



**ALOHA ARBORIST ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES – 05/17/2017 – APPROVED
Old Spaghetti Factory, Ward Village**

Members in Attendance: Lance Bookless, Dudley Hulbert, Andrew Kendall,
Carol Kwan, Desiree Page, Sergio Vasquez
Guests: Pablo Beimler

- 1) Call to Order & Approval of the Meeting Minutes of 04/26/17- The meeting was called to order by Vice President Lance Bookless at 6:45pm. Minutes of the meeting in April were approved.
- 2) Guest Speaker – Pablo Akira Beimler, Hawaii Wildfire Management Organization. Desiree met Pablo at UGC Ag & Environmental Awareness Day. HWMO is a statewide 501(c)3 based on the Big Island. The organization was established by a group of fire chiefs and top fire experts to help educate the public about prevention, fire management, living fuel breaks, and other fire safety topics. They also have community workdays, workshops and other events. HWMO is funded primarily by Region 5 of US Forest Service, but also receives some private funding, for example from State Farm. Some of their funding is specifically for public outreach.

May is wildfire preparedness month. Just spent the day at every school on Oahu's leeward side educating youth. HWMO is expecting another big fire season this year, and this is the first time there's a coordinated message by all the fire departments going out across the state.

Background: Hawaii's native forests aren't adapted to fire. Native species die in fires, allowing invasive species to become established. After the late 1990's, there was a major increase in the number of fires, and 90% of our fires are caused by humans. Oahu averages three fires per day, or about 1,000 annually, but you don't hear about them. On forest lands, fire response is provided by DLNR, with assistance from the counties. When a fire is defined as a "wildfire," the County Fire Departments are the primary responders. When it comes to the percentage of acres burned every year, Hawaii is on par with western US.

Ignition Sources: One of the major ignition sources is from equipment, including vehicle exhaust. Pulling over to the side of a road onto dry grass, just the heat from exhaust pipes is enough to ignite the grass. Weed whackers, lawn mowers and other landscape equipment striking rocks can create sparks and start fires. Equipment should have functioning spark arrestors to help prevent fire ignition. The time of day when work is done also makes a difference – during afternoons when the day is hotter and drier, fires start more easily. Know your surroundings when you're out doing work.

- Lance gave an example of a fire that started on Big Island. The fire was put out and watched for 3 days. However, it was smoldering in the duff layer, and six days later it re-ignited.
- Sergio commented that in his valley in Hawaii Kai, they have had 14 fires in the past 4 weeks, where the fire department has had to come and put it out.
- On Maui where sugarcane farming is dying out, fallow lands are overtaken by invasive grasses, which result in fuel buildup.

HWMO is encouraging homeowners to reduce flammable vegetation in their landscape. “Ready, Set Go!” is a national Program run by fire chiefs. HWMO adapted the program for Hawaii.

- Ready – be prepared far in advance.
- Set – practice situational awareness, and what do to if there’s a fire
- Go – if there’s a fire in your area, leave the area immediately. Don’t wait – waiting leads to traffic jams to get out of area. In Hawaii, there are many areas with no alternate routes (e.g., Waianae).

HWMO is encouraging homeowners to “lighten their landscape”, and remove vertical fuel ladders. The 0-30-foot radius around a structure is most important. Homeowners should pick up leaf and plant litter – for example, haole koa should be cleaned up because pods become embers and fly around, setting houses on fire. Tree branches should be kept at least 10’ from the roof of a house. They are not recommending for vegetation to be removed, but instead for it to be well maintained.

HWMO’s outreach has a special emphasis on reaching arborists because many of the fire-wise programs involve cleaning up trees and brush (there also are funding incentives for HWMO to work with landscapers and arborists). HWMO also has helped at least 10 communities become certified. HWMO provides \$2,000 grants to community associations and homeowner associations (condos) (grants used to be \$5,000 these are no longer available) which communities and condos, regardless of size, can receive to spend on contractors to do tree trimming, weed control, etc.

Andrew suggested linking to their website, Include short blurb about what we discussed and link to their info on our website.

Pablo put together a packet that we can give to homeowner associations about this program, and asked AAA to help spread the information.

3) Old Business

- a) Research Committee (Chair: Dudley Hulbert) – No news to report.
- b) Queen Emma’s Summer Palace Volunteer Workday & Barbecue (Carol Kwan) – Carol polled the group about holding the event on one of three Saturdays – 6/17, 7/15, or 7/29. The group agreed that July 15th would work best. The project will be half-day, and Sergio, Dudley, and Andrew plan to be there. They will coordinate equipment, and will contact Steve Connolly to participate. There will be a scoping meeting at the site, the weekend before the event. Carol agreed to contact Kanoelehua about the event date.
- c) Chainsaw Workshops, Beginner Level (J Zambo) – Tabled.
- d) WCISA / AAA Hawaii Regional Workshop 2017 with John Ball, 6/27 to 6/30/2017 (Angela Liu) – Marketing materials have been sent out; There is no online registration for the event – call, fax or mail to sign up. AAA members get a \$10 discount off the non-member rate. WCISA members get the full discount. Andrew gave a negative review of the bento lunches previously served, and suggested using the caterer who provided the food for the TRAQ events. The caterer’s contact information should be available from Ryan Pendleton at WCISA.
- e) Tree Appraisal Workshop Part 2 by James Komen (Angela Liu) – Tabled.
- f) WCISA Annual Conference 2019 (Carol Kwan) – Elaine Malina has agreed to be the conference chair. The event will be held on Oahu.

- g) Rapid ‘Ōhi’a Death Outreach - Proposed arborist certificate program (Angela Liu) – WCISA has agreed to help market the training program. Desiree is just returning from the Big Island, and there was no ROD education or program to raise travelers’ awareness. There should be work done to raise public awareness, including that of tourists and at airports. Airports should provide sticky mats to clean shoes when boarding planes.
- h) Hui Manu-O-Kū (White Tern Hui) Outreach to Arborists / Possible Workshop (Jolie Wanger) – Angela communicated the group’s feedback of 4/26/17 to Rich Downs of the hui.
- i) Monthly Meeting location (Angela Liu) – There is support for returning to the restaurant at the Navy Marine Golf Course; it will make it unnecessary to coordinate meals. The current name of the restaurant is not known. Lyon Arboretum is available for possibly a few meetings yearly. Andrew would like to have all meetings at the Lyon Arboretum, and feels this would build a relationship between AAA and the arboretum. Others expressed concern that the location is far for many members, including those who attend regularly. Desiree also suggested the UH Urban Garden Center. Dudley suggested not meeting at Lyon Arboretum every month as a compromise. It was agreed that the June monthly meeting will be at the Navy Marine Golf Course restaurant, and the July meeting will be held at the Lyon Arboretum.
- j) Hawaii Renewable Energy (Angela Liu) –HRE’s Sid Higa expressed interest in having AAA help with outreach and investigations into the green waste stream on Oahu. HRE would pay or make a donation to AAA. There was a suggestion that the survey should not specify HRE, but simply indicate that the survey’s purpose is to generally analyze how green waste can be more efficiently managed. There also was a suggestion to review this topic with J.

4) New Business

- a) A300 Part 1 Pruning 2017 (Carol Kwan) – AAA can make a bulk purchase for interested members if ISA offers special pricing. The standard is expected to print soon.
- b) Proposal to add as authorized check writers – J Zambo, Desiree Page, Carol Kwan, Steve Nimz (Desiree Page) – The motion by Carol was seconded by Dudley and passed unanimously. Once Desiree collects the QuickBooks records from Steve Nimz’s office and has it working on her computer, she will present a treasurer’s report.
- c) PO Box for AAA (Desiree Page) – The group agreed that a Mililani mailbox location would be preferable, as compared to Moili’ili, since AAA has three people in Mililani who are able to check the mailbox. The mailbox will need to be checked regularly to make sure incoming checks and membership applications are processed promptly.

5) Announcements

- a) WCISA Annual Conference “Paradise Found: Plans, Partners & Progress”, May 8-11, San Diego, CA – Carol felt that the conference was excellent, probably the best that she’s been to yet. There was a good balance of scientific and subjective topics. Congratulations to Kevin Eckert, the newest director sworn in on the WCISA board. San Diego was colder than expected.
- b) ISA Annual Conference – 07/28 to 08/02, 2017 in Washington, DC – No one at the meeting is planning to attend this year.
- c) Dudley passed around a dying mango branch – the cause of its decline is unknown.

d) *Please join us on:*

June 21st, 2017, 6:30pm – Monthly Meeting – Location TBD

Guest Speaker – Darcy Oishi on Avocado Pests

6) Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 8:29pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Angela Liu

Attachments: Hawaii Wildfire Management Organization educational materials