



Monthly News & Updates

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SEPTEMBER, 2016

PROPERTY VALUES AND REAL ESTATE TAXES

All of the PMKCA membership area is zoned for agriculture so all residents and landowners in our area should be closely following the issue of agricultural land valuations for tax purposes. Since 2014, when a task force studied the effect of agricultural valuations on county revenue, some members of the County Council have proposed a variety of bills to revamp the land dedication program. At present, only about 850 agricultural parcels have been dedicated for either the ten or twenty year period. Over 10,000 other agricultural parcels are “non-dedicated” but still receive an assessed valuation much reduced from fair market value. The dedicated valuations are about half of the non-dedicated.

This system of agricultural land valuations has been in place for 47 years and is governed by Chapter 19 of the Hawaii County Code. Current proposals to amend the County Code include Councilwoman Margaret Wille’s introduction of Bill 218, which would significantly raise valuations in the non-dedicated program. Wille’s draft bill can be found here: <http://records.co.hawaii.hi.us/weblink/0/doc/911409/Page1.aspx> . Bill 219, introduced by Councilman Greggor Ilagan, would leave the non-dedicated language mostly in place, but include provisions for tighter enforcement. Ilagan’s draft bill can be found here: <http://records.co.hawaii.hi.us/weblink/0/doc/911418/Page1.aspx> . All landowner’s who



PMKCA President Joe Clarkson

The meeting included an informative presentation by Representative Mark Nakashima about ongoing projects in our corner of Hamakua. He has been emphasizing workforce needs with an emphasis on Agriculture, Medical training and Technical careers. He said that the agriculture graduates were being snapped up after graduation for food inspectors and similar government positions and weren’t going into farming. Nakashima indicated that there is a plan to add new classrooms to the community kitchen in the old hospital wing of NHERC. It would not include a culinary program but be a place where local farmers could experiment with cooking their own produce. There will also be changes at the Elementary school drop-off routine due to several accidents on the road between campuses. The new drop off place will be behind the school. Eventually the drop off road is to be extended to Lehua Street below Tex Drive In.

are currently affected by agricultural assessment valuations should follow this issue closely as it could dramatically affect real estate tax bills.

This is a complicated issue with many aspects, including fair distribution of the tax burden, land use and development trends, the value of open space as part of the character and atmosphere of Hawaii and deciding what constitutes “real” agricultural use of land. We all need to educate ourselves and be willing to make our thoughts known when these bills, or others to follow, come up before the County Council.

PMKCA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND POTLUCK PICNIC

For the second time in two years, we were aced out of using the Kalopa Park pavilion, even though we had a valid use permit from the state Department of Parks. Another large group exercised a weird form of squatters' rights by showing up super early and occupying the pavilion without a permit. Luckily, we had anticipated this happening and had already reserved the NHERC conference room as backup. We intend to pursue this issue with the proper authorities to preclude the problem in the future.

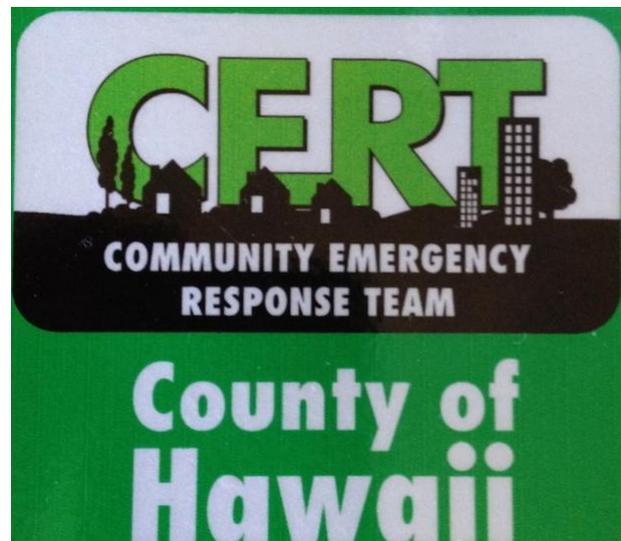
The **PMKCA Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)** is a team of volunteers from the PMKCA area who have been trained to provide temporary emergency assistance to community members in the event of a major disaster, such as a tsunami, hurricane, earthquake, flood, or major fire. CERT members are trained to take control of emergency situations until paid professionals (police, fire department, civil defense, national guard) arrive on the scene. With both Madeline and Lester right on top of us now, you can rest assured that your Pa'auilo CERT is ready to respond if and when necessary. If you are interested in learning more and/or joining this group, please email Carl Pinahs at cgpinahs@gmail.com.

Also the Honokaa gym floor is warped and unusable. They are hoping to finish repairs and reopen before the end of the year. The Umauma bridge project is behind schedule due to a shortage of steel and shipments from the mainland.

A delicious potluck lunch was followed by our annual bingo game, with numerous prizes given away. All prizes were contributed by PMKCA members. In official business, Ruth Bennett was elected to the office of Vice President. We look forward to her participation with the PMKCA board of directors. Its next meeting is Thursday, October 13, 7:00 pm at the Hawaiian Vanilla Company. All interested parties are welcome to attend.

HAWAIIAN TEL DSL

There's still no further word on Hawaiian Tel's rumored plans for improving their DSL facilities in our PMKCA area, but we're anxiously awaiting word on their long overdue September upgrade. Whether this means higher bandwidth, additional customer ports or both is yet to be seen. Stay tuned.



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