



SCA Public Issues Committee

MINUTES

April 14, 2021 – 7:00 PM

TELEPHONIC

1. Welcome and Roll Call

PIC Chair Deputy Mayor Christie Malchow, Sammamish, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. 29 cities had representation ([Attachment A](#)).

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

Guests present included:

Councilmember James Jeyaraj, Auburn (PIC alternate); Councilmember Barbara de Michele, Issaquah (PIC alternate); Councilmember Nancy Tosta, Burien (PIC Alternate); Councilmember Earnest Thompson, Normandy Park (PIC Alternate); Councilmember Dean Rohla, Clyde Hill; Candice Bock, AWC staff; Tom Goff, King County staff; Olivia Robinson, King County staff; Joy Carpine-Cazzanti, King County staff; Doug Levy, City of Renton consultant; Heidi Popochock, King County staff; Jenny Huston, King County staff; Kelsey Beck, Seattle staff; Courtney Black, King County staff.

2. Public Comment

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

3. Approval of the March 10, 2021 PIC Minutes

Chair Malchow asked if there were any amendments to the March 10, 2021 PIC minutes.

Councilmember Kate Kruller, Tukwila, moved, seconded by Mayor Angela Birney, Redmond, to approve the March 10, 2021 minutes. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Chair's Report

Chair Malchow reported that there was discussion at a prior PIC meeting about potentially canceling the May meeting, and that members would be asked to formalize that decision. Before doing so, she asked members to consider that if they wanted to adopt a position on any of the items on the night's agenda, PIC would need to do so by emergency action in order to be timely. She noted doing so would require an 85% vote to declare an issue an emergency and then a two-thirds vote of those present to recommend the position to the SCA Board of Directors.

Mayor Angela Birney, Redmond, moved, seconded by Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, to cancel the May 12, 2021 PIC meeting. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Malchow asked that if there are any current elected officials who are retiring or not seeking re-election to please let SCA staff know.

5. Executive Director's Report

SCA Executive Director Deanna Dawson reported that the SCA Equity and Inclusion Cabinet has begun holding meetings. These first meeting was to get to know the members of the Cabinet and discuss SCA's mission statement. The Cabinet also began looking at potential areas for action such as ways to improve the appointment process, welcoming and onboarding new elected officials, and PIC processes. The Cabinet welcomes feedback from PIC on this, especially on how to ensure that PIC is welcoming and inclusive.

Dawson also provided an update on the Emergency Management Zone Coordinators. Previously, the King County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) decided to make those positions county employees rather than contract positions as they have been historically. With PIC's recommendation, the Board adopted a position urging the county to keep these contract positions. County has decided to go the contractual route for the zone coordinators rather than making them county employees. SCA representatives to the Emergency Management Advisory Committee (EMAC) worked with OEM to add EMAC and city emergency management representatives to the both the selection/interview process and in semi-annual evaluations of the coordinators. Kudos to the SCA representatives to EMAC for their hard work on this issue.

SCA leadership has met with the Executive's office twice since the last PIC meeting to discuss Health through Housing, the Homelessness Authority, next steps on Best Start for Kids levy, the 2022 sewer rate, and other COVID updates.

Thank you to the cities participating in Sexual Assault Awareness Month. If your city is participating and haven't already, please let SCA know.

6. Legislative Update

SCA Policy Analyst Jackie Wheeler reported that the Washington State Legislature was in their final days of the regular session. She directed members to the April PIC packet that includes updates on bills that SCA is tracking that relate to the SCA 2021 Legislative Agenda. Wheeler introduced Candice Bock, the Director of Government Relations with the Association of Washington Cities (AWC), for an update on the work of the legislature on issues important to cities.

AWC Government Relations Director Candice Bock provided an update on the status of bills being supported, monitored, or opposed by AWC. A fiscal flexibility bill (HB 1069) passed out of the Legislature and is on its way to the Governor for his signature. There has been a lot of work on a number of police reform bills including changes to police grievance arbitration, police tactics, and use of force. AWC has also been working with legislators to address city concerns in HB 1220. Sunday, April 11 was the latest big cutoff where bills needed to pass out of the opposite house. Now the Legislature is working to concur on bills that passed out the opposite

house will amendments. Bock stated that the budget writers are also busy negotiating their budgets to determine what the final proposal will be. The House budget had a number of good things for cities and AWC is asking that the Senate agree to the House amounts. AWC will be hosting an [Legislative Wrap-up](#) webinar for cities on May 13.

Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, asked for more information on the Senate amendments to [HB 1310](#). Bock stated that, similar to other police reform bills, the changes were around the use of tear gas.

Councilmember Ross Loudanback, North Bend, asked about the status of [HB 1241](#) that makes changes to the comprehensive planning process. Bock confirmed that the bill did not make the latest cutoff and is dead for this session but stated that AWC did support the bill if the changes were funded.

Councilmember Kate Kruller, Tukwila, asked about updates on bills clarifying the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA). Bock responded that HB 1056 would have updated the emergency provisions in OPMA regarding remote meetings, but it did not pass out of the Senate even after unanimous support in the House early in session. The Legislature did [take action](#) in January to extend the [Governor's proclamation](#) on the OPMA provisions until the emergency ends.

7. King County Rates and Fees

SCA Policy Analyst Jackie Wheeler reported that King County is in the process of developing 2022 sewer and solid waste rates that would take effect January 2022. For the sewer rate, the King County Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) is recommending a rate plan with no increase in 2022, but a 10.5% increase in 2023. The Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee (MWPAAC) transmitted a letter to the Executive recommending a more stable, predictable rate path with annualized rate proposals rather than double-digit biennial rate increases. For 2022, this would translate to a 4% increase under the MWPAAC proposal.

Wheeler noted that SCA representatives to the Regional Water Quality Committee (RWQC) indicated preference for a more gradual, annualized proposal that lessens the impact on ratepayers. They also emphasized concerns for more information and greater transparency behind the rate drivers and long-term rate projections. The King County Executive is considering both the WTD recommendation of no rate increase and the MWPAAC proposal of a 4% rate increase for 2022. Wheeler reported that the Executive is expected to transmit his recommendation to the King County Council by April 29.

For the solid waste fee, Wheeler explained that the King County Solid Waste Division (SWD) has also considered no rate increase in 2022. However, members of both the Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) and the Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee (MSWMAC) voiced support for one of the more moderate rate increases that would smooth the rate path in future years without large spikes in rates or cuts to services. Currently, the Solid Waste Division is recommending a smooth rate option that would translate to a 9.4% rate increase or the equivalent of an additional 71 cents on the average monthly bill for curbside customers. The Executive is expected to receive the SWD proposal in early May and transmit his final proposal to the King County Council in June.

Wheeler reminded PIC members of the position that the SCA Board of Directors with PIC's recommendation in 2020 urging the county to forgo all rate increases for 2021 unless all options are explored and exhausted. Wheeler asked PIC members to consider whether SCA should continue with that position for the 2022 rates, adopt a different position, or not take a formal position at all.

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah, stated that greater transparency is important, and that Issaquah prefers more incremental rate increases over time. The decision to forgo increases made sense last year in light of COVID but explained that he is concerned about large rate increases every few years as things return to normal.

Mayor Angela Birney, Redmond, agreed with Councilmember Marts that large increases are problematic. She said that Redmond was in support of no increases for 2021, but increases will be more significant in the future if the county does not set a smooth rate plan now.

Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, concurred with the approach proposed by MWPAAC as it seems more logical and thoughtful.

Councilmember James McNeal, Bothell, also agreed with the MWPAAC recommendation. His council also discussed the impact that nutrient removal regulations will have on 2020 growth expectations and housing. Wheeler provided a background on the nutrient removal regulations under consideration by the WA Department of Ecology and highlighted some of the concerns that many have expressed on whether the regulatory change would have the impact to water quality that Ecology is intending. Depending on the final regulatory language, the cost for King County's wastewater treatment facilities to become compliant could be in the billions of dollars.

Mayor Leanne Guier, Pacific, stated that she did not support a rate increase for 2020 and does not want to see one next year, but also does not want a 10.5% increase in 2023. She stated that she would like to see a gradual approach like the one MWPAAC is proposing. As a member of RWQC, Mayor Guier also asked WTD what a 4.5% rate increase in 2022 would do to the rate plan to keep future rates lower.

Mayor Angela Birney, Redmond, moved, seconded by Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, to declare that that emergency action be taken on the 2022 sewer rates. There was no discussion. The motion passed 29-0-1. Sammamish abstained from the vote.

Mayor Angela Birney, Redmond, moved, seconded by Councilmember Kate Kruller, Tukwila, that SCA take the policy position of adopting the MWPAAC recommendation for wastewater sewer rates for 2022. There was no discussion. The motion passed 27-0-3. Burien, SeaTac, and Sammamish abstained from the vote.

8. Unincorporated King County Fireworks Ban

SCA Policy Director Brian Parry reported that the King County Council is considering legislation that would prohibit the sale and use of all forms of fireworks in unincorporated King County.

Violations of the prohibition would mirror current state law and county code, and be considered a gross misdemeanor carrying a fine of up to \$250. Per state law, if the ban is adopted it would not take effect until one year following adoption. The proposed ordinance was voted out of county council committee on March 17 and will be considered for final adoption on April 27, 2021.

The proposed legislation will not impact what is allowed within city boundaries; however, it will have an overall impact on the availability of fireworks in the region and in the vicinity of some cities. It would also further restrict the areas where fireworks may be legally used, which could lead to a concentration of use in those cities where fireworks are still allowed.

Deputy Mayor Krystal Marx, Burien, said that the city has a fireworks ban in place and recently increased their penalties and made it so that any penalties are tied to the land owner and not just the individuals using fireworks.

Mayor David Baker, Kenmore, said the city has had a fireworks ban in place for some time and that while the amount of unincorporated area near the city has diminished it would still be helpful for the county to prohibit fireworks in those areas.

Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, said that she supports the fireworks ban in concept but that such laws are difficult or impossible to enforce.

Councilmember Kelli Curtis, Kirkland, said the city has had a fireworks ban in place for twenty years and have had no serious injuries or fires in that time, and that there are such incidents continuing to happen in nearby unincorporated King County.

Councilmember Chance LaFleur, Enumclaw, expressed concern that banning fireworks in the unincorporated areas may lead to more usage in the city where a fireworks prohibition is not a popular idea.

Councilmember Tola Marts said that fire safety is a significant concern in Issaquah. He said he had not discussed the county's proposed fireworks ban with his council, and so would not be able to take a position on the issue.

Mayor Sean Kelly, Maple Valley, said that while he supports banning fireworks in unincorporated King County he has concerns about the feasibility of enforcement. He said the city banned fireworks after a fire four years ago that burned several acres in the city.

Mayor Armondo Pavone, Renton, said the city has had a fireworks ban in place for many years. He noted that when the city made a significant push at enforcement several years ago, an issue they encountered is where to store and dispose of unexploded fireworks.

Councilmember James McNeal, Bothell, said that he was concerned about enforcement and who the law would be enforced upon from an equity standpoint. He said that Bothell allows fireworks but that even so some of the largest displays they see are in adjacent areas where fireworks are prohibited.

Councilmember Tamie Deady, Black Diamond, said the city allows fireworks and that it would be impossible for the city to enforce such a law with the small size of their police force.

Mayor Angela Birney, Redmond, said that the city has had a fireworks ban in place for many years. She said the county adopting a ban would not be a complete solution, but that it would limit the convenience of obtaining fireworks and may help reduce violations in the city.

Deputy Mayor Christie Malchow, Sammamish, said the city adopted a fireworks ban but have not seen a noticeable decrease in usage. She agreed with others that such laws are extremely difficult to enforce.

Mayor Sue-Ann Hohimer, Normandy Park, said that her community loves fireworks and that they are a valuable expression of freedom and provide an opportunity for neighborhoods to come together.

Councilmember Chance LaFleur, Enumclaw, said that he is concerned that if people cannot get the limited fireworks that are allowed under state law they are likely to seek out more dangerous alternatives from vendors on tribal lands.

Deputy Mayor Krystal Marx, Burien, said that she grew up with fireworks and understands the appeal they have for many. She said that as the wife of a combat veteran she has come to support banning fireworks because of the toll they take on that community. She encouraged members to look into adopting “social host” ordinances to enforce fireworks prohibitions.

Mayor David Baker, Kenmore, said that his community loves fireworks and that they have put on a community show every year since prohibiting personal use. He said that prior to prohibiting fireworks, their fire department was responding to several calls a year in the city. With the ban in place, they have had the ability to support with fire response in neighboring areas.

Councilmember Janice Zahn, Bellevue, said the city has had a ban in place for many years and also hosts a community show on the 4th of July. She said they have increased fines over time and are seeing a reduction in fireworks-related incidents in the city.

9. Best Starts for Kids Levy

SCA Policy Analyst Alexis Mercedes Rinck reported the most recent draft economic forecast from King County which states that, under the proposed levy rate of 19-cents per \$1,000 of assessed value, the Best Starts for Kids (BSK) levy would fund over \$870 million in services for King County families and children over the next six years.

Since the last PIC meeting, there has been significant activity between the Regional Policy Committee, the Children and Youth Advisory Board, and the King County Council. The Children and Youth Advisory Board stepped into their advisory role and convened to discuss one of the proposed amendments to the levy ordinance that was public at that time and sent a letter to the Regional Policy Committee. The Regional Policy Committee (RPC) held a special meeting in

late March to take up action on the levy ordinance. RPC adopted several amendments and passed the ordinance out of committee with a do-pass recommendation to King County Council.

Rinck summarized the adopted amendments that made the following changes to the ordinance as briefed to PIC in February and March:

- Establish capital investments program in recreation, community, childcare, and early learning facilities as well as housing as an allowable use of BSK funds. The ordinance allocates up to \$50 million for this purpose.
- Requirement that the implementation plan ensure that residents throughout King County and in any city can access levy-funded services regardless of whether similar services are already provided by their city or in their community.
- Requirement to allocate of an additional \$5 million in the levy (to a total of \$240 million) to the youth and family homelessness prevention, childcare subsidy program, childcare workforce demonstration project, and technical assistance capacity building. The amendment also earmarks \$1 million per year for capacity building grants to assist with development of infrastructure in geographic locations lacking services or service infrastructure.
- Requirement that an annual report on levy expenditures, services provided, and the number of individuals receiving levy-funded services provide data reporting by zip code and by service type or program.
- Re-insertion of language relating to mental health services within the list of eligible expenditures.

Rinck noted a proposed amendment that would have reduced the levy rate such that the total projected collections be equal to what was originally anticipated by the executive was not adopted.

On April 7, the King County Council Committee of the Whole (COW) took up the levy ordinance. No amendments were made to what was approved by RPC and the committee voted to move the ordinance out of committee 8-0 with one excused member.

Councilmember Traci Buxton, Des Moines asked about the relationship between the BSK levy and the Fair Starts for Kids legislation. She asked whether organizations would be eligible to receive funding from both sources.

Clarifying that these programs would not be managed through organizations but rather would be a direct service programs managed through King County and the state, Rinck responded that with the way the Fair Starts Act is written it uses a state median income to measure eligibility. Rinck explained that a challenge with this is that we know that the cost of living around the state varies significantly meaning that it would likely only touch some of the lowest income families in King County. With BSK, the income threshold for the childcare program component would be set such that they are able to serve those whose incomes are just high enough that they would disqualified them from the State program. The goal would be to leverage the dollars as much as possible.

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah expressed that he likes the data reporting language being added. He also expressed that there's a perception that there is little benefit to East King County from the levy and he would like more information on impact in East King County.

Mayor Angela Birney, Redmond said that she and her fellow RPC members have been asking for that data for the current levy at RPC. She said the latest information was available by county district, but this is not terribly helpful for cities and that they will continue to push for that information.

Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, explained that she did propose a reduction to the levy amount based on feedback at the last PIC that would have reduced the total levy to what was proposed by the county executive rather than revising upward based on the more recent economic forecast. Although it did not pass, she said she tried to raise the voice for SCA members who are concerned about the scale of increase.

Councilmember James McNeal, Bothell, thanked Backus and expressed that he stands with her on raising that issue.

10. King County Countywide Planning Policies

SCA Policy Director Brian Parry reported that the King County Countywide Planning Policies (CPP's) are in the process of being updated in 2021 to align with the recently approved update to VISION 2050 and in preparation for updates to county and city comprehensive plans due to be completed by the end of June 2024. The current CPP's have not been substantively updated since 2012.

PIC held a workshop in March to learn about the proposed changes to the CPP's. Examples of the proposed changes include new requirements for cities related to planning for and monitoring affordable housing supply; new policies related to planning for health and equity outcomes in housing, land use, transportation, the environment, and the economy; a greater emphasis to climate change; and incorporating changes to state law and the regional plan for growth, VISION 2050. The revised CPP's will also include updated employment and growth targets that are foundational to the zoning and land use assumptions in comprehensive plans.

On March 31, the King County Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) approved the release of [Draft 2021 King County Countywide Planning Policies](#) for public review and comment. The comment period closes on May 5, 2021.

Councilmember Traci Buxton, Des Moines, said that there should be more discussion of the new data collection and analysis proposed in the update to the CPP's and to ensure that cities have the resources needed to implement the new policies.

11. Levies and Ballot Measures

SCA Policy Director Brian Parry reported on upcoming levies and ballot measures in King County. The next special election will occur on April 27, 2021. The next opportunity to place measures on the ballot is the August 3 primary election. The deadline for filing a resolution placing a measure on the ballot in August is May 14. Parry noted that two measures would be

considered in Shoreline, including reauthorization of a fire benefit charge as well as general obligation bonds for parks and recreation improvements. In addition, a measure is on the ballot that would consolidate the Northshore Fire Department (serving Kenmore and Lake Forest Park) and Woodinville Fire and Rescue (serving the greater Woodinville area).

12. Potential Upcoming SCA Issues

SCA Policy Director Brian Parry reported on topics being considered for future PIC meetings and encouraged members to let staff know about issues they would like brought forward.

13. Informational Items

Chair Malchow noted that there was an informational item in the meeting packet with an update on the King County Regional Homelessness Authority and the recent hiring of Marc Dones as the organization's first CEO.

14. Upcoming Events

Upcoming SCA events include:

- a. SCA Board Meeting – Wednesday, April 21, 2021 – 10:00 AM to noon
- b. Lunch with the SCA Board Series –Amy Ockerlander and Jan Molinaro– Friday, April 23, 2021 – Noon to 1:00 PM
- c. Meet the King County Council Series –Girmay Zahilay– Monday, April 26, 2021 – Noon to 1:00 PM
- d. SCA Public Issues Committee Meeting – Wednesday, May 12, 2021 – 7:00 to 9:00 PM
- e. SCA Board Meeting – Wednesday, May 19, 2021 – 10:00 AM to noon
- f. Meet the King County Council Series –Pete von Reichbauer – Monday, May 24, 2021 – Noon to 1:00 PM

15. For the Good of the Order

Mayor Sean Kelly, Maple Valley, noted that it was National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week and encouraged members to reach out and share their appreciation.

Councilmember Traci Buxton, Des Moines, said that the city would be hosting a 5k run and walk to raise awareness of Sexual Assault Awareness Month on the last Sunday morning in April.

16. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:44 PM.

**Public Issues Committee Meeting
April 14, 2021**

City	Representative	Alternate
Algona	Dave Hill	none
Auburn	Nancy Backus	James Jeyaraj
Beaux Arts Village	Athena Howes	Tom Stowe
Bellevue	Janice Zahn	Jeremy Barksdale
Black Diamond	Tamie Deady	
Bothell	James McNeal	Tom Agnew
Burien	Krystal Marx	Nancy Tosta
Carnation	Dustin Green	Kim Lisk
Clyde Hill	Marianne Klaas	Kim Muromoto
Covington	Joseph Cimaomo	Kristina Soltys
Des Moines	Traci Buxton	none
Duvall	Michelle Hogg	Rick Shaffer
Enumclaw	Chance LaFleur	none
Federal Way	Martin Moore	Lydia Assefa-Dawson
Hunts Point	Joseph Sabey	none
Issaquah	Tola Marts	Barbara de Michele
Kenmore	David Baker	Corina Pfeil
Kent	Bill Boyce	Toni Troutner
Kirkland	Kelli Curtis	Toby Nixon
Lake Forest Park	Tom French	Lorri Bodi
Maple Valley	Sean Kelly	Les Burberry
Medina	Jennifer Garone	Jessica Rossman
Mercer Island	David Rosenbaum	Benson Wong
Milton	Jim Gillespie	Shanna Styron Sherrell
Newcastle	Linda Newing	Tony Ventrella
Normandy Park	Sue-Ann Hohimer	Ernest Thompson
North Bend	Ross Loudenback	Heather Koellen
Pacific	Leanne Guier	none
Redmond	Angela Birney	Vanessa Kritzer
Renton	Armondo Pavone	Ed Prince
Sammamish	Christie Malchow	Kent Treen
SeaTac	Erin Sitterley	Pam Fernald
Shoreline	Chris Roberts	Will Hall
Skykomish	Henry Sladek	none
Snoqualmie	Katherine Ross	Matt Larson
Tukwila	Kate Kruller	Zak Idan
Woodinville	Gary Harris	Rachel Best-Campbell
Yarrow Point	Dicker Cahill	none

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

SCA Public Issues Committee – April 14, 2021
Attachment B – Zoom Chat Log

18:49:33 From Michelle Hogg, Duvall to All panelists : can you put me in as an attendee tonight? Rick Shaffer is at the table tonight.

18:56:05 From Tola Marts, Issaquah to All panelists : True story- I played pinball before I started talking (I started talking late.)

19:00:08 From Leah Willoughby (SCA) to Michelle Hogg, Duvall and all panelists : He doesn't have a unique link. I'll watch for him in attendees to pull him in.

19:12:54 From Kate Kruller, Tukwila to All panelists : Verna Seal in Tukwila says she will not run again for office

19:57:42 From Kate Kruller, Tukwila to All panelists : This is for cities in unincorporated King County only, right?

20:06:29 From Nancy Backus, Auburn to All panelists : Enumclaw and Auburn also border the Muckleshoot Reservation - where ALL fireworks are solddddd.

20:25:01 From Traci Buxton, Des Moines to All panelists : #SAAM 5k in Des Moines on Sunday, April 25! 9a - noon - 605 S 223rd St, Des Moines. Raising awareness and also support for KCSARC :)

20:26:36 From Gary Harris, Woodinville to Everyone : I've been to the Kenmore fireworks show several times over the last years, always a fun event. much better than sitting at home with a hose on the roof to keep my house from burning down