

**Maui Health Care Initiative Task Force**  
May 30, 2008  
Maui Community College, Ka`a`ike Building  
Videoconference Room 108  
Minutes

**Task Force members present:** Chair Rita Barreras, Phyllis McOmer, Norm Bezane, Dr. Richard Weiland, Alan Lee, Leonard Oka, Dr. Emmet Aluli, Jan Yagi-Buen, Mark Hyde

**Task Force members excused:** May Fujiwara, Hermine Harman, Dr. Guy Hirayama, Vice-Chair Tony Krieg, Jeanne Skog, John Smith

**Audience Participants:** Joseph Pluta, Netra Halperin, Representative Joe Bertram, Senator Shan Tsutsui, Representative Kyle Yamashita, Senator Roz Baker, Dr. Al Arensdorf, Deborah Arensdale

**Call to Order.** Chair Rita Barreras called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m. She asked everyone to introduce themselves. Phyllis McOmer participated through a videoconferencing link to Lana`i.

**Approval of Agenda.** The agenda was adopted as presented (motion by Dr. Weiland, second by Dr. Aluli).

**Review and approval of April 1, 2008 minutes.** The minutes were approved (motion by Hyde, second by Dr. Weiland).

**Discussion with Maui County Legislators and Proposal for County Health Care Task Force.** Chair Barreras welcomed Senators Baker and Tsutsui and Representatives Bertram and Yamashita to the meeting. The purpose is to ask for their advice about legislative strategies that could be considered for the 2009 legislative session. Chair Barreras also noted that a proposal for a Maui County Health Care Task Force is on the agenda today. She would be interested in hearing the perspective from both the legislators and task force members about this proposal. Some legislators need to leave the meeting early.

Senator Baker thanked the task force members for their work. She had hoped that the task force would have had the financial support that we needed to accomplish the task. The legislature was surprised by the report. We thought that the task force was to update the H2P2 (Hawaii Health Performance Plan), which the task force did; however, the task force went on and did other things. The other things that the task force did may have created some frustrations for the members, especially the thorny issues, like tort reform that the Legislature had already spent a lot of time discussing. The kinds of things the task force took on are things that are much broader like reforming health care. Some thought it was beyond what one state could do. We should try to prioritize and look for different partners in the community and the state. Whatever affects health care affects all of the state, not just Maui County. The timing was bad; this is not a criticism. The report came late and there was not an opportunity to have conversation.

In terms of long-term care, the Legislature created some task forces and commissions on how to finance long term care. For instance, do we want to adopt a cash and counseling program? There are some good things that the Maui Long Term Care Partnership has done. Remotely or in person we hope that we can share with the other people in the islands. She looks forward to working with the task force members to get the best possible hearings at the Legislature. There is lots of compromise involved at the legislature.

Representative Yamashita indicated that we are fortunate to have Senator Baker in the legislature because of her experience. He is here to listen and learn.

Senator Tsutsui indicated that when the measure was passed to create the task force, they wanted to take a comprehensive look at health care. Timing was a critical issue. By the time they received the report, there was only 10 days to put together bills. They wanted the measures to be introduced. They tried to take the recommendations and introduced measures, where appropriate. In some cases they could not introduce a measure, they did resolutions. This is the first inning (analogy of baseball). It is a great idea for the county to do the task force. They want to be supportive through another measure and resolution or funding. Hopefully moving forward we can work out the details. There will be compromises in the process. He thanked everyone for leadership and work of the task force. He feels we are still in the first inning.

Representative Bertram indicated that we want to be approaching things now. We need to put together legislation now. It became apparent to him after attending task force meetings last year that the task force had an impossible task. He felt that the task force came up with great recommendations. He thinks that now we should distill it down to one or two issues that we can really move forward with. We should start now to work on 1 or 2 pieces of legislation. He would be willing to carry legislation. We need to get the ball rolling now. He commended the tremendous effort of the task force. He felt we should continue the work. We came up with a great snapshot of the issues. We now need to get more of the community involved.

Bezane asked Representative Bertram what role he thought the county would have to play? What role does the GPAC have?

Representative Bertram stated that the state and the county will be looking at different ways of doing business. He thinks we will see revenues not look good over the next couple of years. It is going to take partnerships to address the issues.

Chair Barreras stated that in terms of community involvement, Dr. Anne Beidel, President of the Maui County Medical Society, discussed sponsoring a community forum on health care. At our last meeting, with Mayor Tavares, a recommendation was made to establish a county health care task force. Chair Barreras asked members to locate the proposal in their packets.

Hyde asked who drafted the proposal.

Chair Barreras replied that Vice-Chair Krieg, Dr. Arensdorf, and she met to discuss and draft a proposal for a Maui County Health Care Task Force, following the last task force meeting. Others who were invited included Dr. Beidel and Elaine Slavinsky, Chair of the Tri-Isle Subarea Council. They were not available for the meeting.

Chair Barreras asked Dr. Arensdorf to give some background about the proposal. He noted the importance of having Krieg involved in the development of this because of his long history in working in the health care field and grass roots planning. Dr. Arensdorf fields all the questions that come from constituents about issues about the MedQuest system. He is attempting to facilitate a priority need for the Hana area. It is critical that we have a grassroots process in place. The task force did tremendous work and identified linkages that Honolulu doesn't have. If a task force is created under the county government system he thinks this will strengthen the linkages. The county doesn't set up task forces like the state. It creates a commission or board. It sets the expectations. An important next step for the task force is to approach the leadership in the Council to create a board or Council. It would have a diverse membership. Having Dr. Aluli on the task force was very helpful as he represented the rural areas. He could see a board generating testimony for the county, providing helpful information for the legislators.

Chair Barreras indicated she would like to review the specifics about the proposed Maui County Health Care Task Force, which is on the agenda, as some legislators need to leave the meeting early and she is interested in getting their feedback and also having the task force take action on this proposal today.

Proposed Maui County Health Care Task Force (see attached)

#### Role of Maui County Health Task Force

- Continue to build on the work of the State Health Planning and Development Council Tri-Isle Subarea Council and Maui Health Initiative Task Force to develop vision and mission statements, guiding values, principles, priorities, and action plans for Maui County's health care system;
- Collaborate with the County Administration, the Maui County Council, state and federal governments to continue linkages and coordination and obtain input regarding the County's health care plan;

Bezane interrupted Chair Barreras and called for a point of order. He indicated that this is a separate item on the agenda and he felt we haven't finished the discussion with the legislators. He thinks it does not meet the Sunshine law. Chair Barreras clarified that she had earlier stated that some legislators need to leave the meeting early and she wanted them to hear this proposal so that both the task force members and legislators can provide feedback about the proposal. Bezane expressed his feelings that the task force dismisses his comments. She asked the task force members if there were any objections to proceeding with the description of the role of the proposed county task force. Hearing none, she continued:

- Develop action plans for the top two priorities, including measureable objective statements, detailed work activities, milestones for achieving objectives, and evaluation criteria within the first year;
- Provide an annual written report to the Mayor of the County and County Council regarding plan progress and recommendations.

She noted the other topics in the proposal related to governance, support for the task force, and county staff resources.

Chair Barreras asked Bezane if he would like to express his comments.

Bezane stated that we have a health care crisis in this county. We have a crisis in the state. He attended the democratic convention in Honolulu. The Honolulu legislators did not understand our issues. This is an opportunity for Maui legislators to step up and go to bat in support of our task force resolutions. Angus McKelvey spent most of the time talking with legislators about health care. He couldn't be here today due to illness. He disagreed with Senator Tsutsui's analogy of the task force's work as a 9th inning game. We cannot have this play out for years. This is about an issue of life and death. Our recommendations were not a snapshot, they were a portrait. He made a plea to the legislators to take on the health care issues.

Chair Barreras asked that the group return to a conversation.

Hyde asked the legislators what they thought about a concept of a continued task force and nested at the county level. Are there other organizations that could take this on? He doesn't know enough about the lay of the land. What do legislators think about this?

Senator Tsutsui said that it is a people issue. If the county is willing to assist, he thinks it is great. He would continue to work and support the task force recommendations. What the task force has started to do is to educate the community. What is fact and what is fiction. It will help us to move forward. He is pleased that the Mayor has said it is important. He has our support. If there are different ways he could be of support, let him know. The idea and the concept sounds like a good one.

Dr. Aluli said that he has never been so encouraged as he has been working with the task force. We couldn't have picked a better group. He acknowledged the leadership of the task force. It was a very different approach. It was bottoms up. We knew there was a problem with a new hospital proposal. One of the important things was to give the authority to the county to make decisions through the proposed CON (certificate of need) legislation. It is important to empower the county to make the decision to address its needs. Beyond that, it was a way to look at the gaps and disparities. He mentioned a new book that he finds exciting. It is about how counties took care of communities over time. How companies partnered with everyone else.

Chair Barreras noted that she recalled that when Dr. Aluli first heard about the goals and accomplishments of the Maui Long Term Care Partnership, his reaction was "I want one of those"; meaning the same planning process that occurred on Maui through the Partnership. The Partnership, because of its 5 ½ years of grass roots strategic planning

and implementation experience provided a leg-up for the task force. We could implement some of the same processes that were used by the Partnership. She wondered if the legislature would be willing to fund an expansion to Moloka`i and Lana`i to do strategic planning. At Dr. Aluli's request we included a placeholder in the task force report about remote rural issues (Hana, Moloka`i and Lana`i).

Dr. Weiland stated that in his 40 years of experience, this is the best group that he has worked with. We were asked to come up with a plan in a 6 month period. We thought it was going to go to the Legislature and it was going to be a requirement to be able to deal with at the legislature. It didn't happen. Anything that happens in medicine may take 10 to 15 years. Maui is behind at least 10 years from juvenile care to old age care. It is astounding to him. We are about 10 years behind in medicine. On Maui, 3 of his peers left the state this week. We lose more and more people on a regular basis. There are economic issues that will be tough. If we do not get something turned around in the next couple of years, we are just going to get further and further behind.

Oka asked for input from the legislators about continuation of a panel. What battles are winnable? What is worth working on? We should pick battles that are winnable. Things just do not work over night. He thought may be 1 or 2 items would make it. The compromise on the CON process he thought would be achievable.

Representative Bertram stated that he has only been in the legislature for 2 years. Financially we will be flat. If we focus on regulation that we can change, it does not require money. We could look at improvements to the regulatory process. Things take a while. For instance, the effort to get a Kihei school built.

Bezane said that the task force held hearings and we were very in touch with what people want. The really big issue is a second or third hospital. The real issue is the CON process. We didn't have the ability, resources, or time to research the CON. We did ask that the Legislature look at the CON system. Maui County people feel we need a CON process that puts the power in Maui County.

Chair Barreras brought up the community forum that the Maui County Medical Society is open to hosting. Dr. Arensdorf and she had talked about the timeframe. It seems that first a Maui County Health Care Task Force would need to be put in place, followed by the community forum, perhaps in the fall. The idea was to involve stakeholders and look at the set of issues with a fresh ideas approach.

Hyde said that one of the most fascinating speakers during the hearings process was Dr. Lorrin Pang. He cited the top 3 issues for Maui County. He said the biggest issues are ice, dental care/periodontal disease and elderly. It forced us to look holistically at all the issues. Obesity is the largest of the problems. It takes collaboration and focus. The Legislature has a small role to play. The community has a large role to play. We would lose sight of the good things we have done. We should do what Chair Barreras suggested during the task force's deliberations. She suggested doing some benchmarking, measuring how well we are doing yearly to solve the issues. This is the kind of thing that drives results.

Bezane stated that the state does not have a small role to play. The CON process is one that is a huge role in making decisions.

Representative Bertram felt there should not be a focus on just the state legislature. We shouldn't be just the only focus. It is really important. We almost don't want to get people involved with the legislature, because there is so much involved.

Senator Baker said that she thinks there are some very important health initiatives that can be done. She has looked at what the Partnership has done. What were some of the small things that the community can help to do? She cited the high school project at Lahainaluna High School in which the senior citizens are making and selling lei to raise scholarship money for students. This would be a very valuable thing that looks at a variety of health issues. We are trying to improve reimbursements to providers. It is not something that can be solved easily.

Chair Barreras said that she was struck with the level of collaboration that existed on Maui when she first moved here. She does think that partnerships do make a huge difference in addressing some of the issues. But, she asked the legislators if they would support planning dollars to allow the Partnership to expand to Moloka`i and Lana`i as stated earlier to begin to address the issues outlined in the remote rural areas section of the task force report.

Senator Baker suggested looking for multiple tracks of monies; for instance, the HMSA foundation. Perhaps we can explore planning funds. For small money we could hobble together different funding sources.

Lee stated that involving the community was really quite good in terms of getting testimony and information. If we are going to prioritize at a county task force level, he is concerned about the involvement of the legislators in the long term. The neighbor islands are small pieces in the state when you compare to Oahu. He is concerned that Oahu legislators outnumber us and throw us bones.

Senator Baker said that in a lot of ways the Oahu folks are envious of the Partnership and some other projects. Having conversations with them and how solutions will be salutary. It is about coalition building.

Lee said that he doesn't want to see Lana`i and Moloka`i overlooked.

Dr. Aluli suggested that the legislators prioritize the list (task force list).

Senator Tsutsui said that he is willing to bring this up with his colleagues and ask them to prioritize. He can't guarantee that they will all participate. He said that we do need to identify the most important critical needs. At the community forum we should ask for recommendations. He said he would work with Chair Barreras and, perhaps, the request should come from her.

Representative Yamashita indicated that when we say we are behind 10 years, it is important that such a statement be quantified. He suggests that if an inventory of needs

and services available is done, we could include information about what do we lack and what do we have. We live in a rural area. Rural means without city light services. We need to get this, but there is a cost involved. It is important to quantify.

Yagi-Buen said that she would like to see the legislators make a commitment to prioritize the list of issues and work with the task force. She acknowledged the CON issues that Bezane raised. The task force compromised on this issue. There were other bills that came up in the previous session. There needs to be something done about the CON process. Will something move forward this legislative session? She suggested that all the Maui County legislators do what Representative Mele Carroll does to inform her constituents. She sends email updates so that we can track the bills that are moving through the process at a quick pace. Could other legislators give us a “heads up”? The legislators said they could do this.

Representative Bertram said we should ask the delegation about how they feel about the priorities. What are they?

Chair Barreras said that it would be good if the community and lawmakers are “together” on the issues. She wrapped up the conversation by thanking the legislators for joining us today and asking the task force to take action on the Maui County Health Care Task Force proposal.

## **Actions**

### Maui County Health Care Task Force Proposal

Hyde said he supports the concept. He didn’t hear any negatives from the legislators. It is a people driven issue. He asked about the collaboration with the Tri-Isle Subarea Council. What is their role?

Chair Barreras indicated that the Tri-Isle Council is responsible for giving input in to the Hawaii Health Performance Plan (H2P2) for Maui County. They adopted the priorities of the task force. Her observations are that the Council focuses mostly on CON applications and uses the priorities as a guide when they make their recommendations. The priorities are broad statements. There are no action plans associated with the plan. The proposed Maui County Health Care Task Force is intended to be action and solutions oriented. Krieg was extensively involved in forming the system and may disagree with her perception of the Council’s role. Dr. Arensdorf thought they are focused mainly on the CON applications reviews. Because of their role in the state health planning process, the proposal was written to include the Council in hopes that the Chair or a member would be appointed to the county task force for coordination purposes.

Hyde offered the following suggested changes:

- Add collaborate with State Health Planning and Development Agency Tri-Isle Subarea Council and Maui County legislative delegation to the second bullet;

- Do not limit to two priorities (Dr. Aluli agrees) as it should be up to the task force to decide;
- Governance: The task force meets monthly – let the task force decide;
- Would like to see more definition from general public. Look at language in the Maui Health Initiative Task Force bill that mentions give due consideration to backgrounds and diversity, geographies;
- Define terms of service.

Dr. Arensdorf explained that boards and commissions process includes looking at similar language, such as, backgrounds, diversity, geographies.

Bezane asked how people are selected for this task force.

Dr. Arensdorf stated that selections are made by the Mayor through an established county process. The Mayor is appreciative of this task force. She read the entire report and appreciates that the task force spelled out the details. She would like to build on this group. She's hoping all of us submit our names to serve on the group.

Oka asked about the general appropriation.

Dr. Arensdorf said that the proposal for the county task force would have to go to the County Council in the form of an ordinance and budget request for support.

Chair Barreras asked for a motion to recommend a Maui County Health Care Task Force to Mayor Tavares and Maui County Council.

Hyde said that he supports the concept of the county task force. What would we include in a motion?

Chair Barreras suggested that a letter could be sent by the task force to both Mayor Tavares and Councilman Chair Riki Hokama recommending the establishment of a Maui County Health Care Task Force. We could attach the proposal with the suggested changes made today and the details would be worked out by the County Administration.

**MOTION:** Task force supports a concept for a Maui County Health Care Task Force and that Chair Barreras send letters to Mayor Charmaine Tavares and Maui County Council Chair and members to recommend the establishment of a county level task force. (Motion made by Hyde, second by Dr. Aluli; adopted unanimously).

Joe Pluta, West Maui Taxpayers Association, said that in 2002 a grassroots effort began to study health care issues in West Maui. Everyone knows what all the problems are. He shared some specific things that the grass roots coalition studied. The Association studied all the issues. We don't need more studies. He noted that in 2002 a resolution was sent by the County Council to the Governor and Legislature to urge them to expedite approvals for hospital/medical services in West Maui. He wonders why it takes so long to get things in place.

## **Other Updates**

Since we last met, Chair Barreras learned that Valerie Monson had not been fully paid and that neither Joe Lapilio nor Anne Trygstad had been paid for professional services provided on behalf of the task force. She followed up with SHPDA staff to find out the status of payments and request that payments be made. She learned that Valerie Monson has since been paid and that Joe Lapilio is scheduled to be paid on Tuesday, June 3, 2008. SHPDA Administrator Ron Terry wrote to Chair Barreras indicating some background about why Trygstad's payment was not authorized/approved. Chair Barreras responded indicating that the task force voted to pay Trygstad and that she would be writing a letter to Governor Lingle to request that funds are released to pay the bills. She advised Terry that SHPDA and the Department of Health should be helping to get the funds released to meet expenses.

Earlier in May, Chair Barreras wrote a letter to Governor Lingle to request release of funds to pay expenses incurred during the fiscal year and sent a follow-up email to request the status of release of funds. She has not received a reply from the Governor's Office. It has also been learned that the House and Senate representatives are to or have held a press conference requesting that the Governor release grant-in-aid funds to non-profit agencies. The task force's \$100,000 appropriation is on that list.

Chair Barreras asked if all task force members would be willing to write an email to the Governor asking for the release of the funds. There was consensus. Members asked that Chair Barreras send them some language they can use to craft their messages.

## **Schedule Final June Task Force Meeting**

The group decided the following:

- **Friday, June 20, 2008, 12 Noon**
- Agenda items: Invite legislators to share their prioritization of the task force list, update about the Maui County Health Care Task Force proposal, status about release of funds by Governor Lingle
- Pot luck: We will have a potluck before the meeting to celebrate the work of the Maui Health initiative Task Force.

**Adjournment.** The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m. (motion by Bezane, second by Dr. Weiland; adopted unanimously).

# Proposed Maui County Health Care Task Force

## Maui County Health Goal

***Best possible access to quality health care for all communities in Maui County.***

**(adopted by Maui Health Care Initiative Task Force)**

### Role of Maui County Health Task Force:

- Continue to build on the work of the State Health Planning and Development Council Tri-Isle Subarea Council and Maui Health Initiative Task Force to develop vision and mission statements, guiding values, principles, priorities, and action plans for Maui County's health care system;
- Collaborate with the County Administration, the Maui County Council, state and federal governments to continue linkages and coordination and obtain input regarding the County's health care plan
- Develop action plans for the top *two* priorities, including measureable objective statements, detailed work activities, milestones for achieving objectives, and evaluation criteria within the first year;
- Provide an annual written report to the Mayor of the County and County Council regarding plan progress and recommendations.

### Governance

- The task force will meet monthly;
- The meetings will be governed by the county ordinances relating to open meetings;
- The task force will select its Chair and Vice-Chair; and
- The task force will be composed of persons representing the general public from all islands within the County.

### Support for Task Force

The task force will be assigned to a Department or several Departments commensurate with the priorities of the Task Force.

### County staff resources

Dr. Al Arensdorf, Mayor's staff

Stan Zitnik, Mayor's staff

Cynthia Young, Mayor's staff

Shelley Pellegrino, Mayor's Staff

Vanessa Medeiros and Lori Tshako, Department of Housing and Human Concerns

Deidre Tegarden, Office of Economic Development

Gen Iinuma and Anna Foust, Civil Defense Office