Equity Subcommittee Meeting Minutes – November 1, 2022 at Spokane City Hall (Tribal Room)

Attendance: Douglas LaBar, Jesus Torres, John Alder, Kiana McKenna, KJ January, Salanyaporn (Vivian) Chalardsoontornvatee, Sarah Dixit, Stephaine Courtney, Tasia Weaselbear

Staff: Erik Poulsen, Alex Gibilisco, Mark Carlos, Council Member Wilkerson

Land Acknowledgment

Approve October Minutes

Report Out – Community Updates

Guest: State Representative Timm Ormsby & State Representative Marcus Riccelli

> **Representative Ormsby** explained the budget process at the State Legislature.
>
> > -Can be reached at 509 939-2048
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> > -He currently serves as the Appropriations Chair
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> > > -There are different factors that are affecting the economy and will impact the budget such as sales tax revenue and global events like the War in Ukraine.
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> > > - Governors don't write budgets but they can put out a proposal to outline priorities so the Legislature can craft a budget. (It's the only constitutional requirement for the Legislature to do)
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> > > > -Workforce and Housing are top priorities for the next budget.
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> > > -the Budget Team traditionally consists of:
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> > > > -Chair (Rep. Ormsby)
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> > > > -House Majority Leader
> > > >
> > > > -Three Vice Chairs
> > > >
> > > > -Two staff members
>
> **Representative Marcus Riccelli** talked about the importance of community driven initiatives
>
> > -Can be reached at 509 879-7805
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> > -Elected in 2012, House Majority Whip
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> > > -Gets the votes needed to pass bills
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> > > - "The Budget is the biggest reflection of our values"
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> > > > -Remote Participation has opened accessibility

-Passionate about access to healthcare

-worked with CM Wilkerson on access to oral health in East Central, CM Stratton for an elevator at the Corbin Senior Center.

-Community driven initiatives like five county commissioners in Spokane County, naming 395 after Speaker Foley

-He mentioned that there are three budgets:

-Operating (What Rep Ormsby was explaining)

-Capital (Infrastructure, Jobs, minus roads and bridges)

-Transportation

They both took questions from the group.

John Alder asked about housing.

CM Wilkerson asked about applying an equity lens to the budget ("It's a journey not a destination," said Rep. Ormsby he explained how the budget had to be reworked to accommodate Native child welfare laws).

-On the budget increase, Rep. Ormsby said: "We're not spending more on where it's always gone, we're spending more on places where it should have gone and dipped."

-Rep. Riccelli thanked the group because it's through groups like this. The Legislature has increased access to resources like the Marshallese Community during the COVID19 Pandemic.

Stephanie Courtney asked about access to grants and funds for small businesses.

-Rep Ormsby mentioned working with WA Dept of Commerce to build capacity including technical assistance. Encouraged the group to call the Commerce hotline and say the Rep Ormsby sent them.

-Rep Riccelli encouraged the group to bring in more people, especially businesses of color to come up with what is needed from the Legislature. Many grants and program dollars are left on the table because they haven't been asked for.

CM Stratton brought up the need for an American Indian Community Center in Spokane.

-Rep Ormsby said that it's easier to have solid asks versus broad ideas. Eric Poulsen is working with them to establish the center

In closing, Rep Riccelli invited the group to advocate for the City and work with him and the Legislature since this group touches a wide swath of demographics within the City.

Guest: Erik Poulsen (City Council Legislative Affairs), Nick Federici (Federal Lobbyist for Spokane)

Erik pointed out that most of the City is represented by the 3rd Legislative District, who's State Senator and State Representatives are currently in leadership.

-Mentioned that he serves as a conduit for the City and its residents to the busy State Legislators.

-Echoed what the Legislators said in having "asks" to be specific like "Fund universal school lunches" vs "End Child Hunger"

-Said that lobbyists like Nick literally run after Legislators down the hall to remind them of different community initiatives that they committed to right before crucial votes.

Nick joined virtually from Olympia and echoed how "powerful" the 3rd Legislative District delegation are at the State Level.

-Has worked 31 Legislative Sessions.

-Originated from Social Justice & Low-Income Advocacy

-In line with a lot of work the Equity Subcommittee is setting out to do.

-His job is "to be the tip of the spear which the residents of Spokane are pushing towards Olympia"

-He encouraged the group to start with Alex Gibilisco to work with Erik and Nick to get priorities and asks in front of Legislators.

-CM Wilkerson told the group if any of their individual organizations or organizations they know have a legislative priorities list or specific asks to send it to Alex so the City can help since we have a paid lobbyist (Nick Federici)

-Erik mentioned that Alex is on Council's Legislative Priorities team along with him, Council President, CM Zappone, CM Bingle and other staff members.

-Legislative Priorities include "Tier 1 Issues" which are Spokane specific and led by the City.

-Legislative Session starts in February and goes on for 103 days

-Nick offered to put members of the subcommittee in touch with pertinent people for specific initiatives and asks, also pointed out that many other important decision makers are here in Spokane like Lisa Brown who was the State Senate Majority Leader for years and now serves as the Director of WA State Department of Commerce.

Council Member Wilkerson closed the meeting with saying that "Eastern Washington has a voice and we need to use it." In this group we have the first time that Communities of Color have been invited into the decision-making process. She will also serve as the Association of Washington Cities President next year, so Spokane is a great position to make significant legislative decisions.

Sarah Dixit shared some legislative priorities that Planned Parenthood and APIC set out.

Next meeting will be December 6th at 9:30