

Pa'auilo Mauka Kalopa Community Association March 2018 Newsletter

President`s Message



PMKCA President Joe Clarkson

Aloha PMKCA Neighbors

General Meeting Report

The meeting started with the introduction of the officers, board and guests by President Joe Clarkson. Then members of PMKCA and new attendees introduced themselves. Guests were: Val Poindexter, County Council; John Kari and Andrew Burian, Police Department; Marius Ellis and Kevin Balog, representing Forest Solutions and Edwin De Luz Trucking (partners in Hawaii Forest); Marissa Harman from Kamehameha Schools (together with numerous other staff from KS).

The first presentation was by John Kari of the police department. He indicated that there had been no significant change in crime rates in 2017. Hamakua has very few violent crimes. The most typical crime is theft, often from parked cars. Kari emphasized the fact that since most crimes are stimulated by opportunity, it helps prevent them if cars and buildings are kept securely locked. (Burian)

Kari also noted that last year saw a dramatic increase in highway fatalities. The three years prior to 2017 had no road fatalities in Hamakua, yet in 2017 four people died. Causes were varied, but Kari noted that Hamakua often presents difficult driving conditions with heavy rain and fog.

Police Captain Andrew Burian reiterated Kari's concerns. He recommended we slow down and drive carefully in adverse driving conditions. Burian assured the membership that the police department was committed to keeping drivers within speed limits. He noted that the department had issued over 1,000 speeding tickets in 2017.

naa issued over 1,200 speeding tickets in 2017.

Several people in the audience remarked on the poor state of the belt highway marking reflectors and painted lines. People were encouraged to complain to the state highway engineering and maintenance departments. In darkness, fog and rain people need all the help they can get.

Marissa Harman addressed the meeting next. She noted that of the 297,000 acres of Hawaii land that are owned by Kamehameha Schools, 80% are on the Big Island and 30,000 acres are in Hamakua. Harman also confirmed that Hawaii Forest had been selected for lease negotiation, but that the lease had not yet been completed.

Marius Ellis and Kevin Balog asked to hear from PMKCA members whether they had concerns about the forest industry, particularly relating to the recent harvest program by the previous tenants. Several members voiced their concerns: loud harvest noises, particularly at night, debris left in gulches and waterways, debris blockage of fire access roads, trees falling on power lines in high winds, and concern with the mono-culture nature of the plantations (a wider variety of trees might be more valuable to the local community). Worry about the noise impact from any field chipping of logs was also voiced, as well as a concern for how any harvested acreage would be managed for new plantings. Ellis and Balog (assured they will) promised to take all these concerns to heart and vowed to be good neighbors. They also expressed the hope that they would be able to create more jobs than just those from planting and harvesting trees, perhaps in the forest products industry.

Val Poindexter spoke next. She thanked Balog and Ellis for meeting with her recently and discussing their plans for a more integrated forest management plan. She was encouraged by their plans for forestry and hoped the lease with KS would be finalized soon. Poindexter also said that she wanted to make sure that even though all forms of agriculture were to be encouraged in Hamakua, she was worried about uncontrolled impacts from large commercial operations, citing the recent runoff issues from the dairy in Oâ€™okala as an example.

Poindexter also made a presentation about parking changes planned for upper Paauilo Village. She assured everyone that the changes would make sight lines better and not adversely affect commercial activities along Hauola Road. She also indicated that changes to the turns allowed at several intersections with the Belt Highway were under consideration but not finalized. Everyoneâ€™s biggest concern was with left turns from Pohakea Road onto the highway.

Taxes are always a contentious issue and Poindexter acknowledged that some difficult decisions about taxes are coming up. Since the gas tax and property taxes have recently been increased, she said that she was leaning against an increase in the General Excise Tax. She was distressed that the state had not only increased the Transient Accommodations Tax (TAT) to help pay for rail on Oahu, but also that the state was keeping all of the tax collected in our county. Poindexter asked everyone to communicate with our state representatives that we want our fair share of the TAT. She noted that Mark Nakashima will be holding community meetings to discuss these issues and the legislative session at the end of February.

After the guest presentations were finished, reports from officers and committee chairs were presented.

Carl Pinahs related that the CERT group had received money from the county (thanks to Val) to purchase hand held HAM radios. HAM training and licensing are in the works.

Fred Burian made a guest appearance for the roads committee. He attended a Hamakua Safety Council meeting and reported that the discussion was mostly about traffic changes in Paauilo Town. During the discussion about roads, several people wondered why the street light at the Kalopa Road intersection with the belt highway was so dim. No one knew which government entity "owned" the light.

Jami Sales reported that recent testing showed county water quality passed all federal standards and that it had been determined that fire hydrant numbers and placement were adequate throughout the community (wherever county water was available).

Jim Millar reported that the volunteer fire department has about five active members, which is down some from recent years. The department was also hoping to successfully negotiate an agreement to continue housing their main truck in Paauilo now that the current location property has been transferred from Hamakua Housing to the Paauilo Camp Community Association.

Volunteers Needed

PMKCA is a volunteer organization. We are always looking for people who want to help our community by ensuring that problems are resolved promptly and appropriately, mostly by making sure they are communicated to government and other entities who can help. We need more volunteers for the volunteer fire department and a new chair of our roads committee. Please contact Jim Millar if you are interested in the fire department or me if you are interested in helping out with roads. Contact information can be found at PMKCA.org.

Best Regards,

Joe Clarkson
President, PMKCA

Pa'auilo Mauka Kalopa Community Association

PO Box 408

Paauilo, HI 96776

© Copyright 2006-14. All rights reserved.