

**Fern Acres Community Association  
Board Meeting Minutes  
February 15, 2025**

**Call to Order: 9:00am**

The meeting was called to order by the Chair. Attendance was noted, with the absence of Rick. A motion to excuse Rick was discussed but postponed.

**Members Present:** Joe Utt, John Paikuli, Cristi Fields, Patti Pinto, Mark Laret, Roy Kalili, Hank Schultz, Claudia Ziroli.

**Members Absent:** Rick Kaiuli.

**Visitors:** Brian Fields, Amanda Carrane, Albert and Diana Santiago, Ben Dixon, Cristian Caines, Laila Moire-Selvage, Derek Birn, Erin Rose.

**Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed. A motion was made by Patti, and seconded by Joe to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

**Public Comments:**

Benjamin informed the board that he was live-streaming the meeting for those unable to attend. The floor was opened for public comments, but no further issues were raised at this time.

**President's Report:**

- The 2025 budget was approved in the last meeting. However, minor amendments were proposed:
  - \$100 reallocated to the food basket fund.
  - \$200 allocated to the CERT program for necessary purchases.
- A motion was made and seconded by Joe to amend the budget as proposed. The motion was approved unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report:** Joe reports two bank accounts exist: the old account (now in the process of being closed) and the new account. After investigating, it was determined that this was an account with our old bookkeeper's name on it, which is no longer used.

- Financial balances were presented, including:
  - Old account: \$13,715.19 (to be closed).
  - New account: \$185,240.92.
  - Money Market: \$30,500.
  - Petty Cash: \$2,700 (for road crew expenses).
- A discussion followed regarding the transition of bookkeeping procedures to prevent future discrepancies.

**Road Committee Report:** Roy reports acknowledgment of collaboration between the office, road crew, the hub, and the food basket for the food drive. The committee discussed plans to pave sections of roads across all areas rather than focusing on a single road. Input from community members was requested regarding priority areas for paving. Community clean-up scheduled for February 23, 2025, including a potluck and a coordinated trash pickup. Car removal service available for \$100 per vehicle. Exploration of alternatives to chemical spraying for weed control, including saltwater and organic products are underway. Claudia rec'd a new product called, Spruce.

## Committee Reports:

- **Nominating Committee:** Board positions held by Christy, Hank, and Roy are up for re-election. Nominations are being accepted.
- **Policy Committee:** Next meeting scheduled for February 26, 2025, at 6 PM.
- **Fire Department:** Fully staffed for the first time in years, with ongoing EMT training.
- **CERT:** Meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month. Training on triage is scheduled for March.
- **The Hub:** Progress made on infrastructure, including door and sheathing installation. Plans for an agricultural campus and hydroponic setups were discussed.
- **Food Pantry:** Increase in recipients, from 419 in December to 464 in January. Discussions initiated on long-term sustainability in case of funding cuts.

## Annual Events and Other Business:

- **Annual Picnic:** Scheduled for July 13, 2025. Volunteer night scheduled for May 21, 2025.
- **Kau Kau for Keiki Program:** Running from June 11 to July 16, 2025, providing food assistance to children during school breaks.
- **Trunk or Treat:** Scheduled for November 8, 2025.

## New Business:

- A proposal was made for board member training in payment processing to ensure office coverage during absences.
- Board discussed implementing community composting and supporting local food growth initiatives, in case the USDA cuts funding. Food insecurity in Puna is an on-going issue. Roy emphatically supports gleaning and planting with a plan to share as a model in Fern Acres. [Enthusiastic response and discussion.]

## Adjournment:

Joe motions and seconded by Hank to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:15

**Next Meeting:** March 15, 2025

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These minutes are subject to approval at the next board meeting.