

Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission Regular Meeting

March 4, 2026

The March 4, 2026, Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission (SEEC) Regular Meeting convened in Seattle Municipal Tower Conference Room 4080 and remotely. Vice-Chair Vivian Vassall [Vice-Chair] was present. Chair Jonathan Schirmer [Chair] and Commissioners Bobby Forch and Kai Smith participated via Webex with Commissioner Zach Pekelis joining the meeting in progress. Five Commissioners present constituted a quorum for the adoption of a rule. Executive Director Wayne Barnett [Director] and staff members Fedden Amar, Cliff Duggan, Randal Fu, and René LeBeau were present. Staff member Polly Grow as well as Assistant City Attorneys Joe Levan and Gary Smith participated via Webex.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

Discussion of Written Public Comment (if applicable)

No Written Public Comment was received for the Commission.

Final Action Items

1. Adoption of revised January 7, 2026, SEEC Regular Meeting minutes

The Vice-Chair made the motion to adopt the January 7, 2026, SEEC Regular Meeting minutes (Revised), and it was duly seconded. The motion passed with four ayes.

2. Adoption of February 4, 2026, SEEC Regular Meeting minutes

Commissioner Forch made the motion to adopt the February 7, 2026, SEEC Regular Meeting minutes, and it was duly seconded. The motion passed with four ayes.

The Chair suggested covering the Discussion Items and returning to Action Item 3 when Commissioner Pekelis joined the meeting.

Discussion Items

1. DVP Levy Workgroup

The Director reported that he and Ms. LeBeau met with the Council President's office, the Mayor's Office, as well the City Council to begin the process of putting together the workgroup committee. The first order of business was to accept the request to put together the Voucher Program workgroup. The Chair asked the Director to remind the Commission of the general purpose of the workgroup and its goals. The Director said the law included the request that the workgroup convene to make recommendations people felt necessary about the future of the Democracy Voucher Program.

2. Democracy Voucher Program report

Ms. LeBeau reported that the March 16 mailing of voucher packets is on track. "Inactive" postcards will be sent afterwards. All three of the candidates for the Special Election for the D5 position have signed up for the Democracy Voucher Program. Two of the candidates have already qualified for the Program.

Note for the record: Commissioner Pekelis joined the meeting at 4:09 p.m.

3. Executive Director's report

The Director has been in touch with the Council President's office as well as the Mayor's Office about the need for more Commissioners. With Commissioner Pekelis rotating off, there is a crucial need for another member to provide a quorum to adopt rules. The Council President's office has publicly advertised the Commission's Council opening. The application period closes on March 6.

The Mayor's Office is still in discussion about what they are going to do. The Director reported that the Commission is not the only one having this problem. The Washington State Public Disclosure Commission is a five-member commission down to three members at present.

Final Action Items

3. Adoption of CY2025 Financial Interest Statements Rule

The Director gave a brief background of the Financial Interest Statement process described in Seattle Municipal Code 4.16.080. The Commission is required to adopt the Rule that establishes the identified City employees and members of City boards and commissions required to file a Statement for the previous calendar year. This is done annually before the submission deadline of April 15.

This year there was more focus on address confidentiality and being aware of victims of domestic violence. The Chair asked if it was known how the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission handles this same situation as far as keeping some of the addresses and names confidential. The Director replied he did not know but could find out. The Chair is interested to see if the State is paying the same attention to this as the Commission is. The Chair would also like to know how other jurisdictions are handling this new emphasis on privacy. The Chair agrees that this is a worthwhile and important thing to do.

The Vice-Chair inquired to the notation "In progress" under some of the Department headings. The Director explained that list to be approved is the most current list before the Commission meeting. The list may be amended by rule from time to time. [SMC 1.16.080.B.1.]

Commissioner Pekelis made the motion to adopt the Financial Interest Statement Rule for Calendar Year 2025, and it was duly seconded. The motion passed with five ayes.

Hearing no further comments for the good of the order, the February 4, 2026, SEEC
Commission Regular Meeting was adjourned at 4:47 p.m.

DRAFT