

Commissioner roll call was given at 4:30 p.m. The Briefing was held via teleconference, with an in-person option at the SHA Central office. Commissioners Minor and Houston were absent from the Briefing.

Introduction: New SHA Commissioner, Kristin Ryan

Commissioner Clark introduced the new commissioner, Kristin Ryan, and welcomed her to the board. Commissioner Ryan offered additional insight into her interest in SHA and joining the board of commissioners. Commissioner Purcell added his own welcome, stating that Commissioner Ryan has an excellent reputation in both the private and public spheres of development and construction. Commissioners Crutchfield and Howard also offered their welcomes.

Legislative Response Team (LRT) Update: Federal Government Shutdown

Executive Director Rod Brandon invited Lisa Wolters, Director of Intergovernmental Relations, to share information about the federal shutdown, impacts on SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), state and local responses, and proposed rules.

Ms. Wolters stated that the federal fiscal year ended on September 30th, and the shutdown began on October 1st. The senate has proposed a new continuing resolution that would fund the government through January 30th, 2026. The expectation is there are enough votes in the senate for the continuing resolution to pass. There may be a vote in December on expiring tax credits related to the Affordable Care Act.

As for the impact of the shutdown on SHA, there has been no change to operations, housing assistance payments, or subsidy payments in 2025.

As for impacts on residents, SHA looks at what has happened to SNAP. Money for food benefits expired on October 31st and was not released to states. The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) did not issue SNAP benefits from November 1st-7th. On November 7th, due to a court ruling, DSHS released benefits to about half the recipients in Washington state. There is ongoing uncertainty pending litigation about full benefits for the remaining participants. Ms. Wolters reviewed best case and worst-case scenarios about the future of SNAP.

As a reminder, SNAP can be used on milk, cheese, baby formula, eggs, etc., but cannot be used for hot, prepared foods, household cleaning products, or alcohol. The average monthly benefit to a single person household would be \$200-\$384 in Washington state. There are approximately 1 million recipients in our state, and roughly 86% of SHA's tenants—approximately 14,000 people—are likely eligible for this benefit. The agency does not know how many tenant households are signed up for SNAP as this is not information the agency collects.

The state has pledged \$2.2M per week to food banks statewide, and the city of Seattle has pledged \$4M per month to Seattle food banks. Ms. Wolters noted that food banks

offer less fresh food typically than a grocery store that accepts SNAP benefits and are harder to access as there may be lines to wait in or outdoor elements to contend with.

SHA has provided information to residents in various formats about where to get access to food if they have need. Seattle Public Schools has also provided similar assistance to families of students.

Commissioner Clark noted that this information was all very helpful. Commissioner Howard asked if SHA has done analysis of the effect on residents who had SNAP and how the loss of benefits might affect their ability to pay rent; if they have limited resources, food may come before rent. Ms. Wolters replied that the agency plans to monitor that as it comes up, if it comes up. Some residents who attended town halls with SHA leadership at various buildings had been unaware their SNAP benefits were at risk. Upon a question from Mr. Brandon, Ms. Wolters stated that these SNAP benefits were related to the appropriation process and are unrelated to the planned 2026 reduction in SNAP benefits that was passed as part of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) earlier this year. Ms. Wolters added that the reduction planned as part of the OBBBA will be approximately \$50 per household.

Commissioner Purcell stated that both Washington senators voted against the continuing resolution; is there any plan to deal with the health insurance tax credit question other than that there may be a vote in December? Ms. Wolters stated that there is no information available yet regarding anything but the potential vote.

The senate is expected to vote tonight or in the early hours of the morning, and after that, the house will vote likely on Wednesday. If the house changes anything, the continuing resolution will go back to the senate. The continuing resolution as it is now will fund everything at 2025 levels through January 30th, 2026, except for USDA (SNAP), military and construction, and the legislative branch, which will each be funded through September 2026. Commissioner Howard asked if the White House renovations would be funded, and Ms. Wolters replied that these funds are related to actual infrastructure, not the White House renovations. Mr. Cummer added that we will not know until January 2026 what any funding cuts may look like for the agency. Commissioner Howard asked to hear updates about the health insurance tax credits conversation as time goes on. Mr. Brandon replied that the agency could provide those.

Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV) Update

Mr. Brandon opened this discussion, providing a summary of events up to now regarding EHV's. Alice Kimbowa, Director of Housing Choice Vouchers, introduced her team who has assisted with the utilization of EHV's over the years. She provided an overview of the EHV program which began in 2021. SHA was allocated 518 EHV's, and there were over 70,000 issued nationwide. 500 households are currently in SHA's EHV program. Funding was expected to be annually appropriated through 2030, but in March of 2025, HUD announced that EHV funds will be fully exhausted in 2026.

HUD is encouraging public housing authorities to absorb the EHV into their regular voucher allocation. Unfortunately, SHA is unable to do this as tenant-based vouchers are utilized at 103%, and almost 40% of those vouchers are project-based. If SHA were to add the 500 EHV households, it would mean no new households could be drawn from the waiting list until 2029. Additionally, if funding for HUD programs is cut in the future, SHA will need to make very difficult decisions given current leasing levels and high rents.

Guiding principles for SHA include being fiscally responsible in order to maximize EHV funding while it is available; to utilize MTW (Moving to Work) authority wisely and *not* use it to create a term-limited voucher program; to prioritize stability by housing families with children in place; to leverage the city's Housing Levy funding as much as possible; and to maximize all the resources that SHA has in order to reduce the likelihood of homelessness in EHV recipients. Ms. Kimbowa noted that there are 70 families with children in SHA's EHV program.

One option for the agency is for those 127 households living in units with funding from the Seattle Office of Housing to be given the option to continue their subsidy using funds from the Housing Levy. Another option is for the agency to absorb the 70 families with children into its normal MTW Tenant Based program. The last option is to offer all EHV households the option to join the Low-Income Public Housing (LIPH) waiting list with special preferential status; this would require a significant outreach effort, and households would be matched to the best available public housing unit as they become available. Additionally, SHA would maintain voucher funding until the LIPH offer process is completed.

Ms. Kimbowa noted that 130 EHV recipients are considered "port-out" recipients. This means their voucher from SHA is administered elsewhere and SHA pays administrative fees to the recipient housing authority. This complicates things for SHA as the agency does not know how the recipient housing authorities plan to handle their own EHV.

Ms. Kimbowa reviewed a timeline of major milestones and next steps beginning in March of 2025 and running through to December of 2026, when all EHV funding must be expended. It was noted that in January of 2026, the board will be briefed on the financial impact and updates on the approval of the Administrative Plan.

Commissioner Ryan asked about the EHV that would be migrated to the city's Housing Levy; will this change be a greater burden than the levy can bear? Ms. Kimbowa replied that no, that is not expected. Commissioner Purcell stated that this means we are taking the 127 vouchers from the Levy and putting them into existing buildings, so that means 127 units will not be available to our housing partners for new development projects—is this accurate? Mr. Brandon replied that yes, that is accurate. The city realized that there is slowed construction across the city, and that realization went into the decision by the city to use the levy funds to stabilize these EHV families. This is a 7-year levy commitment, and it is for 127 of the 400 units included in the levy. Additional conversation between Commissioner Purcell, Mr. Brandon, and Ms. Kimbowa occurred.

Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Purcell expressed their appreciation of Ms. Kimbowa and her team for coming up with these potential solutions. Commissioner Howard asked for a copy of the slide deck tonight, if possible. She also asked for clarification of the agency's decision not to utilize MTW funding to create a short-term solution for EHV, but then later, Ms. Kimbowa had stated that MTW funding would be used for some families. Ms. Kimbowa replied that it is true that the agency cannot utilize its MTW status to fund *all* EHV vouchers, but it can absorb the roughly 70 households with children.

Commissioner Ryan asked for more information about the 200 other EHV households that were not mentioned in any of the potential options. Dani Fitts, Deputy Director of the Housing Choice Voucher Program, answered that the vast majority of those 200 households are living in units owned by private landlords, and SHA will need to work individually with them on moving out of the existing leases they have. Fewer than 10 of the 200 households mentioned by the commissioner are in SHA-owned and managed units.

Mr. Brandon stated we do not know if HUD will reimburse those public housing authorities that absorb the EHV, but few believe this will occur. In response to a question from Commissioner Clark, Ms. Kimbowa stated that most EHV recipients are in King County. Commissioner Clark stated that the attempt to try and absorb some of these EHV in a year when it was expected to have funding for five more years is impressive, especially in the face of difficult decisions ahead of the agency.

Meeting Close

The next Board meeting will occur on Monday, November 17. Hearing no further comments, Commissioner Clark called for an appointment. Commissioner Purcell motioned, Commissioner Howard seconded. The November 10, 2025, Regular Board Briefing was adjourned at 5:54 p.m.

Secretary-Treasurer