

POLICY ADVISORY BOARD FOR ELDER AFFAIRS (PABEA)
IN-PERSON AND VIA ZOOM
No. 1 Capitol District | 250 South Hotel Street | Conference Room 410
Friday, August 7, 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: Poki'i Balaz, Beverly Gotelli, Louise Johnson, Roy Katsuda, Stephen Lung, Sara Lenzer Medeiros, Suzie Schulberg, Marilyn Seely, Barbara Service, Leimomi Shearer, Gary Simon, Scott Spallina, Rick Tabor, and Kathy Wyatt.

Appointed members excused and absent: Raelene Tenno.

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

Ex-officio members present: Paula Cerio, Department of Health (DOH); Kathy Ishihara, Department of Human Services (DHS); Jordan Lewis, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Center on Aging (COA); and Ryan Mandado, Department of Education (DOE).

Executive Office on Aging (EOA) staff and Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) staff present: Harmoni Brennan, Candice Bryant, Caroline Cadirao, Rowena Dagdag-Andaya, Ka'u'ionalani Fukuda, Emily Ishida, Renee Kato, Josephine Lum, John McDermott, Jan Mori, SueAnn Yasuoka, Cristina Valenzuela, and Jason Wong.

Guests present: Percy Ihara; Kealii Lopez, State Director, AARP Hawaii; and Audrey Suga-Nakagawa, Director of Advocacy, AARP Hawaii.

Those attending in-person and via Zoom introduced themselves.

ADOPTION OF MEETING MINUTES

The draft minutes of July 10, 2026 in-person and Zoom PABEA meeting were adopted as circulated.

EOA DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Attached is Caroline's report. Caroline provided highlights from her report:

- Act 245 (HB 1853) establishes the Hanai (Hawaii's Assistance for the Navigation of Alzheimer's Intervention) Memory Network Program within EOA to create a statewide network of dementia care specialists and support systems to assist individuals with dementia and their caregivers and appropriates \$3 million to EOA. EOA had a request for

information this past week. The request for information allows EOA to gather information from the community. EOA had a Zoom meeting for the request for information. PABEA members can participate and provide feedback on the Hanai Memory Network Program via the request for information. Josephine will send the request for information to PABEA members. The request for information is in preparation for the request for proposals, in which vendors bid on the proposals to complete the work. EOA then selects bids and awards funding. PABEA members that have comments may contact Tani Salazar.

- Act 246 (HB 1973) establishes within DOH a one-year KupunAloha Pilot Program to provide in-home health care and support services to eligible participants who do not otherwise qualify for government assistance for these services and appropriates \$2 million for the pilot program. The pilot program sunsets June 30, 2027. EOA has been asked to administer the program. EOA completed the request for information, and the proposal was posted this past Monday. EOA is aiming to complete the contract for program by October 1, 2026.
- Hawaii State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) had their annual recertification on July 24, 2026 in preparation for open enrollment for Medicare from October 15 to December 7, 2026.
- EOA is in the community needs assessment survey stage of the State Plan on Aging. EOA is working with stakeholders and organizations to distribute the survey. DOH posted the link to the survey for its employees. Results from the survey will help shape the goals, objectives, and strategies for the State Plan on Aging 2027 - 2031. The counties have been successfully distributing their surveys widely.
- EOA is developing strategies for the Rural Health Transformation funds that have been appropriated for aging.
- Act 249 (HB 1804) requires EOA to develop the framework and scope of work for a study that examines the feasibility, impacts, and costs of different public and private financing options for long-term care services and supports and submit a report to the Legislature, authorizes the Executive Office on Aging to contract with the University of Hawai'i, and appropriates \$100,000 for the study. The contract is almost fully executed.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Beverly reported that she met with Caroline to discuss the PABEA orientation held in July. They also met to discuss a follow-up orientation that was also held. Beverly worked on neighbor island PABEA procedures and sent it to neighbor island PABEA members to let them know of the necessary procedures. The Plans and Projects Review Committee will be developing a PABEA procedure booklet. Beverly reminds PABEA members to select the PABEA Committees (Legislative Committee, Plans and Projects Review Committee, and the Recognition and Awards Committee) on which they would like to serve. Beverly encourages PABEA members to serve on more than one committee. She strongly encourages PABEA members to join the Recognition and Awards Committee. Currently, seven PABEA members are serving on the Legislative Committee, and three PABEA members are serving on the Plans and Projects Review Committee. Ideally, each committee should have an equal number of PABEA members. The Recognition and Awards Committee should have at least five PABEA members. Beverly will be contacting PABEA members who have not signed up for a committee. The Recognition and Awards Committee meets on the Thursday preceding the PABEA meeting from 9:00 to 9:30 a.m. The Recognition and Awards Committee will resume meeting in November 2026.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Gary reported that the Committee met this morning. The Committee reviewed 2026 aging and

disability legislation that was signed into law by the Governor and which Caroline covered in depth in her report. Gary announced at the Committee meeting that Rick Tabor is the Legislative Committee Vice Chair.

Josephine will send the EOA legislative recap report prepared by Cristina to PABEA members.

PLANS AND PROJECTS REVIEW COMMITTEE (PPRC)

Sara reported that the Committee met this morning and discussed the bylaws and reviewed the Committee's responsibilities. The Committee discussed how it can best serve EOA and kupuna served by EOA. The Committee discussed the procedure booklet, goals, and the format for the AAA reports. Sara thanked Candace for her service and support, especially with Robert's Rules of Order.

RECOGNITION AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (RAC)

Rick commented that he succeeded Kathy as Chair of RAC. Rick had been Vice Chair for many years. Rick has continued Kathy's format for planning the State Older Americans Month (OAM) awards ceremony and luncheon recognizing Hawaii's outstanding older Americans. The State OAM awards ceremony and luncheon is hosted by 15 Craigside in its solarium in June of each year. Rick recognized Suzie for her support and the support of 15 Craigside in hosting the OAM celebration. The 2027 OAM celebration is scheduled for Friday, June 4, 2027, from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Approximately seventy attendees are present at the celebration. Musical entertainment is provided by Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center. The theme of OAM is issued annually by the Administration for Community Living. Each county hosts its own awards celebration recognizing one female and one male older adult who serve their communities. The State OAM celebration at 15 Craigside recognizes the awardees from the counties. The Governor's office has indicated that the Governor might be available to attend the 2027 celebration. The next RAC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 5, 2026, 9:00 – 9:30 a.m.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No unfinished business was presented.

NEW BUSINESS:

No new business was offered.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

No public testimony was offered.

APPOINTED MEMBERS' REPORTS

No appointed members' reports were offered.

Beverly reminded appointed members to let her know ahead of the posting of the PABEA agenda if they have any items that they would like to report so that the member's report is included in the agenda.

EX-OFFICIOS MEMBERS' REPORTS

Jordan Lewis reported that the new semester at the University of Hawai'i begins in two weeks. He anticipates that the contract between EOA and the University of Hawai'i for Act 249 (HB 1804) will be finalized today.

Hawaii County Office of Aging (HCOA)

Attached is Ka'u'ionalani's Hawaii County AAA Executive Report for August 2026.

Ka'u'ionalani reported that HCOA hosted another good intergenerational event, *Sensory Summer*, last week in the HCOA training room. Turnout was good with approximately 45 children and 30 kupuna in attendance. Hawaii Police Department, Hawaii Island Community Health Center, and other community partners participated in the event. Much of the feedback was positive. Many would like the intergenerational events to continue. HCOA will seek funds to provide intergenerational events on a larger scale. HCOA is also partnering with Hawaii Electric Light Company (HELCO) and Hawaii Police Department to provide presentations on emergency preparedness training and fraud prevention. HCOA plans to continue these events with Hawaii Police Department and other community partners on topics of interest to kupuna. Emergency preparedness training was a requested topic. Vacancies at HCOA's Kona office have been difficult to fill. A volunteer at the Kona office has been volunteering there for a few weeks. HCOA is hopeful that the volunteer will be hired as a full-time civil service employee in the Kona office. HCOA depends greatly on its volunteers as staffing has been difficult.

City and County of Honolulu Elderly Affairs Division (EAD)

Renee Kato reported that EAD has been awarded \$2 million in funding to support EAD's nutrition programs for the kupuna. The award includes \$1 million in general funds and \$750,000 in grant funding. The funding will be used to strengthen and expand the kupuna nutrition services throughout Oahu. EAD is expanding its nutrition program offerings through a recent solicitation. EAD has added two nutrition services that will better address the needs of kupuna. One service offers emergency shelter meals to help provide shelf-stable emergency meals so that kupuna are better prepared for disasters considering the importance of what the State experienced with the Kona low storms. The emergency meals will be replenished, ensuring ongoing readiness for future emergencies. The other added service is the Green Bag Program that supports both the nutritional well-being of kupuna and the local agricultural community. Participants will receive locally grown and locally produced fruits and vegetables, increasing access to fresh, healthy foods while supporting local farmers and strengthening Oahu's food system. EAD hosted its open house at its new offices. Providers visited and learned how EAD operates its divisions.

Kauai Agency on Elderly Affairs (KAEA)

Attached is Emily's July 2026 KAEA Executive Report.

Emily shared a story illustrating the positive impact that KAEA and its staff have with kupuna: An 81-year-old lady living in her home on the west side of Kauai had been bedridden for 3 months due to emotional issues. She fell down 11 years ago and seriously injured her leg. She recovered and managed to help care for her husband, who had been hit by a car while riding his bike. A few years after that, she lost one of her daughters to cancer. Sometime between losing her daughter and her husband's eventual passing, she lost her best friend. She fell again

approximately 4 months ago and only suffered a minor injury to her toe. She began having panic attacks when trying to drive and relegated herself to the bed and had not left the bed. She does everything in the hospital bed, which was her husband's bed. She cleans herself via waterless bathing. She wears adult diapers and cleans and changes herself in her bed. Her grandson visits her in the morning and gives her food and takes out her trash. He returns in the afternoon to ensure that she is safe, helps her move her dishes, washes everything that needs to be cleaned, and ensures that she is safe for the night. She had no medical or physical reason to be bedbound. She was giving up. When KAEA visited her, she said she was sad and depressed and missed her daughter and her best friend and was ready to join them. By the end of the home visit by KAEA staff, she was asking about physical therapy. She agreed to counseling with Dr. Posado, a behavioral therapist. KAEA offers free therapy to its clients. Clients can receive counseling with Dr. Posado at KAEA or Dr. Posado can perform a home visit. The lady agreed to counseling with Dr. Posado. The lady also agreed to home-delivered meals, which she has begun to receive. KAEA staff have also referred her to Dr. Ash, a gerontologist who performs home visits. He will be seeing her soon. Ideally, he will refer her to physical therapy.

Maui County Office on Aging (MCOA)

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

Rowena reported that the Maui County on Aging staff, along with staff from other County agencies attended the USAging Conference. Rowena, another MCOA staff member, Habitat for Humanity, and Na Ho Aloha provided a presentation, *The Power of Pilina*, sharing the connections MCOA makes with other organizations and their volunteers. Approximately 25 attendees were present at the session. The presenters shared their experiences working with volunteer organizations and how the organizations and their volunteers have supported MCOA's work as an Area Agency on Aging (AAA). Habitat for Humanity helps MCOA with home modification and retrofits for low-income seniors and people with disabilities. Na Ho Aloha provides MCOA with services in friendly visiting, telephone reassurance, and transportation. Many on the continent were unaware that AAAs could partner with Habitat for Humanity. MCOA staff member Cary Valdez was recognized as the recipient of the 2026 Community Champion Award at the conference. Regarding the Rural Health Transformation Program, MCOA has submitted a proposal for its care transitions program, in which MCOA works with the hospital and other organizations that do community health work. A senior who exhibits risk factors would be enrolled in a 90-day program. MCOA will partner with the hospital, which will determine the senior's need for services such as transportation, personal care, and home-delivered meals. Services would be provided to the senior upon discharge from the hospital. MCOA will monitor the senior for 90 days and assign a community health worker to the senior. The community health worker will be part of an interdisciplinary team. Prior to the end of the 90 days, MCOA will transition the senior to Kupuna Care Program services offered by MCOA. Rowena has been meeting with the hospital and Ohana Pacific Health. Next week, she will meet with Maui Medical Group and other healthcare providers to understand how to create a better framework for referral and service delivery. MCOA is working with the County of Maui Workforce Development to examine how MCOA can use the funds that Workforce Development receives for workforce capacity.

Rowena commented that SHIP can refer seniors who have lost their Medicaid coverage due to the changes in eligibility rules to the AAAs.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Kupuna Caucus Meeting: Friday, August 7, 2026, 2:00 p.m. via Zoom. The Kupuna Caucus meeting agenda includes a presentation by Gary Powell of The Caregiver Foundation on *The Who, What and Why of The Caregiver Foundation*. The agenda also includes suggested proposals for bills. Beverly commented that attending the Kupuna Caucus meeting is optional for PABEA members. The co-conveners of the Kupuna Caucus are Senator Sharon Moriwaki and Representative Cory Chun. Anyone who has an interest in aging can attend the meeting. Recordings of Kupuna Caucus meetings are posted on YouTube.
- PABEA monthly meeting: Friday, September 4, 2026, 12:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT OF PABEA MEETING

Beverly adjourned the meeting at 12:55 p.m.