ready to go back to recruitment and find the next person?

Ms. Robles: Absolutely.

Councilmember Kualii: We need that person to start by July 1st to have that position be fully-funded. Thank you.

Council Chair Rapozo: Go ahead.

Councilmember Cowden: First, welcome and thank you. How long have you been working?

Ms. Robles: For about nine (9) months.

Councilmember Cowden: We have not had you here before. Am I able to ask anything?

Council Chair Rapozo: If it relates to page 51. We are in the positions. Did you have a question to ask?

Councilmember Cowden: It is sort of related to that. I wanted to know about her background.

Council Chair Rapozo: No, that is not a question for today. We are discussing the Budget.

Councilmember Cowden: Is there any time that we are able to talk to you folks?

Council Chair Rapozo: You can give her a call. You had a question on surety bonds and they stated that it would be a question for the Treasury Division.

Councilmember Cowden: The surety bonds are more insurance.

Ms. Robles: That is a different type of bond.

Councilmember Cowden: I know that our last Finance Director was good at buying and selling bonds for the County's money that is sitting in the back, so our cashflow was managed well. I think I read somewhere in the overview that we are getting good

interest. Are we still buying and selling bonds with our cash that is in the account with the surplus that comes with the payment plans?

Ms. Robles: All our bonds were issued and the revenue from those were used in the CIP. The funds that were invested is the cash revenue that we receive.

Councilmember Cowden: Are we still doing that?

Ms. Robles: Yes.

Council Chair Rapozo: Go ahead.

Councilmember Kualif'i: On the narrative, we negotiated rates with First Hawaiian Bank for new cash account, cash equivalent account earning three-point-five percent (3.5%) for idle cash. What is idle cash and how much of it do we have on average? The next question was related to reducing bank fees and a new contract with Tree Plus One, improving our liquating and cash flow. Is the money available right away the idle cash? What about the money in reserve? Do we put those away for a while to earn a lot more?

Ms. Robles: We have cash and invested cash. Our cash is cyclical. In February and August when property taxes are paid, we have a surplus of tax. I would say that it is idle, it is a surplus. That surplus, instead of having it sit in a checking account at the bank, we move it into an account that earns more money. We do not have all our funds in one bank. We have them in several banks throughout Kaua'i. They are local banks. Recently, we negotiated a new rate with one of the banks for some of the cash so that we did not have to keep moving it around so much.

Councilmember Kualif'i: Thank you. Thank you, Chair Rapozo.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any further questions for the Treasury Division? Councilmember DeCosta.

Councilmember DeCosta: I have a question on page 51, regarding overtime. The overtime budget is very low. Although year-to-date, it is at twelve thousand two hundred fifty dollars (\$12,250). Is the reason because the division does not encumber too much overtime?

Ms. Robles: Last year, we did because we were without a Treasurer for over eight (8) months and a staff member was out on medical leave. Our staff is very small. Also, cyclically, when we have the tax revenue coming in or the appeals for the taxes, because the treasury's role there is to issue the taxpayer a check if an appeal is granted, so there are certain times, two (2) months out of the year where the very small staff is issuing checks.

Councilmember DeCosta: I noticed that in some departments the pay scale is low. Do we use those funds to assist them with overtime? It seems that in your division, your employees are satisfied with their salary, so I do not see much overtime to incentivize them.

Ms. Robles: We do not use overtime as an incentive. We certainly use it as a necessity to get checks out to taxpayers more quickly.

Councilmember DeCosta: Thank you for those fiscally responsible salaries.

Councilmember Kualii: I also noticed that Position No. 284, Accountant Trainee is being moved to the Accounting Division. You have such a small staff. Are you able to give up that position? Is that person still helping you but from another place? How does that work?

Ms. Robles: We were able to give that staff member up and certainly a hands-on supervisor.

Councilmember Kualii: Thank you.

Councilmember DeCosta: I want to comment on that. Again, I am amazed that you folks did that because there are divisions that hoard employees to make their jobs easier, but this division gives them away and absorbs more work. Do we have a trophy for you? Thank you. Thank you for running that successfully, Michelle.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any further questions for the Treasury Division? If not, thank you. We will move on to the DMV.

Councilmember Kualii: The first vacant position is Position No. 236, DMV Service Representative II. It was vacant since last June for two hundred eighty-eight (288) days. It is showing a status of promotional. Does that mean that you plan to promote someone from within? Have you done that already? When will they start in the new position?

JEREMY K. LEE, Vehicle Registration & Licensing Manager: Council Chair Rapozo, Councilmembers, Jeremy Lee, for the record. We are trying to fill that position with a new hire, someone that we will be promoting from within.

Councilmember Kualii: Is that happening now? Is that ongoing? Will that person be in that new position by July 1st?

Mr. Lee: Yes.

Councilmember Kualii: The next position, below that is State-funded, but it is Position No. 278, Senior Clerk. It has been vacant since last September, no budget item. What is the fund that pays for that position?

Mr. Lee: Councilmember, we have three (3) different State grant funds that are helping out with differing services within the driver's license section and the motor vehicles section. I believe that position comes out of our State Identification (ID) fund.

Councilmember Kualii: If you do not fill that position, does that money sit there until you fill that position? Does it go back? How does that work?

Mr. Lee: It is a grant reimbursable situation. The money that we bring into the DMV lessens the expenses of the staff and operation gets compensated back to the State.

Councilmember Kualii: Thank you. The next position is Position No. 234, Senior Clerk, which has been vacant since last October for one hundred fifty-one (151) days. That status recruitment lists continuous. Where stage is the division in recruitment? Do you have a list? Have you been doing interview?

Ms. Lizama: We have had recent interviews. Correct, it is ongoing.

Mr. Lee: We have hired a number of people in the last month and month in a half. We have a couple more on cue to be interviewed, sir.

Ms. Lizama: For that specific position, we did an interview and made an offer, but the offer was declined so we are going back to that list.

Councilmember Kualii: Then, you are going back to the list and whoever that is, should be hired and on staff by July 1st.

Ms. Lizama: Hopefully.

Councilmember Kualii: What is "hopefully"? The next position is Position No. 626, DMV Service Representative I that is newly vacant, just a month and a half. Are you in recruitment, list referred, or selecting off the list? How does that work? Do you already have the potential candidates on a list and you pick from it?

Ms. Lizama: Correct. Were you speaking on Position No. 626?

Councilmember Kualii: Yes.

Ms. Lizama: Recommendation for higher pay pending background checks. We are in the process.

Councilmember Kualii: The next position, closer to the bottom of the page, is Position No. 157 and Position No. 158, Senior Clerk for the Kapa'a DMV. Let us do them together because they are the same. Both have been vacant since last July and the recruitment status for both is listed as continuous.

Mr. Lee: It is the same pool of applicants that we have been and will continue to interview. Hopefully, we will be filling those vacancies if they agree to the position.

Councilmember Kualii: Does that mean you are in the middle of interviewing now?

Council Chair Rapozo: Can I interrupt? Will that Kapa'a shop be operational by July 1st?

Mr. Lee: We have high hopes, and we are doing everything that we can to get that site operational. Staffing was one of the elements that was pending. We are in the midst of having a discussion with HGEA relating to our staffing plan that we crafted. There are several operational elements that we are continuing to work on, including the construction punch-list.

Council Chair Rapozo: The question is not so much about the people, but on the facility itself. What are the chances of it being operational by July? You really can not hire until you have a site for those employees to go.

Ms. Lizama: We can continue with the hiring process, get them in and train them at our main facility in Līhu'e. Then, when we are ready to roll out and open the Kapa'a DMV to the public, we will be ready to support that function.

Mr. Lee: If I could also add, Chair Rapozo. We are in the middle of doing the elements of construction coming to a close. Our IT Department has been working very closely with us to get all our equipment and hardware that we have precured in place. That way, after we get the punch-list, then it will just be down to the staffing plan. As Michelle mentioned, those positions will be staffed in Līhu'e as we build their capacity and in coordination with HGEA, we will come up with a staffing plan to take high capacity individuals to operate the Kapa'a location.

Councilmember Kualifi: The last position is Position No. 160, DMV Service Representative III. Will that position also be located at the Kapa'a DMV? The recruitment status is listed as promotional. Are you hiring from within? Is that happening now?

Mr. Lee: Yes, sir.

Councilmember Kualifi: Thank you.

Councilmember Cowden: Which of these positions conduct the driver's license tests? Are any of these positions responsible for driving license tests? Do they get in the cars and drive around?

Mr. Lee: If you are referring to our vacancies, no.

Councilmember Cowden: Are all those positions filled?

Mr. Lee: Yes.

Council Chair Rapozo: Councilmember DeCosta.

Councilmember DeCosta: Up until now, I am still not good with acronyms, but after dealing with you personally for the last three (3) years and knowing all of your employee's comments regarding your management, I think it stands for an excellent manager. I am very impressed with you and what you do out there, Jeremy. I am looking at these positions and you have sixteen (16) employees that earn under fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000). Only three (3) employees earn fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) and one employee earns sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000). You have the lowest-paid division, yet you have the comradery. Every time that I go in there and speak to the constituents, they are impressed. There is one area that I would like us to improve on, and that is with the backed-up phone calls. Besides that, you run a very tight ship.

Mr. Lee: Thank you.

Council Chair Rapozo: Councilmember Carvalho.

Councilmember Carvalho: I have a question on the Kapa'a operations. Overall, what is the total amount of employees?

Mr. Lee: There will be five (5) staff members.

Councilmember Carvalho: Will the five (5) employees posted here run the Kapa'a DMV?

Mr. Lee: That is correct. That is the whole bill of five (5) staff members.

Council Chair Rapozo: Councilmember Cowden.

Councilmember Cowden: I am looking at the regular overtime. I see that it was eight thousand two hundred dollars (\$8,200), then thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000), then seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) then three hundred forty-one thousand dollars (\$341,000). That is an increase. Is that because we have that many people that are working doubles since we do not have enough? Why would have that much overtime?

Mr. Lee: That is a part of our premium pay package for our staff members that are working over the amount of volume that we can get to in an eight-hour workday. That is a part of the HGEA agreement. They are foregoing their lunches and working throughout the course of the day, which triggers premium pay for the last three and a half (3½) hours of their workday.

Councilmember Cowden: I am happy to hear that because that is what my colleague mentioned, noticing that these tend to be lower-paid positions. That premium pay is helping to retain people by compensating them better than what is listed here.

Mr. Lee: They receive additional compensation for working through their lunch and forgo a lunch period to attempt to keep up with the volume of work that the DMV has.

Councilmember Cowden: Yes, but we have three hundred forty-one thousand dollars (\$341,000). That is a decent amount spread out amongst these folks.

Mr. Lee: Absolutely.

Councilmember Cowden: Will the Kapa'a DMV offer driver's license testing as well?

Mr. Lee: Could you clarify? Are you talking about road testing?

Councilmember Cowden: Yes.

Mr. Lee: No, we are going to centralize that service at the Lihu'e DMV.

Councilmember Cowden: Can they do the written test at the Kapa'a DMV?

Mr. Lee: No, written tests will be done in at the Līhu'e DMV. We are also working to have those tests done electronically, remotely. In the future, the public will be able to do the written permit exam, that will soon be done remotely, from someone's home.

Councilmember Cowden: How do we ensure that the person taking the exam does not cheat, or that the person does not have a dad, brother, or mom helping?

Mr. Lee: The system has a number of robust security features that will help to prevent fraud. Like any other system, it will not capture every single thing, but the statics of those that pass or fail are similar to our existing statistics.

Councilmember Cowden: Chair Rapozo, my next question is relative to staffing. Typically, how long does someone have to wait to get tested for their driver's license? I am wondering if we have enough people in the system. How far ahead are the public having to schedule it out for?

Mr. Lee: Can you clarify? Do you mean road test or the permit testing?

Councilmember Cowden: I am talking about the whole thing. Say if someone loses their driver's license and goes in for a replacement, or someone moves to Kaua'i from somewhere else, how long does it take?

Mr. Lee: From my understanding, to schedule an appointment at the DMV for a duplicate license, the appointment horizon is about eight (8) to ten (10) business days.

Councilmember Cowden: What if a person does not have a driver's license and wants to get one? How long is that horizon?

Mr. Lee: To get into the permit room, it is about eight (8) to ten (10) business days with an appointment. You could always go in as a walk-in customer every day. Once a minor receives a permit, you have a minimum waiting period of one hundred eighty (180) days plus the state-mandated requirement for drivers' education. Once you complete your permit, our horizon for a road-testing appointment is about two (2) months at this point.

Councilmember Cowden: Two (2) months. Let us assume that an adult wants to make an appointment. It would take that individual two (2) months to get a road test appointment.

Mr. Lee: That is correct.

Councilmember Cowden: Are we trying to hire more for that? That is a long time.

Mr. Lee: We have. We brought back a previous employee to fill a Road Test Examiner I position, which is doing our Type III licenses. There are two (2) full-time employees doing that. We also have our Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Examiner who does Type III road tests two (2) days a week. We also added a full-time clerk

to help deal with the front end call volume. We have a lot of people coming in, wanting to do a road test. There are a number of factors that have impacted that. One, there is no school bus service for portions of our island, which has added an additional burden to families wanting to get their children tested sooner. Two, we have added a number of driver's education providers. In the past, we have only had one (1) or two (2). Now, we have six (6) to eight (8). In addition to that, when I first came into the DMV, we began taking voicemails and emails where in the past, if you got us, you got us. Now we collect and retain all the information. That means that we have a large volume of people who are trying to get into the DMV services.

Councilmember Cowden: It sounds to me that we need another position. I am suggesting and asking that question.

Council Chair Rapozo: What was the question?

Councilmember Cowden: Well, the question is, it sounds like we are short a position. There is not an open position to hire. It seems to me that if people are waiting for two (2) months, we need to hire another person because those two (2) months is very significant.

Councilmember Kagawa: You can propose that.

Councilmember Kualif'i: Between now and then, you can work it out with them...

Councilmember Kagawa: We are asking questions right now.

Council Chair Rapozo: Yes. I think the question is, would bringing on additional staff shorten that two (2) month window, and if so, what staff would that require? It is not just a trainer or evaluator; it is the support staff that goes along with that. What would that be, and do you have the capacity space-wise and personnel-wise to make that happen?

Mr. Lee: That is a great question and I like to think that under Reiko and Michelle's leadership that we have done a great job at being fiscally conservative and mindful of the taxpayer's money that we spend. We always like to be data driven. As a result of what we are doing and the reason behind what we do, we know that we take anywhere between forty (40) to fifty (50) calls a day from customers requesting Type III road test service. With the two (2) full-time staff, it is an underwater situation and I know that we are alike, customers, you folks, Administration, and us being that we all want to best serve our customers the best that we can. We are doing everything that we can, including adding technology to the way that we do that service. One of the things that I have been asked to do is recraft one of our primary vendors that does our booking systems. In the near future, we are going to be working on them to allow for road test booking for all services to be done online, which will reduce some of the burden of that front end call volume. We would love the opportunity to have an additional examiner. It would be a Type III Examiner I position that we would need.

Council Chair Rapozo: Councilmember Kagawa.

Councilmember Kagawa: If we wanted to propose a position like Councilmember Cowden stated, you need to get the numbers from the department and then you need five (5) votes here. If you propose an add, you must propose a cut as well. If you add that position, how will you fund that money? Are you going to raise taxes in one category? That is homework. If you want to add, that is great, but you need to make sure that you have your cut as well.

Council Chair Rapozo: Being realistic, the ultimate way to do that is have the Administration come back with a supplemental because I do not want to add a position and your marching orders is to not fill. On positions, it is critical that we get the concurrence from the Administration so that it gets implemented. Otherwise, we are just putting money in the budget to a position that may never get filled. It really is not for you folks here. It is for Managing Director Reiko Matsuyama and the Mayor. We are willing to support that because I agree that two (2) months is a long time, especially with the school bus situation that you mentioned. I know that a lot of parents need their children to drive. Otherwise, they cannot make it to school. That is just a suggestion and hopefully, we can see it in the supplemental budget. Councilmember Kagawa.

Councilmember Kagawa: As an individual Councilmember you cannot say to add in a position because it does not necessarily mean that you have the support.

Councilmember Cowden: If I could just respond, I mean no disrespect. I was trying to ask a question to better understand because I did not see an empty position. As Chair of the Public Safety & Human Services Committee, I tend to focus on those people who are cascading out of stability. The difference between being able to get your license and go to work, especially if you are required to go to work or do community service or any of those things, and not being able to get your driver's license for three (3) months or four (4) months, those individuals are driving without a license...they are going to cascade into a very difficult space. I am not only looking at those in difficult circumstances, but there are a lot of things when I talk to folks and try to help them through what they are doing. They lost their driver's license for whatever reason and cannot solve it.

Council Chair Rapozo: Duplicates are quick. I went in for a duplicate for my mother. If you make an appointment, you get in quickly and you get the duplicate. The licenses have a longer wait.

Councilmember Cowden: That is the one that I am talking about.

Mr. Lee: There are many things that we do, partnering with social service organizations to help people in those situations and there are a number of materials out in our lobby and on our website. In addition, we verbalize it to the folks walking in to assist those in that situation.

Councilmember Cowden: Some people forget to renew their license. They do not look at the bottom and do not notice for four (4) or five (5) months. Then, they find out and they hit a reset point. It is not as if the person had done anything wrong other than not noticed. It is not as if the person had broken the law some other way. I am trying to make sure that we can think about that and fix it.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any more questions on positions?

Councilmember Kualii: I have a question on that page.

Council Chair Rapozo: Go ahead.

Councilmember Kualii: I might have missed something, relating to the regular overtime and the drastic increase to two hundred forty-one thousand dollars (\$241,000). Are you doing this in lieu of adding a new position, and is this premium pay or lunch period additional funds going to the series of positions that is primarily the DMV Service Representatives?

Mr. Lee: It is our front office that receives that premium pay if they opt-in. The agreement with HGEA is that it is an individual's opt-in to choose to work through the lunch break.

Councilmember Kualii: You did not have it last year. Now, you have to put money in the new budget and forecast the cost of doing it. I am wondering how you came up with that number. How many hours are you going to need and at what cost? Obviously, this is not to only cover their salary but all the benefits as well, right?

Mr. Lee: Yes. That is part of our budgetary process. We took a look at the amount of staff that we have that would be eligible to participate in the program for cashing out that premium pay throughout the course of the year as part of our budget submission, sir.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are they receiving it now?

Mr. Lee: They are.

Council Chair Rapozo: Then you have an idea, right? Similar to the Park Rangers, right?

Mr. Lee: Yes.

Councilmember Kualii: Had you said earlier that they are being paid from another line item right now, because this line item is jumping up from eight thousand two hundred dollars (\$8,200) to three hundred forty-one thousand dollars (\$341,000)...

Mr. Lee: Yes. They are currently in the pilot program, which began with our Division and HGEA, that fund was provided to us out of the existing Finance Department funds.

Councilmember Kualii: Now, it is new. You know that we need to fund it, and this is the amount.

Mr. Lee: In our budget, yes, sir.

Councilmember Kualii: The other thing is, if this premium pay benefit was a mechanism to attract and retain these particular employees on the front line, have you looked at, going back to the Department of Human Resources (HR), and I know that it is a civil service thing and probably statewide, but looked at the whole class and maybe moving

it all up? I am not sure if it is called a civil service reclassification? They are some of the most important staff on the front line and they are the lowest paid.

Mr. Lee: Yes, sir. We have been up and down, all over, looking for ways to be able to conceive of the work that they do in an accurate fashion versus the way their classified currently. This is what we came up to and within our authority to give them reasonable pay for the work that they provide.

Councilmember Kualii: Yes, and for long-term, you could go to HR.

Mr. Lee: Yes sir. I am going to keep it on my front burner.

Councilmember Kualii: Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any further questions on page 54, 55, 56, or 57? Perfect. Thank you.

Councilmember DeCosta: Chair and I had a question, and it surfaced with the derelict vehicles, maybe now would be an appropriate time to ask it. It relates to the Notice of Transfer, but individuals do not do their part and the next thing that you know, the vehicle becomes derelict. Then, you cannot pinpoint the owner of the vehicle, which makes it hard to tow the vehicle. Maybe we could set up a meeting.

Council Chair Rapozo: Yes, that is a legislative issue that we will deal with.

Councilmember DeCosta: Before you leave, I would like to say thank you. You are in a tough spot. You referenced the Administration. You stated that you wanted to be fiscally responsible for the funds that you receive from the Administration and our job is to advocate, not necessarily on the floor. We have meetings outside of these Wednesday meetings. That is what we do on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. I know that you came to me before and I saw Reiko for you folks before. We all discussed this, and I know that you did all your homework before you came in today. Thank you for that.

Council Chair Rapozo: RPT on page 59.

Councilmember Kualii: I have a question. The only vacant position shown is Position No. 161, Senior Clerk. It has been vacant since July. The Vacancy Report lists continuous, but where is the Division on recruitment? Have you done interviews, and is someone starting?

MIKE HUBBARD, County RPT Manager: For the record, Tax Manager, Mike Hubbard. We have this on continuous recruitment. We are trying to recruit for all aspects of this class and so far, we have been unsuccessful.

Councilmember Kualii: By trying to recruit, are you saying that you are posting it and no one is replying?

Mr. Hubbard: That is correct.

Councilmember Kualiti: Wow. Do you have any thoughts? Are you working with HR?

Mr. Hubbard: Yes, we are working with HR and that is the reason it is on continuous recruitment at the moment.

Councilmember Kualiti: It is on continuous recruitment with a hope. There is nothing happening other than you putting out the listing, with no response, and leaving it out to get no responses. I guess that we need to wait and see until the next submittal. Hopefully, something happens, but when you return in May...if this position has been vacant for two hundred fifty (250) days, how critical is this position? How are you getting the work done?

Mr. Hubbard: It is a critical role. It is an Abstractor position, which defines ownership and reviews documents from the Bureau of Conveyances. It is a specialized aspect of our department. It affects more than our department. Other agencies within the County need to know who the owner of a property is and so, it cascades to other departments.

Councilmember Kualiti: Do you think one of the reasons that you are not receiving any applicants is that the salary might be too low?

Mr. Hubbard: That is one of the aspects of it, and the minimum requirements to fill it.

Council Chair Rapozo: What are the minimum requirements?

Mr. Hubbard: The prospect needs to have a background of abstracting, ownership changes, legal documents and those types of reviews, and with it mixed with a low salary rate...

Council Chair Rapozo: Is that similar to an Escrow Agent or someone that works in an escrow office that is probably earning twenty-five dollars (\$25) or twenty-eight dollars (\$28) an hour. With this vacant position, we are offering nineteen dollars (\$19) an hour.

Mr. Hubbard: This is part of the challenge.

Council Chair Rapozo: Is there any way that we could reclassify this position? That is beyond the duties of a Senior Clerk.

Mr. Hubbard: There are different things that we could try.

Council Chair Rapozo: It seems that it would be rough without that critical position. It is hard for us to review all the departmental budgets with all different salaries and how much the staff is earning...when we look at these critical positions, like at the DMV and this one here, and see that it is only forty thousand dollars (\$40,000), it is hard. There should be an easier way to attract more qualified individuals.

JANINE RAPOZO, HR Manager: Good morning, Janine Rapozo, HR Manager. For clarification, the description that Mike gave was for an Abstractor or an Abstracting

Assistant. The Senior Clerk does not need to have abstracting minimum qualifications. They come in as a Clerk and the requirements for that position would be...

Council Chair Rapozo: Is there a classification for the Abstractor position.

Ms. Rapozo: Yes.

Council Chair Rapozo: Have we tried that?

Ms. Rapozo: Yes.

Council Chair Rapozo: Did it work? Did we receive applicants?

Ms. Rapozo: We had a few bites, here and there, but not a lot.

Council Chair Rapozo: Is the idea to downgrade, train, and hire up?

Ms. Rapozo: Yes.

Council Chair Rapozo: Got it. Thank you. Councilmember Cowden.

Councilmember Cowden: I have a follow-up to that. Can they skip lunch? Can we do that same situation? Can we provide those positions with premium pay? I know that we looked at it in other departments. What are calling it?

Councilmember Kualifi: It is called premium pay.

Councilmember Cowden: We just saw three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,00) premium pay for the DMV.

Mr. Hubbard: I would be willing to look at premium pay.

Councilmember Cowden: I think that we need to take care of our people and we need our people.

Ms. Rapozo: To clarify, the reason that we considered the no lunch break for the DMV is because of their face-to-face contact with the people. Even with the three quarters of the hour that they are not taking their lunch adds to leaving the DMV stay open for us to have that face-to-face. There was a nexus as to why we did that. I am not sure if the RPT Division would have as much as a nexus for that, but we need to look. If we start going beyond that, then we need to look at all our Clerks in all the different Divisions. I wanted to clarify the reasoning behind why the DMV was given that option.

Councilmember Cowden: Overall, it seems like the thread there, the tapestry of making our whole situation function well is threadbare. When we look at the RPT Assessors office, it is incredibly critical that we keep individuals in their homes and provide the funding for our money. We need to figure that out.

Council Chair Rapozo: Councilmember DeCosta.

Councilmember DeCosta: Mike, I have a question. Did we fill that Ag Assessment Position after Terry left?

Mr. Hubbard: We did. We converted it to an Evaluation Analyst III, and we were successful with HR's assistance.

Councilmember DeCosta: I know. Thank you for being crafty with that position, Janine. I noticed that we did not have it here as an Ag Assessor. I know that is a big thing for us with the new ag tax breaks. You need to be on it. Thank you for crafting that.

Councilmember Cowden: I have a follow-up on that.

Council Chair Rapozo: Go ahead.

Councilmember Cowden: Does the person that filled that position have any skills in agricultural assessment?

Mr. Hubbard: I do not think that the person has skills in agricultural assessing, but we are very fortunate that we were able to attract the good applicant that we did. I am excited. This is a shoutout to HR that they suggested. I wanted to hire quickly after we lost our previous employee and the wisdom which I originally fought for a second was to hire exactly what we lost, and HR suggested that our Division would be more successful hiring an analyst that can still do the work. HR was one hundred percent (100%) correct and we hired a staff member that I am excited about, and we could not be happier with HR's decision.

Councilmember Cowden: That is wonderful. When we see Property Technical Trainee II staff for that...we have room to train people to know these little areas of expertise and funding for that.

Mr. Hubbard: Yes, training in my Division is critical. It is very complex. It takes a lot of our current staff members to help grow each new employee that comes in through the door, no matter what position they are at to be familiar and how to move through the organization and programs.

Councilmember Cowden: The training number is not too modest. It is not dollar-funded. It is thirty-six thousand dollars (\$36,000). Does that feel adequate?

Mr. Hubbard: I think that is reasonable given the nature of what we are doing and need to accomplish. I am content with that.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any further questions on page 60?

Councilmember Kualii: Item IT Arrangements, what is new there? What accounts for the eighty-four percent (84%) increase of three hundred nineteen thousand dollars (\$319,000)?

Mr. Hubbard: The two (2) main new ones are Pictometry – EagleView and Esri Canada.

Councilmember Kualii: Are those the two (2) at the bottom?

Mr. Hubbard: That is correct.

Councilmember Kualii: What is the Esri Canada?

Mr. Hubbard: Esri Canada 3D modeling allows us to use technology instead of physically going out into the field. These both do similar things, differently. It is a way to maintain equity and fairness. The 3D will allow us to have data analysis for view coding and mainly our condominium projects. We cannot go to the fourth floor of a condominium. It is hard to look at and compare the fourth-floor view to the first floor. This allows us to have some correct georeferenced data that we can use, analyze, and to embed in our coefficient for our evaluation and also allows us to check if our coding is correct. That is the 3D analysis, Esri Canada and Sketch Detect. That is a way for us to verify our current sketches in our system and overlay that onto the actual property to check if there are any differences and if we should go out and require an inspection or if we forgot to pick up an additional over the years or if there is an additional that happened without permits.

Councilmember Kualii: Thank you.

Council Chair Rapozo: Councilmember Cowden.

Councilmember Cowden: On the CAMA software, two hundred thirty-six thousand dollars (\$236,000), is that Tyler Technologies?

Mr. Hubbard: That is correct.

Councilmember Cowden: We have discussed a number of times about whether we need another module or two (2). Would another module or two (2) go in this General Fund in our basic budget or CIP? We were discussed that our software is inadequate to address some of the nuances and that it would take new modules of the software.

Mr. Hubbard: We might be able to handle that through a modification and through an alternative procurement. That would be an add along to the Tyler Technologies subscription of two hundred thirty-six thousand dollars (\$236,000).

Councilmember Cowden: Is anything under SBITA simply a subscription, and not a purchase? It is not a growth. Are we planning to have any growth in our Tyler Technologies software? This is what we discussed rather fervently four (4) or six (6) months ago when we were looking at the limitations that it was in. Are we looking to make new modules?

Mr. Hubbard: I think we have done, and I think we will continue based on the Council's desires for change.

Councilmember Cowden: Are we getting them, or did we already receive them?

Mr. Hubbard: To clarify, one of the recent ones was the tier modification. I think that we budgeted around one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000)

for that. For the most part, that has been inputted into the data and that is why we are at certification, and we are talking about the budget. That module which we procured about one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000), yes, we spent it. We did an Ag Dedication change a year and a half ago. We changed the way that we valued that. We had maybe two (2) other modifications.

Councilmember Cowden: When we talked about if there was more than one (1) parentage cap. We can only do a three percent (3%) assessment cap. You cannot do a three percent (3%) and then a six percent (6%) for a long-term rental or something else. You stated that we did not have the technology to offer caps, even twenty percent (20%). You stated that we could not do it because the technology was not there. We were rather spirited of needing to have that piece. Did we break through that limitation?

Mr. Hubbard: We did not spend money on a twenty percent (20%) cap or continue that conversation when it quieted down.

Councilmember Cowden: It quieted down because we failed, not because we did not want it. We failed because we could not do it with the software. We were told that we would lose employees if we did that. I am interested in the cost to possibly start that and if it is possible.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any other questions?

Councilmember DeCosta: Could you clarify the Other Services for one hundred eighty thousand dollars (\$180,000)? It looks like the original budget was one dollar (\$1).

Mr. Hubbard: Could you clarify the page that you are on?

Councilmember DeCosta: Expenditure. You folks have an expenditure of one hundred eighty thousand dollars (\$180,000). Are you asking for one dollar (\$1) again, but you folks spent one hundred eighty thousand dollars (\$180,000). What does that mean? I am looking at the bottom of page 60 in budget preparation. There are Dues and Subscriptions written below it.

Ms. Sakai: That item was most likely reclassified into IT Subscriptions based on GASB 96 to move it out of Other Services and into where it should be classified.

Councilmember DeCosta: Thank you Chelsie.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any further questions on page 60, 61, or page 62? Thank you. We will move on to RPT Collections.

Councilmember Kualii'i: The only vacant position is Position No. 233, Account Clerk, vacant since October. The recruitment status list that it closed on March 22, 2024. Did you receive any applicants? Are you interviewing?

Mr. Hubbard: I believe that we are waiting for a test, testing that should be happening this month.

Councilmember Kualifi: Is that the first part of the recruitment process? Do you know when it closed? How many applicants you have, or how many people will be taking the test? Hopefully, at least one (1).

Mr. Hubbard: Hopefully, at least one (1).

Councilmember Kualifi: Then, you can go from there. If you do not receive any applicants from this round, then you have time to go back, try another round and get that person onboard by July 1st?

Council Chair Rapozo, the Presiding Officer, relinquished Chairmanship to Councilmember Kualifi.

(Council Chair Rapozo was noted as not present.)

Mr. Hubbard: Absolutely. That is correct.

Councilmember Kualifi: Members, are there any further questions on page 64? Councilmember Kagawa, followed by Councilmember Cowden.

Councilmember Kagawa: Are the tax collections just the RPT collections?

Mr. Hubbard: Correct.

Councilmember Kagawa: Do they have one (1) window, but it is in the office side.

Mr. Hubbard: Yes, it is the first window on the left when you enter the DMV building. We also collect the trash, we call it the RRCA, and from the Kukui'ula Community Facilities Districts (CFD).

Councilmember Kagawa: Is all the motor vehicle registration televised?

Mr. Hubbard: Yes.

(Council Chair Rapozo was noted as present.)

Councilmember Kualifi returned Chairmanship to Council Chair Rapozo.

Councilmember Cowden: When I look at the payments for that, to me, it looks like another area where we could create some sort of premium pay? That possibly can not be a pleasant job. They are hearing more from those that are unhappy than those that are happy. I know that there are a lot of people who are unhappy. That is why I say that they are the "complaint department" in the finance area. That is where people will come to give the biggest "beef." I know that you are not collective bargaining, but those also seem like underpaid positions, and they are front facing like Janine stated.

(Councilmember Bulosan was noted as not present.)

Mr. Hubbard: These are front-facing.

Councilmember Cowden: What about their lunch? What can we do for them?

Ms. Lizama: As Janine stated, she would have to look at it overall. Definitely, we would support the premium pay.

Councilmember Cowden: I am just highlighting it for this page also. I know that we went through that, but this is a tough job.

Mr. Hubbard: It is a tough job and I wanted to comment on something that you stated. It could be the "complaint department," but shoutout to my staff because they always attempt to provide solutions and tell them to come across the street to apply for exemptions or anything that they think they could do to possibly help them. They take the complaint in with the idea of how they could help that taxpayer. The staff that we have at collections is fantastic at that.

Councilmember Cowden: Gratitude to them, if they are watching. Hopefully, the training is there because we adjust to different things. It is not easy. I want to acknowledge the difficulty of being on that front line.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any further questions for RPT Collections?

Councilmember Cowden: Yes, on page 65. I see a nonjudicial foreclosure sale for fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000). What does that mean? Is that the paperwork for it? Typically, how many nonjudicial foreclosure sales does the County do in a year?

Mr. Hubbard: Typically, we do one (1) in a year. I do not think it is one (1) property. It is one (1) auction.

Councilmember Cowden: Typically, how many properties?

Mr. Hubbard: That is one of the best things about our collection's efforts, the threat of foreclosure, as bad as that sounds, is a good collections tool. We may have started out with about thirty (30) properties, and we are down to six (6) properties for this year.

Councilmember Cowden: Putting a foreclosure sale, you need to have a person who goes...is this something that we contract out or is this in-house? If so, what does that fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) pay for?

Mr. Hubbard: Most of those fifty-two thousand dollars (\$52,000) is for the limited title search fee.

Councilmember Cowden: Would it be per property? Say that we had a bad year and suddenly, there were one hundred (100) people who could not pay their taxes, then that count would go up. But this is what we were anticipating for this year.

Mr. Hubbard: Considering that we went through COVID and that we have six (6) this year is a good sign. Three (3) of the parcels would most likely be the ones that they foreclosed upon. It is an association-owned property in a vacant land

subdivision. It is not really taking away someone's house. There are certain limitations to when we can foreclose on someone's property through Chapter 5A of the ordinance, so it is not if they had a dire exasperated excuse. It is a continuation, and we could enter into payment plans and agreements. We are not the "cutthroat department" that tries to take properties away.

(Councilmember Bulosan was noted as present.)

Councilmember Cowden: Are property taxes first position and mortgage being second?

Mr. Hubbard: You could look at it that way. We are always a priority position.

Councilmember Cowden: If the lender forecloses, do we still get paid ahead of them?

Mr. Hubbard: Correct.

Council Chair Rapozo: Councilmember DeCosta.

Councilmember DeCosta: Usually the lender has a property tax in the mortgage unless you own the house outright. Then, you do not need insurance and can pay your property tax on your own, but if you have a mortgage, then the property tax is not separated. It is in the mortgage. When the mortgage is paid, the mortgage pays the property tax.

Mr. Hubbard: I think there are options.

Councilmember DeCosta: There is no separation. I am telling you. That is how it is done.

Council Chair Rapozo: It depends on the lender. Some lenders give you that option, but I think the majority of mortgages today include tax and insurance, but the lenders make that decision. One more thing, the Cost Control Commission came and reported that one of their findings was better communication between the County and the taxpayers. I know that I brought up certified mail in the past and the cost of that caught the attention of the Managing Director. The Cost Control Commission identified that as well. It is not just me. I think it is a reality. Going forward, while we are changing classes, is that something that we could consider when you folks go back and think about it and see if there is an opportunity to set aside funds for certified mail notifications of classes that will be impacted? I am not asking for a commitment, just suggesting that you could take a look.

Mr. Hubbard: Sure. I would like to sit down and share with you the services that we are already paying for that are able to show the date that the letter was placed into a mailbox. It is a powerful tool.

Council Chair Rapozo: There is a difference between the mailman putting a letter in the mailbox, which some of us toss quickly thinking that it is junk mail, and a document that requires a signature. That is the whole difference. Councilmember DeCosta.

Councilmember DeCosta: Thank you for saying that, Chair. I know that we had this conversation on one of those days that we meet, other than Wednesdays. What about a random text? It is a simple IT tool. You can respond that you received the message or stop the reminders if you do not want reminders. It is an easy way for you folks to know and it is inexpensive—pennies on a dollar. We will talk about it on another day.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any further questions on RPT Collections? Councilmember Kagawa.

Councilmember Kagawa: What are the two (2) important dates, February 20th and sometime in August?

Mr. Hubbard: Our bills come out from Collections. They get dropped in the mail on January 20th, which is the second half and July 20th, which is our first half.

Councilmember Kagawa: When should the payments be made by?

Mr. Hubbard: August 20th and February 20th.

Councilmember Kagawa: Are there people out paying at those two (2) windows?

Mr. Hubbard: No, the bulk of our payments...correct. As Treasurer Nancee stated, we receive most of our funds around that time for Property Taxes.

Councilmember Kagawa: Do most of the payments come in through the mail?

Mr. Hubbard: A lot of it comes through the mail and a lot comes through agency accounts, like Councilmember DeCosta mentioned. When we do not receive the payments, we will do interim bills, so we mail out notices a few months later stating that a payment was not received, and interest penalties will begin. That usually happens in October, and I think this month or last month.

Councilmember Kagawa: Does your staff start to mail out notices right after the due date?

Mr. Hubbard: We send those individuals another notice in the mail.

Councilmember Kagawa: Is there a grace period with no penalty?

Mr. Hubbard: The ordinance has some limitations to that. That is a Chapter 5A thing.

Councilmember Cowden: I have a follow-up to that. As my colleague mentioned, many mortgages have RPT and insurance rolled in. We certainly know that not all of them, more so older mortgages. When people have an escrow account associated with their mortgage that has a RPT, how are we making sure that those owners get a copy of the bill? I think that is part of what the Cost Control Commission...especially new, first-time

buyers that receive the escrow page from your mortgage company once a year. It is terrifying if your payments go up six hundred dollars (\$600,000) a month, and that might be insurance. I am really worried about this coming up. How are we letting people know where it is rolled in? Do both the homeowner and the mortgage company get the RPT bill?

Mr. Hubbard: No, if the lender has confirmed that they will pay the RPT for a borrower, they will get the notice of the bill.

Councilmember Cowden: How can we make sure that the borrower gets a copy of the bill, because they will only receive that a month or two (2) before their payments go up.

Mr. Hubbard: It is always online and on our website. After we do a tax calculation, the bill will be posted to our website as an amount that represents the assessment.

Councilmember Cowden: That is good. I am going to accept that if the Chair and everyone is going to accept that, but I just want to say my experience at working with people, most people do not understand that subtly. It is certainly not taught in college, never taught in high school, and often not told by their realtor. People do not understand that. That is where we have these problems.

Council Chair Rapozo: Councilmember DeCosta.

Councilmember DeCosta: I wanted to follow up on your idea of certified mail.

Councilmember Kagawa: I also did not understand that, just for the record.

Councilmember Cowden: Did you understand what I said?

Mr. Hubbard: I understood the concept.

Councilmember Cowden: The people do not know.

Mr. Hubbard: We have a place on our website that helps the public calculate tax bills. We will have to modify it this year. If they call our office, we can definitely explain these things.

Ms. Lizama: We also have a service that taxpayers can opt-in, even though they have a mortgage company paying for their RPT and no bills are being sent to them, they can subscribe to a tax bill online.

Councilmember Cowden: I like that, some way to opt-in, so as to encourage the banks or the lender to tell people to look for that. That would be helpful.

Councilmember DeCosta: While I went to a National Association of Counties (NACo) Legislative Conference on the mainland, I saw a large rectangle light sign reminding the public of the due date for RPT. Similar to what we do during high school graduation with the reminder to "Do not drink and drive." I saw that at a common building, and they gave you notices. Similar to how the County shines lights on the building. Why can we not have a light bar that also states the due date for RPT? Food for thought.

Council Chair Rapozo: My concern is not the deadline date to pay. It is the people who are impacted by policy changes. By the time they realize that they were impacted, they are outside of the appeal window, and they are stuck. That is my concern.

Councilmember DeCosta: It could also state the appeal window date.

Council Chair Rapozo: You would need a huge light bar. It is all going back to the same concept that we are communicating well with the taxpayers. I think we need to explore whatever way works. Alright. Are there any further questions for RPT Collections? If not, we will move on to the Purchasing Division. Thank you, Mike.

Councilmember Kualii'i: No vacancies are shown for Purchasing Division. Can you confirm that there are no vacancies, no vacancies are expected, and no upcoming retirements?

ERNEST W. BARREIRA, Assistant Chief Procurement Officer: Good morning, Ernie Barreira, Purchasing Chief. Yes, we have not had a vacancy for some time, so we do not expect any within the next two (2) years.

Council Chair Rapozo: It is a happy place to work.

Councilmember Kualii'i: Thank you, Chair.

Council Chair Rapozo: It is a flat budget. Members, are there any questions?

Councilmember Cowden: I have a question. I was fortunate enough to have a tour with the Building Department and saw that the Building Division is in the Purchasing area right now, which means that the Purchasing Division is somewhere else. They are working remotely from home. How many staff members are in the Purchasing Division? It looks like there are about eight (8).

Mr. Barreira: Yes, there are eight (8) of us.

Councilmember Cowden: Do all eight (8) employees work from home?

Mr. Barreira: Yes.

Councilmember Cowden: Are all eight (8) employees happy?

Mr. Barreira: Very happy. We have about three-quarters of the staff working four (4) ten-hour shifts and two (2) work five (5) eight-hour shifts, but all five (5) days of the week are covered.

Councilmember Cowden: Happy staff members working at home...Is there some sort of adaption that is applied for those working out of their homes when they have to have a home office?

Mr. Barreira: It is not a formal adaptation, but each division employee has created quite elaborate office settings within their home, whether it is a family room or upstairs living space. We have all the resources. Thank goodness for our very

competent IT Division. We have all the resources that we need, multiple screens, laptops, computers, and communication devices that allow us to retain very easy accessibility...ninety-nine point nine percent (99.9%) of our customers are County employees, so the ability to reach is very easy because of all the technical resources that are in place.

Councilmember Cowden: Did the County pay for all those screens, tables, and desks and assist with setup?

Mr. Barreira: No, some of the existing equipment was taken to remote locations. For example, the desks...we tried to promote good health. We provided desks that could be raised, so folks do not have to sit all day. They can raise the desk; they can stand and walk while they work. There were some acquisitions, but they were not significant.

Councilmember Cowden: Okay, so we have been lucky. Everyone that is working happily from home has adequate space to do their work. I am looking at...if we start to place departments in homes...thank you procurements and the Purchasing Division for yielding your work office to help others. Thank you. I want us to be cautious and aware that if we do start permanently moving business space into staff members personal space...I do not know if we compensate those employees in any way for that or if the County pays a portion of their electricity bill.

Council Chair Rapozo: Hold on.

Councilmember Cowden: Am I going too far off topic? You folks never seem to like my questions. I let you folks speak all that you want. It is a little frustrating.

Council Chair Rapozo: Excuse me.

Councilmember Kagawa: You have spoken about ninety-nine percent (99%) of the time.

Council Chair Rapozo: You have been sharing your position on everything and I am letting it go because we have time, but teleworking as an option is an option. The Purchasing Division is not mandating anyone to work from home. I think providing the resources is fine.

Councilmember Cowden: I was curious.

Council Chair Rapozo: I can tighten this up to allow questions. I have allowed you, Councilmember Cowden, to share your position on bonds and everything else and I am not having an issue with it because this is our only chance.

Councilmember Cowden: Yes, that is right. That is my understanding, too, that this is our only chance to really ensure that we not only look at the dollars, but do they have the dollars to function accurately. I liked his answers, that they have the right equipment, and they are doing the right thing. I did not know that they were at home with a laptop, so that is why I asked. It was a legitimate question.

Council Chair Rapozo: Members, are there any further questions for the Purchasing Division? If not, thank you. Members, are there any further questions for the

Department of Finance? Aside from the Kaua'i Humane Society, that wraps up the Department of Finance. We will call them up after the caption break because we need to take a caption break soon.

Councilmember DeCosta: I have a question for Michelle. Michelle, you have access to Reiko, right? She is an intricate part; she has been in her position for a long time, and I want to make sure that you are supported.

Ms. Lizama: I do have access to her, and she has been a huge support.

Councilmember DeCosta: Perfect. Tell those folks in the Purchasing Division that the money that they save on gas, they can use to pay for their electricity.

Council Chair Rapozo: With that, we will take a ten-minute caption break. We will be back at 11:05 a.m.

There being no objections, the meeting recessed at 10:50 a.m., for a caption break.

The Committee reconvened at 11:05 a.m., and proceeded as follows:

Kaua'i Humane Society

(Councilmember Kagawa was noted as not present.)

Council Chair Rapozo: Welcome back. The Kaua'i Humane Society is next. Do you want to go over your overview, then we will open it up for questions?

There being no objections, the rules were suspended.

NICOLE SCHAEFER CRANE, Executive Director, Kaua'i Humane Society: Good morning, Chair and Councilmembers. Thank you so much for giving us the opportunity to present our budget request for FY 2025. My name is Nicole Schaefer Crane. I am the Executive Director of the Kaua'i Humane Society and I am joined by board members Jill Lowry and Andrew Goode. This is what we estimate for our FY 2025 revenue. As you can see, the County makes up about thirty percent (30%) of our budget. Outside of that, we have our retail revenue, BloomingTails Thrift Shop, as well as some of the retail we sell within our shelter. Then we have our veterinary services. These are our clinics, spay and neuter, vaccine, and our community care center. Our program revenue is fieldtrips, direct release to help secure the island from having rabies, and of course, our largest portion is donations and grants.

The Animals We Serve. We have slight variations, year-to-year, in the amount of animals that come in to the shelter looking for help and care. One of our larger variations is our neonates. These are kittens under eight (8) weeks of age, which I will go into in the next slide.

To review last year, we had about one thousand two hundred (1,200) adoptions, six hundred twenty-eight (628) transfers, which is taking animals from Kaua'i and transferring them to a no-kill rescue partner, typically in the continental United States (U.S.) and primarily on the West Coast, and three hundred eighty-three (383) redemptions, which are

lost pets who we were able to reunite with their family. Our Humane Officers resolved two hundred seventy-three (273) cases and investigated sixty-two (62) livestock cases. For livestock, we go out for cruelty and neglect complaints, determine if they warrant that citation, and if they do, we reference that back to the KPD, and act as a witness and provide any testimony we can to help them in their investigation. We took in about one thousand two hundred (1,200) dogs and one thousand five hundred (1,500) cats into our shelter. When we do this, each animal receives our base care. They are vaccinated, dewormed—because we have a lot of hookworms on the island, and they are given a flea and tick preventative, a health examination, and a heartworm prevention and test. For cats, we do a Wood's lamp test to determine if they have ringworm, which is a fungus that is also quite prevalent on the island. In two (2) weeks, they receive another vaccine. This is standardized healthcare and baseline. It also is a practice of herd health. It ensures that all of our animals that come into the shelter stay healthy in the shelter. The eight hundred thirty-nine (839) neonates are kittens under eight (8) weeks of age who are very vulnerable and require a lot more resources and care. They require special housing, because they cannot quite thermoregulate their body and need heating, formula, specialized nipples for care, and intensified feeding schedules, which can be every two (2) to three (3) hours, among other special care. Another aspect of their care is vaccination. At four (4) weeks, they are vaccinated and then every two (2) weeks, they are vaccinated for up to five (5) months in order to be able to survive. Since there is so much disease that can run in a highly-populated shelter, they require much more protection, because they come in without the antibodies because most of them are motherless and do not get the things in the cortisol (inaudible) healthy. With the Wood's lamp examination, where we are testing for ringworm, we had two hundred one (201) ringworm patients, and that requires almost one thousand four hundred (1,400) lime-dips. This is a sulfur bath that we have to give to cats. If you ever walk in to the shelter and wonder why it smells like eggs or sulfur, it is because we are bathing cats. It is not an easy task by any means, but it is a necessary one and the best option for helping them get over the fungus. Their care can also take up to three (3) months. A lot of times, these are kittens who come in to us, so they grow up in the shelter and are receiving care for that long. We had one hundred twenty (120) animals who received antibiotics due to diseases and injuries that they came in to the shelter with, and eight hundred seventy-five (875) animals who received skin and parasite care, like mange.

Spaying and neutering is a very important aspect of our mission. Last fiscal year, we presented our goals to you in a similar presentation that emphasized we were focusing on medical operations, and we succeeded. We did more than three thousand (3,000) spays and neuters as well as our Community Care Center clinic. The County does not fund spay and neuter efforts. We do that on our own, but it is tied to enforcement. In our local ordinances and our contract, it says that we will spay and neuter all the animals that come in to the shelter before we release them, that any impounded cat shall be spayed and neutered, that in lieu of paying redemption fees, owners can spay and neuter, and that dangerous dogs need to be spayed and neutered as well. We assist owners with this aspect or have to offer it for free in order to keep families reunited.

Controlling Kaua'i's Cat Population. We do not work with feral cats, but I know that is a big concern for the island of Kaua'i, and I am very confident in saying spaying and neutering is the most efficient and effective management of cats on the island. Last year, we terminated three hundred thirty-eight (338) cats through spaying and we were able to do it for less than four thousand dollars (\$4,000). Through spaying and neutering, we also theoretically removed almost five thousand (5,000) cats through spaying, and that is on the low end of estimates. We also ensure that the nine hundred eighty-one (981) cats that we

adopted did not further add to the cat population on the island. We can do this all for fifty dollars (\$50) per cat. In comparison, for predator control that takes place, the County spends five hundred sixty-seven dollars (\$567) per cat for twenty-four (24) hours of potential care or control and it typically ends in their termination, whereas on the other end, the County is providing two hundred ninety-four dollars (\$294) to provide care for a cat for thirty (30) days.

To further go into some of our self-funded programs, we offer emergency, so we work closely with domestic violence victims, those that are displaced due to fire and other emergencies; our Community Care Center is helping pet owners on the island ensure that their animals are receiving low-cost care; our Pet Food Pantry has been growing every year, exponentially. Last year, we fed five hundred (500) families with eight hundred (800) dogs and six hundred (600) cats. Finally, we have our Foster Program which is caring not only for those neonatal kittens, but also other dogs and cats that need care outside of the shelter. On top of this, we purchased a facilities truck, a transfer/clinic van to take our clinic mobile, cat cages for ringworm, a ringworm container, and we upgraded our incinerator. Although these programs are self-funded, they assist with County programs like licensing. In order for you to participate in our boarding, care center, or pet food pantry, your animals does need to be licensed per County ordinance, which has been increasing that aspect of our County contract.

In regard to our budget, there is an increase in expenses. While sitting here this morning, I heard that salaries and payroll are a big talking point. Everyone knows that we have a very hard time remaining fully staffed at the shelter. We have been increasing our payroll and labor rates over each year. Right now, our base is sixteen dollars and fifty cents (\$16.50). We are doing that to try to stay competitive, but as you all know and have discussed, it is very hard on us. That is something that we continue to look at, but we also only have so much money and have to make sure we are able to do everything we can accomplish as well.

As well as expenses, of course, are materials. I wanted to focus on our vaccines, because as I said, this is our base item. Every animal receives a vaccine, and our vaccine rates have been going up every year and continue to go up. Last year, we spent almost nine thousand dollars (\$9,000) on dogs and six thousand dollars (\$6,000) on cats just for vaccines. When we think about that neonatal population that has been fluctuating and was quite large last year, once again, those are kittens who receive a vaccine every two (2) weeks for five (5) months of their life, so it is a continuous cost.

Looking at our FY 2025, we need to look back. For FY 2024 we learned that we have a large number of animals coming in and they are coming in needing veterinary care. I do not know if this is an actual increase in disease and issues on the island or if it is just because we are offering more, we are seeing more of it. We increased our percentage that the County contributes to our veterinary technicians by ten percent (10%), because of the quantity of animals who were coming in with medical needs. We increased our Veterinarian (vet) by thirty-five percent (35%), because we would not be able to do any of this without a vet, administer vaccines or purchase vaccines, as well as their license to allow us to have controlled substances and perform surgeries. On the other side, we decreased our Director of Medical Operations and part-time vet by seven percent (7%). Another item we looked at was our vehicles that the County purchased that we use for enforcement. There is a large amount of wear and tear. Our vehicles are not designed for enforcement, so we are looking at purchasing one that is designed for that.

Reviewing going into FY 2025, we were able to reorganize our organizational chart of staff. With this, we removed our Director of Client Relations. Salary, benefits, and all taxes were about one hundred twelve thousand dollars (\$112,000) for a job that no longer exists in our organizational chart and that the County was contributing ten percent (10%) to. We also increased our part-time employees, who were full-time employees. This allows us to be more efficient as well as being what our community applicants were requesting and looking for when they asked to be staffed. We also decreased our labor percentages for animal care technicians and our Director of Medical Operations. The reorganization saved money. On top of that, we were able to self-insure, saving almost seventy thousand dollars (\$70,000), change our liability insurance, which was eleven thousand dollars (\$11,000), offer better health insurance, which actually ended up saving us seventeen thousand dollars (\$17,000), as well as make some changes to our administrative fees. With all these changes and increase in wages, it would have been about a ten percent (10%) to twenty percent (20%) increase in the budget, but because we were able to offset some of our costs and reorganize, it only turned out to be about a six percent (6%) increase in our budget.

As far as the humane officer trucks is concerned, we have two (2) trucks that the County purchased. They are 2018 Chevrolet Silverado pickup trucks. It is the same thing that you can get off the lot. They have one hundred thousand (100,000) miles on them, if not more at this point, and they have a camper that we use as an enclosure that we use to transport animals. Since they are not designed to transport animals, we have to use plastic crates. These crates are not secure. If you have a dog that wants to get out of one, they will. They can bust through or chew through the crates. There also is no cooling mechanism or flow. That means if we go out on a call for an animal and pick one up, we have to come straight back to the shelter for the welfare of the animal. Whereas, if we purchase a truck that is designed to transport animals—dogs and cats—it increases our efficiency. We can pick up multiple animals, which means we can take multiple cases. Instead of driving all the way to Kīlauea or Anahola and having to come all the way back, we can make stops in Kapa‘a or Līhu‘e before returning to the shelter. It increases the safety to the animal. If a dog is busting through a plastic crate, it can injure the animal trying to do so. With an increase of dangerous dog cases that we are seeing not only on Kaua‘i, but across Hawai‘i, this protects our officers. It is a double door system. You can open the door, see the animal you are trying to remove, slip a catch pole into it, and then open the door, so there is a heightened increase of security for our officers. It increases our efficiency while decreasing fuel costs, and increases safety.

To review, we have a five-year contract. We are in year four (4), and it maxes at five million five hundred thousand dollars (\$5,500,000) over the five (5) years. We also have a unique aspect to our contract that has the reconciliation portion of it. That means anything that the County provides for salary that we do not use...so if we are not staffed, that gets returned, any training money that is left over from not sending staff for training is returned, and then the licensing revenue. There is a “true-up” that happens at the end of every year. Lately, we have been averaging a sixty-five-thousand-dollar (\$65,000) per year reconciliation. Even though we are asking for one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) for that humane officer truck this year, that is incorporated into this, that still puts us underbudget at the end of the fifth (5th) year. With this, our County contract is very specific on what we are allowed to do and not to do, because it is a contract, we are a nonprofit organization, and we also have reporting. I know that came up at the start. We report on a quarterly basis with our finances, what we performed for customer service, medical, animals, and enforcement. If the County would like review how we report and send that off, we are happy to do so starting the next fiscal year.

All in all, we are asking for just over one million two hundred thousand dollars (\$1,200,000) for FY 2025, and this includes the one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) for the truck cost, which is listed under Enforcement and Investigation. Besides that, it is pretty much on par with what we have asked for in the past years.

Council Chair Rapozo: Councilmember DeCosta.

Councilmember DeCosta: I have two (2) overview questions. Thank you so much for all that you folks do. This is a much-needed thing to have on Kaua'i and you do a really good job at managing it. You have helped me and all of the hunting community.

Ms. Schaefer Crane: Thank you.

Councilmember DeCosta: I think I told you that I wanted to see this implemented. Do you know how we get licenses and microchip (chip) ID? You have certain days that you accommodate certain groups. I am not sure if it was during your time or before your time, but if someone had more than x amount of animals, you folks would send the officer to the house to do the chip and license, and they would pay a lumpsum fee. Is that still available? Sometimes, a hunter has, let us say, ten (10) hunting dogs and does not have the ability to take all the dogs in that day in their kennel. Would you folks do a house visit? Is it possible, if you come up with a price for that visit that covers the gas and time? That is something I have been hearing from the hunting community. Sometimes, it is a little difficult to get the puppies, the mother dog, and the hunting dogs in at the same time. Would you folks do that? That is my first question.

Ms. Schaefer Crane: I completely understand that challenge and hurdle, because we see it not only from those who have multiple animals, but also from those who have transportation hurdles. We have not quite been able to do house calls and it is hard for us to send individuals just because, legally, only a veterinarian is allowed to administer or must be present for administering a microchip. Since we only have one (1), it is hard to pull them away from the shelter to do that. We have been trying to do mobile clinics quarterly across the island. We have been in Anahola, the Salvation Army sites, Hanapēpē, and have also gone out to Waimea. We are not quite able to do house calls, but we are trying to bring ourselves to more accessible points in the community.

Councilmember DeCosta: The ID tool that you claim you use...is there a possibility that the one people get online from Jeffers or some other livestock company a match to your folks' one? Can you scan the ID or is it a totally different scanner they put in that outpatient tool that can be bought online?

Ms. Schaefer Crane: We use Michelson Found Animal microchips, but we use universal scanners. When we scan, we should be able to pick it up. We can pick up a AVID chip, a HomeAgain chip, and a variety of others. Our scanner is universal whether you have our microchip or not.

Councilmember DeCosta: I have a two-part question for this next item. It is called the DPA project. I did not see the DPA project in there. I do not know if you remember that you and I spoke about DPA. Hunting dogs are a huge number that comes in to the Humane Society, whether it is hunters who breed and do not know what to do with the puppies...hunters do not normally spay and neuter because they want to keep the bloodline going. I remember speaking to you about this. The DPA project is the Dog and Pig Arena.

It is an arena where the dog is outside of a galvanized fence, but can see the pig in the smaller enclosure and can do their work around the arena, whether you have a muzzle that allows them to bark, so there is no biting through the fence, there are no inhumane actions to the pig, but allows the hunter who comes to the Humane Society to pick out a yearling dog. A lot of hunters do that. They want to go in to the Humane Society who is a year old. They come to their shelter and you folks have a hard time getting rid of dogs that are a certain age because people like puppies. Would you folks consider having something like that where a hunter can come to Humane Society, you would have a pig in a safe haven area, and they could walk the dog on a leash and turn the dog loose in an arena? The pig would be safe in a smaller enclosure, the dog could run around the fence to show some type of interest, and if the dog shows interest, the hunter may get excited to get the dog home. Otherwise, what I see happening...and I am part of that group...you go there, you need to take a dog at random, you need to spend x amount of weekends in the mountain trying to catch a pig to see if the dog does anything, but a lot of times the dog does not do anything and you have spent all that time and money, but if they have an opportunity to go to the Humane Society and see the dog showing interest in a pig, then that person may be more prone to adopt that dog. It is a very safe and humane way. I had this conversation with you on the Dog and Pig Arena project.

Ms. Schaefer Crane: I can understand how it can be very time-consuming to determine if a dog you have adopted from the Humane Society is qualified for the purpose of hunting. My concern with housing a pig is although you have given a lot of thought into how to keep it physically safe, we have to think about emotional stressors as a humane society. On top of that, I will add that it is very hard to keep a pig contained, as the current shelter is dealing with a lot of pigs coming onto our property and tearing up our land. It is one of those things where caring for the pig would be quite a burden as well, and looking at the emotional stressors of having it being pretend hunted or tested to a certain degree, also to a point where the pig may very well realize that nothing is going to happen to it and will no longer respond to that training. It is a bit of a difficult program for us to implement. Instead, I would suggest that...I think it is great that the hunters are understanding that a successful hunter is a trained dog who knows how to do it. Yes, we can talk about a certain degree of instincts and lineages, but it is also a trained behavior, so spending the time to do that as well as if it does not work out, the animal can come back to us. You can always return the dog. We will understand that the dog did not meet your needs and we will not penalize you for that.

Councilmember DeCosta: Thank you for the explanation.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any other questions for the Humane Society?

Councilmember Cowden: You have some, right?

Council Chair Rapozo: Do I?

Councilmember Cowden: Yes, I thought you said you did. You were getting complaints about the dogs.

Council Chair Rapozo: No. We have already spoken about it. As far as the Department of Finance is concerned, I was curious about who monitors the contract. We had that discussion. I had one (1) email that I was trying to find, but I cannot find it. It was about a cat café. Was that in here?

Ms. Schaefer Crane: No.

Council Chair Rapozo: Can you explain what the cat café is?

Ms. Schaefer Crane: Yes, because I am a co-owner of the cat café.

Council Chair Rapozo: Is it not part of the Humane Society?

Ms. Schaefer Crane: It is not part of the Humane Society. It is a private entity, which is why it is not listed.

Council Chair Rapozo: I got it.

Councilmember DeCosta: I have a clarifying question.

Council Chair Rapozo: Go ahead.

Councilmember DeCosta: Is that where you can have coffee, crumpets, and pet a cat?

Ms. Schaefer Crane: I do not have any crumpets, but I do have coffee.

Councilmember DeCosta: I have seen it in other areas. It is so successful. They even have one with smaller dogs. It is a small dog café. It is called, "Coffee, Donut, and a Dog."

Ms. Schaefer Crane: That is nice. Ours is focused on cats just to help increase adoptions and decrease the populations of cats.

Councilmember DeCosta: Thank you. Remember, crumpet-cat and donut-dog.

Ms. Schaefer Crane: Okay.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any other questions for the Humane Society?

Councilmember Cowden: I appreciated our time together. We went through our questions.

Council Chair Rapozo: Yes, and that helps a lot to do that. I did have one (1) picture that I wanted to put up for you all.

Councilmember Cowden: Is that a dog in a blanket? Is that what we are seeing?

Council Chair Rapozo: That is Kiba. My son lives in Oregon and has a dog. They have a labradoodle and a cat. They decided to go down to the shelter to adopt a dog.

(Councilmember Kagawa was noted as present.)

Council Chair Rapozo: They went around, played with all these dogs, and ended up adopting Kiba. When they were done, they got all the paperwork and had the history of this dog, that dog came from Kaua'i. That dog was sent to Portland from the Kaua'i Humane Society. What are the chances of that? That is an amazing dog. Kiba is an amazing dog.

Ms. Schaefer Crane: I am so happy to hear that.

Councilmember DeCosta: Is his name Kiba Rapozo?

Council Chair Rapozo: No, just Kiba.

JILL LOWRY, Kaua'i Humane Society Board Member: Council Chair and Members, from the board, I just want to say that we really appreciate your support. The Humane Society has had sort of a storied past over a couple of decades, and as a board member, I am proud of where the organization is, and we cannot do that without you. We appreciate that partnership. I am very proud of Nicole and the work she has done. It is a hugely important service and appreciate your support in it.

Council Chair Rapozo: Go ahead.

Councilmember DeCosta: I want to chime in on that. My constituents and I from the hunting and country community have personally dealt with Nicole. She has done her homework on how to intermingle our cultural practices and has immersed herself in making it right for our community, so I appreciate you so much.

Ms. Schaefer Crane: Thank you very much. I appreciate that.

Council Chair Rapozo: Go ahead, Councilmember Kualii.

Councilmember Kualii: Thank you to all of you. On any given day, are there cats at the cat café? How many cats are there.

Ms. Schaefer Crane: We can hold a maximum of ten (10) cats at a time. It is at Harbor Mall and the cats reside there until they are adopted.

Councilmember Kualii: Thank you.

Council Chair Rapozo: Thank you.

Ms. Schaefer Crane: Thank you very much.

Office of Economic Development

Council Chair Rapozo: With that, we are moving on to the Office of Economic Development. Welcome.

NALANI K. KA'AUWAI BRUN, Director of Economic Development: Nalani Brun, Director of the Office of Economic Development. Good morning. I will do a quick overview of our next budget. Just a reminder, what the Office of Economic Development pretty much does is we partner. We do very few things by ourselves. The things that we can do, we do,

but we find that the best benefits come when we get to share them with the rest of the community. That is our goal. We partner with our community to develop and implement creative strategies to enhance economic opportunities and the goal is to build a better quality of life for our people.

Almost all the projects we pick come from a plan that has already been vetted by the community. We find that it is not only important, but it really speeds things up, because we have a reason for why we did it—the community said.

That is our team right there. I will go through our area. The team is here to answer questions, because although I have a surface knowledge of a lot of things, they have the depth.

I will start with Film. Film or “creative industries,” which is the popular term for that. This position has a few big projects in the next year. The biggest one of all is that the State of Hawai‘i is finally coming around and we are going to have an agreement on how we are going to work together. This has been in the making for probably three (3) years. We have been waiting for this to happen. We will be working with our team members on the other islands and the State Film Commission to try to do things together, instead of separately. We are also having funding in there for a local film project. We really want to support local film makers if they are there. It will be part of our innovation grants. As a side note, the estimated Films spend for Kaua‘i in 2023 was over four million dollars (\$4,000,000) and in 2022, it was about one million six hundred thousand dollars (\$1,600,000). With that said, the spend itself is confirmed spend that the State can get. There is a lot of other spend, like on private property, things that they do not track, that usually equals to about ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) a year, but a lot of those things are estimates by the State versus confirmed. That is a confirmed number that we know happened and it comes from a variety of types of film, everything from feature to B-roll, to catalog, to commercials. It can be any of those types of things. Again, that is confirmed spend. The Film position is also our Grants Manager. She basically puts together our programing, she is our AmpliFund expert, which is the online system that we use to apply for grants when we can use it. Her budget it about four percent (4%) of our total operating budget.

Moving on to Agriculture. This is a big part of our budget, because as you know, we all want to get somewhere with agriculture. That has always been a big goal. The OED has struggled with it, but we are getting somewhere now. Some of the big projects for next year are a research and development project for Port Allen Shipping Study. We are working with the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) on that. DBEDT’s role is to take whatever we give them and run. All we want to do is start the project and get them to understand why it is necessary to have agriculture able to move out of the Port Allen shipping area. To have that, we start with the feasibility study. Our goal next year is to actually do one. It is great training for us, because we do not do a lot of these, so it is team-building and capacity as well. Another one that we have been working on for some time and are actually making headway is, of course, the Rose-Ringed Parakeet Culling. We want to put money specifically in there. Right now, we are just grabbing from here and there when we can, but we want to specifically work on that because we are having success and are hopeful that the State Legislature will match us with funding to try to get this done. I think if we were to put two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) into next year’s efforts, we might actually be able to get rid of a large bunch of those parakeets. We did very well this year. The third is that we have an agricultural grant program. We had a big one this last year...thank you very much...and we want to do it again. This time, we are looking at the comments we had. The comments are that they do not want to only do something, they need

time on their farms to plan how they are going to expand. We did not include money for planning in the last round, but we want to do that this round, and that is to help them to plan how they are going to what they are going to do and what types of markets they want to get into. Agriculture is thirty-eight percent (38%) of our operational budget.

Moving on to our Business area. Business will be managing the Waimea Theater. They are taking that on. He has also been managing the broadband efforts, which is trying to get digital equity for everyone when it comes to broadband, because that is the heir of the future. It is about eleven percent (11%) of our budget. Our plans in there, again, include a feasibility study for the theater and that is to see how we can get it really operating day and night; what types of things can we do in there? He is also going to be looking at exploring pathways towards more co-working spaces. They are getting really popular, but they are not regional, and we do not want people driving far to get to a co-working space, we would like it to be nearby. We would like to do a study looking at where these spaces can be islandwide. We also have business development programs to address needs identified from over four hundred (400) business visits that Nate has done over the last year. It has been great, they have been very open, they have given a lot of suggestions, and we want to use some funding to try to chase some of the initiatives that he found they have been asking for.

Lastly, we are going to be handling the theater CIP funds. Up there it says, "Plumbing–Power Wash–Gutters," but we finally came to the decision that we really needed to do a plumbing facility condition assessment, which is to just look at the building overall, what does it need done to it, and let us get that on a priority list so we can ask for funding properly. If we can get gutters—it has always had a flooding problem, so we just want to solve something now, and then after the facility assessment, we can move on to the next piece, which is looking at flooding. Moving on.

Energy. The Energy employee also does Clean Transportation, and is kind of our guru on federal procurement right now. Her upcoming projects are to complete the Coconut Marketplace Mobility Hub Plan, where we are going to be trying to see if we can actually go back to the future and have more visitors in group travel, which is a possibility. We are not dragging everyone on there, but we would like to get a good portion of them due to that. This is the first step in that project. It will be completed in June and then we have some carryovers after that for next year to continue the process. She is also working the congressionally directed spending cost. We have a match there of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) as we are working on the level three electrical vehicle charging stations. That area covers five percent (5%) of OED's total operational budget. They also participate in other areas in the grant area, innovation grants, but these are just the "call-outs" of the projects that are kind of changing a little bit into the next year.

Sustainability. She also is fantastic with the Geographic Information Systems (GIS), she is helping with Accounting, and she also manages the EPA funds. Again, we have another staff member with lots of talent and we are trying to use every bit of talent that they have. This position has asked for 'Ohana and Youth Educational Programs, that is really what sustainability is all about, education, how can we do it and how can we do it better? Also the Youth Climate Internship Class, which has been wonderful this year, kids have loved it, so we want to continue that, and we want to continue the Earth Day Collaboration, which right now we are coming up on that event, which is going to be near to the end of April. Also, she has a portion of the funds in the innovation grants for doing innovative grants projects. So, she also has a grant program in the innovation grants. Her budget is four percent (4%) of OED's total operational budget.

Workforce & Tourism—that is a combination. This is kind of our position piece that we will be talking to you about. She also does the Sister City and backs up Administration. We have three (3) administrative people and each back each other up. Her upcoming projects...we are trying to maneuver a project with the Kaua'i Community Correctional Center (KCCC) and the Kaua'i Community College (KCC), and other partners to try to get an upscaling for reentry of that workforce, because we do not have much of a workforce. We are looking everywhere for where we can get them and how we can help them. The other one, she wants to continue working with partners via special events and that is going to be an issue, a competitive grant for Special Events, Cultural Programs this year. It is about fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) each, so it is about one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000). She also works on Destination Management Action Plan projects that are incorporation with the efforts that the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) is doing.

That is basically the background, we have seventy-two-point one percent (72.1%) in operations and of those operations, fifty-two percent (52%) is Grants in Aid, and then some programing funds and then travel. Here are the grant programs that we are going to be introducing next year. In the first line there is basically who the funding would go to and then in the third line it says whether it is "Direct," "Competitive," or "Competitive and Direct." We will be doing the direct grants, like with the YWCA support for their Sexual Assault Treatment Program and Family Violence Shelter. For Economic Development, we have several different grants that we do, some with the University of Hawai'i and that is basically research. They help us do the Economic Forecasting. We work with the Kaua'i Economic Development Board (KEDB) on the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, hopefully what we have are the things we need to do. We have Workforce—Support with KCC, trying to help them get people in and educated in upskilled. For Sustainability, we have compost education, we work on those grants, and then of course we work with the Kaua'i Visitors Bureau for Consumer Promotion Support and also Kaua'i Festivals and Destination Management.

The third one is Innovation Grants. Those are competitive and that is in all the different sectors. The fourth one is Agriculture Grants and that is again, part of the agriculture farm expansion program grants, which we are going to tweak a little bit, but we want to do those grants again. Those will be mostly competitive. Lastly, the Special Events and Cultural Grants issue will be another Request for Proposal (RFP) and those will be in those areas, special events, product enhancement, and culture and destination management. Those are going to be the grant programs that we are going to be issuing for 2025.

We also have external funding sources that we manage, so we would just like to show that. This year, you can see...it is kind of a little darker on the purple side for 2025. The darker ones are the ones we already know we have, and then the lined part are funds that we have applied for, so we always try to double our money by going out and getting other funds. That is that.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any questions on the actual overview?

Councilmember Cowden: I do.

Councilmember Kualii: Are we jumping all over?

Council Chair Rapozo: No, we will go in order of the presentation.
Councilmember DeCosta.

Councilmember DeCosta: I have an overall question. I am looking at...and by all means, I do not mean it is not important, but I notice you have a very small group. You are probably the smallest group in any division.

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Yes.

Councilmember DeCosta: But you mentioned that there were administrators, how many of your personnel are administrators? I know you are, and in your PowerPoint here, Theri Martin-Haumea has two (2) departments, but who else is part of the administration?

Ms. Kaaui Brun: The Administration team members are...Theri is our frontman, Melissa Sugai...

Councilmember DeCosta: Front lady.

Ms. Kaaui Brun: ...the Kaaui Made is secondary, and the third one is our Tourism / Workforce Specialist.

Councilmember DeCosta: I do not mean to question how you do your flowchart of managerial positions, but why would you so many different administrators if you have such a small team. I count twelve (12) people or eleven (11) people here.

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Yes, okay, when we do "administration," what we are just doing is who is covering the front, who is making sure the people are being greeted at the door, who is answering telephone calls, and who is managing the movement of papers or making sure things are logged in. That is our administration.

Councilmember DeCosta: That is workload, that is not managing people.

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Well, for us, it is considered administrative, how we administer the workload. That is what we call it. We can change the name, for sure, but that is how we have it. No one is just one (1) thing, everyone is expected in our office to do multiple jobs. They are all project managers. They all do different types of projects in different areas, but when it comes to...we are very picky about making sure we answer the telephone and have someone at the front door. We want to make sure that is covered. We just say that is our administrators, they are going to make sure we are covered with a lovely "Hello" at any of those points.

Councilmember DeCosta: Of course, that sounds almost like a clerical position, right?

Ms. Kaaui Brun: It does sound clerical, but...

Councilmember DeCosta: We answer phone calls at the Department of Motor Vehicles. You mentioned something about "pay a farmer to plan," you wanted to put money into a farmer's hands to plan.

Council Chair Rapozo: Hang on until we get to Agriculture.

Councilmember DeCosta: Okay, I am okay for now.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there further questions on the organizational structure?

Councilmember Kualii: There is one (1) vacancy, Position No. 9219, Economic Development Specialist II. Vacant since September of last year, one hundred ninety-six (196) days.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Yes.

Councilmember Kualii: Is was underfunded last year, I think, and is the funding now for this position split between General Fund and State, and where are you at with recruitment?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: What we have asked to do is take what was the accounting position, it was partially funded by grants that we could get and then partially funded by the County. We have asked the Administration if we can instead have the Workforce / Tourism position solid in the office, and what we did was we restructured inside to make sure we could handle the accounting piece with the existing employees that we have. We were able to do that. Basically, what would happen is if we got the funding, the Workforce / Tourism person would become a permanent County person versus a grant-funded person.

Councilmember Kualii: So, going fully County.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Yes.

Councilmember Kualii: And in the range for the Economic Development Specialist II, is this an incumbent? Are you going to hire someone new?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: No, we have the person.

Councilmember Kualii: So, it is maybe higher than the lowest end of the salary range.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Yes.

Council Chair Rapozo: Councilmember DeCosta.

Councilmember DeCosta: Right now, the Workforce / Tourism person, Michelle Rego, is she funded by a grant?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Yes, she is paid out of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) moneys right now, because we could cover tourism and workforce with those funds.

Councilmember DeCosta: It is in the next budget where you are going to ask us to cover this position one hundred percent (100%)?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: In the next budget, yes.

Councilmember DeCosta: Okay. Going back to your diagram, I see you have one (1) person with two (2) accounts on the bottom. Could you combine Workforce / Tourism with Kaua'i Made, is there a way you could combine departments or do you need a fulltime person for that position, once the ARPA funds run out?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: What we would probably do is try to take off the Kekaha Host Community Benefits Program (HCB) and move it over to another specialist for workload purposes. At this point, the amazing Theri can handle all of it.

Councilmember DeCosta: Okay.

Council Chair Rapozo: Councilmember Kualii.

Councilmember Kualii: There is a position, Position No. 9224 that is moving to HR, so that is not a position that you do not need?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: No, I think that has been moved someplace else, and it was a grant position.

Councilmember Kualii: Thank you.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any further questions on the structure?

Councilmember DeCosta: I have a question on the supporting funding of a local film project, fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000). Can you explain a little bit about...

Council Chair Rapozo: Okay, we are on Film.

Councilmember DeCosta: This is the overview.

Council Chair Rapozo: Yes, but we were going page by page.

Councilmember DeCosta: Oh, okay.

Council Chair Rapozo: If there are no further questions on the team, then we will go to Film.

Councilmember DeCosta: Can you explain the fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) for the local film project? What is it and who does this involve on Kaua'i?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: We actually do not know. It is a competitive grant. We will put it out, name it as a, "We would like to pay for a local film project," and then have the people pitch projects to us, as part of the Innovation Grants.

Councilmember DeCosta: Does that project target a certain area on Kaua'i? Are you going to target agriculture, tourism, a certain piece of that pie?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Typically, it is just as long as it is film. Because it is film funding, we want to build the film sector, so we want to encourage our filmmakers with whatever topic they want. I think we had one-year that they did on *akikiki* that are dying out, so they did a film on those birds and the songs that they make. It is almost like

you do not know what to expect, but we try to make sure that the filmmaker is from Kaua'i, someone doing work here, hopefully lives here, and those are the requirements other than what kind of film do you want to make. It could be almost anything.

Councilmember DeCosta: You said, "hopefully live here," but do we have criteria in the grant?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: We do. We prioritize Kaua'i. It has been so long since we funded something that was from somewhere else, unless it was Statewide.

Councilmember DeCosta: Do you know if we are going to maybe use it as some sort of advertisement at the airport? Are we planning to use that film that person gets, because that is quite a bit of money for a project, and I would like to see that project use someplace to benefit Kaua'i or benefit your office. Is that our plan that we plan to implement that project into something that we are doing with OED?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Usually whatever it is we definitely support in once it is done. We also do promote other types of films, like what Sue is doing at Kaua'i Visitors Bureau (KVB), so she has funding too, and she uses our funding a lot of times to get films done. It is happening there too. It is the type of film that we could use at the airports, we would absolutely look into doing that.

Councilmember DeCosta: Thank you.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any further questions on film? If not, we will go into agriculture.

Councilmember Kagawa: A few years back, Council Chair Rapozo and I worked on the parakeet problem, and I think the population was approximately one thousand five hundred (1,500) back five (5) years ago, so what is the population now?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: They actually estimated at ten thousand (10,000) to fifteen thousand (15,000), but it was well over twenty thousand (20,000). It was much higher than we thought it was.

Councilmember Kagawa: The one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000)—how much do we feel that we can...

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: We recently did a culling at Smith's Tropical Paradise, they had one thousand eight hundred (1,800) birds, we got them all.

Councilmember Kagawa: Terrific.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: If you just keep pounding away at it, and then recently we did one at Kukui Grove, that was another four hundred fifty (450), but there is probably one hundred (100) left there, that we have to go back for. One hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000), you are going to take out probably half the population.

Councilmember Kagawa: Terrific.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: We just have to find the best spots to take them all out.

Councilmember Kagawa: What crops do the parakeet impact the most? I heard lychee is a big one.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Lychee, corn, the most recent one we found they had some new beans in their stomach, but we are trying to figure out what that plant is. We are going to put that out to see what they are after now.

Councilmember Kagawa: Pretty much the fruits that are sweet, they may go for?

NICHOL KUNIOKA-VOLZ, Economic Development Specialist IV: Yes, it is mostly fruit orchard crops. Mango, lychee, longan, any of those tree orchards. On the Westside, we are getting a lot of complaints about the seed crops. They have gotten smarter over time, and so some of the companies have been bagging the corn to keep them out, but at this point, they are able to remove that protectant layer and start to attack the seed again.

Councilmember Kagawa: So, they are taking away the husk?

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: Not only just the husk, but they also put on protective bags over the corn, and then the parakeets have gotten so smart, they have learned to remove that to attack the crop.

Councilmember Kagawa: Thank you.

Council Chair Rapozo: What will the one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) be used for?

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: It is to contract out with a wildlife control company to actually go out and do the culling after procuring...

Council Chair Rapozo: What is culling? Killing?

Councilmember Kagawa: Yes.

Council Chair Rapozo: They shoot them?

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: Yes.

Council Chair Rapozo: We are going to pay someone to shoot the birds in the seed companies' farms?

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: No. For those types of operations, those companies are contracting directly with the company. For those we are seeing in more public areas that are not necessarily agriculture-related, take for example Smith's or Kukui Grove, that is where we helped to cost-share the effort. For the seed companies, they have their contracts with the wildlife control companies.

Councilmember DeCosta: You mentioned that you work with DBEDT, is it Jimmy Tokioka?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Yes.

Councilmember DeCosta: This is a State issue. Do they match us dollar-for-dollar? If we put in one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000), are they matching our money? Do they allocate funding for the parakeet culling?

Ms. Kaaui Brun: This year, there is a bill that made it all the way through, that looks like they are going to give us matching funding.

Councilmember DeCosta: You said, "looks like," so we are going to approve this funding here, but it is not guaranteed that they approved their funding yet.

Ms. Kaaui Brun: This is true.

Councilmember DeCosta: Okay. I have a question on the money for "plan a farm plan." Are you going to give farmers money to plan. I have a hard time with that. I can see giving money to farmers for constructing materials on their farm, but when you give them money to plan, this sounds like a farmer who does not know how to be a farmer. Those people are supposed to have an idea of what they want to do, they come to you folks with a plan, and then they ask for the money. We just do not give money and then tell them to get a plan. I have a hard time supporting that. Help get my support.

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Basically, they have an idea of how they want to expand their farm, but they have some questions and typically it is based around crops, where to place the crops...they already know what they want to do, they just want to make sure they get the best yield they can at the end. Some of the requests that they have made have been around, "Okay, we want to do this, and we want to do it the best way we can," so it may not be a ton of money for it. They want to be able to use some money to consult someone that knows about...

Councilmember DeCosta: There is your consultant, we have an ag person here in your division, who we hired who knows ag, why can they not go to Ms. Kunioka-Volz and ask consulting questions?

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Actually, many of them do.

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: Yes, a lot of them come to me and then I will try to walk them through the process as best I can. There are some specific instances where the projects that they might have in mind are beyond my knowledge or scope of expertise. For example, if they want to expand a production facility, that gets much more into the weeds of building permits and specs that are specific to their industry type. I am by no means a subject-matter expert in all the different categories of agriculture, and in those instances, a consultant would be a better fit for them to actually meet their needs much better than I would be able to.

Councilmember DeCosta: Thank you for that honesty, but maybe in the future going forward, you log down all of those projects that you are not that informational about, so you can get the training, so the next year comes around and we do not have to pay for the consultant. You will be that much more *akamai* with all the consulting needs for our farmers.

Councilmember Carvalho: I have a question on the study for the feasibility of Port Allen. Can I get an update? I was trying to look at the harbor area and the feasibility study, did it start, and how long will it be, etcetera?

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: We are not sure exactly how long that feasibility study would take. We have not put out an RFP yet, but the backstory behind that is we had some new farmers move to the Westside of Kaua'i, a large portion of our food production is now going to shift over to West Kaua'i. One thing we heard time and time again from our producers out there is the hindrance that transportation to Nāwiliwili puts on their business. Part of this is just the roadway infrastructure and the time required to get from Kekaha to Nāwiliwili. Another piece of that is the need for more CDL drivers, so there are not as many trucks to be contracted out by these farmers to make that trip. For some of these farmers, if they are going to bring a delivery into Nāwiliwili, that means one delivery per day just including whether DOT is doing roadwork, traffic, or for whatever reason it may be, the turnaround time for the driver to get to Nāwiliwili, come back to Kekaha to pick up another load, they will not make it back to Nāwiliwili in time to make that shipment out. What we are hearing from our producers on the Westside is that they are really interested in exploring reopening Port Allen to commercial shipments. When we spoke to DOT about it they said they will need a comprehensive study of what that would entail, that would be a very long-term project, and tens of millions of dollars on DOT's end, that they want to see buy-in from our County and our producers that they are very serious about utilizing Port Allen should DOT move ahead and help to pay for that reopening of Port Allen for agriculture export.

Councilmember Carvalho: Okay, so it is kind of prepping.

Council Chair Rapozo: So, you folks have met with DOT?

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: Yes.

Council Chair Rapozo: So have I. Are they requesting this study?

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: I would not say specifically they are requesting, they need to know that it is feasible to go ahead and invest tens of millions of dollars into reopening it.

Council Chair Rapozo: Yes, but they are expecting the County to pay that? That is a State harbor.

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: That was not explicitly said that they expect the County to pay.

Council Chair Rapozo: I have a big concern. In fact, Councilmember Kagawa has been working on this for quite a while, but the State...and the last time I spoke with DOT, there is just not enough volume. I just do not want to blow one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) to tell us what we already know. The State made some concessions down at Nāwiliwili now, so they can...but just the fact to spend one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) and the feasibility study would probably be more than that anyway. Did we get estimates on feasibility studies? All the studies I see in the budget are a lot. It is more than one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000).

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: We called the University of Hawai'i that...originally the ADC was very interested in the study, so we have been talking to Wendy and she said, "If you put in one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000), we will match you whatever more you need. Really, it is a partnership between you and ADC to try to move it along."

Council Chair Rapozo: But the DOT is the more critical player than ADC.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Yes.

Council Chair Rapozo: And ADC should be funding this. The Department of Agriculture should be funding this, not the County of Kaua'i, in my opinion.

Councilmember Cowden: After Councilmember Kagawa brought this to us on the floor, I looked at the harbor's master plan for 2025, and it was interesting to me to see that the rebuilding of that Port Allen Harbor was, in fact, in that master plan. The master plan is outdated almost everywhere in it, actually. I would say I have some alignment with the Council Chair, that it seems like it is the Department of Agriculture that really needs to be...they can fund it through you folks, is that money coming from our General Fund or is it coming from State moneys?

Councilmember Kualif'i: It is in the budget, General Fund.

Councilmember Cowden: General Fund money. Because a lot of these are grants, though.

Council Chair Rapozo: The one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) is specifically in the budget for...it is General Fund money.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: What it is really all about is we are trying to "poke" at this thing to see if it will move. That is what a lot of it is.

Council Chair Rapozo: That is one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000).

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Yes.

Council Chair Rapozo: That is an expensive poke. Again, how much impact is that going to have on DOT?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Yes.

Council Chair Rapozo: That is the reality of this.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: From when we spoke to the University of Hawai'i, it was "you need to look at what is happening with the growers that are moving in and are starting to grow out there," and what they wanted to do is try to estimate at what point would they have enough supply to shift that it would actually be worth it for them. So that you can actually time it out over time and go, "We think they are going to have enough in seven (7) years, and so we have seven (7) years to build this out." That is really what UH was going to look at.

Council Chair Rapozo: Okay. Are there any further questions on agriculture?

Councilmember DeCosta: I am listening to you speak and Ms. Kunioka-Volz speak, and it sounds like you two (2) should get the one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) for the assessment, because you have good explanations of why we need to get that harbor going, but it seems like you both know more than the feasibility study. Maybe you should draft a letter to the House of Representatives and Senators in the State of Hawai'i, and we can probably support that with a resolution, but maybe that is a more powerful way than to spend taxpayers one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000).

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any further questions on ag? Before we move on, I am looking at your chart that shows all the grant-in-aid programs, this one here. You have numbers on here, but when I look at the numbers in the budget, they are different. I am trying to figure out what numbers are we...

(Councilmember Kagawa was noted as not present.)

Council Chair Rapozo: ...the budget is what we are contemplating right now, so in Agriculture, for example, you have nine hundred sixty-seven thousand dollars (\$967,000), but on your chart under Agriculture, you have seven hundred ninety-two thousand dollars (\$792,000). If I add up the projects in your Ag slide, I get eight hundred sixty-seven. I am trying to figure out what number are we looking at?

Councilmember Kualii'i: Did you not give all the details in your presentation?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Yes. It might be...there are the Agriculture grants and then I think we also have some Agriculture money in the Innovation Grants. It is split up between the two.

Council Chair Rapozo: Okay. The budget is for agriculture right now, nine hundred sixty-seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$967,500).

(Councilmember Kagawa was noted as present.)

Council Chair Rapozo: In your slide, you show agriculture expansion, grant program continuation to advance objectives from the agriculture economic development plan, six hundred sixty-seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$667,500). I am just trying to find out...

Councilmember Kualii'i: I think what she just said was that if you add the ag and the innovation here and the ag and innovation here, it may be pretty much the same amount.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: I think it is in two (2) different pots here. I will make a note, we will not do that again next year.

Councilmember Kualii'i: It is okay, you just gave us our detail.

Council Chair Rapozo: I am just trying to figure out what...give me an example and maybe...this current FY, we have awarded grants?

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Yes.

Council Chair Rapozo: Give me some examples of some of the grants that we typically give out in this agriculture expansion grant program.

Ms. Kaaui Brun: In the ag expansion.

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: A small-scale farmer came to us, and they wanted to establish a commercial kitchen operation, so they can process their product, turn it into value added and get it to the market. One thing that is holding them up is the insulation of a septic tank. That is a requirement for a commercial kitchen. We are cost-sharing to help cover some of that cost. Not the entire cost of the project, but a piece of it, to help them achieve their goals. Another example is a farmer on Grove Farm land has forty (40) acres of land, but they have twenty (20) in production now, they needed help with some machinery to help clear the additional twenty (20) acres to expand their production.

Council Chair Rapozo: What do we give them? Do we give them money or machines?

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: We give them money with the agreement, we get estimates on the pieces of machinery that they require, and they have to report and prove to us that they are actually using the funds that we give them for those pieces that they clearing...

Council Chair Rapozo: Is it a rental or they get to keep...is this a competitive grant? How does this work?

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: Yes, competitive.

Council Chair Rapozo: You put out an RFP?

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: Yes, we put out an RFP. We had a panel of agriculture subject-matter experts on the review panel and we went through each of the applications, scored them, gave them a list of recommendations on how to improve their overall project, and then the awards were determined moving forward.

Council Chair Rapozo: Okay. Is it possible to get that report of the grants that were awarded?

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Yes, absolutely.

Councilmember DeCosta: I have a clarifying question on this grant program. So, you do not need to be a nonprofit, you can be an individual?

Ms. Kaaui Brun: It has to go through a nonprofit.

Councilmember DeCosta: So, you folks just said that an individual on Grove Farm land came to you for a piece of equipment, was that person an individual or was that person in a nonprofit?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: They are all nonprofits. Otherwise, we cannot give funding to them.

Councilmember DeCosta: How did you give an individual...

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: They work with a nonprofit organization.

Councilmember DeCosta: A nonprofit organization umbrella.

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: Yes.

Councilmember DeCosta: Perfect. Okay. Big talk, Cattlemen's Association, they are a nonprofit, they were looking for a piece of equipment, huge lawnmower so they can keep their pasture weeds down and they would share it between all of the ranchers on Kaua'i. I went to a meeting with you out at the Shinagawa Ranch on that. Did we ever help the Cattlemen's Association buy that tractor and mower, so they could share it within the different ranchers and they could mow the grass. Did you ever make that happen?

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: They did not come to us with a grant application for that specific project. We have received other projects from Cattlemen's Association, but that one specifically...

Councilmember DeCosta: Did you fund the other projects?

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: No, we did not.

Councilmember DeCosta: How come?

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: It goes through a vetting process and a scoring process, and at the end of the day, they need to be strong applications. We need to see that the project is very thought-through. We would like to work with them for future grant opportunities, but at this point what we received from them, we did not have...

Councilmember DeCosta: I am personally going to advocate for them right now with you and with Nalani. They are a large organization, and they have applied for some of those grants, and I think they should be considered when you do the scoring, please. Because if we are helping individuals who are umbrellaed by a nonprofit, and they are a legitimate nonprofit, and you folks want to promote ag and cattle ranching, and food sustainability is the biggest thing on Kaua'i, we should be helping them.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: We hear you. We found them a nonprofit to work with that actually has grant experience, because that is really important for them. Over the years, their applications have slowly gotten better, so we are getting there.

(Councilmember Bulosan was noted as not present.)

Council Chair Rapozo: Councilmember DeCosta is going to help them make the application.

Councilmember DeCosta: Nalani.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: We do not help them.

Council Chair Rapozo: No, I said Councilmember DeCosta.

Councilmember DeCosta: Did you hear what you just told me? You are looking for them to have more experience, they are the most experienced folks. They are the ranchers out there. They are our farmers, the biggest farmers we have.

Council Chair Rapozo: Okay. You made your point. Moving on. Are there any further questions on ag? What is the typical grant award on those?

Councilmember Cowden: He had a question.

Councilmember Kagawa: I want to thank you for what you are doing. I see ag as being in a way better position than we were years back. Is there any assistance for taro farmers on the Westside that want to expand? Are there any grant opportunities?

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: We have not specifically created a grant program for our kalo farmers, but again, any grant program that falls under the ag umbrella, we are hoping that they come with applications.

Councilmember Kagawa: Okay, they just need to find a nonprofit, perhaps?

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: And for the ag expansion grant, for some of the farmers that Councilmember DeCosta was asking about, they are members of the Farm Bureau, they can use those organizations. An individual rancher could use the Kaua'i Cattlemen's Association as their nonprofit sponsors, so for kalo farmers, we hope they go a similar route and please come to us and submit a strong application.

Councilmember Kagawa: Thank you. I just see so much value with kalo because you can use the leaf and the kalo plant. It is sustainable. If something ever happens, it is a food source for us.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Oh, yes.

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: Yes, it was not specific to kalo, necessarily, but one of our projects that was funded through this ag expansion grant was Kumano I Ke Ala to expand their operations, the overall, the east side of Waimea River. We are helping them to clear out that land so that they can increase production in the majority of their crop they produce is kalo.

Councilmember Kagawa: Thank you.

Councilmember Kualii: In the Ag line item when you told us about the seven hundred ninety-two thousand five hundred dollars (\$792,500), in your report, it says "Competitive and direct." If you made that into two (2) line items and separated what is

competitive and what is direct that would be helpful. Also, as we do every budget year, typically we ask you, because you have all these different grants to then follow up with a report and giving us the detail, and while there are future grants that people can apply for, there is the immediate past year, so you give us a report of how it was all awarded in the current year. For the future year, how you anticipate, everything that is direct is already not going to go in an open application process, so you can tell us that, and I think you have here, but then on the others, what are the grants that are going to be open, for how much, who is eligible to apply, etcetera.

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Got it.

Councilmember Kualii: Thank you.

Council Chair Rapozo: I am looking at master page 82, so on page 83, you have the amounts of the grant-in-aid for each sector, but under Other Services, which means what we pay out, you have the same sectors with amounts and agriculture has one hundred twenty-five thousand dollars (\$125,000), what does that mean? Are we paying someone for that?

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Other Services are basically things that we are doing in-house. It would include a feasibility study, etcetera. The next page, master page 83 under 001-0901-512.36-00, Grant In Aid, that is where you will find the actual grant amounts per sector.

Council Chair Rapozo: Is it possible to get a description of what you plan to do?

(Councilmember Bulosan was noted as present.)

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Yes.

Council Chair Rapozo: With the Other Services.

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Yes.

Councilmember Cowden: On the Grant-in-Aid, I would imagine people are all turning in their grant reports, right? If anyone was curious what the outcome is, there is accountability to what they spend the grant towards?

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Yes, they are required to do quarterly reports and a final report. Much of our work is chasing down those reports.

Councilmember Kualii: That is what you meant, too, in the beginning when you said that "we are all project managers."

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Yes.

Councilmember Kualii: Everyone is probably managing some of these different grants, making sure they get the reports, etcetera.

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Yes.

Councilmember DeCosta: Back to what Councilmember Kualii said about being a project manager and grant funding, do each project manager manage the grant funding themselves or does it go through your accountant?

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Each project manager manages it themselves.

Councilmember DeCosta: They manage that entire lump sum of money?

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Yes. They have grants assigned, we have a brand new system now that we are working with, that is notifying us when things are coming due, it "pings" us. We, in turn, "ping" the grantee that they need to turn in their report. As those reports come in, we have an entire system where you must check the box, did they do this, that, did anything change, have they asked for anything new that we do not know about. This is brand new. We have just incorporated it now. It helps to keep us on track, and it has also helped our grantees to stay ahead of the game, so when we are asking for reports, that they are not in shock. They have a month's notice that this is coming, so they have actually been turning them in on time. We are also starting to use the online system more often. They can enter their grant reports right into a system and then it all comes rolling down to us, which is really helpful.

Councilmember DeCosta: My question on the septic. You mentioned that you partially funded a septic system, helping a farmer with a septic system if they wanted a commercial kitchen on a property. Is that for personal commercial property or nonprofit commercial property?

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: That is private farm property and part of their proposal, which they are held to, is that upon completion that commercial kitchen will also be available for other farmers to utilize. It is not for one (1) farm's sole use only. Part of the proposal is that eventually that operational kitchen would be somewhat of a commissary shared-use kitchen that other farmers can then rent out and develop their own value-added products.

Councilmember DeCosta: Help me understand, since we are the ones approving the funding for this. You had a personal property with a commercial kitchen that the County subsidized and the agreement is that farmer needs to let other community farmers come on their personal property and use the kitchen, and the liability with that personal property owner, he or she, has to be okay with it, or is this landowner who the farmer had leased the property from and then they put the commercial kitchen on?

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: No. I believe they own the property.

Councilmember DeCosta: Okay.

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: And that idea of bringing this forward as a shared-use kitchen for other farmers was presented by the farmer themselves.

Councilmember DeCosta: And that is all in writing, so another farmer can use that.

Ms. Kunioka-Volz: That would be at a different point, and I am not exactly sure that we would be involved in creating that sort of contract with other farmers, but that was brought to us as part of their proposal.

Councilmember DeCosta: Okay.

Council Chair Rapozo: Is there anyone else? Moving on to Business.

Councilmember Cowden: Just clarifying that I am understanding correctly. This money is for the County, as the landlord, to fix the plumbing, the power wash, and the gutters, but the nonprofit contractor that is inside there that runs the theater is continuing?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Yes.

Councilmember Cowden: He is solid and it is moving forward, we are just being a good landlord.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Yes.

Councilmember Cowden: Okay.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any further questions on Business? Energy. Sustainability.

Councilmember DeCosta: Sustainability and Ag work hand-in-hand together, tell me a little bit about who your sustainability person and how do they work closely with Ms. Kunioka-Volz?

ANA ESPANOLA, Sustainability Specialist: *Aloha*, Councilmembers. In response to your question, I completely agree that sustainability and agriculture work hand-in-hand. We have a few projects that we collaborate on. Anything that is outside ag, for example, natural resource management, waste reduction, smart sustainable communities, etcetera, that is where I fall in.

Councilmember DeCosta: The Kilauea Ag Park, is that something that would fall under you or Ms. Kunioka-Volz?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Mostly, that is under Ms. Kunioka-Volz.

Councilmember DeCosta: Under Ms. Kunioka-Volz, okay. I noticed that we had funded that also in our budget. Are we going to be doing something like that on the Westside, so we have an ag park on the North and one on the West?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: I think it has been talked about for many years.

Councilmember DeCosta: Feasibility money, so you can get it started.
Thank you.

Councilmember Cowden: I see nine hundred sixty-seven thousand dollars (\$967,000) in the grant-in-aid, are these competitive grants or committed grants?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Most of them are competitive.

Councilmember Cowden: So, we are not sure that we are keeping that funding going, that is a possibility, is that correct?

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Keeping the funding going?

Councilmember Cowden: He asked about the ag park, last year they had to reapply, every year, are they still reapplying?

Ms. Kaaui Brun: They could apply to any of our grant opportunities this year.

Councilmember Cowden: Yes. So, they are competitive grants?

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Yes, they are competitive for them. The only direct one that is in there is the parakeet one.

Councilmember Cowden: Okay.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any further questions on sustainability? Thank you. Workforce & Tourism. I have a question on the second bullet, "Continue working with partners via the Special Events," you are saying the grants are from fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) to one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000) each?

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Oh, no, I am sorry. Each of those programs has about fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) in the pot. This year we will go out to RFP for those, fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) in Special Events, fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) in Product Enhancement Projects, and fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) in Hawaiian Culture projects.

Council Chair Rapozo: Okay. So, one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000) total.

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Total, yes.

Council Chair Rapozo: Okay.

Councilmember Kualii: The first bullet about the fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) for Kauai Community Correctional Center, it says for training and upskilling reentry workforce. Obviously, the correctional center is the State, so we must be partnering with them, but I am curious as to what our fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) pays for and then what they are paying for?

Ms. Kaaui Brun: It is in its infancy, to be honest, but we are trying to partner with the State and with Kauai Community College to see if we can actually start a carpentry program to get it going. What we found the difficulty piece is the transport. Again, we do not have drivers, again, they are struggling in getting people back and forth in time to get them checked back into Kauai Community Correctional Center. We thought we can start a carpentry program onsite is what we are working on, where they can build their own little classroom right there and learn the carpentry skills where they are at. That is the goal of the program. We are still struggling to get there because there are so many partners trying to figure out how we can get that done.

Councilmember Kualii: Awesome. I am glad we are trying to “poke” that.

Council Chair Rapozo: That is an expensive poke. I guess for me...

Councilmember Kualii: It is an investment in the future.

Council Chair Rapozo: Like I said earlier before we did the budget for the department heads, show us the plan of what we are going to be using this money for. I know that the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney has a new program, sort of a reentry program. We, as the Council, have to make sure we are not putting money in services that are being duplicated by others. We have to be very careful. For me to support any...for all the departments, and I have said it before a few times, make sure there is a plan attached and not just a commentary, because I do not want money sitting that is not going to be used and then ultimately being used for a purpose that was not the intended use. I hope you can appreciate that.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: I understand, totally.

Councilmember Cowden: With KCCC, our correctional center, I am seeing this under Workforce & Tourism but that could be Ag, right? It seems like training in Ag or you said carpentry. It does not seem like the Kaua'i Community Correctional Center is a good match for tourism.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Oh, yes, it just happens to be that she covers workforce, and so she has the workforce context, so even like when we met with the Office of Prosecuting Attorney on different plans...

Councilmember Cowden: This seems like this could be a good partner with the reentry program because if they are pretrained, and are actually...with some of the different companies like Kaua'i Coffee, Hartung Brothers, etcetera, they work and they build up some money in an account, and so it helps them to be a prime candidate for positive reentry.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Noted. We will look at that for the next reiteration.

Council Chair Rapozo: I noticed on the slide you have the Sister City, that is the division that would cover the Sister City?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Yes.

Council Chair Rapozo: We have been invited to participate in a Sister City arrangement with a city in South Korea for next year, so I will get with...

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Alright! Yes, they have been working with us for agriculture innovation, so we are really interested in that.

Councilmember DeCosta: I have a question on the upcoming project at Kaua'i Community Correctional Center, can you talk about this program? Are they going to attend Kaua'i Community College and be instructed or are we instructing them?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: That was the original plan and then we found out how difficult it was to get people to Kaua'i Community College. The idea now is to build them a facility onsite, and that can be part of their carpentry skills, and then we are trying to figure out the WiFi aspects, so that they can do online classes in there. That is the tricky part, because they are not allowed WiFi access, so we have to figure that out technically on how that would actually be used. It is probably the most complicated piece at this point.

Councilmember DeCosta: Is the State willing to match us dollar for dollar on this? They are state inmates, and not community inmates, are they not?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: We have not gotten any offers to help us fund this, but we have other funders in workforce development that would be interested.

Councilmember DeCosta: Okay, but these are the inmates in Kaua'i Community Correctional Center.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Yes.

Councilmember DeCosta: Which are State inmates.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Yes.

Councilmember DeCosta: Okay.

Council Chair Rapozo: But they are going to be released into our world. If we can cue them up for getting a job...

Councilmember Kualii: And some of them are our residents.

Councilmember DeCosta: I understand. I just see we have a drug treatment facility that we have not gotten up and running, that they are going to start at the youth age before they even end up at the Kaua'i Community Correctional Center, which I think that is a preventative way to do it. I just want to make sure we are being equitable and fair and when we do grants for people who need help to get a head start in the community. That is a community group right there who is underage that we should be supporting.

Council Chair Rapozo: Alright. Kaua'i Made. That is an ongoing project. It really does help our Kaua'i businesses.

Councilmember Kagawa: Do the farmers markets fall under Kaua'i Made?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: They fall under Ag.

Councilmember Kagawa: Okay, thank you. There were accusations that some of the folks are buying Costco types of things and then selling...is there truth to that? Have we verified that?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: We do have a program where the Ag Specialist goes out to monitor the farms, not only that the at the Sunshine Markets, too. They have rules they have to follow and then we have to check what is on their table, their prices are correct, and if we find the Costco pineapples, they have to go.

Councilmember Kagawa: Do we do periodic checks?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Checks? Yes.

Councilmember Kagawa: Because the typical prices of the farmers markets are going to be a little higher than the store?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Some are, and some are not.

Councilmember Kagawa: Just depends. But then for a lot of the local people, they feel like they are buying locally grown fresh, organic.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: They have regular customers that know where they are going to be and they go right from the beginning.

Councilmember Kagawa: I mean, I love it. I love when we buy farmers markets things and supporting Kaua'i.

Council Chair Rapozo: The Kaua'i sweet onions are much better than the Maui onion. Are there any further questions on the Kaua'i Made?

Councilmember DeCosta: I would like to think most of them are businesses.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Yes.

Councilmember DeCosta: Right, when they sell their Kaua'i Made produce, why would the Kaua'i Made not be categorized under Business and we can consolidate those two (2)?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: They do work closely together. It is just the maturing of the project. Originally, it was under the director a long time ago and then it has been passed on over time to Melissia Sugai who has it now, and she has the relationship with all the vendors now. Right now, we are practicing adding more people to that, and so if anyone leaves, we will have continuity. It is a loved program, that is for sure.

Councilmember DeCosta: All of your project managers for each division all help each other?

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Yes. We operate in teams, so one (1) person will be on multiple teams, there are three (3) teams. They are learning what each other does, while also being able to back each other up. One (1) person goes deep like on Business, but you have two (2) other people helping you that are on the surface helping with things. Kaua'i Made has a team of three (3) that work really closely together to make that program run smoothly, and they do a lot of events.

Councilmember DeCosta: I noticed accounting is a very big aspect of your division, and accounting is something you have to learn in college, you just cannot pick up accounting. Your accountant, does she support everyone else and they support her also with the different accounting?

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Yes. We have one (1) person who handles federal accounts and then we have one (1) person who handles all others, which she has learned over time and we are grateful she was able to take over from the accountant when he retired.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there further questions on Kaua'i Made? Let us go to management. That is pretty much it. That was one heck of a presentation. Thank you. Does anyone have questions? We went through everything that is in our budget.

Councilmember Bulosan: I just wanted to say thank you. The economic challenges that we face, businesses are struggling every day, with the cost of living, struggling to find people, OED has been the hope for all the sectors that we need to survive, especially for local business owners, you folks are often the lifeline, so thank you for the work you folks are doing.

Council Chair Rapozo: Is there anything else before we break for lunch?

Councilmember Kagawa: Yes. I think I have one that crosses over Ag and Kaua'i Made is that I have some friends that are wild pig hunters, and I think some of their sausage with the wild pig has been better than any sausage I have ever eaten. They work hand-in-hand because there are so many farmers, like banana farmers, that are just being ravaged by wild pigs. There are a lot of people with full freezers, no one wants the meat, but if we could have some of these local cooks that can get sausage production going, I think it could be a good product and then maybe we can get more demand for wanting to eradicate those feral pigs.

Ms. Kaaui Brun: Noted, we will make note of that.

Councilmember Kagawa: Thank you.

Councilmember DeCosta: A lot of times you folks say things and I am going to praise him, this is the best innovative idea I ever heard, but let us follow up something concrete. Community/County slaughterhouse, why have we not done that yet? Why have we not put funding for a community slaughterhouse? We have done that for community kitchens. Let us do a community slaughterhouse on a County property, maybe at Waimea 400, because that wild pig cannot make sausage unless it goes to a slaughterhouse. I have been singing this tune a lot and no one seems to listen. Time for you to listen. Community slaughterhouse, let us put the money, let us have a place for people to take their animals to a certified slaughterhouse, and come up with a certified product that can be inserted to the community for food security. Kaua'i Made. You want to make sausage, let us do that. Thank you.

Council Chair Rapozo: Everyone breathe.

Councilmember DeCosta: I have to go to the bathroom.

(Councilmember DeCosta was noted as not present.)

Council Chair Rapozo: Okay, let us finish up right now. Are there any further questions or comments? If not, thank you.

Councilmember Kualii: Thank you for your work and this report is really amazing.

Ms. Kaauwai Brun: Thank you.

Councilmember Carvalho: Great job on this overall structure, all teamwork.

Council Chair Rapozo: Makes the dream work. Planning, I am sorry, we need to take our lunch break. You folks come back after lunch, because we have to feed our staff.

There being no objections, the meeting recessed at 12:37 p.m.

The Committee reconvened at 1:42 p.m., and proceeded as follows:

(Councilmember DeCosta and Councilmember Kagawa were noted as not present.)

Council Chair Rapozo: Welcome back. We will wrap up today with the Planning Department.

There being no objections, the rules were suspended.

Planning Department

KA'ĀINA S. HULL, Planning Director: Good afternoon, Chair. Ka'āina Hull with the Planning Department. I can briefly go into the operational synopsis. I know you have a copy, so I will be brief. Operationally, we are not proposing much this year. In fact, aside from salary and wages, collective bargaining increases that are a part of our contracts, we are actually only proposing a twelve-thousand-dollar (\$12,000.00) increase, and that is to deal with a little bit of inflationary things with some of our operational expenses and whatnot.

(Councilmember DeCosta was noted as present.)

Mr. Hull: In our operational challenges, I think we went through them at the CIP discussion concerning our office space, a potential move-over, and the spatial plan that the County has had for several years, as well as the digitalization of permits and data which will bring us into the twenty-first (21st) century, and help us better access, record, and have a resource of our six million plus (6,000,000+) pages of legal land use entitlements. Some of our highlights from this past year...we wrapped up the first phase of what we are calling Plantation Camp Zoning. That was for Kaumakani Avenue and Kaumakani Camp. We are in what you could call Phase 2 of Plantation Camp Zoning. We just wrapped up the first draft for Numila Camp and we are about coding for Camp 6. Depending on if the landowners are okay with it, we anticipate having those bills up before this body in maybe three (3) or four (4) months. From there, we would be moving into Phase 3, and the final phase, which would be a subdivision ordinance and form-based code for plantation camps. Right now, we are doing Plantation Camp Zoning for existing camps to be able to expand a little bit. Recognizing that there may be areas of land that landowners, individuals, or organizations want to use potential plantation camp form and character, we would like to spin up a draft ordinance for that, but we figured we would do that after Numila Camp and Camp 6. We are also eyeballs-deep in our Climate Adaptation Plan and we expect to have the first draft of that available for public review and there will be a robust amount of

community outreach with that first draft...in two (2) months, we should have that first draft out, and it will take three (3) or four (4) months of community outreach with that first draft. We are also just initiating the East Kaua'i Community Plan, which has not been updated for a few decades here. We are excited to transition from our Climate Adaptation Plan project to the East Kaua'i Community Plan. Some updates on our Enforcement Division, which is broken into a couple of different sections. One that I know is of interest to the public and is a personal pride of mine, is the Vacation Rental Section of the Enforcement Division. That is down to about two (2) enforcement officers who actively monitor the world wide web, checking in on various websites. I am sorry. I will backtrack. We enforce on the memorandum of understanding (MOU) that we have Airbnb and Expedia. Airbnb and Expedia provide data. Expedia provides it monthly as far as who all their users and operators are and where they are located, and we continuously check that against our system to make sure they are only occurring in the Visitor Destination Area (VDA). Airbnb has spun up something that is far more superior than what we asked for. It is basically a backdoor portal into Airbnb, in which our staff will constantly and routinely monitor any new operators on that website to make sure they are operating within the VDA. Those that are not that we catch through these portals...Airbnb lets us know that they can kick them off at any time, but we actually have them leave it up for a while to see if they, the operator, once to get the notice of violation from us, voluntarily removes it from the website. Some do. Those that do not are hit with a second notice of violation and a fine. Then and only then do we ask Airbnb to affirmatively kick them off. The enforcement team has two (2) specifically dedicated for this active vacation rental enforcement program. The rest are dedicated to Coastal Zone Management (CZM) enforcement, as well as standard Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance (CZO) enforcement. This past year, we collected roughly fifty-five thousand dollars (\$55,000) in fines, which is on par with the past few years. In 2023, we collected about fifty-nine thousand dollars (\$59,000), in 2022, we collected forty-six thousand dollars (\$46,000), and in 2021, we collected six thousand dollars (\$6,000). That is us in a nutshell. Do you have any questions or concerns with any aspect?

Council Chair Rapozo:

Councilmember DeCosta.

Councilmember DeCosta: Thank you for that explicit information, Ka'āina, and for all you do with your Department. For those VDAs where you have the Transient Vacation Rentals (TVRs) and you catch advertising for areas that are not in the VDA...so basically, someone is piggybacking on someone's VDA advertising online, what is the penalty for that? Here is a scenario. You have a TVR and you are in a VDA. I do not, but I have a room or an additional dwelling unit (ADU) that I want to rent, and come to you saying, "If you advertise for me, I will drop you five percent (5%) or ten percent (10%) a year, because you have a right to have that account and I do not." There are a lot of secrets things happening on Kaua'i and they have been doing that. Is there a plan in place where the County can actually take away that person's TVR license if they are caught doing something like that?

Mr. Hull: Generally, it is not that they are explicitly in cahoots with the VDA operator. Sometimes, they will grab the VDA operator's advertisements and, unbeknownst to the VDA operator, will try to use it in their advertisement.

Councilmember DeCosta: That is the excuse they are telling you. They are telling you that, but they are in cahoots.

Mr. Hull: It could well be that. When you go on secondary sites, like Craigslist and whatnot, you will actually see VDA operators posting, "If you are seeing this advertisement on this website, this is my home. It is not intended to be used or rented out." There are definitely instances where we know for a fact that they are grabbing it without the landowner's consent.

Councilmember DeCosta: What is the repercussion? Is there a fine in place? Can they lose their license? How strict is the County with things like this?

Mr. Hull: We have not come across a case where they are working in cahoots. In every single case that we have come across, they have been using it illegally. We will notify that property owner that their advertisement is being used, and they are upset when it happens.

Councilmember DeCosta: Okay.

Council Chair Rapozo: Go ahead.

Councilmember Cowden: Do you have one? You can go ahead.

Council Chair Rapozo: You collected fifty-five thousand five hundred dollars (\$55,500). Was that TVR fines or from regular planning CZOs?

Mr. Hull: For the last year, some were CZO, some were TVR.

Council Chair Rapozo: Okay.

Mr. Hull: It is six thousand dollars (\$6,000) for TVR operations. There was a ten-thousand-dollar (\$10,000) fine for a TVR, a four-thousand-dollar (\$4,000) fine for a TVR, another ten-thousand-dollar (\$10,000) fine for a TVR, and some Special Management Area (SMA) things.

Council Chair Rapozo: In your report, you said the expenditures were ninety-three thousand eight hundred thirty-five dollars (\$93,835). Do you still have an eighty-nine-day contract position?

Mr. Hull: We do.

Council Chair Rapozo: Do you have one (1)?

Mr. Hull: Yes.

Council Chair Rapozo: Is that one (1) of the two (2) inspectors?

Mr. Hull: No.

Council Chair Rapozo: How many investigators do you have?

Mr. Hull: We have one (1) fully dedicated to only TVRs. Another one will split their time in half (½) between TVRs and CZO violations. At the

beginning of when I started as Director in 2018, they were both fully dedicated to TVRs. We brought those numbers down. Advertisements are not as robust as they were four (4) years ago, so he is segueing some of his time with CZOs. If we begin to see spikes...every now and then, we will see a minor little spike where we see illegal advertisements online, and that individual will spend one hundred percent (100%) of their time on TVRs.

Council Chair Rapozo: Okay. Thirty-five thousand dollars (\$35,000) for Granicus, for internet-based investigation and tracking.

Mr. Hull: That one was originally called Host Compliance. They use their own algorithms to monitor various third-party hosting platforms, like Airbnb, but also ones that we do not have MOUs with, like FlipKey, Craigslist, and an array of different ones. They monitor through their algorithms if there are illegal operations there.

Council Chair Rapozo: Is this a service that we...

Mr. Hull: Yes.

Council Chair Rapozo: Then forty-six thousand dollars (\$46,000) was used to purchase equipment and supplies. We had a discussion about the existing violation going on. I do not want to get into the discussion of the issue or the parcel, but you said something like the County cannot fine them on the first notice of violation. Is that for all violations?

Mr. Hull: With the exception of Coastal Zone Management violations. We have the authority to issue fines right off the bat, and we generally do on all Coastal Zone Management Act violations. With anywhere outside of the Coastal Zone Management Area, we are required by law to put the landowner on notice first and if they fail to come under compliance, then we do have the authority to fine with the second notice of violation.

Council Chair Rapozo: Is that a State law or a County law.

Mr. Hull: It is a State law.

Council Chair Rapozo: Okay. It is best to just get caught and get it fixed before the second violation. Is that a State law?

Mr. Hull: Yes.

Council Chair Rapozo: Okay. We will work with the County Attorney to see how we can fix that. That is crazy. Councilmember Cowden.

Councilmember Cowden: On page 75, towards the bottom of the list...

Council Chair Rapozo: We are on the overview.

Councilmember Cowden: Okay.

Council Chair Rapozo: Go ahead.

Councilmember DeCosta: You mentioned Plantation Camp Zoning and I am very supportive of that, but the Numila Camp and the Robinson Camp...Are those the two (2)? Are any of those landowners interested in having a lease-to-own or rent-to-own program, instead of just renting? Right now, they have a rental program, right? They have plantation dwellings where they craft the houses to look the same, they can expand, they can have more units per land area, but it is all for rent. There is no incentive for local families to own a place. Would these landowners be incentivized to do a rent-to-own or lease-to-own? Is that part of the topic?

Mr. Hull: For the two (2) landowners that we are working with for Numila and Camp 6, it does not appear that they have any long-range plans for a rent-to-own or lease-to-own program. That is also part of why we want to look at allowing a formal Plantation Camp Zoning to happen in areas that did not have plantation camps before.

Councilmember DeCosta: Could you please lead the march on that rent-to-own or lease-to-own project. I think that is a huge thing for our local families to know that they can own something one day. We are doing everything we can to incentivize and help these large plantation landowners. What about helping the community members who want to buy that house? Maybe there could be a contingency later on that is embedded where if they want to do this project, fifty percent (50%) goes to rent and fifty percent (50%) goes to rent-to-own.

Mr. Hull: I can have those conversations with them. I can say that we also have to come to the Council, ultimately, to adopt any of those types of ordinances, so I can definitely share that in conversations.

Councilmember DeCosta: I am just giving you the conversation. Plant the seed, Ka'āina, and now you water it.

Council Chair Rapozo: Does anyone else have questions on the overview? If not, we will go to page 75. Councilmember Cowden.

Councilmember Cowden: Towards the bottom of page 75, where it says, "Land Use Permit Technician, Account Clerk, CZM Enforcement Officer, Planner III," there is no amount for those. Is that because it is paid from a different fund?

Mr. Hull: They are federally-funded positions.

Councilmember Cowden: Do you still have those positions?

Mr. Hull: Yes, we do. Two (2) of them are vacant right now. Of course, we are hoping to fill them. Planner III and the Land Use Permit Technician are the federally-funded positions that are currently vacant.

Councilmember Cowden: Do you have the money to fill them, but are not filling them because you do not have any applicants?

Mr. Hull: Yes, we do not have the applicants. In checking with HR for the Planner position, I believe there are twelve (12) applicants that they are processing right now. If they are qualified, then the list gets sent to us.

Councilmember Cowden: Okay. Relating to positions and a blank space, if I can flip a couple of pages...is that okay, Councilmember Kualii?

Council Chair Rapozo: Hold on. I know Councilmember Kualii still has not talked about the positions.

Councilmember Cowden: Alright.

Councilmember Kualii: Position No. 2008 at the top is dollar-funded. The recruitment status is "Return Rights Position." What is going on with that position?

Mr. Hull: That is from when I initially signed up to be the Deputy Director under former Mayor Carvalho. It is the same with Mayor Kawakami. I had no desire to enter the private sector, so it was a contractual agreement for me to have return rights to my position once I am done with the Director position.

Councilmember Kualii: Okay.

Councilmember DeCosta: I have a clarifying question.

Council Chair Rapozo: Is it on that position?

Councilmember DeCosta: It is on his position.

Council Chair Rapozo: Go ahead.

Councilmember DeCosta: Are you saying that we might lose you if this was not put in place?

Mr. Hull: The Planning Director is appointed by the Planning Commission, but as soon as this mayor is done, it is generally good for the Director to step down so the incoming mayor can bring their cabinet in.

Councilmember DeCosta: I am advocating for you. You are good at your job. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Hull: Thank you, Councilmember.

Councilmember Kualii: Is it that it is a civil service position and that is just how the right is set up?

Mr. Hull: That is the position I had as a Planner in the Department.

Councilmember Kualii: The next vacant position is Position No. 2028, Staff Services Assistant, and it has been vacant since November of last year. The recruitment status says, "No activity." Has that changed?

Mr. Hull: Yes, definitely. We are going intra-recruitment. There is someone within the office who has expressed interest in the position. We feel the

person is absolutely qualified. We just need to go through the process and hope to have that filled in two (2) or three (3) months.

Councilmember Kualii: Okay. Thank you, Chair.

Council Chair Rapozo: Are there any other questions on page 75? We are moving on to page 76. Go ahead.

Councilmember Cowden: This is at the very bottom of page 76 that blurs over to page 77. It is the Sea Grant Services and Investigations. It says one hundred sixty-seven thousand dollars (\$167,000), then I could not tell in the next place, where it is blank. You still have that position filled, right?

Mr. Hull: Yes.

Councilmember Cowden: It is the person who has been doing it for a number of years. Is that job position changing in any way?

Mr. Hull: No.

Councilmember Cowden: Alright. That is all.

Mr. Hull: Thank you.

Council Chair Rapozo: Okay. Are there any other questions on pages 76 or 77? If not, we are moving on. The next is Planning Commission on page 79.

Councilmember Cowden: I still have a question.

Council Chair Rapozo: Go ahead.

Councilmember Cowden: Is the software for the Planning Department all paid for through the Department of Finance? I do not see the software.

Mr. Hull: The vast majority of it is. There are a few Adobe licenses and whatnot that we pay for and is a little separate from what the Information Technology (IT) Division things are, but a lot of the GIS and whatnot...

Councilmember Cowden: I am hardly seeing anything in there for what it would really take. Is that what we were seeing in the Department of Finance?

Mr. Hull: Yes.

Councilmember Cowden: Okay.

Council Chair Rapozo: Is there anything else? Are there any other questions for the Planning Department in general?

Councilmember Cowden: Are we going to the Planning Commission?

Council Chair Rapozo: Okay. Planning Commission is a flat budget. It is what it is. I apologize, we could have taken you before lunch. I expected a little more discussion.

Councilmember Kualii: Can I ask a question?

Council Chair Rapozo: Yes, please.

Councilmember Kualii: The Hawai'i Congress of Planning Officials (HCPO) Conference is such a small amount. When does it cycle around for the County to host again?

Mr. Hull: We hosted it two (2) years ago, so it will be another four (4) years, I think, before it comes back. That amount pays for a commissioner to attend HCPO.

Councilmember Kualii: Is that why it is under the Planning Commission?

Mr. Hull: Yes.

Councilmember Kualii: When the County does host, is it someplace else and is a higher budget?

Mr. Hull: Not really. We do that totally separately. We do not use any County money for it. We use County employees to help staff it, but we do not spend any County money.

Councilmember Kualii: It is a good event.

Councilmember Cowden: I have a question.

Council Chair Rapozo: Go ahead.

Councilmember Cowden: All the legal money that goes on here, is it in Boards & Commissions?

Mr. Hull: Yes.

Council Chair Rapozo: Is that all? Alright, thank you very much.

Mr. Hull: Thank you all.

Council Chair Rapozo: That will conclude today's review.

Councilmember DeCosta: Thank you to your staff and board. They do an excellent job.

Council Chair Rapozo: We will see everyone back here tomorrow morning at 9:00 a.m.

There being no objections, the Committee recessed at 2:04 p.m.