

DATE: June 27th, 2025

TIME: 10:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Crystal Glendon, Kirsha Durante, Andrew Kennedy (virtual), Gina Gormley (virtual)

ALSO PRESENT: Jon Ikenaga (Public Defender), Hayley Cheng (First Deputy Public Defender), Belinda Castillo (virtual), Bill Bento (virtual), Jerry Villanueva (virtual), Alyssa-Marie Kau (Attorney General, virtual), Ben Kreps, (virtual), Helen McCarty

Approval of Agenda

At 10:09 a.m., Chair Glendon requested approval for the Regular and Executive Session minutes from April 26th, 2024.

Member Gina moved for approval of minutes held on April 26th, 2025; Member Durante second motion; motion approved unanimously at 10:10 a.m.

Public Testimony

At 10:11 a.m., Chair Glendon solicited public testimony. (in person and zoom)

No public testimony received.

Public testimony closed at 10:11 a.m.

Report by Public Defender Jon Ikenaga: 10:11 a.m.

1. An office wide clean-up took place, leading to the reorganization of the library space.
2. The director of Budget and Finance visited the office.
3. A scheduled pickup for items requiring shredding has been set to occur periodically.
4. The annual Seminar was held in May, with positive feedback regarding the use of volunteer jurors in the Voir Dire exercises. The volunteers were reimbursed for their time with a small gratuity, and the office covered parking expenses.

5. The legislative session has ended, with many thanks to the legislative team who testified on 119 bills.
6. All attorneys in the office will be receiving raises in the form of a 20% increase if House Bill 300 passes. The team is optimistic it will go through. The raises are part of an effort to establish parity between the Office of Public Defender and the Attorney General's office. Fair and equal compensation for the attorneys has been a priority for Jon and Hayley.
7. Office staff salaries are graded through union collective bargaining, so staff raises are separate from those of the attorneys.
8. Budget adjustments are planned in response to increased uncertainty surrounding federal funding.
9. International tourism has decreased, which may further restrict spending.
10. In response to budget instability, the office has utilized funding, however, the funding set aside for an updated case management system is not substantial enough. On the advice of Budget and Finance, the Office has let the funding lapse. Plans are in place to revisit funding and implement a new case management system in the future.
11. The Kona office was at 50% capacity, but now five out of six positions have been filled. Many thanks and gratitude to attorneys Villanueva, Hayakawa, and Christensen, who have been traveling to the Big Island to help alleviate understaffing.
12. In the Hilo office, one person is scheduled to be onboarded soon, as they are waiting for their licensing.
13. The Maui office is down four people. Volunteers in Maui and throughout the state have stepped up to help provide coverage. There are two possible starts from the mainland, and one staff member in the Maui office who could potentially start soon as well.
14. Thank you to Hayley for her diplomacy, delegation, and knowledge during this period of being short-staffed.
15. The Limited License Waiver is an amendment to the rules regarding licensing outside of Hawaii. These changes would allow someone licensed outside the state to work for the Public Defender's, Prosecutor's, or the Attorney General's offices for

a period of two years. This would alleviate the lack of staff and would allow the office to accept mainland applications.

Kirsha Durante asks about the state case management systems. Jon Ikenaga expands on how an updated system and updated tech would accommodate for future updates as well as allow for better systems. The current desk computers do not support windows 11, and the warranty has expired. Regarding a new or updated management system there have been several bids from various agencies, however, no discount has been offered. The ideal system would be the same as the one used by the Prosecutor's office. Hardware support like laptops and hotspots are also requested. Budget and Finance has begun working on a proposed budget, however federal policy changes are creating uncertainty. Kirsha Durante supports the acquisition of better technology as it will allow the attorneys and staff to expand services.

Executive Session: 10:32 a.m.

Ben Kreps from Public First questions why the Executive Session has no agenda items or topics listed.

Council went into Executive Session at 10:36 a.m.

Open Session Reconvened: 10:54 a.m.

While in the Executive Session there was discussion of Procedural Law and the Sunshine Law.

Unanimous approval of minutes.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be July 17th at 10:00 a.m., with zoom and in-person both available. The motion was unanimously approved.

Adjournment: 11:32 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned unanimously at 11:32 a.m.