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SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY  
REGULAR BOARD BRIEFING

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LOCATION	<u>Virtual via Microsoft Teams</u> (206) 257-3799; Phone Conference ID 869 252 502# <a href="#">Click here to join the meeting</a>	
	<u>To attend in Person: SHA Central Office (NEW LOCATION)</u> 101 Elliott Ave W, 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor Tahoma Conference Room Seattle, WA 98119	
DATE	November 13, 2023, 4:30pm - 6:00pm	
BOARD ATTENDEES	Paul Purcell, Board Chair Gerald Smiley, Vice-Chair Sally Clark Robert Crutchfield	Rita Howard Dr. Paula Houston Twyla Minor
DISTRIBUTION	SHA Board of Commissioners; Cabinet	

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Commissioner Roll Call

AGENDA:

Briefing Items

- Resolution No. 5272: Yesler Services Legacy (25 min)
- Resolution No. 5273: Procurement Policy Updates (15 min)
- Resolution No. 5274: HCV Administrative Plan Changes to Waitlist Management (20 min)
- Resolution No. 5275: 2023 Voucher Payment Standard (20 min)

Commissioners roll call was given at 4:33 p.m. The Briefing was held via teleconference with an in-person option at the new SHA Central Office. Commissioners Crutchfield, Dr. Houston and Smiley were absent from the Briefing.

## **Review 11/20/23 Regular Board Meeting Agenda and Updates**

### **SHA Staff Commendation: Bao Nguyen**

Commissioner Purcell introduced Bao to the Board and gave him thanks and kudos for being the recipient of the Friend of Housing award awarded at a national housing conference for his life-saving assistance to an SHA resident experiencing a health crisis. This is a very distinguished recognition, and he expressed his appreciation that he works for SHA and all the different positions that he's held in the organization; it reflects extremely well on him, as well as the agency. Executive Director Rod Brandon and Housing Operations Dave Wellings concurred with his comments and gave their thanks and kudos to Bao for a job well done, as well.

### **Resolution No. 5272: Yesler Legacy**

Executive Director Rod Brandon introduced Deputy Director Anne Fiske Zuniga and Housing Operations Deputy Director Rachael Steward to the Board to present Resolution No. 5272.

Resolution No. 5272 authorizes the Executive Director of SHA to enter into agreements with the Seattle University and Seattle Foundation that are necessary and appropriate to pay for ongoing resident services in Yesler that provide for the continuation of services for residents at the redeveloped Yesler neighborhood into the future.

Ms. Fiske Zuniga: In SHA's Choice Neighborhood's grant award, HUD allowed for the use of up to 15% of grant revenue to be used for services at Yesler. SHA maximized this opportunity and funded an array of services for residents. HUD also encouraged SHA to find a way to continue these services into the future. In April of 2021, the Board of Commissioners adopted Resolution No. 5213 directing staff to evaluate options and make recommendations regarding establishing a vehicle for long-term financing of Yesler resident services as well as identifying the source of funds to serve as the corpus for sustaining the services for the long-term. Specifically, the Board approved the dedication of up to \$15,000,000 from excess property sale proceeds that will not be needed for other redevelopment purposes.

Ms. Steward: It was determined that one entity cannot provide services & funds management in this goal. Since Seattle University (SU) is an existing service partner at Yesler already and the Seattle Foundation (SF) successfully manages its investment portfolio, staff recommends a tri-partite agreement, with achieves long-term services goal for Yesler residents. Four agreements are recommended in this partnership:

- **Formation and Transition Agreement:** The parties establish their relationship moving forward and commit to the series of actions that will fund services at Yesler Terrace in perpetuity.

- Services Agreement: SHA will pay SU for an initial suite of services at Yesler Terrace.
- Fund Agreement: The parties will establish a fund within SF to pay for services in perpetuity.
- Amended and Restated Services Agreement: SF will oversee the provision of services in future years.

SHA's effort to ensure resident support and services continue at Yesler is key and is a unique feature of this work and how it has evolved from the original Choice Neighborhood grant. So often granting opportunities come and then part of that grant opportunity is to find a way for services to be sustained beyond the initial award of the grant. Very often that is not possible. SHA is finding a way to make that possible. The resident services that SHA provides, and especially at Yesler, have been centered around the interests expressed and observed by many of the residents. Part of our reasoning for having services within our Yesler community and across the portfolios that SHA owned and managed housing is to be able to continue with an equitable framework and delivering housing. In this particular case, we are looking at community development at large because of the renewal of housing and livelihood at Yesler, the services that are shared exist right now and did during the Choice Neighborhood grant, but also became more robust during that granting period.

We're going to spend the first body of years, which is a period of about 10 years, on education and youth development. In terms of how these funds would be used, education and youth development are a body of work that focuses on academic progress for young people as well as developing them in a holistic manner, ensuring that they have, as some people call, the soft skills to be able to be strong leaders within our community as well as within whatever other spaces that they might find themselves going forward. Many of you are also familiar with community building, which is a concept that exists and is practiced more readily here within Seattle Housing Authority than you find in other locations. Community building is an effort that we utilize at Yesler to be able to develop connections between our residents as well as between our residents and the neighbors in adjoining areas. The reasoning for those relationships and connections is to be able to build out their leadership such that our residents can shape and create not only their individual lives, but their communal lives in a way that fits the vision that they have for themselves and others.

The next body of work is in economic opportunity and within the SHA agency we call that JobLink and are always looking and finding opportunities for employment and education, growth, and development. This body of work was also built out and become more robust following the Choice Neighborhood grant, but it was certainly a part of the work that we were doing at that time and is a part of what could be going forward into the future. And in addition to the body of work that lives within the JobLink program, this also includes working with partners outside of SHA, including Seattle University in the School of Business, to develop business partnerships and opportunities for small business owners at Yesler and looking to find opportunities to bring in different types of vendors to the area that will support residents of our housing.

Our efforts around health and Wellness have included not just making sure that people have access to primary care providers, but also early in the process, ensuring that people

were insured. When the Choice Neighborhood grant began, maybe 50% or so of residents had insurance and had a primary care provider by the closeout of the Choice Neighborhood grant, 95% of the residents at Yesler reported having insurance to be able to receive continuous health care and to be able to have an established relationship with the primary care provider. This work also included kind of the classic efforts of public health and looking at preventative work to ensure that residents were able to live healthy lives by learning more about how to maintain healthy lifestyles and by increasing the access to resources to keep their bodies healthy and moving.

The last item to address is creative placemaking. We sometimes talk about it as our art initiative that happened at Yesler, and the work that it took to get the development body or team online with community services and all these different artists within the community and across the City of Seattle was really beautiful. As a result of that, you'll see numerous different pieces of art throughout the Yesler community, that were not just created by the original artists, but also by the hearts, minds, and experiences of Yesler residents of this time.

So, what we're looking at in continuing forward will be 10 years of focus on education and youth development. Those investments in programming will include early learning and preparing young children to go into kindergarten and beyond, as well as supporting young children in kindergarten through 12th grade with tutoring in college navigation. We'll include out of school time programs, which look like summer programming, spring break programming and after school, which is what a lot of people think of for young adults. Internships and mentoring will be made available and grown out from where they are right now to provide one of those key components to developing young people which we know is to have at least one trusted adult in their lives. We will also continue our institutional partnership with Seattle Public Schools, to which partnership was developed as a direct result of our anticipation of the Choice Neighborhood grant and the effort of Seattle University to try and improve the academic outcomes for young people who are living in the communities that surround their campus. Seattle University was the key partner for education services delivery within the Choice Neighborhood grant period. (Ms. Steward was the staff member working at SU and was then responsible for helping to lead and develop that pipeline of support for children and families at that time.)

Community building will be key to the way that this plan works out going forward. As mentioned, there is a Resident Council that we are going to be setting up in partnership. One of the key elements of how this program, or funding effort, keeps residents in the center is that the resident leaders at Yesler will be the folks who are making guiding decisions with and for the residents. There are other ways that community building happens, and it occurs in social and cultural programs and annual events. We are not able to do this work by ourselves, nor is Seattle University. So, we have partnerships at Yesler that include Yesler Community Center via Parks and Recreation, and Neighborhood House is a long-standing partner with us and provides early learning care, as well as a parent/child home program, early head start and case management and language-based services for residents at Yesler and have done so for decades. We're also partnered with the First Hill Improvement Association and the Black Farmers Collective. These partnerships help to build out a very strong fabric that we can rely upon to support our

residents in developing their leadership as they look to develop their community in the pockets that oftentimes are overlooked by professionals who have a responsibility related to a position to be able to do service delivery and development.

We are very much still at the beginning of this process and the coming year will be a transition year that will allow Seattle University and leaders at Yesler to become clearer on what we have available to them and to begin to map out the structures that they'll use to be able to implement going forward.

Former Executive Director Andrew Lofton and former CFO Shelly Yapp gave comments as to their delight in the commencement of this process, as they held vital roles in bringing this to fruition during their tenure at SHA. They are very excited about this possibility of going forward with this to memorialize a set of services for the residents at Yesler, as it was an extremely high priority for the organization at the start of the Choice Neighborhood grant. Commissioner Purcell expressed his gratitude to both for their diligence and work to make this a reality.

Cindy Sherrick and Steven Andrzejewsk from the Seattle Foundation were recognized at the meeting. Mr. Andrzejewsk, who is the controller at Seattle Foundation, has been working most directly with Ms. Fiske Zuniga and Ms. Yapp for the past two years expressed excitement in the partnership with SHA.

In closing, Commissioner Purcell requested from staff a diagram of how things would work and what the structure is going to be and what some of the decision-making authorities down the road will look like. He felt that it is the Board's primary responsibility as a Commission is to make sure that the fiscal structure and organizational structure is sound.

### **Resolution No. 5273 – Procurement Policy Updates**

Mr. Brandon introduced CFO Jared Cummer to present Resolution No. 5273 to the Board.

Resolution No. 5273 is a resolution authorizing the adoption of an amended Procurement Policy, which governs all purchases and contracts entered into by SHA. The Resolution amends and restates the existing Procurement Policy. This Policy has been developed by the Purchasing Division and reviewed by Legal and Executive Staff.

As a governmental entity and as a recipient of federal funds from HUD, SHA is required to have and use documented procurement policies and procedures that are consistent with State and local laws and the Federal regulations found in 2 CFR 200. In early 2023, SHA was randomly selected for a Limited Scope Procurement Review as part of HUD's review of CARES Act spending. As part of the review HUD made some suggestions regarding updates to SHA's Procurement Policy.

After a review of the Procurement Policy, the Purchasing Division determined that there were updates needed to the policies to conform to changes in state and federal law. The current Procurement Policy was initially adopted in 2002 and has been amended numerous times over the years, most recently in December 2015. Additionally, the team

determined that the Procurement Policies, in their current form, are complicated and that SHA would be best served by amending and restating the Policies in their entirety. This will enable the policies to incorporate the required legal revisions, incorporate updates to reflect changes in state and federal law and simplify policy language which will make it easier for SHA employees to understand and implement.

The updated Procurement Policy contains several changes, of which these listed are the most significant changes.

- Reduction of the Procurement Policy from approximately 100 pages to 20 pages.
- Focused the Procurement Policy on the Federal and State requirements and the specific areas that must be adopted by the Board; and,
- Removed procedures and administrative processes from the Procurement Policy and created a procedure manual that can be updated as processes are changed.

What this amended policy provides is that it removes all the procedures and just leaves the policy requirements, both federal and state requirements, that need to be adopted in a policy by the Board of Commissioners. The benefit of this is it makes the document a lot easier to implement for staff, as well as a lot easier to manage when auditors, or HUD ask about our policy, as well. It also focuses in the policy on what the Board is responsible for as part of that policy, the procedures have been removed and we have set the procedures and the administrative processes up in separate documents that have a process for the various types of procurements that we have. And, how the internal workings of that work overall, besides removing processes and procedures from the policy document, as well as merely updating a couple of the outdated references to regulation that has changed, or no longer exists. The function of the policy at the core remains the same.

Commissioner Purcell requested information as to what was removed; Mr. Cummer will provide to the Board a written summary of the procedures that were pulled out, as well as information that remains in the updated policy.

**Resolution No. 5274: HCV Administrative Plan Changes to Waitlist Management**

**Resolution No. 5275: 2023 Voucher Payment Standard (VPS)**

Mr. Brandon introduced Rental Assistance Program (HCV) Director Alice Kimbowa, HCV Program Administrator Dani Fitts, Housing Services Manager TySonia McClain and Compliance & Policy Manager Mark LaBrayere to the Board to present Resolution Nos. 5274 & 5275 to the Board.

Ms. Kimbowa: SHA's 2017 waitlist is almost near completion, and we are drawing down this month the last of those households on the list; today's presentation encompasses what the new waitlist approach will look like. It's almost seven years ago that SHA opened the waitlist, and over the past year, we've been thinking about ways of serving more people. HCV partnered with the Policy Office to figure out a different way to manage the waitlist that illustrates SHA equity values and efficiency values. This presentation is the

outcome of various discussions that occurred this year and several HCV staff will present the findings. For Resolution No. 5274, Dani Fitts will present an overview of the new approach to the waitlist, then TySonia McClain will be presenting our outreach plan. Mark LaBrayere will present Resolution No. 5275 regarding the VPS updates, which is basically a continuation and a supplement to the goal of SHA to serve more people.

Ms. Fitts: Housing Choice Vouchers provide rental assistance for people with low incomes to rent from landlords throughout the Seattle rental market. SHA is adopting a new process that allows families and individuals to apply anytime and have an equal chance at being drawn. This new Housing Choice Voucher application process is separate from and does not impact other SHA application processes. In the past, registration was open for a few weeks every few years and a single random drawing was conducted to create a number-ordered waiting list for a set number of vouchers that would be issued over the next several years. In 2017, 22,000 households registered for the waitlist, with 4,200 selected. This month, everyone on the waiting list will have been served. As of January 2, 2024, application to the voucher list will be ongoing, with applicants chosen at random whenever vouchers are available. An applicant's chance of being drawn from the waitlist is equal no matter when households apply. The difference to this method is the list is an applicant pool, not a place in line and the wait for a voucher could be long, or short, so applicants could remain on the list without being drawn. The benefit of this method is that the voucher list will not close, and an applicant can join the waitlist at any time. SHA will continue to draw from the list when vouchers are available, and if you're on the list, you will always have a chance to be selected. Applicants will be available to apply via in-person, by phone or via the SHA website.

Commissioner Clark inquired as to if SHA is modeling the revised approach to another housing authority's process or have we devised this or what are the principles that have gone into it? Ms. Fitts explained that staff spoke with other housing authorities, such as San Diego HA, prior to making this approach, but that SHA is one of the only housing authorities in the region that will have an open waitlist at this time. We were able to use lessons learned from San Diego's application of this new approach to learn from some of the challenges that they're experiencing in the way that we're going to implement it. One thing to keep in mind is at the end of the day, there are not enough vouchers for everyone who needs one, and that is just a tough reality to administer this program under. The idea is that by allowing everybody to at least have a shot at a voucher is potentially better than not allowing people to apply at all.

Ms. McClain: The goal for our community engagement outreach plan is to not only reach households in need of housing who may not have the same resources as others, but to provide information in the system through the process of the new voucher list. I, along with our housing counselor team and two staff from the Policy team, have identified a list of approximately 65 agencies and organizations who work with low-income households. It's single adults and families and we are prepared to expand the list and do a more targeted outreach after we pull data at the end of January after the first month of the opening. We are expecting that not all will want us to come out, so we also may add more to the list depending on staff capacity and that data. These are agencies and organizations who work with our homeless population, transitional and emergency shelters, some who

HCV work closely with through our emergency housing vouchers, and some who attended our recent resources fair. Some of those agencies are Mary's Place, The Urban League, Catholic Community Services, Africatown, Muslim Housing Services, SeaMar, El Centro de la Raja, YWCA Jewish Family Services and Asian Counseling and Referral Services. This list also includes our Seattle Public Schools working with our family support workers and our McKinney Vento case managers and a partnership with Seattle Public Libraries, going as far South as Renton to co-host a few registration events. Also added to the list are a few local churches and a few food banks. Outreach has started minimally to confirm organization and agency contacts to be prepared to contact, to set up site visits via our designated email and phone once the press release goes out and we'll schedule those through the end of February.

After the press release will be moving fast with a quick turnaround time. Staff will do outreach to schedule the site visits and the lists will confirm the date and time if we are presenting to staff or clients and if the space will have computer access to assist with registering on the portal. In January, for registering for the portal and assistance with signing up for the voucher list, we are excited to be adding two digital navigators to the team to not only assist with the community outreach engagement, but to assist with the support for our voucher list. If there are agencies and/organizations that you can suggest that might have an interest in participating in these efforts, please let us know.

Mr. LaBrayere: For what is a major change to the way that we handle our waitlist doesn't require that much change of SHA's Administrative Plan. There's just a couple of key policy changes and, in the resolution, you'll see the specific blackline language, the comparison, but the language changes are all aimed at achieving basically these two things.

The first is an update to the way that we manage the waitlist and that is the Save My Spot system that, so applicants will be required to check in via the system to make sure that they are indicating they're still interested in receiving assistance. The system has a phone-in option and applicants will also be able to come into the Central Office to maintain their interest. This is the system that Housing Operations has been using for their waitlist management for some time, and so far, it has been working well for them and we're happy to be moving closer into alignment with their policies. There will be both computer or all options - computer, phone, and in-person. To note here, and on that same theme of coming into alignment with Housing Operations, we've recently decided to change that check-in frequency to once a month rather than every three months. That is the current policy for Housing Operations, and after discussing the ease of communication to applicants on how frequently they need to check in some of the technical limitations of having a different check-in schedule and again being in alignment with what Housing Operations is already been doing, the monthly check in requirement made the most sense.

The other change in this waitlist management section is that it allows for the removal of households without any notification to the household. It is incumbent on the household to check-in; if they do not, then they are removed. There is no additional communication to that household now. Just to emphasize here that with an open waitlist and a random selection process, the consequences of being removed from the waitlist are greatly reduced. Households can simply reapply to the waitlist at any time. I'm touching on the



random selection as it was mentioned, we will make a random selection from the voucher list pool. However, once that random selection is made, we will still apply the preferences that are currently within our Administrative Plan. So, if a household is selected in that random draw but does not meet one of our current preferences, such as under 30% AMI or homelessness, they would be returned to the voucher pool rather than issued a voucher. We will still be applying our preferences, but we want to make sure that as households are selected, we give an opportunity for any households that might not have updated their information and might now qualify for a preference to have that opportunity to do that.

Ms. Kimbowa reported to the Board that Mr. LaBrayere will not be presenting Resolution No. 5275 regarding the 2023 Voucher Payment Standard and why it is related to the information that was shared with them during the budget process. It is important to have a viable voucher when searching for housing in the current market, so updating SHA's voucher payment standard will ensure that people who receive a voucher are able to use it.

Mr. LaBrayere: A Voucher Payment Standard (VPS) is the maximum amount of financial assistance a family can receive. SHA reviews payment standards at least annually to ensure aptness of the payment standard amounts for each unit size. SHA has a two-tiered VPS: Market Rate VPS, which generally applies to units in the private rental market, and an Affordable Housing VPS, which is applied to units owned by non-profit and government entities. These units are generally subject to other restrictive rent covenants, as well.

We are seeking to update both VPSs at this time, so this is our request to update the market rate VPS. We would like to set this voucher payment standard at the 2023 Fair Market Rents (FMRs) published by HUD from an analysis done earlier this year. By increasing the VPS to the 2023 FMRs, it will ensure at least 40% market penetration, which is the goal we normally have for households that are searching within the market and will also fit within the projections for the 2024 budget. For the affordable voucher payment standard, we are seeking to, as we have in the past, to match other affordable housing rent limits. So, we are looking at the Seattle Office of Housing rent limits and seeking to match those current limits. This is the same philosophy that we've used for the past couple of years to set this affordable voucher payment standard to make sure that households looking at affordable housing in Seattle aren't paying additional tenant rent due to the VPS being lower than those of the Seattle Office of Housing rents.

After further discussion, Commissioner Purcell then asked the Board if there were any questions, or comments pertaining to the Briefing. After hearing none, Commissioner Clark moved for adjournment, and was then seconded by Commissioner Minor. The November

13, 2023, Regular Board Briefing was adjourned at 6:16 p.m. after a vote of the Board present (4 yes; 0 no; 0 abstentions.)

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Secretary-Treasurer