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Description automatically generated with medium confidence**HAWAI`I STATE - COMMISSION ON FATHERHOOD (HS-COF)**

**Friday, March 28, 2025**

**Time:  10:00 am**

**Location**: Queen Liliuokalani Building, 1390 Miller St, Conference Room **214**, Honolulu. Virtual access to meeting via **Zoom** - Meeting ID #**876 5720 3038** / Password: **Fathers**

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87657203038?pwd=MlZOejU3VS9iRWVwNG1ZRWhLM1ZpQT09

Zoom waiting room will be open 5-15 minutes prior to meeting start time.

**Link to Recording:** [**https://youtu.be/fcypA9ucR78**](https://youtu.be/fcypA9ucR78)

**Call to Order: 10:02 am**

**MISSION Statement: read by Commissioner Augustine (1:25-1:57)**

**[From Chapter 577E, Hawaii Revised Statutes] The mission of the Hawaii State - Commission on Fatherhood (HS-COF) is to promote healthy family relationships by emphasizing the importance of fathers in the lives of their children. The Commission serves in an advisory capacity to state agencies and makes recommendations on programs, services, contracts, policies and laws relating to children and families.**

**I. Introductions and Roll Call (0:00-11:38)**

**Commissioners (voting members, by seniority)**

* Chair Jeff Esmond (Oahu)
* Alan Sunio (Hawai’i Coalition for Dads)
* Brian Alston (Kauai)
* Marty Oliphant, Vice Chair (Oahu)
* Neel Chauhan (Oahu)
* Mark Augustine (Maui)

**Commissioners Absent**

* Allen Cardines (Oahu)

**Ex-Officio(s) or their designees (non-voting members)**

* Matthew Shim, Director of Health

**Deputy Attorneys General Sunshine Law monitors**

* Deputy Erin Yamashiro

**Administrative Staff**

* Devyn Goo

**Guests**

* Lowell Gerry
* Kim Krell, PARENTS INC
* Russell Kimura, Fathers with Daughters

**II. Community shares or concerns (12:39-12:52):**

1. Public Testimony
   1. This agenda has no item II.
2. Commissioner Updates (seniority order) and Community Outreach
   1. This agenda has no item II.

**III. Current Fiscal Year Initiatives – (Vote) (12:53-1:09:55)**

a. Annual Awards – marketing, outreach, press release and updates

i. Press Release for Awards (12:53-16:24)

a. Commissioner Esmond shares that PIO Amanda Stevens has published press

release and there is one applicant for Father of the Year and two applications for the Sponsorship Awards; Children’s Discovery Center and Maui Family Support Services.

ii. How will we present these awards? (16:25-29:31)

a. Commissioner Esmond shares that the plan is to have a press release on

Father’s Day and asks the Commissioners to share ideas on what the event will

be to present the awards.

1. Commissioner Alston suggests that the organizations or ex-officios connected to COF hosts an event relating to fatherhood each year. Matthew Shim shares that previously, Commissioners Mattos and Sunio had planned events to present awards. Commissioner Sunio shares that for over 20 years, they held Father’s Day events at Windward Mall and invited other non-profits to share their services/mission. He suggests holding a luncheon with other organizations to introduce everyone and hold the awards ceremony there. Deputy Yamashiro states that due to Sunshine Law, it would need to be treated as a board meeting and adhere to agenda, board packet, and minutes. Commissioners Esmond and Sunio express the idea of combining the event with the Children and Youth Day in October.

b. Strategic Plan and objectives (29:32-1:09:55)

i. Commissioner Alston shares the strategic plan for 2025-2027. The plan’s aim is to cultivate a society where fatherhood is essential to child development and well-being, by empowering fathers with resources, advocating for policies, and fostering environments that support father involvement. He shares his research on similar commissions across the US, with common objectives such as parental involvement, economic empowerment, and mental health support. He shares areas where HS-COF aligns and differs from national trends/women’s. He shares the short-term goals (1-3 years), which include launching educational programs and fatherhood awareness campaigns, expanding access to legal and mental health services, advocating for workplace and parental leave policies, and strengthening partnerships with government agencies and nonprofits. The long-term goals (5-10 years) include systemic policy changes for father-inclusive workplace and legal frameworks, establishment of sustainable fatherhood support networks, and broader legislative advocacy for equitable treatment in family law and mental health and support. He shares that the next step for the commissioners is to look at how this applies to their respective communities and share back at the next meeting.

*(Note: Commissioner Neel Chauhan exits meeting at 11:02 am, still meeting quorum with 5 commissioners)*

c. Periodic Newsletter – Commissioner Alston and Commissioner Esmond (1:09:56-1:13:38)

i. Commissioner Esmond shares the newsletter that Commissioner Alston has written, with the new addition of the announcement page. He expresses his wish to release the newsletter the following week and asks the commissioners to share any email list they may have.

d. Outreach Events (1:13:39-1:27:48)

i. Commissioner Esmond shares about the [Maui Family Support Services, Inc](https://mfss.org/). – 18th Annual Celebration of Fathers & Families on June 7, 2025, 9:00 am – 12:00 noon. The commissioners discuss handouts/giveaways. Commissioner Augustine suggests doing brochures and magnets for a giveaway or potentially stress balls, fidget spinners, or glasses. To be further discussed at the April meeting. (1:13:39-1:21:10)

ii. Commissioner Esmond shares about the [Civil Beat – Hawaii Storytellers: PARENTHOOD](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/hawaii-storytellers-parenthood-tickets-1280356293139?aff=website) – April 4, 2025, 6:00 – 7:30 pm – Waiwai Collective (1110 University Ave, Honolulu). He shares that the commission has been invited to host a table and Commissioner Oliphant volunteers to host on behalf of the commission. (1:21:11-1:27:48)

**Vote: Commissioner Esmond moves to have Commissioner Oliphant and one other Oahu commissioner at represent the commission Hawaii Storytellers, seconded by commissioner Alston, unanimously approved (11:29 am).**

iii. Periodic online gathering of fatherhood commissioners nationwide (1:27:49-1:30:35)

1. Commissioner Alston shares his draft of the gathering of fatherhood commissions nationwide. It’s objective is to create a professional, engaging, and collaborative platform for Commissioners of Fatherhood Organizations from across the US to gather informally every two months. Commissioner Sunio shares that there is already a webinar and will pass information onto the commission.

e. Budget Review – Commissioner Esmond (1:30:36-1:34:13)

i. Commissioner Esmond shares the updated budget sheet with current expenses.

**Vote: Commissioner Esmond moves to approve the draft budget as the working budget for the current fiscal year, seconded by Commissioner Oliphant, unanimously approved (11:35 am).**

f. Officer nominations and elections (1:34:14-1:34:58)

Commissioner Esmond asks the commissioners to consider what positions they would like.

**IV. Legislative Update (1:34:59-1:36:23)**

a. Legislative Bills for discussion and possible testimony

i. Commissioner Esmond shares that he presented testimony on behalf of the commission for the [SB1231 (SD1)](https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session/measure_indiv.aspx?billtype=SB&billnumber=1231&year=2025) hearing, relating to donor anonymity.

**V. Ongoing Business and Updates (1:36:24-1:38:10)**

a. Commissioner position update

i. Commissioner Esmond shares that Lowell’s application is moving forward in the system and Jed Tesoro has dropped his application.

**VI. Upcoming Meetings (1:38:11-1:39:00)**

a. Next Meetings

i. April 25, 2025 (4th Friday, DHS)

ii. May 16, 2025 (DHS)

iii. June 20, 2025 (DHS)

**VII. Conclusion (Vote) (1:39:01-1:40:28)**

1. Final Thoughts (1:39:01-1:39:54)
   1. Commissioner Esmond expresses that there are many topics to be discussed at the next meeting. Commissioner Augustine shares his well wishes and blessings.

b. Vote to Adjourn (1:39:55-1:40:28)

**Adjourn Meeting– Motion by Commissioner Esmond, 2nd by Commissioner Augustine, unanimously approved [11:42 am].**