

City and County of Honolulu
Storm Water of O'ahu Stakeholder Hui (SWOOSH)

August 8, 2023, 4:15-6:45 pm

Hybrid Meeting

via Zoom & Mayor's Conference Room

ATTENDEES

American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) (June Nakamura)

Hawai'i Community Foundation (Dana Okano)

KUA (Malia Heimuli)

Neighborhood Board #31, Kailua (Levani Lipton)

Sustainable Coastlines Hawaii (Rafael Bergstrom)

The Nature Conservancy Hawaii (Kim Falinski)

Wai'anāe Mountains Watershed Partnership (Yumi Miyata)

Waikiki Business Improvement District (BID) (Trevor Abarzua)

Public Agency Staff

Randall Wakumoto (Program Administrator, Storm Water Quality Division, City and County of Honolulu
Department of Facility Maintenance (DFM))

Gene Albano (Director and Chief Engineer, City and County of Honolulu DFM)

Roger Babcock (Director and Chief Engineer, City and County of Honolulu ENV)

Barry Usagawa (Program Administrator for the Water Resources Division of the Honolulu Board of
Water Supply)

Consultant Team

Joan Isaacson (Kearns & West)

Juli Beth (JB) Hinds (Birchline Planning, LLC)

Laurens van der Tak (Jacobs)

Ming Ding (AECOM)

Janice Jensen (G70)

Michele Leong (G70)

Members of the Public

Hugo de Vries

Cindy Turner

Christin Reynolds

Bob Bourke

1. Welcome and Agenda Overview

Joan Isaacson (Kearns & West) welcomed everyone and reviewed the meeting agenda and guides for productive meetings.

See slides 1 to 5 of the presentation materials provided at StormWaterUtilityOahu.org.

2. Public Comment

There were no public comments. See slides 6 and 7 of the presentation materials.

3. Introductions: New Member and DFM Director | Attendance Check-in

Randall introduced the new Department of Facility Maintenance Director designate, Gene Albano, and he introduced himself and shared that his background is in electrical engineering and the private sector. Gene talked about the importance of expanding storm water infrastructure and programs, including establishing a dedicated funding source to support program operations and capital investments. (Note: Director Albano was confirmed on 8/9/2023.)

Trevor Abarzua was introduced as a new SWOOSH member from the Waikiki BID where he has assumed the position of Executive Director. Trevor introduced himself and said he is excited to be involved on behalf of Waikīkī and the business community there.

See slides 8 and 9 of the presentation materials.

4. Storm Water Utility Fee Status and Schedule: Update on Other Water Rates

a. Board of Water Supply (BWS) Rate Updates

Barry Usagawa, BWS Program Administrator and SWOOSH member, gave an update on the proposed water rate increases. BWS has been conducting community outreach to all the neighborhood boards to inform them and obtain feedback for the Board of Directors, who will make the decision in October.

The water delivery system is large and complex. It delivers approximately 145 million gallons per day (GPD) to approximately one million people on O'ahu. BWS is funded only by the revenue generated from the water they sell. These rates only apply to water, not wastewater. All the money generated from water rates goes to fund water operation service needs (see the pie chart on slide 16).

The last rate increase occurred from 2018-2023 and BWS has made significant progress in the planning, design, and some construction to replace aging infrastructure. However, COVID-19 changed a lot of customers' water use habits and inflation has risen much greater than water rates, decreasing BWS's purchasing power. BWS's energy costs have also tripled, as a result monthly costs also rose quickly, resulting in BWS costs exceeding their budget. The response to the Red Hill contamination is also forcing BWS to drill new exploratory and monitoring wells to replace that use and capacity, resulting in more unbudgeted costs.

Barry said that although the increasing costs have put BWS over budget, BWS has chosen not to pass on the energy costs to customers. Instead, they deferred less-critical projects and kept the operations and maintenance budget for the year relatively flat.

Barry explained that setting water rates is about striking a balance between offering safe and dependable water service and affordability. The proposed 5-year CIP increases will raise about \$550 million over that period. BWS's current biggest investments are the replacement sources, exploratory wells, and pipeline replacement (see chart on slide 24).

BWS customers are 90% single-family residential accounts, which use a little more than 1/3 of the water. Revenue from single-family residential covers 95% of their cost of service. Non-residential customers drive the rates. They pay more (117% of the cost of service) and that difference is used to supplement the agricultural customer rates (see slide 25).

In the proposed rate increases all customer classes will have the same rate increase, but the changes may vary by tier. BWS is continuing to use an inverted block rate so that customers who use less water pay less. This method is used to encourage water conservation. The essential needs tier is a below-cost rate for all residential customers for the first 2,000 gallons per month. The proposal is to keep the essential needs tier and limit it to a 2.5% increase per year. The top 3% of single-family residential customers would pay almost twice as much by July 2028 under the proposed rate increases.

Slide 32 shows how customers can calculate their future water bill under the proposed new rates. Usage amounts are rounded down to the nearest 1,000 gallons. The monthly customer charge is the cost to read the meter (cost goes up by meter size). Low water users use 2,000 gallons or less per month. Average single-family water users use approximately 9,000 gallons or less per month.

BWS will continue its existing fee waivers for affordable housing, retrofitting fire sprinklers, and housing for homeless persons. BWS is also considering new waivers for meter and impact fees for new small farmers to help promote more small farms on O'ahu. This is made possible by a state legislative grant (sponsored by Representative Ryan Yamane).

BWS has new conservation programs and is considering doing outreach to the top water users.

The process for rate adoption began approximately 18 months ago with the technical analysis. BWS is taking input from the public from now until the end of September. Barry encouraged SWOOSH members to participate in upcoming community meetings that start next week. There will be other ways to provide input as well.

See slides 10-47 of the presentation materials.

b. Sewer Utilities Rate Update

Roger Babcock, City and County of Honolulu Environmental Services Division (ENV) Director, provided an update on the wastewater utility rates. ENV has two programs: wastewater and solid waste. Wastewater revenues are currently \$450 million per year. He noted the Department is nearing the end of a rate study for a 5-year rate increase package, similar to what BWS has done. ENV has a large capital program with the ten largest projects total about \$1.8 billion. ENV must finish the capital improvement program (CIP) projects under their consent decree, and increased rates are needed to fund the projects.

Roger noted that when the water rates and the sewer rates are added together, they represent 1.9% of the median household income for O'ahu, which is below the generally accepted 2% target for affordability. A 4-5% increase in wastewater rates over a 5-year period is being considered. ENV is exploring a change in structure to a smaller base charge, with an inverted block schedule similar to BWS's rate proposal. This would allow some people's rates in the lower use category to decrease or remain the same, since ENV would shift from a very high base charge and lower consumption rates to a structure with a lower base charge and much larger rates for increasing water use.

ENV is aiming to start the rate increase for FY25 (i.e., July of 2024) and City Council approval is needed. ENV is also looking into customer assistance programs including senior and low-income discounts. Public outreach around the rate increase is anticipated to begin soon.

Roger has been working with the Storm Water Utility financial team (AECOM, Jacobs, Birchline Planning, and Randall Wakumoto) and evaluating an option where a dedicated storm water fee could be incorporated into the ENV rate increase.

See slide 48 of the presentation materials.

c. Storm Water Utility Fee Status & Schedule

Randall Wakumoto provided an update on the Storm Water Utility fee and rates.

Randall said that BWS and ENV were asked to provide updates on their rate increase proposals to the SWOOSH because the Storm Water Utility fee proposal has not yet been introduced to City Council. The introduction has been delayed by several developments, including (originally) the COVID-19 pandemic. The anticipated water and sewer rate increases also present a challenge because the combination of water and sewer rate increases creates concern about total affordability and puts additional financial pressures on businesses and residents. He wanted to provide the group with insights on this dynamic.

The Storm Water Utility team is, as Roger noted, also looking at an alternative strategy of a combined storm water and sewer fee. Over the past few months, there has been a significant update of the 2019 overall cost of service study. Led by AECOM, the team has updated projected costs of salaries, equipment, capital improvements, etc., and the factors that are influencing them (inflation, collective bargaining, etc.). The team is in the process of conducting another rate analysis and looking at an updated impervious cover-based storm water fee and a combined sewer/storm water fee to see which alternative might be preferable. The goal is to bring these options to the Mayor to work on selecting an alternative.

Randall talked about the different strategies associated with these approaches. The fee included in the sewer bill would be a flat fee rather than based on the amount of impervious cover due to the way that the sewer bills and billing systems are structured JB noted that this could be done as a transition to an impervious cover-based fee in the future. Randall hopes to provide updates on the rate analysis and cost of service study by the next quarterly SWOOSH meeting. The team has also been looking at options to phase in the fee over time (i.e., over 4 years, with the fee increased by 25% each year). The goal is to lessen the impacts to residents and businesses and allow them to anticipate the fee over time and avoid as much of a hit in year 1.

See slides 49 to 50 of the presentation materials.

Please note: For all Q&A / Discussion sections, the notes with dashes (-) represent comments and questions from the Stakeholder Advisory Group and the notes with open points (o) represent the project team's responses.

Water Rates:

The responses to questions about the proposed water rate increase were provided by Barry.

- Are the proposed BWS water rates set in stone or will you make adjustments based on feedback from the community?
 - o We're taking feedback. We analyzed four or five iterations of these rates and the Board of Directors settled on this one. We realize that while inflation is still high, we can't ask for too much as that will create more issues for residents.
- I haven't noticed any mention of the military. Are they BWS customers, or do they have their own system?
 - o Both. Kaneohe Marine Corps Base and Fort Derussy are the only locations that aren't supplied by the BWS system.
- With the additional costs incurred by the BWS from the Red Hill contamination, are you charging the Navy anything to recover the costs?
 - o BWS continues to engage with the Navy and the EPA on Red Hill. We did receive some federal funding (ARPA) and are applying for as many grants as we can to offset the costs. Legal action may be necessary to recover some of the costs incurred. This is a common question; even our Board of Directors are asking about this.

Sewer Rates:

The responses to questions about the proposed water rate increase were provided by Roger and JB.

- I constantly hear from people in the community that they're concerned about the sewer fee being so expensive. I'm concerned about how this will resonate with the public. Water use is something we as customers can control, but the sewer fees are out of our control, although we know these services are essential. How will ENV respond to these comments from the community and justify the fee increase when they begin the public outreach process?
 - o The proposed fees are based on the projected expenses to supply sewer services (the cost of service). Adding the inverted block rate schedule (similar to the BWS block rates) and decreasing the base fee will be an important change and will further incentivize water conservation. Implementing this structure will transfer more of the cost onto the variable (consumption-based) portion of the fee, but we do also need to increase the overall amount that is collected.
- When you look at changing to the inclining block rate, is it possible that some users could end up paying less than they do now? Who would end up paying more?
 - o Yes, those on the lower end of water consumption would pay less in fees for the first 2-3 years. Those with the highest water consumption would pay more from year 1.

Storm Water Fees:

The responses to questions about the proposed water rate increase were provided by the project team.

- Is the flat fee going to be commensurate with the impervious surface area coverage on a property? Is it still based on this metric?
 - o In one scenario, where ENV adds a storm water fee as a flat fee, the fee would be based on different classes like residential, non-residential and multi-family. The really big properties would largely have a smaller bill in this scenario than under an impervious cover-based fee.
 - o There are cities that add a similar flat charge on their sewer fees and dedicate these revenues to storm water services. It's not ideal, but it can be a way to get a dedicated revenue source established. In this scenario the charge is not based on impervious cover or a credit program, but starting with a flat fee could be part of a transitional approach. This pivot to look at a flat fee under the sewer fee is due to the way the billing systems are currently set up. The team has been coordinating closely with Roger and the ENV team to compare what the fee rates would need to be under each scenario for each customer type. Total affordability is top of mind and there are some strategies that can improve and promote that.
- Does this mean that the storm water utility would have a dedicated funding stream? I remember this was a need that came up very early in our stakeholder discussions because the Storm Water Program doesn't have one.
 - o That is correct. The intent is to create a dedicated revenue source for storm water as well as a fund to put it in. Adding a flat fee to the sewer bill will still generate revenue for storm water and allow for issuing revenue bonds for storm water projects. The portion of the combined fees that is dedicated to the sewer system could not be used to pay for storm water improvements. The combined fee may just serve as the starting point for implementing a storm water fee with a long-term plan to transition to a fee based on impervious cover. The technical team has seen other municipalities start with a flat fee and then transition later to a fee based on impervious cover.

5. Credit/Rebate Manual Outline

JB gave an update on the progress of the Storm Water Credit Manual for O'ahu.

She shared how credit manuals and the use of rebates and grants are typically part of the strategy to achieve greater use of green stormwater infrastructure and rainwater harvesting in the community. Before COVID-19 the City was mainly looking at an impervious cover-based fee where reducing impervious cover on a property would be the mechanism for obtaining credit. However, as discussed in the first half of the meeting, the City is looking into other approaches to instituting a fee that are independent of the amount of impervious cover on properties. The manual will therefore need to be useful with or without a fee.

JB explained that there is an important difference between credits and rebates. Credits refer to a reduction in an ongoing charge based on actions to reduce the demand on the storm water system. Credits also have to be renewed periodically. Credits would apply chiefly in a system that was based on impervious cover-based fees. Rebates, by contrast, are one-time payments and can be used with

any form of fee (or without one at all) but would apply to both flat fees and impervious cover-based fees.

JB went on to explain that a credit manual is an essential component of any system with an impervious cover-based fee; if an impervious-cover fee is in place, there must also be a legitimate mechanism by which customer bills can be reduced if demand on the storm water system is reduced. Any city/county that has an impervious cover-based fee has a credit manual and it is referenced in the ordinance. Honolulu's credit manual, as with other fee-based utility programs, will contain objective standards for determining fee credits. The credit manual must be established before any impervious cover-based billing begins, so the O'ahu team started working on a credit manual during this fiscal year.

Manuals for green stormwater infrastructure can have many purposes: to assist with the voluntary installation of green storm water infrastructure, to inform residents of regulations, and to describe fee credits offered for storm water capture and onsite retention. Given that no fees are currently in place, Honolulu's manual is being drafted to be ready in time for the ordinance to be introduced, and to illustrate other desired programs that it can support (i.e., grants, green infrastructure projects, and education). The credit manual will also be integrated with the Follow the Drop app.

JB described the initial outline for the credit manual, which will contain information on eligibility, maximum credits, calculations, the application process and assistance, the appeals process, and renewal (see slide 62). The manual will also look at how those elements support a well-developed process for grants and rebates.

The credit manual will spell out the mechanics of how credits would work in an impervious fee-based program. Credits would be offered for permanent features that manage water quality volume and non-structural actions such as educational programs. Certain institutions such as schools, could combine non-structural credits with credits for physical infrastructure (i.e., educational programming with the installation of permeable pavement) for a larger credit amount. Educational programs will have to quantify their efforts (i.e., how many schools and/or students will be doing the curriculum) to demonstrate their impact. Storm Water Quality staff would have to approve the curriculum.

Credits would need to be periodically renewed (i.e., 3 years for residential properties and 1 year for non-residential). The manual will also outline considerations for offering additional credit above the 60% maximum if a property treats the runoff from adjacent neighbors.

JB posed three questions to the SWOOSH members to help with visioning what the credit and rebate process could look. Answers were collected in a Mentimeter poll.

The poll asked SWOOSH members what kinds of questions about credits and rebates should be answered in an FAQ. Participants answered that they had questions on how much of the bill credits and rebates would cover and how often residents would need to reapply for their credits, among others. Participants also indicated their organizations had considered implementing projects for credit such as rain gardens, rainwater capture, and de-paving. When asked what resources their organizations would need to pursue these credit projects, SWOOSH members responded with various needs including time, specific regulations, funding, planning, public outreach and education.

See slide 51-66 of the presentation materials.

Please note: For this Q&A / Discussion section, the notes with dashes (-) represent comments and questions from the Stakeholder Advisory Group and the notes with open points (o) represent the responses.

- I noticed that a lot of these credit opportunities are specifically about promoting the installation of infrastructure, but tree planting is not included. Trees make people’s lives more comfortable by making communities cooler. Could tree planting be included in the credit programs?
 - o We’ve had similar questions about trees before, and tree planting or canopy enhancement absolutely would be part of any program. Tree planting would be credited as an action that is good for storm water. The list in the presentation is not meant to be exhaustive. De-paving and re-vegetating would be rewarded in any system, but it is important to note that specific standards must be established. Tree planting can be credited as an activity, but it gets complicated with private property and tree care and follow up. Often tree planting on private property is incentivized through grants and rebates rather than credits.
- I could see having a separate section in the credit manual for tree planting in parking lots, etc. where large, paved areas are a problem.
 - o Yes, and the best part about an impervious cover-based utility is that remote sensing of tree canopy is done by satellite and tree canopy is read as permeable cover and therefore reduces the property’s bill.
 - o We had some early conversations with the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Department of Urban Forestry about offering small grants for homeowners and residents to plant trees on their properties (with a maintenance agreement in place with the homeowner).

6. SWOOSH Member Presentation: Kailua Neighborhood Board Subcommittee

Levani Lipton (Kailua Neighborhood Board) presented on the Kailua Water Quality PSPHCD (Public Safety, Public Health and Civil Defense) Subcommittee.

Levani stated that this will be a crash course for many in the community-based perspective on storm water quality. She reflected on the question that was posed at the very first Stakeholder Advisory Group meeting: “what does water mean to you?” in relation to Kailua and shared some personal perspectives about what Kailua Bay means to her and her community.

She says she is constantly wondering “what is the future of Kailua Bay?” and asks the SWOOSH members to consider what is the future of the waterway closest to you and what are you doing to protect it?

Levani pointed out how images of Kailua Bay show up everywhere. A quick search for Kailua Bay on Google shows no pictures of brown water— the images are all oversaturated with colors of turquoise, pink, and blue. This is what most visitors see and think of when they think of Kailua Bay. There are also many virtual walking tours of Kailua Beach. This is a hotspot and a big source of tourism revenue, but residents and community members are concerned with the question of how to protect our natural resources and keep them clean.

Ka'elepulu canal comes out from the Ka'elepulu Pond and leads to the shoreline of the bay. After a big storm, the City puts up barriers to screen the silt. Sometimes it takes individuals to go out and open the canal mouth at the beach when the City can't get there in time. Big storms rush a lot of sediment out to the bay. Erosion from these storms has also contributed to the loss of the ironwoods on the stream banks.

Levani shared some images of the water quality in the wetland areas. Red chalky water is the result of sediment rushing off the hillside where construction is occurring and BMPs are not being enforced. Algae blooms often happen due to pollution and warming water temperatures and there are a lot of fish die-offs. When this happens community members complain about the smell and ask the Kailua Neighborhood Board how to deal with the issue. Some people have had to move away because they developed serious allergies to the algae blooms.

Kailua has the largest wetland in the state: Kawainui Marsh. All of our waterways are connected and there isn't a lot of good flow, but after a big storm the sediment either flows out through Ka'elepulu or Oneawa canal near Nico's. Residents are concerned about this but don't know what to do when it gets to this point. Levani explained that when she shows community members photos of the issues in the canals and the bay, she talks about the importance of storm water infrastructure and how the community needs to support the agencies (such as the Department of Facility Maintenance) to get more maintenance personnel.

The role of the subcommittee is to inform, engage and empower the community to protect Kailua's waterways, mauka to makai. The committee has put a lot of action into this goal; they frequently host guest speakers, and they are working with HPU on a study to see if using genki balls (like the Ala Wai) is feasible in the canal. They also work to engage the Kailua community to be proactive and are very passionate about outreach.

Since 2019 the subcommittee has passed dozens of resolutions and motions from Kailua to request DFM to do inspections or site visits or clean storm drains. The community is supportive of the functions of DFM, but the maintenance doesn't happen fast enough, especially when there are bad storms or bacterial exceedances with wastewater overflows in the bay.

The subcommittee produced a fact sheet: "Water Quality Do You Know?" for the I Love Kailua Town Party and created a sign with all the photos of pollution in the waterways. On the community survey this year they asked community members some questions related to water quality. Overall, it appeared that people's concerns are increasing, and the community is concerned about their health. Personal conversations between subcommittee members and community members have the community is concerned about how their health might be affected by direct contact with the water in Kailua Bay.

Levani highlighted several community-led actions by residents. She shared brief stories about Maki, who picks up rubbish on the edge of the stream and has noticed that houseless people living nearby have begun to help keep it clean on their own; Bob and Cindy who do algae harvesting and facilitate community clean-ups and their own clean-ups of Ka'elepulu wetland; and Dr. Eileen does volunteer water quality monitoring for Surfrider. The community hosted a clean-up of Hamākua canal.

Levani showed a map of the Ko'olaupoko moku with all the sources of water (streams, wetlands, bays) that make up the system (see slide 89) followed by a slide of the storm drain systems (slide

90). The storm drain system is extensive, but many residents don't understand the impact that storm water has on their waterways. Levani said she always shares this map as an educational tool. Residents have identified many storm drains in City-owned areas as needing City help.

Kailua could be used as a case-study for storm water intervention because there are so many opportunities to do good. For example, the Ka'elepulu storm drains could be better maintained with regular street sweeping and a staff person to perform regular maintenance (see slide 92). The city needs to invest in personnel and beefing up the system. This is extremely important for water quality in Kailua. The community wonders if BMPs are enforced and whether the fines from enforcement could be put towards additional personnel.

The community has identified some of the major issues in the area. Enchanted Lake was originally dredged to a depth of ~16ft, but with sedimentation its deepest point is now only 9ft. Trash collects in the canal, fish kills occur during algae blooms, and flooding occurs in the canoe hālau parking lot.

Levani concluded her presentation by stating that this is not just a Kailua issue and she would like to challenge everyone to think about what we can do together, organized as a community. The subcommittee has made some recommendations on opportunities to improve water quality in Kailua. Some of the biggest ones are regularly cleaning the baskets in the curb inlets—and they would like to give credit to DFM for doing that. Maintenance is always the biggest need and is significantly more impactful than constructing new infrastructure.

See slides 67-97 of the presentation materials.

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- Which division do most of the labor positions for stream channel cleaning fall under?
 - o They're mostly under the Division of Roadway Maintenance.
- Great presentation, Levani. You should present at the Storm Water Quality BMP workshops. That would open up the workshops to more participation from residents who are the primary demographic for our community outreach programs. Maybe we could do a mini version of the workshop in the neighborhoods.
- What can we in the public do to ensure that these construction sites are inspected and BMPs are installed? This seems like low-hanging fruit.
 - o The community can be the eyes and ears for the City. The Department of Planning and Permitting has a huge caseload with over 100 active projects and is short-staffed. Staff can't get out to visit every project every day, they rely on the public to report problems. The City is also evaluating their enforcement policies to be able to do more enforcement and issue fines, but there is an existing state law that says the City cannot automatically issue fines when violations are discovered. Violators must be notified regarding the violation and given the chance to fix it. Violators also have the opportunity to appeal, which can prolong the process even more. The City has mentioned this difficulty to the state but it's in the Revised Statutes and the City must abide by it. The City is continuing to look at ways to elevate enforcement, working within the statutory guidelines.

7. Additional News and Updates

a. Environmental Finance Center Designation of Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF)

Dana Okano (HCF) shared that HCF has received a grant to become an EPA-designated Environmental Finance Center and is now in the process of hiring contractors and getting the program up and running. HCF will be helping communities who want to apply for federal funds to do more green storm water infrastructure installations around O'ahu. Another aspect of the grant is workforce development. Dana has some partners on the continent who will be helping HCF to focus on water agencies. HCF is hoping to be able to partner with agencies like BWS, ENV, and DFM because of their severe staffing shortages.

HCF launched a campaign at the Honolulu International Airport (see slide 100) with signs to help visitors and residents be more aware of water use and consider their role in conservation. HCF will be putting up more signs as the program expands, but the idea is to help visitors start to be made more aware of water and to pay attention to its use and consider their role in conservation. She stated that when HCF tested the messaging on water with the community it was clear that residents wanted to make sure that visitors are doing their part. HCF hopes to expand the campaign and that it gets people thinking and talking about how we use water more broadly across the state.

See slides 98-100 of the presentation materials.

b. Public Engagement and Outreach Update

Janice Jesen (G70) provided an update on education and outreach for the Storm Water Program.

Make a Difference Month is coming up in October and the City's storm water outreach program will be scheduling a number of cleanups, particularly along the Pearl Harbor Bike Path. Imagine a Day Without Water is on October 20th. SWOOSH members are encouraged to check the calendar for updates and to promote these volunteer events to their members.

Updates have been made to the Healthy Yard Care booklet according to the feedback the outreach group received from the survey sent to members. Thanks to the SWOOSH members who contributed their input!

The City will be holding two Healthy Yard Care Demonstration Fairs on August 19 and September 23 to share with the public how yard care can affect our waters. There will be information tables focused on different aspects of yard care, and the city will be distributing native plants, informational materials and holding a yard care kit giveaway.

The City has developed new guidance materials on car wash fundraisers and commercial car washing to inform the public that wash water from charity car wash fundraisers is no longer allowed to enter the storm drains. These flyers and brochures will be mailed out with letters to locations that typically host these fundraisers.

New guidance was also recently developed for restaurants on how to handle wash water from washing floor mats and cleaning commercial hood filters. This will be included as a supplement to the Property Maintenance Toolkit handbook for property managers.

The City has also developed a brochure for industrial and commercial businesses receiving wet weather inspections. These brochures inform businesses of the purposes of these inspections and how to prevent polluted runoff on their property.

See slides 101-106 of the presentation materials.

c. City Staffing and Job Openings for Storm Water Quality Work

Randall provided an update on hiring efforts for the Storm Water Quality Division.

Several vacant positions have recently been filled, however there are still many vacancies which they are actively trying to fill. Storm Water Quality has conducted multiple candidate interviews in 17 rounds. A lot of vacancies have come up because of retirements or people leaving for other jobs and this has hindered the City's ability to perform their activities. The mayor and his administration recognize the need to fill these vacancies and are supportive of the push for hiring.

The City realizes that the public may not know exactly what it is that the Storm Water Quality Division does, so Division staff have been attending job fairs to help get the word out and recruit applicants. These are usually brief interactions, but they help to draw interest.

The Storm Water Quality Division has just issued another round of position postings and is hoping to fill the environmental tech positions for critical field staff. These positions are difficult to recruit and hire for and there is a lot of turnover.

The Division currently has about a 34% vacancy rate, which is a little better than the nearly 46% vacancy rate earlier this year. Gene is working with all of the Department's divisions and trying to deal with the significant number of vacancies. Things are moving in the right direction, but Gene noted that the Department will continue to look for the right candidates to fill these positions. One of the biggest challenges is the loss of experience and institutional knowledge. Succession planning is important. It takes time to get new staff adjusted, understanding of their role, and fully trained.

Randall and Gene are hoping that the summer internship program with the University of Hawai'i will help to fill vacancies. These internships are scheduled to end around the time of the Storm Water Quality BMP Workshops held in August. DFM has held this internship program for the last 7 years and will keep doing it as long as the funding is available.

See slides 107 and 108 of the presentation materials.

8. Wrap Up and Next Meeting

The annual in-person meeting is tentatively scheduled for mid-November or for the first week in December, exact date TBD. The timing might depend on how much progress is made on the storm water fee study. SWOOSH members will be informed when a date is decided upon.

See slides 109-111 of the presentation materials.