



## Seattle Center Advisory Commission Meeting

April 2, 2026 | 12:00 - 1:30 p.m.

Armory Loft 3 / WebEx

**Adopted**

### ATTENDEES

*Commissioners:* Michael George, John Olensky, Sally Bagshaw, Adriane Musuneggi, Mark Dederer, Lara Mae Chollette, Lauren Campbell, Will Ludlam, Gloria Connors, Eric Berlinberg, Matt Roewe

*Absent Commissioners:* Stacey Hutchison, Eric Pettigrew, Matthew Mead, Sarah Rich, Holly Golden

*Seattle Center Staff:* *Diamatris Winston*, David Kunselman, Rose Ann Lopez, Chelsea Riddick-Most, Randy Engstrom, Marc Jones, Tony Lucero, Kaori "Kiyō" Kiyono, Janet Chapman

*Guest:* Will Daugherty

### Welcome/Review & Approve March Minutes – Mark Dederer, *Chair*

- Vote to approve March meeting minutes: approved

### Public Comment – Mark Dederer, *Chair*

No public comment

### Introduction of Randy Engstrom, Seattle Center Acting Director

Acting Director Engstrom brings extensive experience in arts, culture, and public service. He aims to align with the center's strategic plan, focusing on funding increases, cultural partnerships, and equitable arts access.

### Director's Report – *Diamatris Winston, Deputy Director*

- Potential Return of the NBA - The National Basketball Association Board of Governors has approved moving forward with a formal process to explore expansion. Seattle and Las Vegas are widely viewed as leading candidate markets; however, no final decisions or team awards have been made at this time.
- Central Waterfront Oversight Committee - Recent waterfront park inspections and performance standards reports indicate strong stewardship. Tiffani Melake, Waterfront Operations Manager, is scheduled to present these findings at an upcoming SCAC meeting.
- Bond Timing - A decision regarding bond timing is anticipated in the coming weeks, with current options under consideration for 2026 or 2027.
- World Cup Fan Celebration Financing - FIFA World Cup–related financing includes state and federal grant support for security. Approximately \$ 434.5K has been secured to date.
- The "No Kings" March took place on March 28, 2026, with Seattle Center serving as the concluding site, reinforcing its role as a civic gathering space.
- Elliott Bay Connection - Discussions are ongoing regarding potential maintenance and operations models for the Elliott Bay Connection, spanning from Pier 62 to Centennial Park.

### ESU Annual Report 2025 – *Tony Lucero, Acting Emergency Services Manager*

- The report includes data related to parking citations, disturbances, controlled substances, assaults, medical responses, and vehicle crimes on both the Seattle Center campus and the waterfront.



- The reduction in opioid overdoses on campus, despite the presence of stronger drugs, is highlighted.
- Vehicle crime numbers have remained stable on campus, even as broader crime rates have increased.
- Noise disturbances and arguments are usually handled by de-escalation, while narcotics and alcohol issues are more challenging.
- Campus disturbance trends indicate that Sundays tend to be more challenging than weekdays.

#### Controlled Substances

- A noticeable increase in overdose incidents occurs during the summer months, attributed to higher levels of alcohol consumption.
- Narcan usage is lower at Waterfront Park than at the Campus, largely because the park has limited restroom access.
- Overdose incidents have occurred in every restroom on every floor of the Armory, whereas Waterfront Park operates only one public restroom facility.

#### Challenges

- Ongoing challenges in receiving timely responses from the Seattle Police Department due to staffing shortages.
- For Waterfront Park, ESU don't have authorities to write parking citations but provide warnings.
- The Compass Center in the waterfront neighborhood has been as a problematic area for narcotic use for decades.

#### Medical Responses

- Medical response calls occur more frequently than assault-related incidents on campus.
- The spike in medical calls in late summer is attributed to heat-related issues. Measures to address heat-related casualties include bringing in additional personnel during peak heat periods.

### **2026 Marketing & Communications Priorities** – *Marc Jones, Director of Marketing & Strategic Partnerships*

#### Q1 2026: Awareness & Alignment (January – March)

- 52 Weeks of Fun Campaign (Jan–May): Weekly push highlighting food, festivals, sports, family programming, and how to get here.
- Local Organizing Committee announces the distributed FIFA World Cup Fan Celebrations model, positioning Seattle Center as a primary civic hub.
- Transportation Alignment Messaging: Early emphasis on light rail expansion, Monorail connectivity, and regional access ahead of summer surge

#### Q2 2026: Partnerships & Positions (April -May)

- Full announcement of Let's Play '26 World Soccer Fan Celebration at Seattle Center.
- Pacific Science Center Partnership: Center Art LLC IMAX Opening/Concessions Upgrades + New Entrance + Maker & Innovation Lab development
- The economic impact study and community impact study will be released, focusing on the importance of investing in Seattle Center. They will help us tell a story about why Seattle Center has a big impact.



### Q3 2026: FIFA Summer Surge (June – August)

- Summer at the Center Campaign (June–July): featuring Let’s Play ’26 Fan, brand activation for partners
- Global Visibility Storytelling: Seattle Center as the Pacific Northwest’s civic stage: “Where the World Comes Together.”
- Public Capital Funding Campaign Activation Begins: Shift from narrative-building to a clear investment case.

### Q4 2026: Public Capital Funding + Legacy (September – December)

- Holidays at the Center (Nov–Dec): Anchor year-end storytelling with legacy, stewardship, and future-looking impact.
- Public Capital Funding Campaign Peak (Sept–Nov): Coordinated paid, earned, and owned media; on-campus activations.
- Transportation Legacy Framing: Position transit access and mobility investments as lasting public benefit.

### Conversation with Ricky Graboski, Executive Director, The Vera Project – Will Ludlam, Vice Chair

- The Vera Project (Vera) is an all-ages community center with music venue, screen print shop, and recording studio.
- Over its 20 years, the organization has adapted to meet the changing needs of young people, especially during the pandemic, by providing social support and intervention.
- They expanded to include Black Lodge, a smaller DIY space in South Lake Union neighborhood, and plans to open a new space in Georgetown by the end of the year.
- Seattle Center remains the home base for educational and volunteer activities, while Black Lodge and Georgetown focus on different aspects of their mission.
- Vera is seeking more collaboration with Seattle Center and other partners to support their programs and expand their reach.
- Vera faces challenges in balancing volunteerism and paid opportunities, and in navigating financial realities and socio-political issues.
- Vera is working on a \$2.5 million cash and capital campaign to support their programs and infrastructure.
- Vera is seeking more opportunities for youth involvement in larger festivals and productions, and for collaboration with other organizations on campus.
- Vera is also exploring ways to integrate their programs with workforce development and apprenticeships, and to increase youth participation in the creative economy.

### Good of the Order – All

- The search for a new coffee vendor at the armory is ongoing, with criteria prioritizing small businesses and local vendors.

1:30 p.m. – Meeting adjourned