



## SCA Public Issues Committee

### MINUTES

July 8, 2020 – 7:00 PM

TELEPHONIC

#### 1. Welcome and Roll Call

PIC Vice Chair Council President Bill Boyce, Kent, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. 32 cities had representation ([Attachment A](#)). Guests present included Councilmember James Jeyaraj, Auburn (PIC Alternate); Councilmember Ernest Thompson, Normandy Park (PIC Alternate); Councilmember Vanessa Kritzer, Redmond (PIC Alternate); Councilmember Tom Agnew, Bothell (PIC Alternate); Councilmember Corina Pfeil, Kenmore (PIC Alternate); Deputy Mayor Wendy Weiker, Mercer Island; Councilmember Susan Honda, Federal Way; Councilmember Valerie O'Halloran, Renton; Councilmember Clyde Hill, SeaTac; Councilmember JC Harris, Des Moines; Councilmember Kathy Lambert, King County; Jenny Huston, King County staff; Beth Mountsier, Bellevue staff; Joyce Nichols, Bellevue staff; Kelsey Beck, Seattle staff; Tom Goff, King County staff; Diana Hart, Woodinville staff; Erika Harris, PSRC staff.

Vice Chair Boyce stated that the PIC meeting was being held telephonically and online via Zoom due to the COVID-19 public health emergency and consistent with the Governor's Safe Start-Stay Healthy Proclamation. He noted that the SCA bylaws provide for meetings to be held by telephone or other similar means in the event of an emergency.

SCA Policy Director Brian Parry provided an overview of how the meeting would be facilitated using Zoom Webinar software. He noted that any discussion in the chat logs would be maintained for public records purposes and included in the PIC minutes ([Attachment B](#)).

#### 2. Public Comment

Vice Chair Boyce asked if there was anyone in attendance who would like to provide public comment. Hearing none, Vice Chair Boyce closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

#### 3. Approval of the June 10, 2020 PIC Minutes

Vice Chair Boyce asked if there were any amendments to the June 10, 2020 PIC minutes.

**Councilmember Ed Prince, Renton, moved, seconded by Mayor Angela Birney, Redmond, to approve the June 10, 2020 minutes. The motion passed with 31 members voting yes, and one abstention (Lake Forest Park).**

#### 4. Chair's Report

Vice Chair Boyce reported that SCA would be hosting a Racial Equity and Social Justice Series for SCA members. The first of the series was to be held on July 10, 2020 ([recording available](#)) and the series will continue monthly on the second Friday of the month from 2:30 to 4:00 PM.

## **5. Executive Director's Report**

SCA Executive Director Deanna Dawson encouraged PIC members to remember the Guiding Principles that SCA adopted earlier this year as members engage with each other. These include:

- Assume that others are acting with good intent
- No surprises!
- Have each other's backs
- Think about who is not at the table
- Be candid, but kind
- Once a decision is made, work together to make it work
- Show up to meetings prepared
- Extend grace to others – cut them some slack
- Remain open-minded
- Respect differing views

Dawson reported that SCA would be welcoming a new Policy Analyst, Jackie Wheeler, in July. Topics that will be staffed by Wheeler include transit, regional water quality, solid waste, flood control, and emergency management, among others.

Dawson said that SCA continues to focus on assisting cities manage through the COVID-19 public health emergency. She said recent case count trends have been moving in the wrong direction in recent weeks and King County Executive Dow Constantine recently held a meeting with community and business leaders to enlist support for renewing efforts to combat the virus.

## **6. PIC Meeting Schedule**

SCA Executive Director Deanna Dawson reported that at the February 2020 PIC meeting, members adopted Resolution 2020-1 setting the committee's meeting schedule and typical meeting location for the year. PIC members were asked to consider potential amendments to Resolution 2020-1 to: cancel the August 2020 PIC meeting consistent with past practice and with those of many regional committees and city councils; reschedule the November PIC meeting to November 12, 2020 as the regular meeting date would otherwise fall on Veterans Day; and, to temporarily designate the location of PIC meetings to be virtual due to the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency.

Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, said that she supported canceling the August PIC meeting. Councilmember Ed Prince, Renton, said he agreed with Backus. Deputy Mayor Krystal Marx, Burien, said she agreed with the proposed amendments. Mayor Angela Birney, Redmond, concurred. In response to a question raised by Mayor David Baker, Kenmore, on behalf of his alternate Councilmember Corinna Pfeil, Dawson noted that SCA staff would still be available to member cities if the August meeting was skipped.

Councilmember Semra Riddle, Lake Forest Park, said the Lake Forest Park City Council meets on Thursdays and would not be available for the meeting on November 12, and asked if staff could

attend the meeting. Dawson said that staff are welcome to attend the meeting but would not be able to participate formally or vote on behalf of the city. She said SCA staff will do additional outreach prior to the November meeting with cities that have council conflicts due to the date change.

**Councilmember Ed Prince, Renton, moved, seconded by Councilmember James McNeal, Bothell, to approve Amended Resolution 2020-1A ([Attachment C](#)), to cancel the August 2020 PIC meeting; reschedule the November PIC meeting to November 12, 2020 and, to temporarily designate the location of PIC meetings to be virtual due to the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **7. Board of Health Declaration of Racism as a Public Health Emergency**

SCA Policy Analyst Alexis Mercedes Rinck reported that on June 18, the King County Board of Health unanimously approved a resolution declaring racism a public health crisis. This action is in line with the declaration made earlier in the month by Executive Dow Constantine and Director Patty Hayes, also declaring racism a public health crisis.

Rinck reported that data collected by Public Health – Seattle & King County shows Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (or, BIPOC) frequently face disproportionate health outcomes, and that recently this has been demonstrated with the higher rates of COVID-19 infection and mortality. She noted that in King County, the rate of death per 100,000 for Latinx and Native Hawaiian/pacific islanders is more than double that of white residents.

In the resolution, the Board of Health identified systemic and structural racism as being directly linked to these disproportionate outcomes. For example, BIPOC communities are at greater risk of mortality from COVID due to the increased prevalence of chronic health conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and severe obesity which are all tied to a systematic disproportionate lack of access to affordable and nutritious food; and also asthma, which is tied to poor air quality and other environmental factors.

Further, Rinck explained that many BIPOC folks are overrepresented in jobs considered essential, and thus they experience an increased likelihood of exposure to COVID-19 due to inability to avoid contact with potentially infected individuals.

Rinck reported that through declaring racism a public health crisis, the Board of Health committed to doing the following:

- Revising guiding documents like the Board of Health code and annual workplan;
- Conducting ongoing work around race and equity such as racial equity training;
- Engaging and being responsive to communities and residents impacted by racism; and,
- Establishing an agreed upon understanding of racial equity principles.

In addition to the action by the Board of Health, Rinck described two upcoming events on race and social equity that SCA has been involved in, including a Racial Equity and Justice Series with the first panel discussion scheduled for Friday July 10, 2020, from 2:30 - 4:00 PM; and a session

called Prioritizing and Budgeting for Racial Equity being hosted by Governing for Racial Equity and Inclusion on June 17, 2020, from 1:00-2:30PM.

Rinck concluded by asking members to share what cities are doing to address racism and for suggestions members have for how SCA as an organization can contribute to those efforts.

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah, reported that the Issaquah City Council developed short, medium, and long-term goals in addressing racial equity. He said they felt like it was important to address certain actions immediately, including reviewing their use of force policy. He referred to the "8 Can't Wait" police reform framework and said that the council is exploring providing a monthly report for the public on use of force indicators, and that the council will be engaging in equity training.

Councilmember Traci Buxton, Des Moines, suggested that SCA could be a gathering place for compiling and producing a monthly list of what each city is doing regarding race and equity. SCA Executive Director Deanna Dawson highlighted that SCA is putting together a resource list on race as part of the July 10 SCA webinar focused on history and perspectives from African American leaders, and that future events will cover topics relating to youth as well as policing.

Deputy Mayor Krystal Marx, Burien, noted that the National League of Cities (NLC) has a Race, Equity, and Leadership initiative and recently published a [report](#) that includes six steps cities can follow to begin improving equity and creating better outcomes for everyone. She said the Burien City Council will be using the report to guide discussion at an upcoming retreat.

Mayor Benson Wong, Mercer Island commented that he met with residents and students interested in reviewing use of force policy, and that the Mercer Island City Council will be holding a study session with the Chief of Police to inform the community about policies currently in place regarding use of force. On August 4, the city will be holding an event to have a broader discussion about possible next steps including councilmembers and boards having bias training, community outreach, and ongoing dialogue with community. He also noted that funding for these initiatives has been an obstacle.

Councilmember Janice Zahn, Bellevue, suggested cities also review another report from NLC on addressing racial tensions ([Responding to Racial Tension in Your City: A Municipal Action Guide](#)). She said that the Director of Race, Equity and Leadership for the National League of Cities, Leon Andrews, recently presented at the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) annual conference and encouraged members to reach out to AWC for a recording of the presentation. Zahn noted that she is an SCA alternate representative on the Board of Health, and that they are convening a subcommittee to look at racism as a public health crisis. She said if any SCA members have any interest in providing feedback to direct the caucus to please send it to Mercedes Rinck. Zahn also stated that she recognizes this is a broader issue than just policing and use of force.

Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, reported that the city created a new racial equity manager position and was in the process of finalizing hiring. She also reported that she and directors at

City of Auburn recently participated in a 48-hour training with a racial equity consultant, and the City Council will be holding the same training in August. She said the city is engaged in community conversations about community policing and to identify barriers to equity built into current programs and laws. She noted one city grant program that reimburses expenses up to \$5,000 as an example of a program they are considering changes to, recognizing that organizations have differing capacity to pay costs upfront and wait to be reimbursed.

Councilmember Semra Riddle, Lake Forest Park, reported that she is bringing the equity guidelines developed by Healthier Here for her council to review with the hope that the city council can adopt something similar.

Mayor Sue-Ann Hohimer, Normandy Park, noted that the Board of Health resolution uses a lot of specific terms or jargon regarding race, identity, and structural power that could lead to confusion about what these terms mean and undermine the effort of having people from different worldviews agree on steps to take to meet the broader goal of having every person capable of thriving.

Councilmember Kelli Curtis, Kirkland, reported that Kirkland City Council held a study session on use of force and the viability of school resource officers in schools. She said the council also held a two-hour meeting focused on hearing Black voices that was very powerful. At upcoming meetings, the council will engage in work focused on transparency, followed by a city-wide equity assessment, and more community engagement. She said the city is also working on identifying funding to hire an equity and inclusion manager.

Councilmember Lydia Assefa-Dawson, Federal Way, reported that two weeks ago the Federal Way City Council voted to eliminate the use of neck restraints by policy. She said the council is considering several opportunities for training and asked if SCA could provide training or other workshops and asked about pooling resources. She emphasized the importance of having common language, understanding history, and leaders working toward understanding the impact of racism on the region's BIPOC population. SCA Executive Director Deanna Dawson reported on the race and equity series. She said SCA is also looking at opportunities to extend training opportunities to the membership. She said an obstacle has been finding experts who are willing to provide training virtually during the pandemic, but that SCA staff would continue to work on this.

## **8. Budget Outlook**

SCA Policy Director Brian Parry reported on budget challenges facing all levels of government due to the COVID-19 public health emergency and asked PIC members to provide updates on how their cities are approaching their budgets, actions taken to date, and expectations moving forward.

In the most recent economic forecast released in June, the state forecast a \$4.5 billion shortfall in the current biennium and \$4.4 billion in the next biennium. Over half of the decrease in forecasted funding is due to declining sales tax collections. While there was initially some expectation of a special legislative session being called in July or August, it now appears more

likely that a special session will not occur until later in the year and possibly as late as November or December.

At the county level, the county Office of Economic and Financial Analysis is projecting significant sales tax declines for the next several years over what had been projected in March. They are projecting a nearly 31% decline in sales tax collections this year and are not expecting collections to return to 2019 levels until 2024. Impacts to the county general fund are mitigated to an extent by the county having much of its funding from property taxes, which are much less affected by the current recession. But, services such as Metro Transit and programs supported by the Mental Illness and Drug Dependency (MIDD) levy – both of which are heavily dependent on sales tax – are facing large shortfalls.

Metro is projecting a loss in revenue from sales taxes and fares of over \$1.5 billion in the next ten years and a total shortfall of \$2.2 billion between now and 2028. Metro was already looking at a \$1 billion shortfall in the next ten years without new funding, and this shortfall doubled due to drop in funding from sales tax and fares for service. Altogether, Metro is now looking at a 20-30% reduction in the bus service network, which will have major implications on how people commute as well as long-range plans for growth that depend on transit.

Metro has made some immediate, temporary changes to service under the county's emergency declaration authority. More service changes are expected in September and again in March as part of their regular service change schedule. SCA representatives on the Regional Transit Committee were briefed recently and have asked Metro to provide a detailed plan on how the agency will be working with cities prior to making long-term system changes.

The county is similarly looking at options to cut costs to address a nearly 30% shortfall in 2020 for services funded by the MIDD sales tax levy. Some of the programs currently being considered for significant cuts include support for therapeutic court services; crisis intervention and de-escalation programs; and funding set aside for system improvements and innovation.

Parry said that all these cuts at the county and state level will of course add further strain on residents and make the challenges many cities are facing all that much harder to deal with. Parry asked PIC members to share with how they are beginning to tackle these difficult challenges.

Councilmember Janice Zahn, Bellevue, expressed concern that many of the proposed cuts stemming from declining MIDD levy revenue are to the types of services many communities have been calling for more of, such as de-escalation training or therapeutic drug courts. She said more discussion should be had about whether these services can be funded from another source.

Mayor Angela Birney, Redmond, said the Regional Policy Committee was briefed by the Superior Court on proposed cuts and that SCA members expressed concerns about cutting programs that help divert people out of jail and that have shown to save money while reducing recidivism. She noted that it is a very difficult time budgetarily for all cities, and that Redmond

has instituted a hiring freeze and eliminated vacant positions but have so far been able to avoid layoffs.

Deputy Mayor Krystal Marx, Burien, said the city of Burien has instituted furloughs for management staff and are facing a 12% revenue shortfall. She said she does not support the cuts proposed to MIDD funded programs and that it is the wrong time to cut services that address systemic racism when county leadership and the Board of Health recently declared racism a public health crisis.

Councilmember Semra Riddle, Lake Forest Park, said she was very concerned about the proposal being considered by the county to essentially eliminate the Risk Awareness, De-escalation and Referral (RADAR) program. She said their police force relies on the RADAR program to connect residents with social workers who can work with them on long-term solutions to issues while allowing the police to focus on policing.

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah, said the city is facing a 20% general fund shortfall and are projecting a long-lasting economic challenge. He said the city has already taken steps to reduce staffing, implement furloughs, and implement pay reductions. The city was recently able to distribute grants to businesses and community organizations from federal CARES Act funds, but these funds are limited.

Mayor Benson Wong, Mercer Island, said that he would like more information about what local school districts are planning with regard to operations in the fall. He said the city is working hard to prioritize expenditures, and that the services that have suffered the greatest impacts are parks and recreation, and youth and family services. The city is projecting long-term economic impacts from the current recession.

## **9. King County Regional Homelessness Authority**

SCA Policy Analyst Alexis Mercedes Rinck reported that the King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCHRA) Governing Committee held their second meeting on June 18. During this meeting, the Governing Committee was briefed on efforts to provide staffing for members of the Governing Committee with lived experience of homelessness; discussed the process for hiring a CEO, and voted to select a hiring firm to conduct the CEO recruitment process; voted to hold a special Governing Committee meeting with the Implementation Board and staff to undergo racial equity and anti-oppression training; and affirmed the Governing Committee workplan.

Rinck reported that at the next Governing Committee meeting, the committee is anticipated to vote on co-chairs, review draft bylaws for the committee, review a racial equity assessment, and confirm the Implementation Board nominees. The Implementation Board will be comprised of individuals with expertise in a variety of subject matters associated with homelessness response. SCA has authority to appoint two members (of 13 total) to the Implementation Board. Currently, staff from all appointing entities are working through a nominating committee to develop and recommended slate of candidates.

Rinck said that All Home has begun the process of putting together the third tier of the Authority, which is the Advisory Board. Rinck reminded members that this Advisory Board will perform two main functions: advise the implementation board, and function as the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) required Continuum of Care body. The board will have a maximum membership of 19 people and all board members must have experience or skill in the following areas: implementation of policies and practices that promote racial-ethnic equity; provision of services for persons experiencing homelessness or related social services with an emphasis on serving populations that are disproportionately represented; and physical and/or behavioral healthcare or another intersecting system of care.

Geographic representation is being factored into the seating of the board in addition to including subpopulation representation such as youth, families, chronically homeless, single adults, domestic violence survivors, veterans, and immigrant and refugee communities; in addition to representatives of the faith communities, the funders and service providers, Black and African American community, American Indian and Alaskan Native Community, and people with lived experience of homelessness. The application opened July 7 and all applications are due by Sunday July 26.

Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, thanked SCA staff for their work supporting SCA members throughout the work to establish the KCRHA, specifically recognizing the work of SCA Executive Director Deanna Dawson and SCA Policy Analyst Alexis Mercedes-Rinck.

Mayor Angela Birney, Redmond, echoed appreciation of SCA staff and also added that Joyce Nichols, Bellevue staff, and Nina Rivkin, Redmond staff, have committed a lot of time to working on the KCRHA.

Executive Director Deanna Dawson said that SCA has put forward nominees for the Implementation Board: Dr. Damien Pattenaude, Superintendent of Renton School District, and Nate Caminos, Director of Government Affairs at the Port of Seattle.

## **10. Levies and Ballot Measures in King County**

SCA Policy Director Brian Parry reported on upcoming levies and ballot measures in King County. The county council took action in early July to place a bond measure on the ballot in November to support expansions and upgrades at Harborview Medical Center. The \$1.7 billion measure, if approved by voters, will pay for building a new medical tower, a new behavioral health building, renovation and seismic upgrades, and a host of other capital projects over the next 20 years.

Parry reported that Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan recently released a proposal to renew the city's Transportation Benefit District (TBD) at approximately half of the current funding level. The city's TBD is currently funded by a mix of motor vehicle excise tax and sales tax. The proposed renewal would be funded solely by a one tenth of one percent sales tax that would generate between \$20 and \$30 million per year over six years. Durkan said in announcing the proposal that her intent is to leave the door open for potentially re-regionalizing transit funding



if a countywide transit funding measure is pursued in future years. If approved by the Seattle City Council, the measure will be on the November ballot.

King County is moving forward with planning to develop a renewal proposal for the Best Starts for Kids (BSK) Levy. The levy currently raises about \$65 million per year and funds a wide range of programs throughout King County in support of families and children. The county council recently adopted a motion requesting the county executive to provide an assessment report by September 30, 2020. The assessment is expected to include analysis of investments by strategy, geographic area, and of the impacts on families and communities. In addition, the executive has been asked to provide recommendations on whether to revise the goals of the levy, and whether to increase or expand the levy to incorporate new or revised goals such as childcare.

The last day for jurisdictions to file a measure to be placed on the November ballot is August 4, 2020, the date of the primary.

### **11. Potential Upcoming SCA Issues**

SCA Executive Director Deanna Dawson said that she is working with the SCA Events Committee to plan for more virtual events, trainings, and social events and encouraged PIC members to provide suggestions for topics and format. Recent and upcoming events include the first meeting of the SCA Racial Equity and Justice on July 10 ([recording available](#)); a training session on troubleshooting online meetings with Ann Macfarlane of Jurassic Parliament; and SCA staff are working with external partners on a training focusing on improving cooperation and communication in this time of COVID-19. SCA members are encouraged to provide feedback and suggestions for future events to SCA staff or Mayor David Baker, Kenmore, who is chair of SCA's Events Committee.

### **12. Informational Items**

Vice Chair Boyce highlighted informational items in the packet on the following topics: SCA letter concerning rates and fees, and legislative priorities for a potential special session in 2020.

### **13. Upcoming Events**

- a. SCA Public Issues Committee – Wednesday, September 9, 2020 – 7:00 to 9:00 PM

### **14. For the Good of the Order**

Vice Chair Boyce asked if any members had any items for the good of the order. Boyce thanked SCA staff for their work in preparation for the PIC meeting.

### **15. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:44 PM.

**Public Issues Committee Meeting  
July 8, 2020**

<b>City</b>	<b>Representative</b>	<b>Alternate</b>
Algona	Dave Hill	
<b>Auburn</b>	Nancy Backus	James Jeyaraj
Beaux Arts Village	Tom Stowe	Aletha Howes
<b>Bellevue</b>	Janice Zahn	Jeremy Barksdale
<b>Black Diamond</b>	Erin Stout	Tamie Deady
<b>Bothell</b>	James McNeal	Tom Agnew
<b>Burien</b>	Krystal Marx	Nancy Tosta
<b>Carnation</b>	Dustin Green	Kim Lisk
<b>Clyde Hill</b>	Marianne Klaas	Kim Muromoto
<b>Covington</b>	Fran Hollums	Joseph Cimaomo
<b>Des Moines</b>	Traci Buxton	
<b>Duvall</b>	Michelle Hogg	Jennifer Knaplund
<b>Enumclaw</b>	Chance LaFleur	Tony Binion
<b>Federal Way</b>	Martin Moore	Lydia Assefa-Dawson
Hunts Point	Joseph Sabey	N/A
<b>Issaquah</b>	Tola Marts	Barbara de Michele
<b>Kenmore</b>	David Baker	Corina Pfeil
<b>Kent</b>	Bill Boyce	Toni Troutner
<b>Kirkland</b>	Kelli Curtis	Toby Nixon
<b>Lake Forest Park</b>	Tom French	Semra Riddle
<b>Maple Valley</b>	Sean Kelly	Les Burberry
<b>Medina</b>	Jennifer Garone	Jessica Rossman
<b>Mercer Island</b>	Benson Wong	David Rosebaum
Milton	Jim Gillespie	Shanna Styron Sherrell
<b>Newcastle</b>	Linda Newing	Tony Ventrella
<b>Normandy Park</b>	Sue-Ann Hohimer	Ernest Thompson
<b>North Bend</b>	Ross Loudenback	Heather Koellen
<b>Pacific</b>	Leanne Guier	David Sporaasli
<b>Redmond</b>	Angela Birney	Vanessa Kritzer
<b>Renton</b>	Ed Prince	Armondo Pavone
<b>Sammamish</b>	Christie Malchow	Kent Treen
<b>SeaTac</b>	Erin Sitterley	Pam Fernald
<b>Shoreline</b>	Chris Roberts	Will Hall
<b>Skykomish</b>	Henry Sladek	
<b>Snoqualmie</b>	Katherine Ross	Matt Larson
Tukwila	Kate Kruller	Thomas McLeod
<b>Woodinville</b>	Elaine Cook	Gary Harris
Yarrow Point	Dicker Cahill	
SCA	Deanna Dawson Brian Parry	Alexis Mercedes Rinck Leah Willoughby

Cities present at the meeting are **bolded**. Voting representatives present are highlighted.