

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY  
OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE  
MARCH 17, 2025

The Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Seattle (“Seattle Housing Authority” or “SHA”) met in Regular Session on March 17, 2025, at the SHA Central Office, as well as via teleconference. Board Commissioner Paul Purcell called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. Karlee Keyser then performed a roll call for Board Commissioners currently in attendance. Commissioners present and absent were as follows:

Present: Rita Howard  
Paula Houston  
Paul Purcell  
Twyla Minor

Absent: Sally Clark, Chair  
Robert Crutchfield, Vice-Chair

Public Comment

One public comment was made by Susan Hill, a resident of Kebero Court Apartments.

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Purcell presented the Consent Agenda, which included approval of minutes for the Regular Board Meeting of January 21, 2025; approval of minutes for the Regular Board Briefings of February 10, 2025 and March 10, 2025; and approval of the Expenditure Certification Report (Authorization to Pay Outstanding Obligations of Salaries and Claims for the Period of January 1 to January 31, 2025, as well as for the Period of February 1 to February 28, 2025).

Commissioner Howard moved to approve the Consent Agenda, and the motion was then seconded by Commissioner Houston. Commissioner Purcell asked about an increased dollar amount in voided electronic funds transfers. Chief Finance Office Jared Cummer replied that voids occur when checks that have been sent out have not been

cashed by the receiver, and this increased amount for February could have been related to year-end close or to one or two large checks being voided. Mr. Cummer will research more on the reason. Hearing no further comments, the Consent Agenda was approved by the majority of the members of the Board present at that time (4 yes; 0 no; 0 abstentions).

### Regular Agenda

#### Resolution No. 5298: Revolving Line of Credit Authorization

Commissioner Purcell called for consideration of Resolution No 5298; Commissioner Houston motioned, and Commissioner Howard seconded the motion. Mr. Cummer presented the resolution to the Board and recommended adoption of the resolution. He followed up on various questions the commissioners had at last week's Briefing, stating that today's resolution does not include changes to the way SHA handles mixed-status households.

Resolution No. 5298 authorizes SHA to engage in a new line of credit for \$80,000,000 which would allow for both taxable and tax-exempt uses, as well as permitting operating and real estate uses.

After further comments, Commissioner Purcell called for a vote for Resolution No. 5298. The resolution was then approved among the members of the Board present at the time (4 yes, 0 no; 0 abstentions).

#### Housing Quality: Opportunity Investment Progress Update

Executive Director Rod Brandon introduced the briefing on housing quality, noting that this is purely a briefing, and no action is requested of the Board. Maintenance and Asset Management shared information about changes and improvements that were funded by one of the opportunity investments (OI) from 2023 through the end of 2027. Housing Quality Manager Frankie Flores, Housing Quality Analyst Nina Page, and Housing Maintenance Services' Operations Program Administrator Daigen McAllister presented the materials, first explaining that the OI is funding among several other things, a change in inspection standards to help SHA achieve higher REAC (Real Estate Assessment Center) scores.

The four initial REAC inspections that occurred based on the newest inspection standards did not achieve a passing score. The old inspection standards focused on curb appeal and blending subsidized housing into market rate housing neighborhoods; the newest standards focus on housing quality from the tenant's perspective which better aligns with SHA's values and strategic plan. In the six months following those initial inspections, SHA developed and implemented new internal processes that led to a passing score on nine additional REAC inspections that occurred. The positive impact of a passing score is verification of improved unit conditions and fewer inspections, which means less of a burden on residents.

Some of the new internal processes implemented during those six months included multiple trainings of property management and maintenance staff regarding the REAC inspection criteria, and the creation of a centralized location for all the documents that are required to be gathered with each inspection (e.g. elevator and sprinkler certificates). SHA also centralized the follow up and appeal process that occur after a REAC inspection, which has streamlined things. Property management and maintenance staff has provided positive feedback on how tenants were centered during all these internal changes.

Mr. McAllister noted that the four maintenance positions funded by the OI completed over 2,800 work orders, and Housing Maintenance Services completed 6,030 inspection-related work orders in 2024 alone with makes up an estimated 10% of their total workload.

Mr. Flores explained that the OI also funds other projects that support housing quality, such as the remediation of lead-based paint and an increase in the number of units that are UFAS (Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards) compliant. Additionally, SHA's senior housing portfolio is provided with specialized assistance regarding clutter support as needed. Commissioner Purcell asked if the OI that funded additional maintenance staff in order to catch up with the impact of COVID also helped with the REAC work orders. Mr. McAllister replied that yes, deferred maintenance from when COVID was at its worst impacts a building's REAC score, so having people on staff to help with that backlog is helpful. What was presented today, however, was about more

of a rapid response team that was funded that is solely focused on inspection-related work orders.

Hearing no further comments, Commissioner Purcell offer his thanks to the three presenters and on behalf of SHA residents for what sounds like a tremendous success.

#### Executive Director Report

(insert brief, 1-2 sentence descriptions for each subject Rod brings up.)

Mr. Brandon stated there are two items he would like to note—first, the federal budget impacts that the agency experienced last week. The continuing resolution (CR) was passed by the House and Senate which avoided a federal shutdown. This means we continue with our funding at 2024 levels until September 30<sup>th</sup> and HUD programs are funded through the end of the year. There was also a small increase to the funding for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program from its 2024 levels.

At a prompt from Mr. Brandon, Mr. Cummer added that what HUD projected they would be \$500 million short of what would be needed to fully fund the HCV program. The increase in funds to the HCV program that was part of the CR is believed to cover that shortfall and more. The concern, however, is regarding potential 2026 funding. The House passed their 2026 appropriation blueprint through a budget reconciliation move roughly three weeks ago, and their stated goal is to eliminate the annual deficit which was \$1.8 trillion in 2024 and expected to be the same in 2025. At the same time, they intend to renew individual tax cuts provided in the 2017 Tax Cut and Jobs Act. These two goals lead to a general belief that everything non-defense related is being examined for potential cuts in spending. The expectation is somewhere between a four to eleven or twelve percent cut in funding.

Mr. Brandon continued, stating that SHA is working on a process to examine its budget and what it may look like in 2026 so the agency can react quickly once more information is available. Commissioner Purcell asked if we know of any kind of reduction in staff at HUD at either the local or Washington DC level, or how badly HUD is going to be hurt in this process and how that might impact SHA. Mr. Brandon replied that we do not know many specifics, but HUD's regional offices have been reduced and consolidated in some cases.

Commissioner Howard asked if it's known which specific programs will see negative changes—for example, would SHA's MTW status be changed or removed, or would the pockets of money coming from HUD be affected. Mr. Brandon replied that we do not have clarity at this time, but the HCV program does seem to have broad support, and we have not heard any criticism of our MTW status. SHA continues to track everything happening at the federal level and how it may impact the agency and residents.

Moving on, Mr. Brandon shared the sad news that one of the middle school students recently hit by a vehicle at a local middle school passed away, and another was hurt. Both are SHA residents at the Yesler Terrace community. Staff have made a community room at Yesler Terrace available for folks to gather and continue to talk, grieve, and express their concern for those impacted.

Additionally, there are concerns from residents at Rainier Vista and New Holly regarding the completion of work orders in a timely manner. Residents expressed themselves in a group at the main offices at Rainier Vista, and we have decided to organize some community meetings to allow residents to talk more about what's been happening, for SHA to share what they are working on, and for us also to determine ways to better serve those communities' needs.

Lastly, HUD provided us with emergency homeless vouchers three years ago that were intended to be funded through HUD for ten years. They did not have a plan for funding them after that initial ten years. We received word that now, those vouchers will only be funded through the end of 2026. Following that, we would need to absorb the cost and determine what to do with those going forward. This is an unforeseen expense. Director of Rental Assistance Programs Alice Kimbowa added that even using our reserves to pay for the shortfall would not get us to the original 2035 end date that these vouchers originally had. SHA currently has 518 emergency housing vouchers that we would need to absorb the costs for. Mr. Brandon noted that we are examining our options for this and will share more in the future as appropriate.

Commissioner Howard stated that SHA's original mission was not to house homeless people but now we have 500 people in our portfolio on these vouchers that were supposed to last for ten years—did SHA have a plan for what would happen after

those ten years were up? Mr. Brandon provided the context that when these vouchers came from HUD the country was experience a hug homeless crisis and still is, in some cities, and that HUD provided these vouchers to help with that. They were not necessarily meant to have the recipients move into the housing authority's owned and managed units. Some folks came into SHA housing and others went into the private sector. We were concerned about the ten-year life, so we had begun having conversations with HUD, then things stalled as the presidential election last year picked up and it is a very different discussion now. We expected to have eight more years to work with HUD on a plan, and now we do not. Commissioner Howard stated that she would like us to have discussions about our mission and vision for the agency—where to we fit in with regard to homeless people and affordable housing in our current ecosystem? We need to be sure of where our boundaries are and who we serve. Mr. Brandon replied that he can see where that discussion can fit into the calendar of Board Briefings., and agreed the discussion needs to be had.

One last topic of note—Steve McDowell recently retired, and Mr. Brandon is pleased to announce the hiring of his successor, SHA's new Chief Information Officer Shalini Joshi. Communications Director Kerry Coughlin also recently decided to retire, so we will begin a search for a Communications Director soon.

At a question from Mr. Brandon, Commissioner Dr. Houston shared information about how the University of Washington is tracking and sharing information across departments regarding federal changes. On the topic of sharing information, Commissioner Howard commented that she would like SHA to also be checking in with residents during the Communications Director search to ask them about the ways in which communication from SHA has or has not worked, and how it might be made more effective for them. There has been nothing in *The Voice* so far regarding the impact of federal changes on SHA, and this lack of information sharing is something Commissioner Howard believes does a disservice to residents. She hopes the new director will really think about who residents are, how they can best be communicated with, and how the agency can be as transparent as possible with its residents about goings-on.

Mr. Brandon asked for any comments or questions on the Director's Report. Commissioner Purcell congratulated Development on the work they are progressing through. He also congratulated the HCV team on the decrease in the number of not leased vouchers over the past twelve months.

Hearing no further comments, Commissioner Purcell called for adjournment of the Meeting. It was moved by Commissioner Howard and seconded by Commissioner Dr.

Houston. The March 17, 2025, Regular Session of the Board was then adjourned at 6:20 p.m. as agreed among the members of the Board present at the time (4 yes, 0 no; 0 abstentions.)

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Secretary-Treasurer