



## [Equity Subcommittee Meeting Minutes – December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at Spokane City Hall \(Tribal Room\)](#)

**Attendance:** Stephanie Courtney Beans, John Alder, Lili Navarette, Sarah Dixit, KJ January, Douglas LaBar, Kiana McKenna, Salanyaporn (Vivian) Chalardsoontornvatee, Jesus Torres, Tasia Weaselbear

**Staff:** Alex Gibilisco, Councilwoman Wilkerson, Mark Carlos, Matt Boston, Tonya Wallace

### **Land Acknowledgment**

**Guest: Tonya Wallace, City of Spokane Chief Financial Officer**

#### **City Budget is available online**

- “Biggest budget carveout is investing in employees”
  - the City is basically a corporation of 2,000 employees with a 10% vacancy rate
  - \$7.8 million in backpay on multiple contracts that were outstanding
  - A benefit for cities to incorporate include higher quality and better funded services like Police and Fire instead of relying on County services.
    - Fire Dispatch and Firefighters had a lot of overtime incurred because of issues related to the COVID Pandemic.
  - \$37 million lost in revenue during the Pandemic
    - Not including utility fees, revenue from State/Federal Government
    - Anything legislatively directed is not included like suspension of fee increases

#### **Highlights**

- Three areas of funding:
  - Restricted Funds: Not flexible. Targeted
  - General Fund: 25%
  - Capital Budget: Building projects, streets, utilities
- There are special funds that are tracked like Fire and EMS levy funds.
- Property Tax revenue can only be increased by 1% (dollar budget) not accounting for inflation



-Budget cuts or “creative budgeting” can be compared to if your rent increased but your paycheck didn’t. Costs rise, but the City’s revenue doesn’t always rise at the same time.(We provide services, not widgets)

-Some funds that would be transferred are Police car funds. Their budget is not inclusive of vehicles, so it has to be supplemented. The budget also includes employees that aren’t in uniform like record keepers, analysts and COPS shops.

-We saw a big spike in sales tax. We fared better during the Pandemic than most large cities. However, we also have a “K” shaped economy with a looming threat of Recession.

-Councilwoman Wilkerson clarified that we do not as a City, work with mental health issues, housing, et al. Traditionally, the budget does things like streets, sewers and utilities. The main focus of the Equity Subcommittee is to push the City to make sure that disadvantaged folks are in the conversation through community engagement.

-On the other hand, its on the subcommittee to tell the Community if the City is broke and cant fund initiatives.

-Uniformity does not mean equity. Tanya invited the subcommittee to help the Finance Department open up to populations that are overlooked and need attention/more information.

She committed that as the Budget is amended for services, she will come back to the subcommittee. She can be contacted at [twallace@spokanecity.org](mailto:twallace@spokanecity.org). You may also contact Jessica Stratton, the Interim Director of Management & Budget at [jstratton@spokanecity.org](mailto:jstratton@spokanecity.org) or at [budget@spokanecity.org](mailto:budget@spokanecity.org).

### **Subcommittee approved the November minutes without amendments**

### **Sarah Dixit co-facilitated the Equity Subcommittee with Alex Gibilisco.**

-What is our vision for Equity?

-What are our governing principles regardless of staff or Council Liaison?

-How to bring in more different voices into things like City Cable 5?

-How to bring in more voices to things like the Budget Process.

-2023 is an election year, so we have a potential of having three new Council Members and a new Mayor with a different vision. Governance of the Subcommittee is key to continuity and stability.



-John Alder suggested special training for Police Officers when it comes to racial profiling and mental health, but CM Wilkerson advised that as a committee, the Equity Subcommittee needs to find a structure before looking to priorities.

-Governing

-Chair/other positions

-recruitment of new members to subcommittee (even if it's just for workgroups)

-Form said workgroups

-interaction between Council Members, City Departments, and community groups.

-Expectations of Staff (CM Wilkerson, Alex and Mark)

-Vision

-Equitable Economic Development

-Community Engagement

-Budget

**Next meeting will be February 7<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 via Teams and in the Tribal Conference Room**