

## [Members of Hawaii police union's board cleared of wrongdoing](#)

By Peter Boylan, November 15, 2023

Six current and one former board member of the State of Hawaii Organization of Police Officers were cleared of any wrongdoing by the Honolulu Police Department after allegations of misdemeanor extortion were levied by an ousted union leader.

Before they were cleared, SHOPO President Robert Cavaco and Vice President Stephen Keogh filed grievances against the department alleging that the “excessively long” 15-month investigation denied them their due process rights under the current collective bargaining contract.

Honolulu Police Chief Arthur “Joe” Logan was off island Tuesday, and HPD declined comment, citing the ongoing grievance process.

In September 2022 the state Department of the Attorney General declined to charge Cavaco and Keogh in connection with allegations contained in a May 31, 2022, civil suit filed by former board member and HPD Sgt. David Leonard “Kawika” Hallums.

HPD’s Professional Standards Office opened a misdemeanor extortion case in June 2022 after Hallums reported he was falsely accused of double-dipping into HPD and union travel funds and was blackmailed with the threat of a theft complaint.

The office forwarded the findings of its criminal investigation to the state Attorney General’s Office in July 2022. The decision not to proceed with criminal charges was made after reviewing the findings of PSO’s criminal investigation.

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Cavaco and Keogh were placed on restriction of police authority June 16, 2022, giving up their weapon and police powers while relegated to administrative tasks. They were reinstated and cleared to return to duty Oct. 6.

Cavaco is an HPD lieutenant assigned to night watch in West Oahu Police District 8. Keogh is an HPD sergeant assigned to Urban Honolulu Police District 1's day watch.

Both officers filed grievances against the department for "violating articles in its collective bargaining agreement with SHOPO in June of 2023."

"The focus of Cavaco and Keogh's claim is that HPD's investigation was punitive instead of a process to solely find the truth. HPD's excessively long investigation denied Cavaco and Keogh of their due process rights afforded to them in the contract. Cavaco and Keogh were forbidden from wearing the HPD uniform, required to turn in their badge and service weapon, and had their police authority removed from them," according to a statement from the police union. "Essentially, they were banned from being police officers for almost a year and a half without proof of any wrongdoing. The Department's excessively long investigation also harmed Cavaco and Keogh financially, prohibiting them from working extra duty assignments or applying for other assignments within the Department."

The grievance is moving forward through the normal grievance process as prescribed by the collective bargaining agreement, according to SHOPO.

The administrative investigation into actions taken by Cavaco, Keogh, Derek Pa, Shawn Cavaco, Carmel "Mel" Hurley, John Asing and Nicholas Schlapak wrapped up Oct. 6. Schlapak, Pa, Shawn Cavaco, Asing and Hurley were never the subject of the criminal investigation.

Asing has stepped down from the SHOPO board.

In a statement to the Honolulu Star-Advertiser from SHOPO's state board of directors, union leadership said they are "pleased that after an exhaustive investigation and after analyzing all the facts," all seven SHOPO officials were cleared. Officials maintained the "charges were ridiculous and totally without merit."

"We are further pleased that the two SHOPO active duty police officers the HPD took off the road during the middle of a staffing crisis are back to work patrolling our neighborhoods to keep Oahu residents safe," read the board's statement. "It's unfortunate that the HPD took 15 months to come to the same conclusion the State Attorney General was able to come to in two months. While we are gratified with the outcome of the Department's investigation, we are troubled by the process. We

believe strongly in getting to the truth. In this case, however, an employer put a majority of a union's board under investigation, with charges that threatened the employment of those union officials, based solely on the claims of a litigant who was pursuing financial gain from the union. Actions like these by those in power only serve to silence and intimidate the employer's workers and their representatives."

SHOPO is focused on "moving forward" and remains committed to working with HPD and the city's leadership on addressing the police staffing crisis, improving public safety and providing residents, businesses and tourists with the "high-quality police services they expect and deserve."

During HPD's administrative investigation all seven of the officers faced an internal charge of "Commission of a Criminal Act." That could result in termination even if prosecutors decline to press criminal charges.

Fifty-one percent of HPD's Administrative Review Board can decide the officers did it and terminate them for violating HPD policy.

Hallums' civil suit is ongoing.

Hallums attorney, Bosko Petricevic, in a statement to the Star-Advertiser, called SHOPO's denials of his client's allegations "empty and meaningless." Petricevic claimed HPD didn't clear anyone in the case.

"They said they could not substantiate. Ask HPD about different standards of 'clearing' someone. Be precise," wrote Petricevic. He said documents filed in the civil case prove that Hallums' resignation letter was drafted for him, that board members met secretly to plan his ouster, and union members admitted as much.

"I got mountains of evidence like this," wrote Petricevic.

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