Our Kuleana

Established in 1993, Hawai‘i’s Reserves Inc. is a Hawai‘i-based corporation that manages properties affiliated with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, primarily in Li‘i‘e. HRI manages or owns nearly 7,000 acres of land in Li‘i‘e, of which approximately 6,100 was purchased as the two abuinua of Li‘i‘e in 1865. The company also manages commercial, residential, and agricultural properties, as well as parks, roads and other infrastructure in the Li‘i‘e area. HRI’s subsidiaries and properties include:

- Li‘i‘e Water Company (established in 1991) operates the water system for the community of Li‘i‘e and surrounding agricultural properties, delivering pure water from a basal aquifer deep beneath the ground.
- Li‘i‘e Shopping Center (built in 1969) provides more than two dozen commercial and professional services in a 72,000-square-foot retail complex. From hardware to health care, the center serves a wide range of needs for the entire North Shore community.

Li‘i‘e Treatment Works runs a $20 million state-of-the-art wastewater treatment facility constructed by HRI. Since its construction, the facility has run at an operating loss of approximately $1 million annually. An agreement between HRI and the City and County of Honolulu allows for the transfer of the facility to the city.

As a non-profit company, HRI uses revenues generated by its business ventures to fulfill its vision of creating an economically vibrant and sustainable Li‘i‘e. Although affiliated with the LDS Church, HRI does not rely upon tithing paid by LDS church members to fund its operations. The company’s business ventures exemplify its deep roots in and long-term commitment to Li‘i‘e. HRI seeks to invest in the community while preserving the unique character of the area.

Affordable Homes for Our Local Workforce, More Rooms for Our Guests

Two of the most pressing needs in Ko‘olau are affordable workforce housing and infrastructure to support the local economy. Hawai‘i’s Reserves Inc. hopes to address both concerns with two exciting new projects: a master-planned community at Mālāekahana and a new family-friendly hotel in Li‘i‘e to replace the old Li‘i‘e Inn.

The new Mālāekahana community will spread over approximately 300 acres of rolling hills and include a school, parks, churches, public spaces, and a wide array of housing options from detached single-family homes to multi-family townhomes. Based on community needs, the project will contemplate a village center.

“‘This new community will be a beautiful and much-needed addition to the Ko‘olau area’,” says HRI President Eric Beaver. “It will help alleviate the demand for workforce housing affordable to our local people and do so in a way that’s in accord with proven principles of sustainability.”

The new development, nestled between the rugged northern spur of the Ko‘olau range and the blue Pacific, will have a spacious country feel and offer easy access to Kamehameha Highway. Its planning has involved important community input and detailed technical analysis. “We are drafting the master plan based on an exhaustive study of the topography, ecology, and cultural resources of the area,” says Beaver. “We knew from the beginning we were working with a wonderful piece of land and we want to create something that will appropriately accent its character.”

HRI also plans to build a new 228-room hotel next to the Polynesian Cultural Center on the site of the old Li‘i‘e Inn. The new hotel will accommodate visitors and guests of the PCC, Brigham Young University-Hawai‘i, and the Li‘i‘e Hawai‘i Temple, as well as others seeking family-friendly accommodations in the Ko‘olau area. Designed to showcase a Polynesian sense of place, the hotel will incorporate pitched roofing and other Pacific Island architectural features into its design. Permitting is projected to begin later this year.

“This project will replace a hotel that’s on its last legs with one that fits Li‘i‘e much better, both architecturally and in terms of supporting the activities of our community,” says Beaver. “It’s not a big property, but hopefully it will give a little boost to the town’s economy and create some new job opportunities.”
A New Beginning

This is the inaugural issue of Ho’omau and it marks a new chapter for Hawai’i Reserves Inc. For the past 10 years, we have sponsored Ko‘olauloa, a free newspaper that has served the local Ko‘olauloa community admirably. Ko‘olau, under the excellent leadership of editor Mike Foley, covered everything from La‘ie to football with style and dedication. Mahalo to Mike and everyone else who contributed to Ko‘olau over the years.

In launching Ho’omau, we wanted to create a newsletter that would speak directly to HRI to the people we serve. Each issue will contain news about company projects, our community, HRI employees, and the rich history we’ve shared with La‘ie for nearly a century and a half. We’ll talk about the nuts and bolts of HRI’s diverse operations and our goals as a land management company. Most importantly, the spirit of Ho‘omau will be open and direct—in keeping with our desire to let our friends and neighbors know exactly who we are and what we do.

P.S. HRI will continue to produce and distribute its annual La‘ie heritage calendar as a way of thanking the community for its many years of support.

R. Eric Beaver
Hawai‘i Reserves Inc. President

Football for the Big Boyz

Parents will go to great lengths to get their kids into the game, but how many would create their own league? That’s what Doc Taula did when he founded the Hawai‘i’s Big Boy Football League along with two other partners in 2005. The league’s foundations were laid several years earlier when Taula’s son “Cabby”—a fourth-grader at the time—wanted to play football but was ineligible for Pop Warner because his weight exceeded the league limits. That got Taula to thinking: How many other kids in football-crazy Hawai‘i weren’t getting to play because they were too big? And wasn’t this just holding back the athletic development of kids whose size would be an asset to them in high school?

To get the new league off the ground, Taula enlisted volunteer coaches, arranged for O‘ahu Interscholastic Association-certified referees to take charge of games, and even got several Kuhuku-born NFL players to donate time to the cause. Today the league is flying, with 50 players on four teams—two in La‘ie and one each in Waianae and Kapolei. All of the players are 7th and 8th graders whose weight exceeds the 155-pound Pop Warner limit. The spring season runs from March to May. The fall season, during which the “big boys” play against private-school opposition from the Interscholastic League of Honolulu, runs from August until late November. Games are played on Saturdays at La‘ie Park with three practice sessions a week.

“The league has done great things for these boys,” says Taula. “We have a requirement that in order to play you have to maintain a 2.5 grade point average year round. That’s really motivated them to improve their academic performance. Plus they’re getting a head start on the skills and conditioning they need to play well in high school.”

Taula, a property maintenance employee at Hawai‘i Reserves Inc., was born and raised in Los Angeles but has deep family roots in La‘ie. His wife convinced him to move from the big city 10 years ago and he’s never looked back since. “I always wanted to give something back to this community,” Taula says. “Finding a way to do that with kids and football is just lucky for me.”

Jace McQuivey: O‘ahu Burial Council Chairman

History is not an abstract concept to Jace McQuivey. The vice president and general legal counsel for Hawai‘i Reserves Inc. deals with the tangible past on an ongoing basis through his work on the O‘ahu Burial Council. The council, operating under the jurisdiction of the state Department of Land and Natural Resources’ Historic Preservation Division, works with individuals and organizations that have discovered burial sites older than 50 years on their property. In most cases the council attempts to reach compromises that enable the sites to be left undisturbed. Occasionally, however, they recommend graves be relocated to an area where they can be better protected. The work often involves mediating between competing interests—sometimes within the Hawaiian community itself.

McQuivey has served on the council for four years since being appointed to the position by former Governor Ben Cayetano. Last October, McQuivey became the group’s chairman, a job that entails leading meetings and complying with “sunshine” laws. He says at least two or three new cases come before the council each month.

“Anytime there’s construction, particularly along the coastal areas, you’ll often run into burial sites,” he says. “Also, some sites are exposed by nature. Fortunately, in Hawai‘i almost everyone is sensitive to ‘ae‘i and their importance to Native Hawaiians, so most property owners are willing to do the right thing.”

Although McQuivey credits his Hawai‘i-born mother with instilling in him a strong sense of the family’s Hawaiian heritage, his time on the burial council has helped him better understand the cultural link between the living and the dead.

“These are our ancestral remains,” he says. “You stand beside a burial site and it’s impossible not to imagine the lives of the people interred there, or feel the mana of their ‘ae‘i. We can’t lose that connection. In the end, proper treatment of these sites is just a practical way of preserving Hawaiian history and culture.”