CAROLINIAN AFFAIRS OFFICE

Bwulasiyool Refaluwasch

2026 Citizen Centric Report

OVERVIEW

Pursuant to Article III, Section 18 of the CNMI Constitution, the Carolinian Affairs Office (CAO) shall:

- Advise the governor on matters affecting persons of Carolinian descent within the Commonwealth.
- Review the application of the government policies and the availability and quality of government services for Carolinians.
- Investigate complaints and conduct public hearings regarding matters affecting persons of Carolinian descent.
- May recommend items for inclusion in the proposed annual budget, review the budget before its submission by the governor to the legislature and recommend amendments to the budget relating to matter affecting Carolinians.
- May require information in writing or otherwise with respect to issues affecting Carolinian from the officers of any administrative department, office or agency of the Commonwealth.

The Office is a member of the Governor's Council created under Article VI, Section 5 of the CNMI Constitution.

MISSION

The Carolinian Affairs Office dedicates itself to providing steadfast public service aimed to protect, promote, and preserve the welfare and culture of the Carolinians here in the Commonwealth.





DIVISIONS

CAO has three (3) Divisions:

1) Executive & Administrative: Oversees the overall management, which involves the development and implementation plans, which is responsive and efficient delivery of public services. This division ensures effective governance, policy implementation, and administrative support to achieve organizational goals.

2) Outreach Programs & Services: Ensures community engagement and program initiatives aimed at promoting awareness, education, and participation. This division delivers public services that fosters partnerships that advance the organizations mission.

3) Maintenance and Field Operation: Responsible for the upkeep, repair, and efficient functioning of facilities, equipment, and field assets. This division ensures safe and reliable services throughout the community.









MEASURING PROGRESS

WORLD INDIGENOUS TRADITIONAL GAMES:

In coordination with Taiwan's Council of Indigenous People (CIP), Carolinian Affairs Office sent a delegation comprised of 23 athletes and performers to participate in the *World Indigenous Traditional Games (WITG)*. The initiative involved several traditional sports. It main purpose was to preserve and perpetuate traditional cultures on an international stage throughout the pacific, which all expenses was funded by Taiwan's Council of Indigenous People. In attendance were 300 Indigenous participants from 11 countries throughout the Pacific and over 800 participants from the many native ethnic groups of Taiwan. The event served as a great opportunity to showcase the CNMI's dedication for keeping cultural practices alive. The Carolinian Affairs Office, as the official representative, was proud to present a gift on behalf of the CNMI to CIP Minister Ljaucu·Zingrur.



COLLABORATIONS WITH OTHER AGENCIES:

The Carolinian Affairs Office also participated in the Chamorro-Carolinian Language Symposium and was instrumental on discussions related to language preservation and revitalization as well as the challenges the languages face in this modern age. We were pleased to see several of the Carolinian Bilingual teachers that were assisted through the efforts of CAO-WIA-PSS in attendance.





Post-Sinlaku Progress:

Following the wake of Typhoon Sinlaku, the Office sustained significant damaged to several facilities. Despite the devastation, we were able to immediately mobilize the staff (in a recovery mode), cleaning debris and dismantling structures within the premise and the Youth Learning Center in Laly 4. Simultaneously, we were able to access our local and federal partners regarding equipments and financial assistance.







Cultural Heritage Month:

Despite the challenges and setback, the Office persisted and successfully hosted the Cultural Heritage Month celebration. As an integral part of the event, cultural practitioners were designated throughout the schools imparting their unique traditional skills, such as traditional music, bead making, mwaar making, and weaving to the youth.



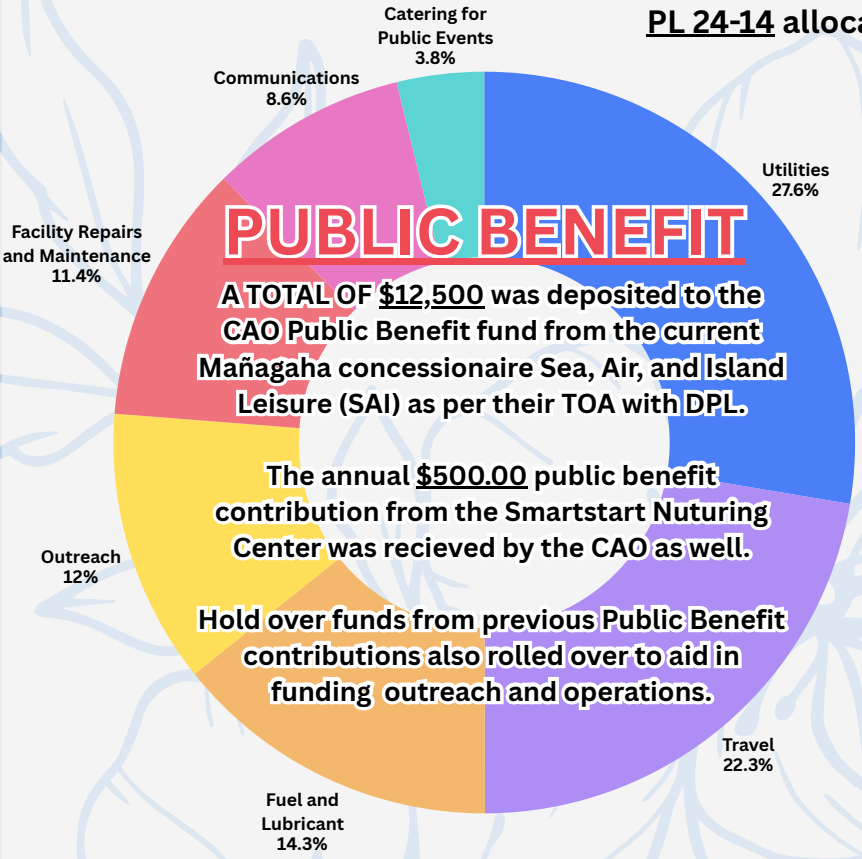


In the wake of financial challenges, the Office remains dedicated to not only providing opportunities for our cultural artist, but also the youth to acquire learning in cultural arts. A major highlight was in commemoration of Chief Aghurubw and 13 Fishermen. Additionally, the event culminates with the Songs and Chants night, celebrating cultural music and dances.

REVENUE & EXPENSES

PL 24-14 allocated funds for the Carolinian Affairs Office totaling $270,533.00

PERSONNEL	$267,874
PUBLIC AUDITOR FEE	$2,679



PUBLIC BENEFIT

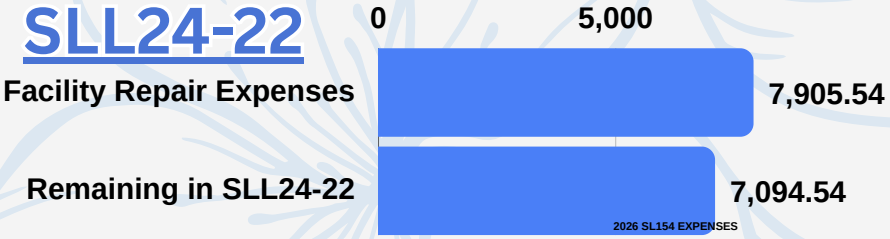
A TOTAL OF $12,500 was deposited to the CAO Public Benefit fund from the current Mañagaha concessionaire Sea, Air, and Island Leisure (SAI) as per their TOA with DPL.

The annual $500.00 public benefit contribution from the Smartstart Nuturing Center was recieved by the CAO as well.

Hold over funds from previous Public Benefit contributions also rolled over to aid in funding outreach and operations.

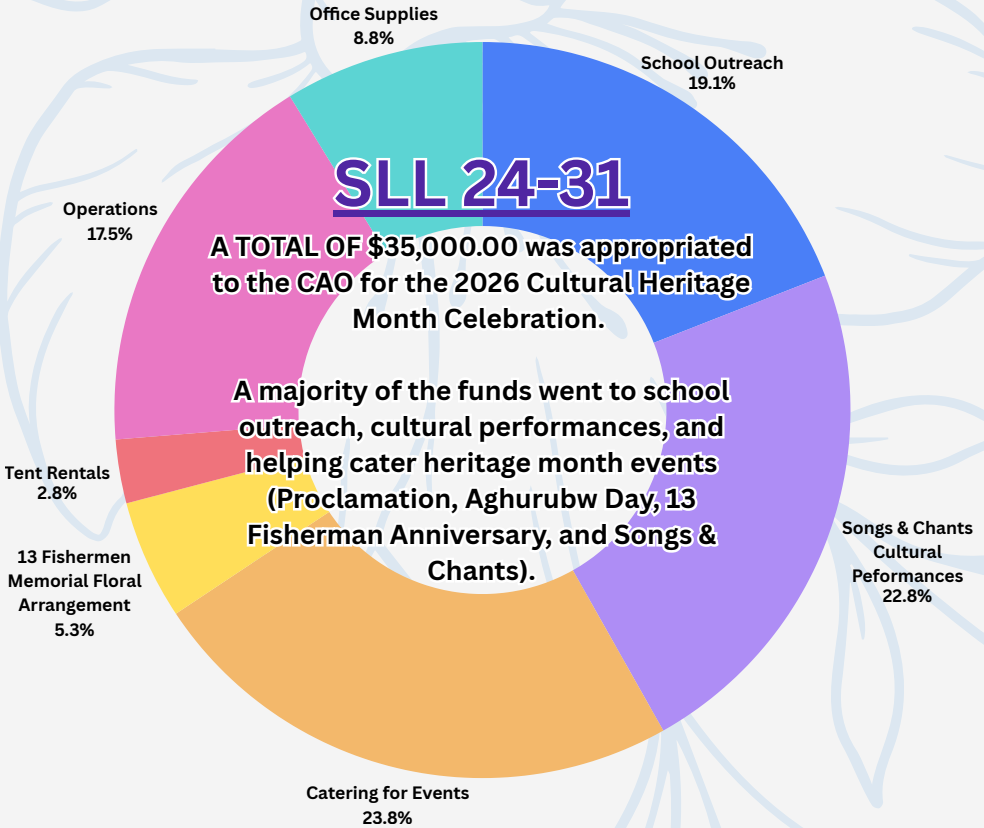
Utilities	5,801.35
Travel	4,684
Fuel and Lubricant	3,000
Outreach	2,512.50
Facility Repairs and Maintenance	2,385.50
Communications	1,803.51
Catering for Public Events	796.62
2026 PUBLIC BENEFIT EXPENSES	**20,983.48**

SLL24-22



A TOTAL OF $15,000 was initially anticipated to procure playground equipment, the law accords the flexibility of funding for other purposes. Given the significant damage sustained by Super Typhoon Sinlaku, we pivoted and utilized funds for a more urgent need for facility repairs.

School Outreach	2,175
Songs & Chants Cultural Peformances	2,600
Catering for Heritage Month Events	2,722
13 Fishermen Memorial Floral Arrangement	600
Tent Rentals	320
Operations	2,000
Office Supplies	1,000
2026 SLL 24-31 EXPENSES	**11,417**



SLL 24-31

A TOTAL OF $35,000.00 was appropriated to the CAO for the 2026 Cultural Heritage Month Celebration.

A majority of the funds went to school outreach, cultural performances, and helping cater heritage month events (Proclamation, Aghurubw Day, 13 Fisherman Anniversary, and Songs & Chants).

WHAT'S NEXT?

GOAL 1: LIFFANG MARKETPLACE PROGRAM

Complete the final stages of preparation, planning, and negotiating to revive the Liffang Program through working with the Administration of Native Americans along with the Office of Grants Management. The Liffang Program aims to build up the business acumen and marketing skills of local cultural practitioners as entrepreneurs, generating income by selling their products.

GOAL 2: CANOE RESTORATION PROJECT

Facilitate the renovation of the traditional canoe (which sustained major damages from Super Typhoon Sinlaku), as well as, the rebuilding the canoe house.

GOAL 3: CULTURAL & BILINGUAL EDUCATION

In coordination with PSS, we'll continue our efforts to strengthen cultural education throughout the school system by implementing year-round cultural programs. Foster the preservation of local traditions, address bilingual teacher shortages, and promote fair working conditions and benefits for bilingual educators.

MAIN CHALLENGE: ECONOMIC SITUTATION

The main challenge is the present dire economic situation throughout the Commonwealth. The lack of adequate and reliable funding source hinders our efforts to plan and implement long-term sustainable programs. Fortunately, we been successful in securing other funding source through SNILD. However, such arrangement does not guarantee indefinite funding.



