



MEETING MINUTES OF THE HAWAII TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CORP (HTDC) BOARD OF DIRECTORS

April 24, 2025
Entrepreneurs Sandbox – Large Classroom
643 Ilalo St., Honolulu, HI 96813

Member(s) Present

Craig Nakanishi, Chairperson (Mr. Nakanishi)
Jacklyn Kaina, (Ms. Kaina) (arrived at
12:04)
Gregory Kim, (Mr. Kim)
Vassilis Syrmos, (Mr. Syrmos)
Gregory Uehara, (Mr. Uehara) (arrived at
12:03 pm)
Kelly Ueoka, (Mr. Ueoka)
Dane Wicker, (Mr. Wicker)

Member(s) Absent

Edward Barnabas, (Mr. Barnabas)
Matthew Sullivan, (Mr. Sullivan)

Guest(s) Present

Johnny Chankhamany, (Mr. Chankhamany)
Jim Kim, (Mr. Kim)

Staff Present

Sandi Kanemori, Acting Executive Director
(Ms. Kanemori)
Wayne Layugan, (Mr. Layugan)
Tuan La, (Mr. La)
Cynthia Matsuki, (Ms. Matsuki)
Stephanie Yuu-Sato, (Ms. Yuu-Sato)

Counsel Present

John Cole, Deputy Attorney General
(Mr. Cole)

Members of the Public Present

None

1. Call to Order, Public Notice, Quorum

Meeting called to order at 12:02 pm

2. Roll Call

Ms. Kanemori conducted roll call. Present Chair Nakanishi, Mr. Kim, Mr. Syrmos, Mr. Ueoka, and Mr. Wicker. Ms. Kaina and Mr. Uehara are running late. Mr. Barnabas and Mr. Sullivan are excused.

Chair advises he will be moving the agenda items around to get the three program approvals first then the remaining agenda items. Asks if there are any objections. None received.

3. Manufacturing Assistance Program (MAP)

Ms. Kanemori introduces Mr. Layugan to present the summary of MAP awards.

Mr. Layugan advises that MAP received a total of fifty-nine (59) applications, thirty-four (34) applications were selected after the review process of which seventeen (17) were first time applicants. Mr. Layugan mentions that on February 9, 2023, they presented the MAP allocation policy statement which provided a detail process. Mr. Wicker was able to sit in on the review process and provided insight. It is a highly competitive application process as it is a reimbursable grant and does require proof of purchase. The applications closed in December, and the review process ran weekly from January until the end of March. Applications were scored and ranked and put into different tiers, the highest ranked tier would receive the largest percentage eligible amount. Funds are allocated until monies run out.

Chair asks if there is someone from the Board that is on the review committee.

Mr. Layugan advises that Mr. Wicker is on the review committee.

Mr. Wicker thanks Mr. Layugan for organizing and keeping the committee on schedule and notes that majority of the applicants are food and beverage. He asks what the sets the perimeters for what they can apply for.

Mr. Layugan advises the administrative rules.



Mr. Wicker states some of the items that were listed for qualified expenses he has a question, as they are talking about manufacturing and some of the items are not state-of-the-art of what they are looking for manufacturing industry. Requests to set another time to review and discuss the admin rules to see if it matches what HTDC is thinking about manufacturing

Chair asks if this will affect what we are asking for today.

Mr. Wicker advises it will not. Moving forward. It will be able to stretch the funding a little bit further and award some other applicants but because the admin rules allow qualified reimbursements when they package it we included it.

Chair asks if Mr. Wicker wants to work with the review committee.

Mr. Wicker states he will work with Mr. Layugan.

Chair asks if there are any other comments or questions.

None received.

Chair requests a motion to approve the Manufacturing Assistance Program Awards and Allocations.

Motion to approve made by Mr. Wicker / Second by Mr. Syrmos

Chair asks if there are any comments or suggestions. None received

Motion approved, 7/0

	Applicant	Total Qualified Expenses	Grant Requested	Committee Recommendation
*	Kia LLC dba Maui Nui Venison	\$371,311.24	\$74,262.25	\$59,410.00
	Pacific Shipyards International, LLC	\$804,410.00	\$100,000.00	\$80,000.00
	Oceanit Laboratories, Inc.	\$23,395.00	\$4,679.00	\$3,280.00
*	Holo Holo Charters, Inc.	\$542,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$70,000.00
*	50th State Poultry, Inc.	\$147,093.83	\$29,418.77	\$20,600.00
*	Lanakila Pacific	\$106,530.03	\$21,306.01	\$14,920.00



	The Art Source, Inc. dba Pictures Plus	\$563,117.00	\$100,000.00	\$70,000.00
*	Hawaiian Host Honolulu LLC	\$1,149,046.86	\$100,000.00	\$70,000.00
*	North Star Scientific Corporation	\$327,535.58	\$65,507.12	\$45,860.00
*	Min Plastics & Supply, Inc.	\$400,781.28	\$80,156.26	\$56,110.00
	Kauai Fine Woodworking LLC	\$138,443.98	\$27,688.80	\$19,390.00
	Hawaiian Sun Products, Inc.	\$718,867.60	\$100,000.00	\$70,000.00
*	Fresh Island Fish Co Inc	\$423,000.00	\$84,600.00	\$59,220.00
	PacMar Technologies LLC	\$62,385.32	\$12,477.06	\$8,740.00
*	Kona Earth, LLC	\$38,789.00	\$7,757.80	\$5,440.00
	Ba-Le Inc. dba La Tour Bakehouse	\$234,192.00	\$46,838.40	\$32,790.00
	FCH Enterprises Inc.	\$72,444.88	\$14,488.98	\$10,150.00
	Pacific Allied Products Ltd.	\$2,825,032.04	\$100,000.00	\$70,000.00
*	Malama Kaua'i	\$64,099.26	\$12,819.85	\$8,980.00
*	Taleea Carvalho dba Wailua Granola Co. LLC	\$7,991.46	\$1,598.29	\$1,500.00
*	Best Day Yet LLC	\$150,344.55	\$30,068.91	\$21,050.00
	Pawniolo Pets LLC	\$37,248.37	\$7,449.67	\$4,470.00
*	Sundog Bread LLC	\$106,689.57	\$21,337.91	\$12,810.00
*	Stanford S Carr dba SCD RMA, LLC	\$55,203.65	\$11,040.73	\$6,630.00
*	Jean Mckeague dba Let's Go Pesto LLC	\$10,162.24	\$2,032.45	\$1,500.00
	The Patisserie Inc.	\$438,854.54	\$87,770.91	\$52,670.00
*	Cupcakes, BOOM! LLC	\$22,410.70	\$4,482.14	\$2,690.00
	Okuhara Foods Inc.	\$24,175.55	\$4,835.11	\$2,910.00
	IL Gelato LLC dba IL Gelato Hawaii	\$90,154.20	\$18,030.84	\$10,820.00
	Simonpietri Enterprises LLC	\$325,439.55	\$65,087.91	\$39,060.00
	KYD, Inc.	\$170,078.44	\$34,015.69	\$20,410.00
*	E-Opala Corporation	\$148,419.00	\$29,683.80	\$17,820.00
	Maui Beverage Company LLC dba Pauwela Beverage Company	\$32,913.75	\$6,582.75	\$3,950.00
	Symbrosia Inc	\$389,949.61	\$77,989.92	\$26,820.00

4. Hawaii Small Business Innovation Research (HSBIR)



Ms. Kanemori introduces Ms. Matsuki, Program Engineer to present the SBIR.

Ms. Matsuki refers to attachment seven of the board packet. Those not familiar with the SBIR it is a matching grant to the federal research and development grant, the requirement is for Hawai'i companies, have to do business in Hawai'i, receive the federal R&D grant to qualify the SBIR grant. There were three (3) applicants for the Phase 0 which is proposal writing and assistance reimbursement, ten (10) Phase I applications of which eight (8) were awarded, and eleven applications for Phase II/II and only eight (8) were awarded. Not included in the memo total federal awards for the Phase I was almost \$1.5 million the grant amount requested was almost \$600,000. Phase II/III the companies that were awarded federal grants amounted to \$8 million and the grant amount requested was almost \$3 million. We also requests that companies only submit for one award for the match, a handful of companies that get multiple awards.

The process is similar to the MAP Grant where we have an application online, review committee, thanks Gregory Uehara is our board member on the review committee, the companies present to the review committee, scored, ranked and placed into tiers and monies are disbursed.

Chair asks if there are any questions from the Board.

Mr. Uehara comments that it was a pleasure serving on the review committee. He presents a summary that should not affect the decision but get a feeling for the companies receiving SBIR funds.

Chair asks if we should include this type of report into the packet.

Mr. Uehara advises that he finds the information useful. He states that he characterized the companies into categories. Category one are pure startups, two are companies that have received SBIR in the past and are trying to breakout-define a product, category three are trying to find additional funding and build a business model, category four are companies that are established. There are quite a few in category four that are vibrant here in Hawai'i. It has become clear that companies in one and two need help, they do not have the right guidance-if they do not have a clear definition.

Chair requests a motion to approve the Hawaii Small Business Innovation Research Awards and Allocations.



Motion to approve made by Ms. Kaina / Second by Mr. Wicker

Chair asks if there are any comments or suggestions. None received.

Motion approved, 7/0

PHASE 0 Company Awards

Company	FED AGENCY	GRANT \$	REQ \$	Award \$
Jumpstart AI LLC				\$3,000
Limu Labs LLC dba Onokai				\$275
Hawai'i Innovation Inc				\$3,000

PHASE I Company Awards

Company	FED AGENCY	GRANT \$	REQ \$	Award \$
Ocean Era, Inc.	USDA	\$175,000	\$75,000	\$61,715
KaiTech LLC*	NSF	\$275,000	\$75,000	\$61,715
PacMarTechnologies LLC	NAVSEA	\$146,397	\$73,198	\$61,715
Makai Ocean Engineering, Inc.	NAVY	\$139,630	\$69,786	\$61,715
HNu Photonics LLC	US Space Force	\$179,999	\$75,000	\$61,715
Nalu Scientific, LLC	NASA	\$156,000	\$75,000	\$61,715
Tridentis	NOAA	\$174,738	\$75,000	\$61,715
Oceanit Laboratories, Inc.	USDA	\$175,000	\$75,000	\$61,715

PHASE II Company Awards

Company	FED AGENCY	GRANT \$	REQ \$	Award \$
H Nu Photonics LLC	DARPA	\$249,956	\$120,000	\$46,400
Simonpietri Enterprises LLC	DoEnergy	\$1,150,000	\$500,000	\$194,600
North Star Scientific*	NAVAIR	\$749,994	\$374,997	\$145,800
Pacific Hybreed	USDA/NIFA	\$650,000	\$325,000	\$126,400
PacMar Technologies LLC	NAVSEA	\$1,218,895	\$500,000	\$140,000



Oceanit Laboratories Inc.	ARPA-E	\$1,857,360	\$185,736	\$52,000
Nalu Scientific, LLC	DoEnergy	\$1,049,888	\$500,000	\$140,000

PHASE III Company Awards

Company	FED AGENCY	CONTRACT \$	REQ \$	Award \$
Makai Ocean Engineering	Navy	\$797,100	\$398,007	\$154,800

5. Hawaii Small Business Capital Program (HI-CAP) – Approval of Investment in Builders VC

a. Builders VC Presentation

Chair advises that the investment will be for \$5 million. The investors will be making a presentation, board can ask questions then we will be going into executive session to discuss.

Ms. Kanemori introduces Mr. Chankhamany and Mr. Kim from Builders VC.

Mr. Chankhamany thanks the Board for their time and describes his background. Executive Director of Builders VC, born and raised here by his immigrant parents who worked low scale-low paying labor jobs. He would like to see more of the immigrant success stories not surrounded by restaurants or food services. He has worked for Hawaiian Electric Industries, on the board on several non-profits from high school, living facilities, SBA 8a, NHO and Hoomaka Foundation.

Mr. Kim introduces himself as the founding partner of Builders VC and in venture capital for the last fifteen (15) years. He started the venture capital program at General Electric Corporation, doing industrial and energy related venture capital and then to Coastal Ventures where he was GP for fund for years in energy and clean technology (square, skybox, climate corporation). H then met the founding family of LG electronics where venture fund Formation8 was founded. He took the early-stage investment team of Formation8 and created Builders VC. The focus of Builders the best opportunity in tech is to invest in companies that are impacting in sectors that need technology the most. Looked at every single industry vertical and looked at IT spending as percentage of revenue. We see the opportunity in the sectors in agriculture, real-assets, manufacturing, data centers, energy related technology, healthcare.

What is the benefit of leaving Silicon Valley and coming to Hawai'i. They are able to obtain customer attraction, build outside of the echo chamber that is Silicon Valley. Partner with Queen's Health System and work on a technology and get a novel data set in a way that I might not get with Stanford Hospital. We have been particularly good establishing in convincing these entrepreneurs to come over, establish operations, partner up with early customers, work to get revenue, work to define the product, and added benefit of opening offices here.

Mr. Chankhamany advises it is his fourth year with Builders, spending several hundred thousands of dollars a year on activities to cultivate the eco-system. There are a lot of opportunities to attract that attention, Kamehameha Schools has agreed to be the local LP to the fund. With Kamehameha Schools being the anchor LP, they are bringing money in and will be an active partner to find and make referrals to their technology problems in their department.

Mr. Kim states it is interesting in Silicon Valley speaking with people from Hawaii working at Meta, Google, and Amazon with engineering backgrounds and they want to return home but there are no tech jobs in Hawaii. There needs to be opportunities for entrepreneurs to feel like they can build a company here and technical talent around that to have success stories. We can bring the Silicon Valley DNA by bringing the CEO here and create an on-ramp thru this fund.

Mr. Uehara asks how you incentivized Kamehameha Schools to get involved and allocate resources to work with you to utilize your software.

Mr. Chankhamny advises that they are not using any software yet with Builders, the discussions with the sustainable industries group is to come into the fund was primarily due to that they are already expending the funds to support community, entrepreneurship, to support startups, it is a great time where they can bring in more non-diluted funding to support their mission.

Chair asks if Kamehameha will be putting money into this fund and what the exit strategy is and asks if Kamehameha knows that Builders VC is going after federal funds.

Mr. Chankhamny advises their exit strategy is typical, IPO, secondary market, acquisitions, revenue basis contracts with some of these firms. He also confirms that Kamehameha Schools knows that Builders is requesting federal funds.



Mr. Kim asks how Builders VC will be different as nothing has really worked yet. There are no companies coming out of Hawai'i. Will the \$20 million fund be able to turn that around for the State of Hawai'i. How will Builders be able to source deals when there aren't any deals because it is labor intensive, and he doesn't believe that they are doing it for the management fees as it won't sustain them.

Mr. Chankhamny says the timing is the best as it has ever been with coming out of the pandemic. 70,000 tech people moved to Hawai'i during that period and continued to stay here and now we have access to them. At an event we met the builder Microsoft's first ML AI department whose son is now attending UH. We have talent here now that we haven't had in a long time. Talent outside that want to come home and we have the ability to have them return home.

Mr. Wicker advises what he sees in the slide deck is the same language proposed by state and non-state entities, workforce development, bring home kamaaina, reverse the brain drain but what data saying to the engineers you are looking to target, what are those challenges here that you have already identified. Looking at agriculture or healthcare and some of the board members are trying to figure out what healthcare tech is needed for the state we are still having that discussion. When it comes to ag and land use strategies its not so much tech it's the cost of land in the State of Hawaii and the lack of infrastructure. He continues to state he does not know what the engineers or companies are looking at to solve the agriculture food insecurities.

Mr. Kim positions looking into healthcare. People fly into Hawai'i to take ER shifts and then fly back to the mainland. The technology we are looking at in healthcare space, are companies that allow doctors to scale. A software platform for primary and urgent care networks to be able to be more efficient.

Chair asks if there are any more questions. None received

b. Pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes §§ 92-4, and 92-5 (a)(8), 206M-21(b), and 206M-67, the Board Anticipates Moving into Executive Session to Discuss and Consider the Approval of an Investment into Builders VC.

Chair requests a motion to move into Executive Session pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes §§ 92-4, and 92-5(a)(8), and 206M-21(b), and 206M-67 to consider and discuss the approval of the investment into Builders VC.



Motion to move into Executive Session made by Mr. Wicker / Second by Ms. Kaina

Motion approved, 7/0

Executive Session: 12:46 PM

Reconvene into Regular Session:

c. Board Report of Summary of Discussion and Final Action (if any) Taken in Executive Session Pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes §§92-4(b).

Chair advises during Executive Session the Builders VC investment was discussed but there is more information needed. Further discussion will be necessary and will be done so at the next Board meeting.

6. Hawaii Technology Development Corporation Executive Director – Update and Status

Chair provides an update on the tentative Executive Director and that he and Ms. Kanemori will be meeting with him as he has questions on a few on the conditions listed on the offer letter.

7. INNOVATE Hawaii – Manufacturing Extension Program (MEP) Program – Update

Ms. Kanemori advises that MEP received a stop order as of April 30th. Another notification was received that they will be funding the program for another six (6) months while re-evaluating the program. While we do not know what that mean exactly but we are planning for the program to end on September 30th. We will continue to do basic services and short-term projects. All other projects will then transition to other staff.

Mr. Wicker comments that we have a positive budget, they announced that they will be taking the SBIR, MAP and Accelerator program back up to \$2 million. Now that we are back up, we won't have the staff to help administer those programs.

Ms. Kanemori thanks Deputy Wicker for his support, Chairs Dela Cruz and Yamashita as well as the tech community all their support.



Chair asks if the issue is that we don't have the general fund positions.

Mr. Wicker advises the federal program helps pay the positions which administers the general funded hours.

Mr. Uehara requests clarification on the staff positions.

Ms. Kanemori advises one staff has decided to leave, one will be moving to a state funded position, and three need placements.

8. Announcements

Chair advises that we will be covering the approval of minutes during the next Board meeting.

9. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 1:54 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Yuu-Sato
Acting Board Secretary