



I. CALL TO ORDER

Nancy Backus called the virtual meeting to order at 1:02 PM.

a. ROLL CALL/ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

Executive Board members present: Chair Nancy Backus, City of Auburn; Collen Brandt-Schluter, City of Burien; Kristina Soltys, Alternate City of Covington; Traci Buxton, City of Des Moines; Sarah Bridgeford, Alternate City of Federal Way; Dana Ralph, City of Kent; Sean Kelly, City of Maple Valley; Eric Zimmerman, City of Normandy Park; Ryan McIrvine, City of Renton; Sunaree Marshall, King County

Other attendees: Angela San Filippo, SKHHP; Trish Abbate, SKHHP; Jason Gauthier, South Sound Housing and Affordability Partners; McCaella Daffern, King County; JC Harris, City of Des Moines; Dafne Hernandez, City of Covington; Laurel Humphreys, City of Tukwila; Nigel Herbig, King County Regional Homelessness Authority; Earnest Thompson, City of Normandy Park; Joy Scott, City of Auburn; Hannah Bahnmilller, City of Renton; Dorsol Plants, SKHHP Advisory Board Member/FUSION; Marty Kooistra, Civic Commons; Mark Santos-Johnson, City of Renton; Amy Arrington, City of Normandy Park; Merina Hanson, City of Kent; Nicole Nordholm, City of Des Moines; Paul Tan, King County Regional Homelessness Authority; Gregg Colburn, University of Washington

II. REVIEW AGENDA/AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

No agenda modifications.

III. APPROVAL OF MARCH 18, 2022 MINUTES

Dana Ralph moved to approve the March 18, 2022 minutes as presented; Traci Buxton seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously (10-0).

IV. EDUCATIONAL ITEM

Gregg Colburn is the co-author alongside Clayton Page Aldern of the just released book Homelessness is a Housing Problem, which highlights how housing market conditions such as cost and availability of rental housing is a bigger driver of homelessness compared to conventional belief that mental illness, substance use and poverty are the main causes. He is also Assistant Professor of Real Estate at the University of Washington College of Built Environments and has published research on housing and homelessness and has both an MSW and MBA degree from the University of Minnesota. Prior to academia Greg worked as an investment banker and private equity professional. Gregg is a member of the Bill & Melinda Gates Family Homelessness Evaluation Committee, and co-chair of the University of Washington's homelessness research initiative.

Gregg introduced common ideas about the causes of homelessness. According to the 2019 Point-in-Time homelessness census in Seattle/King County, survey results suggest the leading causes of homelessness are in order: job loss, alcohol or drug use, eviction, divorce/separation, inability to pay rent, and argument with family/friend. The

book set out to decipher if these conventional explanations of homelessness are root causes or precipitating events. The idea is that focusing on higher level vulnerabilities will help us better understand the root causes. While research demonstrates that drug use, mental illness, and poverty increase the risk of homelessness at the individual level, the majority of people who are living in homelessness are not experiencing addiction issues. So, why do these conditions produce homelessness in some geographic areas (Seattle?) and not others? Their thesis is that tight housing markets accentuate vulnerabilities.

They investigated individual level possible explanations including such things as poverty, mental illness, illicit and legal drug use, and climate. There is no doubt that poverty leads to homelessness but places with high rates of poverty have lower rates of homelessness (St. Louis, Detroit, Cleveland) while affluent cities demonstrate higher rates of homelessness (Seattle, San Francisco, New York).. There is no correlation between places with more mental illness and higher homelessness as people with mental illnesses live everywhere but consequences from the vulnerability of mental illness may be more acute in places such as San Francisco, Seattle, New York. Illicit drug use and homelessness demonstrated no relationship. There is more illicit drug use in some places than others but it is not correlated with higher rates of homelessness. The same holds true for legal substance use.

Places with warmer winter temperatures did not demonstrate a relationship with higher rates of homelessness. While there are warm places with high rates homelessness (San Diego, Los Angeles) there are also many warm places that do not exhibit high rates of homelessness (Florida) and conversely, very cold places (Boston, NY) with high rates of homelessness. More generous levels of social services and benefits was also not correlated with higher rates of homelessness. Low-income migration also did not demonstrate a statistical correlation with rates of homelessness. The theory that democratic politics are to blame does not hold up against the existence of cities with democratic strongholds and low rates of homelessness such as Chicago and Cleveland.

When looking at the housing market, there is a correlation between increasing rates of homelessness and increasing rents and decreasing vacancy rates. Increasing population on its own is not correlated with increasing rates of homelessness as demonstrated by the existence of cities growing as fast as Seattle but without increasing rates of homelessness. However, increasing population combined with low elasticity in housing supply creates a dangerous environment.

Solutions therefore require 1) capital investments to construct housing and 2) operating investments to fund housing support, maintenance and services. Where housing is difficult to construct, changes to regulations and land use policy are additionally needed. Relying solely on the private market will not end the homelessness crisis. While it is estimated that \$11 billion is required to adequately fund the amount of lower income housing needed, for comparison, the Puget Sound invested \$54 billion in transit over the past 25 years so there needs to be a paradigm shift where housing is seen as infrastructure vs. private investment. Continuing to diagnose homelessness as an individual problem will undermine efforts to prevent and solve it. The country requires a structural understanding of and structural response to homelessness.

Discussion occurred around environmental requirements and building housing. Denser housing is suggested as the answer to both issues. A question was raised about substance use and homelessness. It is difficult to know if substance use occurred in individuals before or after their experience of homelessness. Additionally, some of the states with the greatest opioid problems (West Virginia and Arkansas) do not have high rates of homelessness. The Puget Sound region faces a challenge with the housing first solution to substance use since there is fundamentally not enough housing to adequately utilize that solution. Discussion occurred around the question of employment and relationship to homelessness. Colburn referred to the evidence which strongly demonstrates that housing first leads to much greater success than efforts to support individuals to secure employment while living in homelessness.

V. OLD BUSINESS

a. Executive Board Group Agreements

San Filippo introduced the idea of group agreements as serving the purpose of supporting what the group needs to engage and participate fully and provide a foundation of safety, respect and trust as difficult topics are tackled. San Filippo reviewed a draft and asked for feedback.

Specific support was raised for the following items:

- Be curious and respectful
 - Have grace with yourself and others
 - Have courage to interject if something is going amiss or being left unsaid
- Suggested additions include: we are here to collectively solve a problem and we can make a difference if we work together, and no surprises – try not to catch people off guard

Discussion occurred around members signing the agreements as part of an onboarding process, agreement from the group to ask for each Board member to sign the agreements.

Ryan McIrvine moved to approve the Executive Board Group Agreements, Colleen Brandt-Schluter seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously (10-0).

b. Executive Board Rules of Procedure

The Executive Board Rules of Procedure currently require that one elected officer must be from a council manager form of government. The intention behind the requirement was to provide leadership opportunities that support the diverse makeup of SKHHP's jurisdictions. Upon execution, the requirement proved to be a challenge in implementation and did not account for differences in board member capacity and changes in makeup of the representatives.

San Filippo presented the revision of the Election of Officers clause in the Rules of Procedure, which now reads:

The officers of the Board shall consist of a Chair and Vice Chair elected from the appointed members of the Board by a majority vote. Other officer positions may be approved and appointed by a majority vote by the Executive Board. SKHHP consists of regional and local jurisdictions across South King County that range in size and type of

government structure. The SKHHP Executive Board values and strongly encourages diverse representation in elected officer positions that reflect that diversity.

Ralph moved to approve the amending of the Executive Board Rules of Procedure, McIrvn seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously (10-0).

VI. NEW BUSINESS

a. 2022 SKHHP Housing Capital Fund Priorities

San Filippo presented draft Housing Capital Fund priorities that the SKHHP Advisory Board has been developing for the 2022 funding round. Before bringing forward a formal recommendation, staff is seeking input from the Executive Board. Next steps include working with the staff work group and Advisory Board to review and revise the priorities with a formal recommendation coming before the Executive Board at the May meeting. As a reminder, these priorities are not requirements and instead guidelines that will be used to evaluate applications.

Jurisdictions have the opportunity to review the priorities with their councils and provide feedback directly for consideration.

VII. UPDATES/ANNOUNCEMENTS

VIII. ADJOURN

Backus adjourned the meeting at 2:56 pm.