

POLICY ADVISORY BOARD FOR ELDER AFFAIRS (PABEA)
IN-PERSON AND VIA ZOOM
No. 1 Capitol District | 250 South Hotel Street | Conference Room 410
Friday, June 5, 2026 | 12:00 noon

MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Beverly Gotelli called the meeting to order at 12:00 noon.

ROLL CALL

Appointed members present: Beverly Gotelli, Louise Johnson, Stephen Lung, Sara Lenzer Medeiros (joined the meeting after the roll was called), Shelly Ogata (joined the meeting after the roll was called), Suzie Schulberg (joined the meeting at 12:07 a.m. after the roll was called), Marilyn Seely, Barbara Service (joined the meeting at 12:05 p. m. after the roll was called), Gary Simon, Rick Tabor, Leslie Tanoue, and Raelene Tenno.

Appointed members excused and absent: Poki'i Balaz, William Kinaka, and Lisa Spencer.

(A quorum was established as eight members were present at roll call. This board requires eight members to be present in order to establish a quorum.)

Ex-officio members present: Alan Burdick, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations Office of Community Services (DLIR OCS); Kathy Ishihara, Department of Human Services (DHS); and Jienelle Herndon, San Francisco Office of Program Operations and Local Engagement, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS); and Jordan Lewis, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Center on Aging (COA).

Executive Office on Aging (EOA) staff and Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) staff present: Candice Bryant, Caroline Cadirao, Rowena Dagdag-Andaya, Ka'u'ionalani Fukuda, Emily Ishida, Norma Kop, Josephine Lum, James Marchant, Jan Mori, Lani Sakamoto, Tani Kalei Salazar, Jazlyn Wandasan, and Jason Wong.

Guests present: Charlene Iboshi and Audrey Suga-Nakagawa, Director of Advocacy, AARP Hawaii.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

The draft minutes of May 1, 2026 in-person and Zoom PABEA meeting were approved as circulated.

EOA DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Below is Caroline's report from today's agenda:

- June is Elder Justice Awareness Month. Webinars are being hosted by the Administration for Community Living for professionals, advocates, and the community to raise awareness about elder justice.

- EOA legislative session - EOA monitored about 428 aging and disability related bills and resolutions and submitted about 67 testimonies.
- HB1800 State Budget – EOA took a slight reduction of \$382,188. EOA is reviewing operational costs so that there is minimal impact on funding for services.
- Caroline attended the Hawaii, Maui and Kauai OAM recognition events. Thank you to the County Executives and staff for the warm invitations and the fellowship.
- EOA's Advocacy, Education, and Outreach Section launched KupunaReady, a disaster-preparedness website to support older adults. The site gained visibility during the Kona Lows weather events. Caroline distributed the KupunaReady flyer.
- Through Senior Medicare Patrol Hawai'i (SMP Hawai'i), EOA helped spotlight scams affecting kupuna. After experiencing a scam herself, retired news anchor Linda Coble reached out to SMP and has become an advocate, using her platform to raise public awareness.

Caroline reported that EOA will be conducting PABEA orientation on July 10, 2026 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. No committee meetings will be scheduled for July 10, 2026. Caroline requests that PABEA members attend the orientation in-person. PABEA members with extenuating circumstances may attend the orientation via Zoom. EOA will be providing lunch at the orientation. Caroline thanked Shelly Ogata, William Kinaka, and Lisa Spencer for their service as PABEA members.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Beverly thanked Shelly for her service. Beverly reported that she and Caroline attended the Kauai Older Americans Month Celebration. The event was well attended. Beverly and Caroline have been working on the agenda to streamline it and make it more efficient. Beverly and Caroline developed an outline for the PABEA orientation to help new PABEA members and PABEA committee chairs understand their roles and responsibilities. Beverly thanked all PABEA members for their service.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Rick reported that the Legislative Committee met this morning and reviewed bills that the Legislature passed and bills that the Legislature did not pass. The Committee will not meet in July 2026 but will meet in August 2026. At the August meeting, the Committee will examine how it will proceed over the next year.

PLANS AND PROJECTS REVIEW COMMITTEE (PPRC)

Raelene reported that PPRC met this morning and discussed the report template used by the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs). The AAAs will continue to use the report template.

RECOGNITION AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (RAC)

Rick reported that the Older Americans Month celebration is next week on June 12, 2026 at the 15 Craigside Solarium. Setup will begin at 8:30 a.m. Registration begins at 10:30 a.m. The celebration will finish by 1:30 p.m. Caroline has wooden bowls for the honorees. The pictures and the proclamation have been framed. Barbara has picked up the leis. Approximately 63 to 64 attendees are expected. Volunteer assignments are fewer this year. Leslie and Kimberly Itagaki will staff the registration table. Tia Ho will help with photography. Ceiling speakers will

be used for musical entertainment. Please let Rick know if the sound volume from the speakers is too loud. Honorees will have an opportunity to speak for up to two minutes each.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No unfinished business was presented.

ELECTION OF 2026 – 2027 OFFICER BY SECRET BALLOT

Caroline distributed paper ballots to PABEA members attending today's meeting in-person. PABEA members attending via Zoom sent their vote to Josephine via Zoom chat. The slate of officers is:

- Nominee for Chairperson: Beverly Gotelli
- Nominee for First Vice Chairperson: Gary Simon
- Nominee for Second Vice Chairperson: Suzie Schulberg

Caroline tallied the votes and announced that 11 of 12 PABEA members voted in favor of the entire slate of officers.

A motion to adopt the results of the election was made, seconded, and approved.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

No public testimony was offered.

APPOINTED MEMBERS' REPORTS

Rick reported that he is a member of the State Health Planning and Development Agency Honolulu Subarea Health Planning Council (HONSAC). The Governor has secured \$189 million in Federal funds for rural healthcare. Each subarea is recruiting new committee members to help oversee how the funding is utilized and to suggest improvements on how the funding can be utilized. Rick will send the address of the application website to Caroline to forward to PABEA members.

ADOPTION OF THE 2026 – 2027 CALENDAR (attached)

Beverly commented that the July PABEA meeting is scheduled for July 10, 2026 and that the January meeting is scheduled for January 8, 2027 in accordance with the bylaws that PABEA meet on the second Friday of the month if a state or federal holiday falls on the first Friday of the month. Josephine will resend the correct calendar to PABEA members. A motion to adopt the 2026 – 2027 calendar was made, seconded, and approved.

EX-OFFICIOS MEMBERS' REPORTS

Kathy Ishihara reported that Department of Human Services (DHS) Director Ryan Yamane announced his retirement on May 19, 2026 effective May 19, 2026. On May 19, 2026, the Governor appointed DHS Deputy Director Joseph Campos II as DHS Director effective May 29, 2026. Yesterday, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services informed the State of Hawaii that its Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU) has been denied federal certification. DHS will no longer fund MFCU. Director Campos wants EOA and PABEA to know that the Medicaid program provides essential healthcare coverage to hundreds of thousands of Hawaii residents. He wants our Medicaid members, providers, and community partners to know that Medicaid

benefits and services will continue without interruptions. Director Campos and Med-QUEST Division Administrator Meredith Nichols have an open-door policy. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Director Campos at his office phone number, (808) 586-4993.

Jordan Lewis commented that the semester has ended. Three Center on Aging (COA) team members have graduated with their doctorates. They will continue with COA, including managing and operating the Memory Garden. COA will begin new initiatives this fall, including a speaker series, establishing an affiliate faculty program, and building new partnerships. COA is in the process of writing a Pepper Center grant focused on functional independence in older adults. COA might ask for letters of support. Christy Nishita and her team established the Memory Garden adjacent to the University Laboratory School. The garden is ADA accessible. It was developed with the intention of being a memory garden for caregivers and people with dementia to visit and engage in activities geared towards people with dementia and their caregivers. The garden is free and open to the public. Visitors are welcome at any time. The COA website has a schedule of activities at the garden in which visitors can participate. Activities include harvesting and drying herbs to create your own tea and harvesting various vegetables and plants. Volunteers assist visitors to the garden. The garden was established by Melody Halzel, PhD, as part of her PhD research.

Attached is Alan Burdick's DLIR OCS report.

Alan reported that DLIR OCS received a larger than expected second grant from the USDA for the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP). The grant increases the number of participants for this year's program. The Hawaii Food Bank donates approximately \$19,000 in funds it receives for administrative expenses to SFMNP (in lieu of completing the burdensome electronic paperwork) to increase the number of participants the Hawaii Foodbank can serve. Oahu has funding for 5,248 participants. Kauai has funding for 386 participants. Sometimes, Kauai is not subscribed fully. Its surplus will be transferred to Hawaii. For the very first time, SFMNP will be extended to Molokai at its main farmers' market. Except for Lanai, all inhabited islands in the County of Maui will be served. Hawaii Island is a challenge because of its large geographical size relative to other islands. Hawaii Island has funding for 1,685 participants. 25 percent of the State's poverty level population is on Hawaii Island. SFMNP operates from April 1 to October 31.

Jienelle Herndon commented that any stakeholder feedback regarding Hawaii's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit can be emailed to CMS Region 9 at ROSFOORA@cms.hhs.gov. On June 1, 2026, CMS officially issued its interim, final rule with commentary period on the Medicaid Work Requirement. The rule will be implemented on January 1, 2027. The rule applies to non-pregnant, able-bodied adults between the ages of 19 and 64. CMS' official newsroom article summarizing the rule is at [CMS Newsweek article on Medicaid work requirement](#). This is an interim final rule with a commentary period. Those who would like to submit official comments can go to [Federal Register when you can make comments on this interim rule](#). Unofficial comments can be emailed to Jienelle. Jienelle entered in the Zoom chat that CMS is hosting a guest speaker from the Social Security Administration (SSA) for a webinar tailored to seniors explaining how SSA and CMS work together to serve beneficiaries. The webinar is scheduled for June 26, 2026 at 10:30 a.m. Hawaii time. Register at <https://tinyurl.com/SSA-CMS>.

Hawaii County Office of Aging

Ka'u'ionalani reported that Hawaii County had a fun Older Americans Month event. HCOA is excited to begin planning for next year's event. HCOA is filling its vacancies. HCOA has

lowered some of its vacant positions to trainee levels to increase the number of applicants. Applicants who are hired will be placed on a career path to permanent class. HCOA is working on its area plan and is in the distribution phase of its surveys, receiving input from kupuna and providers. The survey QR code and the survey link were provided to all County Council members. They distributed the code and link to constituents in their districts. The survey QR code and survey link were also provided to Vibrant Hawaii, a nonprofit on Hawaii Island. Vibrant Hawaii distributed it to people with whom they are in contact. HCOA is working with Vibrant Hawaii to set up focus groups in every district on Hawaii Island. HCOA distributed the survey to the Hawaii County Research and Development team, who will distribute the survey to those on their contact lists. HCOA also distributed surveys to providers with which HCOA works with.

Kauai Agency on Elderly Affairs (KAEA)

Attached is Emily's May 2026 KAEA Executive Report.

Emily reported that KAEA is focusing on ensuring that KAEA is fully staffed. KAEA recently hired two accountants. They are at the same level and are cross-training each other. KAEA has an intern who is a graduate of Kapaa High School. She is in her third year in college. She has been helping with entering results from the KAEA survey for its area plan into SurveyMonkey. She is training as one of the information referral specialists and going into community with the staff, helping to man the phones and acting as the first point of contact as KAEA has two vacant information referral specialist positions. KAEA reallocated one of its staff members to the data analyst position. KAEA has relocated to the conference room across from its former office. KAEA is collaborating with the Kauai County Housing Agency to help homeless by purchasing wellness kits, slippers, ponchos, etc. The Kauai County Council asked Emily how KAEA helps the homeless. KAEA is performing its surveys for its area plan. The first focus group was live within KAEA. KAEA is visiting agencies, providers, and hospitals. Emily will contact the County Council and Kauai County department heads to solicit their input. KAEA will be hosting its Second Annual Elder Justice Conference in two and a half weeks. Paul Greenwood will be participating in the conference. Emily thanked Caroline for attending the Kauai OAM celebration and for announcing the two awardees.

Maui County Office on Aging (MCOA)

Attached is Rowena's Maui County Executive's Report for June 2026.

Rowena reported that she used the Mon Ami data system to tally the service type, the number of clients for each service type, the number of units, and the sum of the costs. The only downside is that the system does not count all the home-delivered meals because there is an issue with the data collection and how the information is entered into the system. Rowena hopes to resolve the issue by the next PABEA meeting. MCOA is having issues with filling positions due to funding. MCOA receives funding from three sources. In the FY 2027 budget, MCOA has shifted four positions from Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) funding to general funds to stabilize funding for the four positions. Thus, some ADRC funds are available for other uses. MCOA also funds positions through Title III funds. If the need for direct services increases, MCOA prioritizes direct services over filling vacancies. MCOA is working with Adult Protective Services, Maui Police Department, and with hospitals to find solutions for kupuna seeking temporary sheltering, such as kupuna who are displaced, are experiencing an emergency event, or are in an abusive situation. If a senior is in a situation where the senior is being abused and a call for assistance is placed, the police department removes the senior from the home. If the senior has dementia, no shelter is available. Seniors with dementia have been

brought to the hospital, but the hospital is an inappropriate shelter for the senior. Women Helping Women can help occasionally. Some of the homeless shelters on Maui are full. A solution with 24-hour availability is needed where a professional can assist a senior's needs and a case manager can identify next of kin or other people who can provide support. MCOA nominated one of its Aging and Disability Services Specialists (ADSS) for a national award. MCOA Aging and Disability Services Specialist IV Cary Valdez has been selected as the recipient of the 2026 Community Champion Award, presented by Mom's Meals and USAging. She will be recognized at the 2026 USAging National Conference in July in San Diego. She is awarded a free trip to San Diego, free hotel accommodations, and free conference registration. Cary has been with MCOA for over 30 years. She is in her 70s and continues to perform case management, intake, and home visits. She supports many families in discussions about long-term services and support. She is often the referee between siblings, parents, and children. She had an instrumental role in the Lahaina and Kula wildfires, connecting seniors with services. She helped a family that was still in their condominium in Lahaina. Everyone else had left. They had nothing. Cary helped the family with obtaining identification cards and connected them with transportation services. Cary is committed to providing services although she is a kupuna herself.

AI DISASTER PREDICTIONS FOR HAWAII

Marilyn commented that AI disaster modeling predicts extremely dire consequences for Hawaii and its residents. She strongly encourages all to prepare now for safe shelter and a robust supply of food for a disaster. Marilyn will gather more information for PABEA and might secure a guest speaker on the topic.

Jienelle will inquire whether the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR) utilizes AI models.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Kupuna Caucus Meeting, Friday, June 5, 2026, 2:00 p.m. via Zoom.
- Older Americans Month event, June 12, 2026, 10:00 a.m., 15 Craigside Solarium.
- PABEA Orientation, Friday, July 10, 2026, 9:30 a. m. – 11:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT OF PABEA MEETING

Beverly adjourned the meeting at 1:06 p.m.