

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DEFENDER COUNCIL

DATE: September 11, 2020

TIME: 10:00 a.m.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/7266557106?pwd=aWNpZ2xlcmtdUklkKzZnckZDSlJhQT09>

Meeting ID: 726 655 7106

Passcode: 6eVv0D

MEMBERS PRESENT: Craig De Costa  
Crystal "Tootie" Glendon  
Regina "Gina" Gormley  
Stanton Oshiro  
Thomas Otake

Virtual meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m.

Motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting dated Friday, July 10, 2020.

Election of officers discussed. It was suggested that positions should be rotated on a yearly basis. Motion to approve the election of officers as follows:

Chairperson – Thomas Otake

Vice Chairperson – Craig De Costa

Summary of the office updates by James Tabe:

Welcomed the new defender council members on behalf of our office: Tootie and Gina.

Related to the pandemic, we have encouraged the deputies to work from home. Several of them prefer to work at the office for various reasons. While in the office, all are mandated to follow the CDC guidelines. Since the courts have started to open, most of our staff are working in the office.

Our biggest concern is that many calls have been coming in with COVID outbreak concerns. We have protocols and scenarios set up with Budget & Finance, Department of Human Resources Development and the Department of Health to follow guidelines. No employee has tested positive.

Budget matters:

Our office qualified for the federal CARES Act funds. The CARES funds are limited to COVID related items only. We will purchase webcams, laptops and PPE's for the office statewide.

Hiring and promotions are on a freeze so we will not be hiring. We may try to go around our promotions by temporary assigning positions.

Every state agency was required to submit budget proposals for 10%, 15% and 20% cuts. These cuts are basically for the next three (3) biennium budgets which means the next six (6) years.

Miscellaneous items:

Our Kona office has moved near the new courthouse.

The statewide training will be a 3-part Appellate review with attorneys earning credit for Ethics and CLE credits.

Defender council member, Thomas Otake, inquired about the vacancy count for our office. James stated that we have about 10 positions open due to retirement and resignations that could not be filled since the hiring freeze. An exemption request will be submitted to the governor to fill positions.

Inquiry by council concerning our safety measures in our office if public comes in for their interview. Jerry Villanueva addressed the inquiry by stating that our interview room has a sneeze guard in place to separate him and the client. Also, before entering the area we have been following the guidelines with checking their temperature and having each client complete a questionnaire.

Defender council member, Stanton Oshiro, commended James with the filing of the request with the Supreme Court to release due to COVID. James informed the council that the credit goes to Susan Arnett, Lee Hayakawa, Jon Ikenaga and Jacquie Esser.

Defender council member, Thomas Otake, asked if there were any other comments. No public comment.

Upon motion and a second the Defender Council agreed to convene in an executive session, which commenced at 10:24 a.m.

The Defender Council agreed to schedule their next virtual meeting on Friday, November 20, 2020, 10 a.m.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.