



**Attendance:** Salanyaporn (Vivian) Chalardsoontornvatee, Amanda Donovan, Kiana McKenna, Stephanie Beans Courtney, Lili Navarette, Jesus Alvarez, Doug, KJ January, John Adler

**Staff:** Alex Gibilisco, Mark Carlos, Council Member Wilkerson, Kelly Thomas, Chris Wright, Breean Beggs, Lisa Gardner, Matt Boston

### **Land Acknowledgment**

**Guest: Breean Beggs, Council President and Chris Wright, Council Policy Advisor**

Chris Wright introduced himself and his new role in Council. He encouraged the Subcommittee members to reach out to him if they need his help.

President Beggs started a conversation about the City's motto which is currently, "The City of Choice." Inspired by Professor John Powell of UC Berkley, he proposed changing the City's motto to, "In Spokane, We All Belong"

- President Beggs said that it may be words, but it can be taken as a platform and a call-to-action.
- A lot of people don't know what "Equity" is so the new motto can be a conversation starter.
- President Beggs is working with Spokane Arts to come up with a rollout that inspires people to share what the new city motto means to them and start a conversation around Belonging.

### **Some comments from the Equity Subcommittee around Council President's proposal:**

- It's now DEIB with "B" for Belonging
- It's not a big thing here yet in Eastern Washington but on the other side of the mountains they have workgroups around Belonging.
- A member said that they were recently on a panel about Belonging and there are many cities who are more ready to accept Belonging.
- It may be a pro that Professor Powell is a person of color, but he's in a more accepting environment for this conversation.
- We need to put dollars where we need to have the conversation in segments of Spokane
- We need to have a conversation within Communities of Color about tough topics like tokenism and colorism.
- Another member didn't know that "City of Choice" was our motto and agrees that we need to have a conversation and listen to the Community at large and ask them what "Belonging" means to them.
- As an immigrant who came to Spokane 30 years ago, one member likes the proposed motto as it reads, but doesn't believe it. They believe that we can work on it, but there's a lot of work to do to ensure that everyone feels like they truly belong.
- Another member of the Subcommittee doesn't like "City of Choice." They think that the proposed motto feels like a vision statement for the City. We have yet to understand what Belonging is to a Person of Color in a White Space. New motto feels very bold. This member did a focus group with members of the community who are Marshallese, Native Hawai'ians and



Samoan where most of them said that they don't feel safe in Spokane. We have work to do for folks to truly say, "I'm from Spokane, I belong in Spokane."

-People have to be aware of what belonging means and what does that look like.

-It feels good to say "In Spokane, we all belong" but it will take a lot of work.

-One person said that they weren't aware of the current motto, "City of Choice." What have people chosen and what are people choosing. Belonging is aspirational.

-Another person agreed that the proposed motto is aspirational but doesn't know if we are there yet. It's something we should strive for, but we need to be honest about it as well.

-One member thinks that the proposed motto is a good catalyst. It's a standard to set ourselves to and a good start for the Community. They also don't like "City of Choice."

-Another member doesn't feel like people in the LGBTQIA2S+ and BIPoC communities don't belong. Something to work towards for everyone to actually belong.

-One person said that not many cities have mottos that have an inclusive vision vs economic like "City of Choice," "City that Never Sleeps."

Council President said he agreed with the sentiments of the group and that is why he wanted to put it out there. He also agreed that we are not there yet as a City and Community.

#### **Equity Subcommittee Workplan**

Alex presented the Equity Subcommittee Workplan and a few statistics about the group.

-He also asked the Subcommittee for volunteers for the ARPA group around Multicultural Center Funding

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