



SCA Public Issues Committee

MINUTES

June 11, 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 7:04 PM. 22 cities were represented. ([Attachment A](#)).

Guests present included: Tracy Taylor, Auburn (PIC Alternate); Katie Halse, Bellevue Staff; Amy Tsai, Redmond Staff; Brandon Miles, Tukwila Staff; Tania Mondaca, King County Staff; and Misha Lujan, King County Executive Staff.

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 – May 14, 2025 Meeting

This item was moved to later in the agenda due to lack of quorum. Item was addressed once quorum was reached, following Item 5. Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, SCA PIC Chair asked for any questions or amendments to the minutes of the May 14 SCA PIC meeting.

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah moved, seconded by Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, to approve the minutes of the May 14, 2025 SCA PIC Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Chair's Report

Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, SCA PIC Chair shared that, thanks to leadership, SCA's monthly meetings with the King County Executive have restarted. Chair Roberts stated these meetings were regular pre-pandemic, and this past month's meeting represents the first once since then.

5. Executive Director's Report

SCA Executive Director Robert Feldstein shared that PIC is the first business item at the meetings held with the King County Executive's office. Feldstein stated the Regional Utilities Affordability

Summit was discussed at the meeting with the Executive's office, with planning underway for the event to hopefully be held in October. He also shared that the Criminal Justice Sales Tax was placed on this PIC meeting agenda to inform his next meeting with the Executive's office.

Feldstein also reported on discussions in the Regional Policy Committee (RPC) related to the EMS Levy, sharing that the group appealed for the ordinance to go before RPC and proposed an amendment requesting annual reports to go before RPC as well to allow for greater engagement and access to data. He thanked SCA RPC Caucus members and Chair Auburn Mayor Nancy Backus for their work. Feldstein also stated that he joined an organics management panel at RPC, and thanked city staff members who helped with preparation for that meeting.

Feldstein also shared that SCA Policy Analyst Aj Foltz will be taking on the role of Senior Policy Analyst given current SCA Senior Policy Analyst Andie Parnell's departure, though Parnell will stay on for a bit longer to ease the transition. The search for a Policy Analyst to fill Foltz's role is underway; a timeline will be finalized soon.

6. Regional Board and Committee Updates

Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, SCA PIC Chair opened the floor for questions regarding the regional boards and committee memorandum from SCA staff. Hearing none, Chair Roberts closed this portion of the agenda.

7. Revising the Public Issues Committee

SCA Executive Director Robert Feldstein overviewed the memo on this agenda item and invited members to discuss its proposed contents. He stated that PIC used to be a larger regional driver in policies and consensus, as well as a connection point for regional committees and boards. Feldstein stated that while PIC does not have to be identical to its prior renditions, the goal is to recreate discussing areas of concern amongst the body. He proposed this could be accomplished through shifting the focus from fewer presentations and instead to more conversation. He acknowledged that PIC may be the only place where smaller cities receive those presentations and proposed a separate meeting ahead of PIC to allow for cities to be briefed. Feldstein also stated a need to identify issues earlier; he proposed bringing issues to PIC for initial discussion, members subsequently discussing the item with their cities, and then ultimately having a second discussion at PIC informed by local discussions. Feldstein opened the floor for questions.

Councilmember Toni Troutner, Kent, shared optimism for PIC returning to this direction, and stated that the goal of SCA is to support other cities in cases where it would not hurt your own city.

Feldstein listed various scenarios where PIC discussion would be relevant, such as: ahead of committee action, when the SCA caucus is in agreement with each other but disagrees with other committee members, when there is disagreement among caucus members, or when a committee has recently completed a large body of work. Outside of committee work, other reasons a city might bring an item to PIC could be to discuss how cities are addressing a challenge or opportunity, or when there is concern about a policy or action.

Mayor Kelli Curtis, Kirkland, expressed appreciation for Feldstein's energy and enthusiasm and shared her excitement for pre-PIC meetings and discussions that impact all of us.

Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, agreed with Curtis that this gets back to the purpose of PIC and gives members reasons to ensure we have quorum, rather than just sharing information on items that may not be of urgency to cities. She stated that this presents an opportunity for us to share best practices, make sure we have one voice, and focus on our core vision.

Mayor Pro Tempore Ronn Mercer, Duvall, shared he is new to PIC and thinks moving toward discussion rather than presentation is of value. Mercer shared that as a smaller city with smaller staff, some initial analysis on an issue and the impact of related decisions would be helpful.

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah, stated that this is his 15th year on PIC and that he feels this list is a good distillation of what both newcomers and long-term members want to see from PIC. Marts liked moving longer items to before PIC to allow for greater conversation. Marts also stated that PIC's influence on County-level actions also depends on Feldstein's relationship with the King County Executive and PIC members' relationships with the King County Council. He shared that getting consensus from PIC has value to the county and that PIC's input will help the County get items done, which he hopes will encourage them to bring items to PIC in a timely fashion.

Feldstein added another driver of these proposed changes is the survey results.

Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, SCA PIC Chair shared that the amount members bring of themselves and their city's values is what makes PIC work. He stated that PIC will achieve more if members are engaged, informed, and have discussed items with their cities.

Feldstein shared that staff are excited about and will support these changes, but that success also hinges on the participation of PIC members; he encouraged members to spread the word about what PIC is doing.

Chair Roberts shared a desire for greater conversation with caucus chairs to bring items to PIC. Feldstein agreed.

8. House Bill 2015 & New Criminal Justice Sales Tax

Presentation by SCA Senior Policy Analyst Andie Parnell. Materials attached and available [here](#) .

Parnell overviewed existing sales taxes allowed by state law. Public Safety Sales Tax is for any city, town, or county. The tax rate for cities or towns can be up to 0.1% with voter approval, while counties can tax up to 0.3% with voter approval; however, combined city and county rates may not exceed 0.3%. The Criminal Justice Sales Tax is available to any county, amounting up to 0.1% without voter approval.

Parnell then overviewed revenue requirements for the existing sales taxes. The Public Safety Sales Tax requires one-third of revenues to be used for criminal justice purposes, fire protection purposes, or both. Its revenues may be shared between the city and county, with the split of revenue determined by who placed the tax on the ballot. At this time, King County does not have a Public Safety Sales Tax, and only a few SCA cities do. The revenues of the Criminal Justice Sales Tax must all be used for criminal justice purposes. Ten percent of revenue is distributed to the county, with the remaining 90 percent shared between the county and its cities on a per-capita basis.

Parnell then introduced the two components of the Washington State House Bill 2015 (HB 2015): the Local Law Enforcement Grant Program, and a new local criminal justice sales and use tax.

The Local Law Enforcement Grant Program aims to provide direct support to local and tribal law enforcement agencies in hiring, retaining, and training. Grant funding may be used to recruit and fund new law enforcement officers, county correction officers, peer counselors, and behavioral health personnel working in co-response. It is funded by \$100 million of the state's operating budget and expires on June 30, 2028. To be eligible for the program, agencies must receive sales tax funding, have established policies that comply with state law, complete various trainings and required Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) certifications, and comply with data reporting. Applicants must also submit staffing plans and annual response data to CJTC. Selection of grant recipients will prioritize, in order, those seeking to establish co-response or community immersion law enforcement programs, those who currently maintain co-response teams and are seeking grants to hire additional law enforcement officers, and all other applicants.

The new local criminal justice sales and use tax authorizes cities or counties to create a 0.1% sales and use tax for criminal justice purposes, by resolution or ordinance, without voter approval, by June 30, 2028. To be eligible, cities or counties must demonstrate compliance with the Local Law Enforcement Grant Program requirements and submit documentation to CJTC, and the imposition and collection of the new tax may only occur if and when the city or county receives the CJTC grant. The tax has no revenue sharing requirements and requires annual reporting to AWC or WSAC on how the moneys received from the tax were expended. However, if the city or county voters have rejected the imposition of a criminal justice or public safety sales and use tax within the past 12 months, the city or county cannot impose the new sales and use tax. Additionally, if the city or county has not adopted a resolution or ordinance to impose the tax by June 30, 2028, the city or county may only impose the tax with voter approval.

King County Executive Braddock has transmitted a proposal for a countywide 0.1% criminal justice sales tax to King County Council. If approved, the new revenue would be included in 2026-2027 county budget and is expected to address the anticipated \$175-180M budget shortfalls. The proposal is scheduled for action by the Budget and Fiscal Management Committee in July. A Public Safety Roundtable will be convened in July as part of Executive Braddock's 200-day plan. Participants will include SCA leadership, SCA members selected by the PIC Nominating Committee, King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, King County Sheriff's Office, and City of Seattle.

Deputy Mayor Harry Steinmetz, Des Moines, asked whether the county implementing their tax pre-empts cities from doing the same. Parnell stated it does not pre-empt cities, there is no revenue sharing requirement, and that cities can implement the tax so long as they are eligible. She also clarified that the failed ballot measure criteria only applies to sales and use tax measures.

Councilmember Jared Nieuwenhuis, Bellevue, asked whether the award is linked to a specific hire or if it is a general allocation, whether funds are returned or maintained if an officer does not complete training, and what guidance will be provided in terms of supplanting the rules. Parnell shared that funds are specific to law enforcement officers, peer counselors, and behavioral health workers, but there is no further specificity. Parnell also stated that she was unsure what would happen to funding in the situation of an officer being let go, and that there are many outstanding questions on the implementation of the program. She stated that she is unsure what training or help CJTC will provide to grant applicants. Nieuwenhuis also asked if Parnell has seen any comments from the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs, as this might be difficult for cities that do not have the infrastructure or staffing in place to support the necessary reporting. Parnell stated she would follow up.

Councilmember Suzan Torguson, North Bend, asked if the sales tax was connected to grant requirements. Parnell replied that they are separate, but to be eligible for the sales tax, cities must meet the grant eligibility requirements. Torguson expressed that the extra requirements posed a barrier to achieving the basic need of paying for police services, and that she hopes cities can use these funds to address problems rather than making it so difficult that cities are left out and unable to pay for police services.

Steinmetz shared that Des Moines has a behavioral health specialist which frees patrol officers up for police activities, and that he is willing to share information with other cities. Steinmetz also asked whether there was any discussion around what will happen at the end of the grant funding and whether the anticipation is that the sales tax creates a revenue stream to keep officers on that were hired with grant money. Parnell stated that it is unclear what follows June 30, 2028, as much of the next steps will depend on seeing where the state budget is at the time.

Councilmember Toni Troutner, Kent, stated that a top legislative priority for Kent was getting additional money to hire police officers. She shared that she feels it is misleading to say that the city is raising taxes for public safety yet not raising enough money to hire officers such that the public cannot see the difference and thinks other large cities may feel similarly.

Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, applauded the City of Kent's efforts on sales tax for cities. Backus stated that the three years of grants is similar to the federal grants: these are great talking points, but do not really help cities in need of additional public safety officers. She also said she was unsure if there is a requirement to retain officers after those three years.

Mayor Henry Sladek, Skykomish, shared that as a small city that contracts with county, he assumes if the county raises funds, they can increase the staffing in the Sheriff's office which somewhat subsidizes the pool of funding they receive as a contract city. Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, PIC Chair shared that is what he has heard from Councilmember Dembowski and that if the tax passes it can keep community court open, fund patrols in unincorporated areas, and help with overall staffing across the board for county and contract cities. He warned that if the levy does not pass, many contract cities will be short on officers and costs will go up.

Roberts also shared that Shoreline is unlikely to go for their own sales tax levy but is supportive of the County doing so as he wants to see the community court preserved and ensure there are officers in the unincorporated areas of the county.

SCA Executive Director Robert Feldstein asked the body for input on who SCA's representatives may be for the roundtable and for cities' priorities for uses of funds.

Nieuwenhuis shared that Bellevue's top public safety priorities are recruitment, retention, and wellness of officers; training; joint crisis response; community growth and capacity pressures; and potential loss of federal funding. He asked how the roundtable will hear from cities and how feedback will be shared with the County. Feldstein stated the roundtable is being hosted by the King County Executive to inform how the tax will appear in the September budget.

Torguson stated she would hope the 0.1% would allow cities to use funds for anything related to criminal justice, since North Bend is looking at laying off city employees to pay for public safety, as costs have dramatically increased and they have no way to suddenly raise the funds. She asked whether we as a group can request that the rules allow for cities to utilize the funds in a way that makes sense for the city.

Steinmetz echoed Torguson's remarks, stating that each city has unique issues, all cities need help, and it is difficult to prescribe from a county level what every city must look like. He stated that the County has the benefit of economy of scale, as some items involved in law enforcement are better and easier to operate on a larger scale; since the county tax would apply to cities with their own police departments, it would be ideal if the County can provide some of those larger functions of law enforcement that benefit from the economy of scale.

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah, shared that there are county-wide crime issues that necessitate county-wide responses and that he does not want cities to outbid one another. Marts noted recent attention on high net wealth home invasion and that Issaquah sees a large difference between violent crime versus property crime.

Feldstein stated he wants to manage expectations about letting cities choose how to spend money, as the County faces a huge deficit and the sales tax will likely pay for a hole of existing items that the County does not have money for. He stated that SCA will use the typical nomination process to identify members for the roundtable.

Deputy Mayor Sue-Ann Hohimer, Normandy Park, shared that she wants roundtable representatives with fire since the County pushes many items and everyone is angry, tax-fatigued, and feels that they pay and do not see nearly enough. Hohimer stated other causes the County funds do not show fruitfulness, and that representatives should ask to see results of where the money is going, how it is being spent, and what the resulting improvements have been. She stated she hopes that the representatives are willing to bring a big voice and lean into the fact that while Washington has come a long way and she is proud of that work, she wants to see more from County and State governments.

Mayor Pro Tempore Ronn Mercer, Duvall, stated he is unsure how Duvall will weigh in but appreciates Feldstein's comments. He shared that Duvall leverages some services and has a relatively small level of crime. Mercer stated they finally fully staffed their police force and are struggling to maintain it, and do not want to bring people on just to have them cycle off. He shared fatigue around the cost and that while it is a shared County service, there is not always visible representation in city limits.

9. King County Transportation District Sales Tax

Presentation by SCA Senior Policy Analyst Andie Parnell. Materials attached and available [here](#) .

Parnell overviewed that state law allows for the creation of Transportation Benefit Districts (TBD) to fund and implement transportation improvements, established by the legislative authority of a county or city. Funding sources available to TBDs include vehicle license fees, sales taxes, development impact fees, tolls, property tax excess levy, and Local Improvement District. A sales tax is not to exceed 0.3%. A councilmanic sales tax can be for 10 years at a rate of 0.1%, and renewal requires voter approval. A voter-approved sales tax can be for 0.2%. Sales tax funds must be used for transportation improvement, such as investment in or operation, preservation, and maintenance of new or existing programs.

The King County Transportation District (KCTD) was created in 2014 with the support of SCA, informed by PIC policy positions. It is governed by the KCTD Board, consisting of all 9 King County Councilmembers. KCTD placed a transit funding measure on the ballot in 2014, which was not approved. Another measure was discussed in March 2020, but was not pursued due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Locally, many cities have their own transportation districts funded by their own sales taxes.

A 10-year 0.1% sales and use tax is now being proposed by the County for transportation improvements. The tax would be imposed countywide in addition to the sales tax currently imposed by local TBDs and would generate an estimated year-one revenue of \$95 million. Revenue would be evenly distributed between roads (focused on high-priority road and bridge projects) and metro (focused on safety and security upgrades for operators and riders).

The KCTD is an independent government; only the KCTD Board has decision-making authority. The proposed sales tax does not require review by the Executive, regional committees, local

jurisdictions, or other governing bodies. In the future, the King County Council could vote by ordinance to assume the KCTD into King County, meaning responsibilities and funding authority would then be managed by King County Executive, Council, and regional committees. For now, the Regional Transit Committee only tangentially has authority over Metro's tax revenues through the renewal of Metro's three policy documents.

Covington Councilmember Joseph Cimaomo, Jr., SCA PIC Vice Chair corrected the chart of local TBDs, stating that Covington removed their \$20 car tab in January due to a sales tax increase.

Councilmember Syd Dawson, Maple Valley, shared that Maple Valley also removed their car tab fee due to implementation of a 0.1% sales tax.

Councilmember Jared Nieuwenhuis, Bellevue, stated that he knows the County is facing pressures from revenues not coming in, but the cities face these same pressures. He shared that this is a great opportunity for SCA to weigh in strongly and get upstream to provide input before major decisions happen in King County. Nieuwenhuis said he was unsure of any outreach from County Councilmembers to Bellevue, which he found concerning. He stated that with the AFIS levy in April, the Public Safety and Criminal Justice Sales Tax, MIDD renewal, Parks Levy Renewal, TBD tax, and the EMS levy, he hopes voters will still have some appetite but that this list is concerning. Nieuwenhuis said voters are facing tight budgets, higher taxes, sales and property taxes, and more. He asked how the distribution of revenue to roads and metro will look in this upcoming proposal. Parnell stated it is proposed as a 50-50 split to roads and metro.

Mayor Kelli Curtis, Kirkland, echoed Nieuwenhuis's concerns regarding tax fatigue. Curtis stated she thinks SCA needs to clearly communicate to King County how much the assessed value is per city and what kind of money this brings in, as cities contribute a lot to these levies. She said this is not required to go to the Regional Policy Committee or Regional Transit Committee, but we can request it. Curtis asked if the road improvements are in unincorporated areas of the County, as cities need to benefit from contributing to the tax and stated it may be worth PIC creating a letter on this.

Mayor Nancy Backus, Auburn, agreed with Nieuwenhuis that many tax measures on the ballot, including renewals. Backus stated that we fought for the Parks Levy rate to go down to 23.5¢ (from 25¢) per \$1000, which results in \$1.5 billion in revenue, that the EMS Levy is also at 25¢ per \$1000 and thus another \$1.5 billion, and that MIDD is also up for renewal.

Councilmember Tola Marts, Issaquah, requested more information to determine whether tax rates are actually higher, or if they remain the same once inflation and population growth are taken into account. Marts stated the context and history would be helpful to respond to questions like this.

SCA Executive Director Robert Feldstein appreciated Marts's comments and stated that SCA will have a look across the various King County governments and add them up to determine whether it is more money per person over time. Feldstein also urged members to not regard the County

and County Council as a monolith, as he has heard various timelines and viewpoints, and stated this indicates that it is a good time for those on the fence to hear from SCA members. He also shared that in discussions with the staff of TBD Chair Councilmember Claudia Balducci, the staff did not anticipate both discussion and action occurring in one meeting. [CLARIFICATION AFTER THE MEETING: Staff from Councilmember Balducci clarified that since the KCTD discussed the potential tax in their June 2 Special Meeting, it was possible that there would be a vote in the next KCTD meeting, sometime in July.]

Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, SCA PIC Chair stated that information on tax rates per city would be informative.

Mayor Henry Sladek, Skykomish, asked for clarification on whether the 0.1% proposal affects cities as well if enacted by the county, which Parnell stated it does.

10. Levies and Ballot Measures

Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, SCA PIC Chair requested that members share with SCA staff information regarding city ballot measures and levies, or to share relevant information verbally.

11. June Newsletter

SCA Policy Analyst Aj Foltz provided a brief update on the new SCA newsletter. The launch of the monthly SCA newsletter was informed by feedback from the 2025 SCA Membership Survey. The purpose of the newsletter is to engage regularly with our entire membership and keep our member cities informed of SCA's work. The proposed newsletter content will include an Executive Director update, updates from the Public Issues Committee, updates from policy staff on boards and committees, and upcoming events, lunch & learns, and tours. The newsletter will be disseminated to SCA member city elected officials and affiliated staff.

12. Proposed Standing Item: Upcoming SCA Meeting with the Executive's Office

Executive Director Robert Feldstein shared that himself; Des Moines Mayor, Traci Buxton, SCA President; Renton Mayor, Armondo Pavone, SCA Vice President; and Shoreline Mayor, Chris Roberts, SCA PIC Chair share PIC's thoughts in regular meetings with the King County Executive's Office. Feldstein stated he has high-level thoughts on items discussed at the meetings but opened the floor for members to share any other items that are important to bring back to PIC at a follow-up meeting following discussions with the Executive's Office.

13. For the Good of the Order

There were no items for the good of the order.

14. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Public Issues Committee Meeting – Attachment A
June 11, 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 | Lorri Bodi | 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 | Suzan Torguson |
| 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 | |

SCA PIC June 11, 2025

Attachment B: Chat Log

(no content to record)