



SCA Public Issues Committee

MINUTES

October 8, 2025 – 7:00 PM

Online Meeting

1. Welcome and Roll Call

Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, Public Issues Committee (PIC) Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. 20 cities were represented. ([Attachment A](#)).

Guests present included: Katie Halse, Bellevue Staff; Amy Tsai, Redmond Staff; Tania Mondaca, King County Staff; Micha Lujan, King County Executive Staff; Calandra Childers, 4Culture; and Claire Miccio, 4Culture.

Chair Roberts noted that any discussion in the chat for those joining online would be maintained for public records purposes and included in the PIC minutes ([Attachment B](#)).

2. Public Comment

Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, SCA PIC Chair asked if there was anyone in attendance who would like to provide public comment and encouraged any individuals with comment to contact sca@soundcities.org .

Hearing none, Chair Roberts closed this portion of the meeting.

3. Approval of Minutes – September 10, 2025 Meeting

Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, PIC Chair asked for any questions or amendments to the minutes of the September 10, 2025 SCA PIC meeting.

Mayor Kelli Curtis, Kirkland moved, seconded by Covington Councilmember, Joseph Cimaomo, Jr., PIC Vice Chair, to approve the minutes of the September 10, 2025 SCA PIC Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Chair's Report

Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, SCA PIC Chair, thanked Covington Councilmember Joseph Cimaomo, Jr., SCA PIC Vice Chair, for running the September meeting in his absence and thanked members who were able to attend. Roberts said he heard the tour went well and expressed excitement for future light rail openings. He shared that he has the privilege of naming the PIC Nominating Committee, which will consist of Mayor Troy Linnell, Algona; Councilmember Cara Christensen, Snoqualmie; Councilmember Ruth Pérez, Renton; and Councilmember Melissa Stuart, Redmond.

5. Executive Director's Report

SCA Executive Director Robert Feldstein expressed appreciation for being in the room with other PIC members at the September meeting. He introduced new SCA Policy Analyst Dax Tate, who has taken on the portfolio of public safety and transit committees. Feldstein shared that SCA has continued conversations around the potential King County Transportation District tax, including receiving a response from the Building Trades Union and speaking with King County Metro General Manager Michelle Allison.

Feldstein stated that the Regional Transit Safety Taskforce recently presented their implementation plan to the King County Committee of the Whole. He encouraged members to attend the upcoming Regional Utilities Rate Summit, which he shared will be held on November 14th with an invitation to follow shortly.

6. SCA Regional Boards and Committees 2026 Appointments

SCA Executive Director Robert Feldstein highlighted the importance of SCA's work on Regional Boards and Committees and expressed that this work only happens if members apply to committees. Feldstein asked members to reach out to their colleagues and encourage them to apply. Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, PIC Chair, also encouraged members to apply.

7. Indigent Defense Caseload Standards Letter to the Legislature

Presentation by SCA Senior Policy Analyst Aj Foltz. Materials attached and available [here](#) ; the redlined letter and amendments can be found in the PIC Packet ([link](#)) on pages 23-27.

Foltz began by reviewing PIC's prior discussions on this topic. At the July PIC meeting, members decided PIC should take collective action on this issue. Between the July and September meetings, SCA staff met with AWC and Gordon Thomas Honeywell, surveyed SCA cities for more information on the impacts of implementing the new standards, and drafted a letter. At the September meeting, there was consensus that PIC & SCA should take up this issue and vote on the final draft letter at the October meeting. Between the September and October meetings, SCA staff collected proposed amendments, briefed the SCA Board of Directors on the letter, and added a section to the 2026 SCA State Legislative Agenda on Indigent Defense.

Components of the draft letter include rising costs and budgetary concerns, public defense recruitment challenges, operational and fiscal impacts, and inequities in impact. The letter primarily asks for ongoing state-funded resources, workforce development support, and guidance on how to effectively allocate city resources.

Deputy Mayor Harry Steinmetz, Des Moines, moved, seconded by Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah, to approve the redlined version of the letter as presented in the PIC packet.

Steinmetz stated that the primary focus of a letter should be on the standards as a fiscal issue and that he hopes SCA does not get bogged down on other issues. He expressed that the letter directly addresses the issues cities will face in complying with the standards and stated his support for the letter.

Foltz then overviewed the submitted amendments as presented in the PIC Packet. She shared that Kirkland has communicated support for Kent's amendment. Foltz added that SCA staff has been looking into reasons to include a state study or limitations of a study. She overviewed that reasons in support of a state study include that there are specific factors at the state and local level that influence the time attorneys need to represent their clients; that substantive law, court rules and procedures, caseload maximums, outcomes, discovery policies, travel times, and support staff levels vary by jurisdiction; and that the RAND National study calls for a state-specific study. Limitations of a potential study include that in six out of seven state studies SCA staff reviewed, findings were in line with the national study, and in the seventh case, greater capacity was recommended. Other limitations include that the national study has found their conclusions are usually in the middle of state results, state studies are done in partnership with those who conducted the national study, and the timeline would be challenging given that implementation is set to begin in January 2026.

Mayor Kelli Curtis, Kirkland, moved, seconded by Councilmember Jared Nieuwenhuis, Bellevue, to adopt City of Kent's Amendment 1 as presented in the PIC Packet. No objections were raised, and the amendment was adopted.

Nieuwenhuis expressed appreciation for the purpose behind Kirkland's proposed Amendment 3 as presented in the packet. He asked whether the amendment could delay funding until after the study. Foltz replied that her interpretation is that the study would delay implementation by the state but would need to confirm. SCA Executive Director Robert Feldstein added that it is unlikely that the state would pay for a study this year. He also raised questions about the validity of the approach used in the study, though acknowledged its usefulness.

Curtis asked Feldstein whether the studies performed looked at misdemeanors. Feldstein asked SCA Policy Analyst Dax Tate, who stated that the studies were conducted on overall workload, which includes both misdemeanors and felonies. He stated that the national study analysis went into a more granular level of detail.

Curtis moved forward amendments 2 and 3. A second was not obtained.

Councilmember Bill Boyce, Kent, stated his appreciation to approve the standards but shared concerns that a proper process to arrive at the standards was not conducted.

Boyce moved, seconded by Jared Nieuwenhuis, Bellevue, to strike out the language, "SCA appreciates the many months of work by the Washington State Bar Association and Washington State Supreme Court to create and approve these standards." from the letter. Given that this text is now absent from the letter following the adoption of Amendment 1, this motion was ruled out of order.

Steinmetz moved, seconded by Councilmember Melissa Stuart, Redmond, to adopt Amendment 4 as presented in the PIC Packet. No objections were raised, and the amendment was adopted.

Steinmetz expressed that it is important to get the information in Amendment 4 in front of the legislature as soon as possible.

Stuart expressed that she believes Amendment 4 is necessary. She asked whether there had been communication between SCA staff and the staff of the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) in light of recent PIC discussions about aligning with AWC as much as possible. Stuart added that this topic is a priority in the AWC Legislative Agenda alongside workforce development and therefore supports Amendment 4's inclusion in the letter. Foltz replied that SCA staff has been in communication with AWC staff and has drawn on the AWC Legislative Agenda to inform SCA's State Legislative Agenda. Feldstein added that SCA shared the draft letter with AWC early on, and that AWC's only concern was around conducting a state study.

Mayor Pro Tempore Ronn Mercer, Duvall, stated that he is not against the adoption of Amendment 4 but wants to clarify that while Washington law schools have limited numbers of graduates and attorneys in this area, graduates from other states are not precluded from this field.

Steinmetz asked whether Mercer was suggesting a friendly amendment to say "there may be too few attorneys", to which Mercer agreed. Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, PIC Chair, clarified that friendly amendments are not possible, and asked Foltz whether this change would contradict the remaining text of the letter. Foltz replied that it does not.

Roberts called for a vote to adopt the redlined version of the letter as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

8. 4Culture Doors Open Presentation

Presentation by Senior Government Relations Manager Claire Miccio, 4Culture, and Director of Program Strategy and Impact Calandra Childers, 4Culture. Materials attached and available [here](#).

Miccio began by introducing 4Culture. She shared that 4Culture is chartered as the Cultural Development Authority of King County and was started in the 1970s to support, advocate for, and preserve the cultural resources of the region. 4Culture does this work by providing competitive grant funding programs and art commissions.

4Culture is primarily funded by a 0.1% sales tax funding to implement the Doors Open cultural access program (estimated \$100M annually from 2024-2030), funds from 37.5% of lodging tax from King County (\$10-15M annually), and the 1% for the Arts funds from eligible capital construction projects. For each revenue source, there are tight constraints on how the money can be spent and applicant eligibility.

Miccio shared that the King County Council and Executive appoint 4Culture's Board of Directors, which is representative of the King County Council Districts, guides the work of 4Culture, reports to the King County Executive and Council, and reviews 4Culture's budget. 4Culture also

completes additional assessment reporting for Doors Open and is audited annually by the Washington state auditor.

In 2024, 4Culture received 2,000 applications and granted 1,701 awards across 8 programs. The organization developed an Implementation Plan which was approved. They also prepared for the full rollout of the Doors Open Program in 2025.

The Doors Open program is made up of six competitive grant programs: operating support, public schools cultural access, public free access, cultural facilities, County connected, and launch. A minimum of 25% of all Doors Open funding is required to go to projects and organizations outside of Seattle. 4Culture surpassed the 25% goal, as 27% of sustained support funding went out of Seattle, 35% of funded organizations were located outside of Seattle, and 26% of facilities funding went to projects outside of Seattle. Organizations outside of Seattle had a 71% win rate for grants related to facilities and a 98% win rate for grants related to operating support.

The Doors Open program is designed to support new and emerging organizations, including by providing an online resource library and consultant directory. Funded organizations qualify for services like coaching, mentoring, consulting, and communities of practice. The Doors Open Facilities Grants also funded projects focused on ADA compliance.

Childers shared 4Culture's evaluation principles, which ensure responsible stewardship of funds and accountability. 4Culture also hoped to build expanded evaluation capacity across the sector. They collect three levels of metrics to measure success: monitoring and compliance, program performance, and public benefit impact.

Doors Open has developed an Evaluation Framework and Plan that they have been sharing, and will continue to share, with partners across the County.

Doors Open has completed their first round of awards and has done an economic impact review. They found that the Arts and Culture funds have a larger economic impact since grantees buy local. Specifically, they saw that every \$1 of investment creates a \$1.73 total output in arts recreation and entertainment and every \$100,000 of investment creates 1.56 jobs in arts recreation and entertainment. Overall, from a \$60.9 million investment, Doors Open has had \$105.4 million in total economic impact, with 950 new jobs and gigs in King County and \$34.1 million in King County wages.

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah, asked whether 74% of funds are going to Seattle-based organizations. Miccio clarified that 74% of total funds are not going to Seattle. Instead, 27% of sustained support funding went out of Seattle, 35% of funded organizations were located outside of Seattle, and 26% of facilities funding went to projects outside of Seattle. Marts asked how much of the revenue supporting 4Culture comes from Seattle. Miccio replied that they have not done that analysis for the sales tax amount or the funding source derived from capital facility construction for King County Facilities, but that the majority of the lodging tax revenue comes from Seattle. Marts stated that if the revenue streams primarily come from and return to Seattle, a good argument to primarily fund organizations in Seattle can be made. He stated that in an era

of tax fatigue, his constituents might be concerned about why the majority of the funding is going to Seattle. Miccio replied that it would be interesting to analyze how much revenue comes from each jurisdiction.

Shoreline Mayor Chris Roberts, SCA PIC Chair, asked whether adding capacity to struggling, smaller organizations or giving funds to larger organizations with donors has a better return on investment. Childers stated that 4Culture funds organizations that are volunteer-run or have a few staff and does not often fund organizations with a large employee base. She added that organizations with a large employee base bring visitors and tourism revenue to the region but are predominantly in Seattle and are not as accessible to everyone in King County. Childers stated that the focus is on how to distribute funding to groups outside of Seattle.

Councilmember Syd Dawson, Maple Valley, stated that he knows of two nonprofits in Maple Valley that have benefitted from 4Culture funding and expressed appreciation. Dawson stated he is happy to share how the funding has benefitted organizations in his cities.

Councilmember Mark Joselyn, North Bend, asked whether a funded organization must reapply for funding annually. Miccio replied that with the exception of their unique 3-year program, other programs provide funding on an annual basis.

SCA Executive Director Robert Feldstein shared that many cities do not have the infrastructure of nonprofits, and the city's parks and recreation team does the arts and culture programming. He asked whether 4Culture would be willing to support any of the programs breaking out into their own 501(c)3 organizations. Childers replied she would want to confirm the laws in place before providing a definitive answer but thinks this is worth further conversation. She stated that the launch program includes a path for coming up with a new nonprofit and a path for nonprofits that have been doing the work but have not yet hired staff.

9. Regional Boards and Committees Upcoming Issues

SCA Executive Director Robert Feldstein shared that the goal for updating this item is to provide an opportunity for our caucuses to have increased input from more of our cities. SCA Senior Policy Analyst Aj Foltz shared that there was broad support for this item at the September PIC meeting. Foltz stated that SCA policy staff have reworked the memo format of this item and are happy to take feedback on the format and timing of the included items.

Councilmember Melissa Stuart, Redmond, shared that she chairs SCA's caucus for the Growth Management Planning Board, which has recently recommended reconsidering the representation on the committee. She shared that a proposal has been presented that would award six permanent seats to SCA cities and lower the overall designation for SCA-appointed seats. Stuart expressed that she has questions regarding how this impacts smaller cities and stated that this issue arose after the PIC Packet was compiled.

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah, stated that Issaquah is concerned about this proposal because while Seattle and Bellevue have unique needs, the 80,000 population cutoff for receiving a seat seems arbitrary.

Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, SCA PIC Chair, asked if there were updates on Seattle Mayor Bruce Harrell's letter regarding cities' contributions to homelessness response. Foltz said that the letter was discussed at the last meeting of the King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA), and that there will be a county-wide look into the resources going into housing. Feldstein shared that the desire is to check if the work being done by SCA cities is proportional to our needs. He clarified that not paying into KCRHA is not the same as not contributing to work on homelessness generally. Feldstein stated that Seattle and King County have a need for a coordinated response that does not apply to other cities as much. He also shared that Harrell recently discussed a potential resolution asking cities to give land for the homelessness response if they cannot provide funding.

10. Updates/Informational Items

SCA Senior Policy Analyst Aj Foltz presented this standing agenda item to offer an opportunity for questions from PIC members.

Foltz shared that work on SCA's 2026 State and County Legislative Agendas is moving forward. She stated that the committee has met twice and proposed topics for consideration and language changes. Foltz said work is underway to compile specific language, and that the agendas will be before PIC next month and then voted on at the December PIC meeting.

Foltz shared that the October 2025 newsletter was released today and asked members to share their feedback. Foltz stated that feedback thus far has been positive and encouraged cities to submit their wins to be highlighted in the newsletter. She also reviewed that the newsletter included pictures from the September Pre-PIC and a City Manager/City Administrator meeting on parks and libraries.

Foltz stated that there was an update to the levies and ballot measures to reflect Covington's item raised at the last PIC meeting.

11. For the Good of the Order

There were no items for the good of the order.

12. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

**Public Issues Committee Meeting
October 8, 2025**

City	Representative	Alternate
Algona	Troy Linnell	David White
Auburn	Nancy Backus	Tracy Taylor
Beaux Arts Village	Aletha Howes	
Bellevue	Jared Nieuwenhuis	Dave Hamilton
Black Diamond	Tamie Deady	
Bothell	Carston Curd	Rami Al-Kabra
Burien	Kevin Schilling	
Carnation	Jim Ribail	
Clyde Hill	Steve Friedman	
Covington	Joseph Cimaomo, Jr.	Kristina Soltys
Des Moines	Harry Steinmetz	Yoshiko Grace Matsui
Duvall	Ronn Mercer	Mike Supple
Enumclaw	Chance LaFleur	Corrie Koopman-Frazier
Federal Way	Susan Honda	Lydia Assefa-Dawson
Hunts Point	Joseph Sabey	
Issaquah	Tola Marts	Kelly Jiang
Kenmore	Nigel Herbig	Melanie O'Cain
Kent	Bill Boyce	Toni Troutner
Kirkland	Kelli Curtis	John Tymczynsyn
Lake Forest Park	Joe Lebo	Tracy Furutani
Maple Valley	Syd Dawson	Dana Parnello
Medina	Michael Luis	
Mercer Island	Dave Rosenbaum	Ted Weinberg
Milton	Tim Ceder	Shanna Styron Sherrell
Newcastle	Paul Charbonneau	Ariana Sherlock
Normandy Park	Sue-Ann Hohimer	Jack Lamanna
North Bend	Errol Tremolada	Mark Joselyn
Pacific	Kerry Garberding	Vic Kave
Redmond	Melissa Stuart	Osman Salahuddin
Renton	Ruth Pérez	Armondo Pavone
Sammamish	Sid Gupta	Amy Lam
SeaTac	Jake Simpson	Iris Guzmán
Shoreline	Chris Roberts	John Ramsdell
Skykomish	Henry Sladek	
Snoqualmie	Cara Christensen	Louis Washington
Tukwila	Jovita McConnell	Hannah Hedrick
Woodinville	David Edwards	James Randolph
Yarrow Point	Katy Kinney Harris	

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

SCA PIC October 8, 2025

Attachment B: Chat Log

19:06:20 From Sid Gupta, Sammamish to Hosts and panelists:

Sid Gupta, CM Sammamish.

Apologies for my tardiness.

20:00:52 From Jared Nieuwenhuis, Bellevue to Hosts and panelists:

I apologize but I need to drop off. Have a good night everyone.

20:12:14 From Robert Feldstein to Everyone:

SCA is looking into this question of city-by-city generated income across a number of taxes.

We don't have that info yet, but will share when we do.

20:22:36 From Claire Miccio, 4Culture to Hosts and panelists:

Thank you! I'd be really interested to see this analysis

20:25:40 From Ronn Mercer, Duvall to Hosts and panelists:

Apologies. I need to drop a bit early. I'm flying out from SeaTac this evening, but I wanted to catch as much of the meeting as possible.

Public Issues Committee Meeting – Attachment A
September 10, 2025

City	Representative	Alternate
Algona	Troy Linnell	David White
Auburn	Nancy Backus	Tracy Taylor
Beaux Arts Village	Aletha Howes	
Bellevue	Jared Nieuwenhuis	Dave Hamilton
Black Diamond	Tamie Deady	
Bothell	Carston Curd	Rami Al-Kabra
Burien	Kevin Schilling	
Carnation	Jim Ribail	
Clyde Hill	Steve Friedman	
Covington	Joseph Cimaomo, Jr.	Kristina Soltys
Des Moines	Harry Steinmetz	Yoshiko Grace Matsui
Duvall	Ronn Mercer	Mike Supple
Enumclaw	Chance LaFleur	Corrie Koopman-Frazier
Federal Way	Susan Honda	Lydia Assefa-Dawson
Hunts Point	Joseph Sabey	
Issaquah	Tola Marts	Kelly Jiang
Kenmore	Nigel Herbig	Melanie O'Cain
Kent	Bill Boyce	Toni Troutner
Kirkland	Kelli Curtis	John Tymczyszyn
Lake Forest Park	Joe Lebo	Tracy Furutani
Maple Valley	Syd Dawson	Dana Parnello
Medina	Michael Luis	
Mercer Island	Dave Rosenbaum	Ted Weinberg
Milton	Tim Ceder	Shanna Styron Sherrell
Newcastle	Paul Charbonneau	Ariana Sherlock
Normandy Park	Sue-Ann Hohimer	Jack Lamanna
North Bend	Errol Tremolada	Mark Joselyn
Pacific	Kerry Garberding	Vic Kave
Redmond	Melissa Stuart	Osman Salahuddin
Renton	Ruth Pérez	Armondo Pavone
Sammamish	Sid Gupta	Amy Lam
SeaTac	Jake Simpson	Iris Guzmán
Shoreline	Chris Roberts	John Ramsdell
Skykomish	Henry Sladek	
Snoqualmie	Cara Christensen	Louis Washington
Tukwila	Jovita McConnell	Hannah Hedrick
Woodinville	David Edwards	James Randolph
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