

# SSHA<sup>3</sup>P

## South Sound Housing Affordability Partners Executive Board Meeting Minutes

October 6, 2023

8:30 – 9:51 a.m.

**Executive Board:** Mayor Nancy Backus, City of Auburn – excused  
Councilmember Kevin Ballard, City of DuPont – present  
Deputy Mayor Mike Winkler, City of DuPont – excused  
Mayor Daryl Eidinger, City of Edgewood – absent  
Councilmember Christi Keith, City of Edgewood (alternate) - absent  
Mayor Kim Roscoe, City of Fife – present  
Councilmember Doug Fagundes, City of Fife – present  
Chair, Councilmember Hunter George, City of Fircrest – present  
Mayor Pro Tempore Joe Barrentine, City of Fircrest - present  
Mayor Tracie Markley, City of Gig Harbor – present  
Councilmember Mike Brandstetter, (alternate) City of Lakewood – excused  
Councilmember Paul Bocchi, City of Lakewood – present  
Mayor Shanna Styron Sherrell, City of Milton – absent  
Executive Bruce Dammeier, Pierce County - excused  
Councilmember Ryan Mello, Pierce County – present  
Deputy Mayor Ned Witting, City of Puyallup – present  
Mayor Dick Muri, Town of Steilacoom – excused  
Councilmember Nancy Henderson, Town of Steilacoom, (alternate) – present  
Mayor Kathy Hayden, City of Sumner - present  
Mayor Victoria Woodards, City of Tacoma – excused  
Deputy Mayor Kristina Walker, City of Tacoma (alternate) – present  
Councilmember Stan Flemming, City of University Place – excused

**Staff:** Jason Gauthier, SSHA<sup>3</sup>P Manager  
Mary Connolly, Program Specialist  
Becki Foutz, Administrative Assistant

**Guests:** Bryan Schmid, Kenneth George, LeighBeth Merrick, Taylor Jones, Trish Crocker, Katie Baker, Rosa McLeod, Tiffany Speir, Sonja Hallum, Raquel LaPointe, Cynthia Stewart, Felicia Medlen, Debby Herbert, Donna Walters, Brian Rybold

### MINUTES

TOPIC/ WHO	DISCUSSION	ACTION
Call to Order	Chair George called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m. SSHA <sup>3</sup> P Manager Gauthier called roll, per above; a quorum was present.  Fircrest Mayor Brett Wittner welcomed the members of the public and the Board to the Roy H. Murphy Community Center, and invited those attending in person to a tour following the meeting. He thanked Arlette Burkhart, City Clerk, for setting up the meeting.	Wel- come!

TOPIC/WHO	DISCUSSION	ACTION
<p><b>Agenda &amp; September Minutes</b> Hunter George</p>	<p>Any modifications to the agenda or meeting minutes? None. Mayor Markley moved to approve the consent agenda and September minutes. Councilmember Bocchi seconded. Vote was taken, none opposed.</p>	<p>September minutes and today's agenda were approved.</p>
<p><b>Public Comment</b></p>	<p>Chair George invited the public to comment.</p> <p>Debby Herbert and Donna Walters own several rentals in Pierce County. They're quite concerned about the nine-month eviction ban initiative being considered. If it passes, landlords will no longer be able to provide affordable rentals, and may be forced to sell, even though they don't want to, thus destroying the affordable rental market.</p> <p>Brian Rybold is a long-time Fircrest resident, and raised his children here. As a citizen, he's concerned about extra legislative bodies forming, although he's sure there's a charter allowing them to exist. 2023 SSHA<sup>3</sup>P legislative priorities concerned him, in particular, the two property tax mitigation proposals. He feels that one is good, and one is bad. The good one is to keep seniors in their homes. The one that concerns him is to expand the MFTE exemption. There's a big apartment complex going up near James Center with the exemption. Everyone should pay their share of property taxes; it's not right for thousands of people to use the infrastructure for ten years while not paying property tax. There is a housing crisis, but at worst, SSHA<sup>3</sup>P is basically a lobbying organization for developers.</p>	<p>Thank you!</p>
<p><b>Resolution 2023-07 Adopting 2024 Federal &amp; State Legislative Agendas</b> Jason Gauthier</p>	<p>There have been no significant changes since the legislative agendas were reviewed at the last meeting. Jason read over the Resolution and explained priorities:</p> <p><u>Federal</u> Congressional-Directed Spending Requests, Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act, Fair Housing Improvement Act, Neighborhood Homes Investment Act, Flexibility in Federal Funding, Funding CDBG &amp; HOME Programs</p> <p><u>State</u> Facilitating Development of Affordable Housing; Support Policy &amp; Planning Efforts; and Information and Engagement.</p>	<p>Informational</p>

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<b>Resolution 2023-07</b> continued	<p>Council Chair Mello moved to approve Resolution 2023-07. Councilmember Bocchi seconded.</p> <p>Council Chair Mello thanked Jason and stated that the priorities line up with SSHA<sup>3</sup>P's work plan. He asked Jason to share more about workforce development. Jason explained that workforce development was brought forward as a priority by the SSHA<sup>3</sup>P Advisory Board, which is composed of a number of builders, as well as affordable housing advocates. Due to significant workforce challenges, they're focused on a couple of things: ensuring that there are education gateways, for example, pre-college exposure to education and job opportunities in the building industry, and for the legislature to put policy in place regarding rebuilding techniques.</p> <p>Mayor Roscoe appreciates the succinct information and focus that this document presents to the public about what SSHA<sup>3</sup>P's doing. She thinks it's an excellent representation of what we hope to achieve in the next legislative session, and what the focus has been since the group has convened. Thank you!</p> <p>Deputy Mayor Walker thanked Jason for the workforce piece; she reported that Mayor Woodards has been working on that at the national level, particularly around green jobs. This represents SSHA<sup>3</sup>P and cities well.</p> <p>Councilmember Ballard noted that it was refreshing to hear comments from the community this morning. When it comes to the final legislative agenda priority re: the veterans property tax exemption, he would like the County Executive to know that he'd be happy to be the face of the Veteran community. There are no real lobbyists available to veterans' organizations in Olympia; they're all volunteers. The fact that we have an elected-based organization standing up for the Veterans community is welcomed, and he's here for us, in whatever capacity is needed.</p> <p>Councilmember Bocchi supports expanding the investment ability for CHIP. In Lakewood they have a very low-income mobile home park with a lot of issues. They recently needed to put in sewers, and the job was quite costly.</p> <p>Mayor Markley echoed what Councilmember Bocchi said. Gig Harbor's in a very similar situation. They also have a large mobile home park, with most residents around 75 years old. They're at risk of losing their homes. She'd like to be able to help them, and she's more than willing to testify in Olympia about these issues. In terms of workforce development, have we considered partnering with school districts and local colleges to make a united front with the legislature? Yes, Jason said that we'll be working with local community colleges and school districts. Trade industries have seen a loss in workforce since 2008; we'd like to rebuild it together.</p> <p>Vote was taken; none opposed.</p>	Discus- sion
		Resolu- tion 2023- 07 passed.

TOPIC/WHO	DISCUSSION	ACTION
<p><b>2024 Legislative Session</b> Senator Yasmin Trudeau (27-Tacoma)</p>	<p>Senator Trudeau thanked the group for their work and for inviting her. She's been experiencing issues with her home, so staying in an Air BnB with her children. She's happy to be here! Senator Trudeau is one of two Democrats working on the budget. She serves on the Housing Committee. She's experienced housing insecurity personally, so strongly supports people staying housed. As Brian expressed during public comment earlier, she also sits with a lot of discomfort re: exemptions. We have two options: exemptions or government subsidizing affordable housing, because the market's not responding to that need. She's excited yet anxious. Senator Trudeau also serves on committees focused on the environment, energy, justice, and technology. She considers accessible housing is where folks don't have to rely on cars. She chairs the Members of Color Caucus, and has supported a number of farm bills. She's worked on helping Asian populations, first-time homeowners, and young people just moving out of their parents' homes.</p> <p>How are we going to deal with rising rates? Rents have increased 50-60% in a year. Many of Senator Trudeau's constituents are reporting that they're living in their cars. More and more people in our community are rent-burdened. Over the next two years, we'll be pushing for more housing affordability. It remains her top priority going into the legislative session.</p> <p>The Senator opened for questions. It's a challenge not to increase rent when units are renting out at a fairly low level. It costs owners; how do we balance the needs of owners of rental properties? There's a whole range, from owners losing money to gouging. Threats to homeownership needs to be addressed include large companies who have the cash to buy up homes and are then in charge of mass rental properties. There are also efforts in areas in which companies or individuals take neighbors out of neighborhoods, diminishing the supply of potential housing.</p> <p>Senator Trudeau acknowledged that it's frustrating engaging with these organizations. They try to stop the conversations from happening. They don't want to work on anything. It's been incredibly difficult. She's looking forward to engaging with smaller landlords to expose costs in terms of flexibility for improvements. At this point we must work together to forge a path forward; we continue to exist in siloes. There's differentiation between large, out of state investment companies and smaller landlords. It's a very polarized political scenario. She's not exactly sure how to engage on this issue. She introduced a Bill featuring exemptions for new housing supply, and property improvements, and it went nowhere. She's always happy to meet about it.</p>	<p>Informa- tional</p> <p>Discus- sion</p>

TOPIC/WHO	DISCUSSION	ACTION
<p><b>Legislative Chat with Senator Trudeau</b> continued</p>	<p>Mayor Markley shared that Gig Harbor has had a huge, short-time rental debate. They have 25 short-term rentals that are fully permitted, but there remains a concern about large corporations coming in and buying up the supply. The real estate in Gig Harbor is mainly million dollar+ homes. Gig Harbor's fortunate in having a good thing going and able to create more affordable housing. There's been concern about large businesses purchasing property and raising rent, displacing small businesses. Mayor Markley's becoming bolder about contacting owners and asking why they had to raise rent so much.</p> <p>Senator Trudeau said that there are a lot of ways for the legislature to be transparent. When it comes to cost of rentals, and what rental units we have, we're not equipped to have that conversation. She appreciates Mayor Markley being bold and addressing this issue with property owners.</p> <p>Council Chair Mello said that this coalition of cities and county is focused on affordable housing, and while it's not focused on homelessness, we all care about it, and it's all interconnected. The Right of Way initiative has helped to obtain more stable housing, and was initially funded for three years. It would be helpful to extend that.</p> <p>Senator Trudeau noted that people can't be moved without adequate housing for them to go to. It's not safe for them or for the community at large. She will champion extending the Right of Way funding as long as her constituents report that it's needed. We need to work on expanding affordable housing. People need permanent and supportive housing, and access to BH services across the spectrum. It's an "and," services are needed as well as affordable housing. People who have been on the streets need support to obtain housing and successfully remain in it. Government is going to have to pick up funding, however funding housing needs competes with school construction and all sorts of other needs.</p> <p>Council Chair Mello thanked the Senator for demonstrating that she understands the need. If we solve the Right of Ways issues, the legislature may think that we don't need that funding any longer. Local government uses 1406 – is it clear at the State level what that policy is? More revenue flexibility is needed. The more funds provided with clarity for local government without requiring them to write grants, the better.</p> <p>Senator Trudeau absolutely supports local governments having the fund flexibility they need. Council Chair Mello would love to continue the discussion about how funds can be used most effectively. There are barriers, and sometimes the process hinders progress. If we could focus on one or two things during this short session, what would those be?</p>	<p>Discus- sion</p>

TOPIC/WHO	DISCUSSION	ACTION
<p><b>Legislative Chat with Senator Trudeau</b> continued</p>	<p>The Senator expressed that the lack of accessible affordable housing for the elderly keeps her up at night. We need development of affordable housing across the board, and we need to balance affordability with development. She went on a tour earlier this week to take a look at what different jurisdictions need. The legislature will balance all those things in a really good supply bill that's going to work on affordability. A new Director is being hired to delve into the economic revenue forecast, and it's the Senator's hope that there will be more funding for affordable housing, particularly around acquisition. A revolving 1% loan fund for land acquisition has been started; it takes time, and workforce. She's not sure at this time whether the program will be expanded or not.</p> <p>Chair George noted that this is the first time the SSHA<sup>3</sup>P Advisory Board has met in person. The Board is in its second year, representing 15 organizations. Their Advisory Board is now up and running, representing various disciplines, including builders and those with lived experience. He thanked the Senator for this conversation. One thing SSHA<sup>3</sup>P exists to do is leverage dollars and knowledge. For example, Fircrest is a relatively small town, so pooling resources and expertise to form collective policies is extremely valuable.</p> <p>Senator Trudeau added that housing is foundational to the health and well-being of every individual in our community. There are competing priorities for electeds to balance. The housing spectrum, from shelter to homeownership, requires a lot of expertise. She looks forward to continuing the conversation. She hears about developers dealing with the permitting process and fees, and those are controlled at the local level. The state needs to understand what's going on at the local level. She and the Lieutenant Governor have been moderating a discussion with builders and realtors – this topic is front and center for everyone.</p> <p>Mayor Markley said that sometimes the issues that smaller cities have is that the state passes legislation for everyone. Legislation is often quite broad; more specifics would be very helpful for local governments and the county. She loves that increased flexibility in spending is being considered. She added that if they want boots on the ground, and more voices, SSHA<sup>3</sup>P members will share information with their jurisdictions, so that the legislature can make better, informed decisions that will benefit all communities.</p> <p>Senator Trudeau shared that legislators often struggle with capacity to reach everyone, so meeting with multiple jurisdictions in one place like this is very helpful. She would love to have other legislators visit SSHA<sup>3</sup>P, and she will spread SSHA<sup>3</sup>P's message. It's great to get together in one room and/or hybrid, to hear multiple voices together. She hopes that other jurisdictions will adopt this model. It can be chaotic to try to get multiple perspectives.</p>	<p>Discus- sion</p> <p>Thank you, Senator Tru- deau!</p>

TOPIC/WHO	DISCUSSION	ACTION
<p><b>SSHA<sup>3P</sup> Manager Report</b> Jason Gauthier</p>	<p>At the November mtg, the group will have an extensive briefing presentation on the Regional Housing Development Fund. In December, rules and procedures for the Fund will be presented.</p> <p>Last July, five SSHA<sup>3P</sup> member cities applied for a middle housing grant for to get a jump start and save dollars in the comprehensive planning process. Each city is unique and different. Mary has built out <a href="#">a framework of commonalities across the five jurisdictions</a> that can be found on the SSHA<sup>3P</sup> website.</p>	<p>Informational</p>
<p><b>Executive Board Updates/Comments</b></p>	<p>Mayor Roscoe pointed out that in the written Managers Report, Fife is highlighted several times and they appreciate the support of this group. Re: MFTE, she asked Taylor Jones, City Manager, for some speaking points. It was adopted in September, providing 12 years exemption on improvements, with requirements for mixed-use development; commercial space on the ground floor; fronting arterial streets; at least 50% must be residential; and must be affordable to those with household incomes at 80% AMI or lower. They have a large vacant parcel on the market that's ideal for mixed-use development, right across the street from Fife City Hall.</p>	<p>Great job, Mayor Roscoe, and Fife!</p>
<p><b>Adjournment</b></p>	<p>Chair George thanked everyone for participating and reminded those attending in person to stay for a tour of the facility. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, seniors come to hang out, play pickleball, eat donuts, etc. They recently received a grant from the state to fix the ceiling, which needs work.</p> <p>Chair George adjourned the meeting at 9:51 a.m.</p>	<p>Meeting adjourned!</p>

The next SSHA<sup>3P</sup> Executive Board meeting is scheduled for Friday, November 3, at 8:30 a.m. via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Becki Foutz  
Administrative Assistant