



SPOKANE WORKFORCE COUNCIL

MINUTES

FULL COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14, 2021 – 7:30 - 9:30 AM

Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kelley Charvet	Rebecca Cook	Robert Duron	Dan Evans	Lori Hunley
Dr. Christine Johnson	Machelle Johnson	Commissioner Josh Kerns	Wade Larson	David Lewis - (designee for Mayor Woodward)
Luis Licea	Nancy Nelson	Dr. David May	Tina Morrison	Diane Quincy
Ben Small	Staci Taylor	Ron Valencia – (designee for Commissioner Kerns)	Jennie Weber	Christina Vigil Gross
Joel White	Diana Wilhite			

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Alisha Benson	Vicki Leifer	Mayor Nadine Woodward
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OTHERS PRESENT:

Mandy Adamson – Talent Solutions	Kevin Brockbank – Spokane Community College	Michaela Brown – Greater Spokane Progress	Rob Crow – Employment Security Department	John Dickson – Spokane County
Amanda Fisher – Labor & Industry	Sarah Flambouras – WorkSource	Mike Glenn – Next Generation Zone	Greg Gormley – WorkSource	Jen Morris – Spokane Resource Center
Terrance Nixon – Next Generation Zone	Jamie Pierce - WorkSource	Jen Ranney – Next Generation Zone	Kurtis Robinson – Greater Spokane Progress	Lora Senf – WorkSource
Derek Tyree – Spokane Teachers Credit Union	Stacey Wells – Next Generation Zone	Kevin Williams – WorkSource		

STAFF PRESENT:

Shannon Brundle – Program Manager	Kate Behrmann – Communications Assistant	Jessica Clayton – Program & Development Director	Jeanette Facer – Finance Director	Andrea Hixson – Program & Operations Manager
Dawn Karber – Chief Operations Officer	Victor Rapez-Betty – Communications Manager	Angela Maioriello – Office Assistant	Mark Mattke – Chief Executive Officer	Mike McBride – Business & Industry Analyst
Tim Robison – Program & Compliance Specialist				

Chair Dan Evans called the meeting to order at 7:31 a.m. with a quorum of members present and conducted introductions of members and guests.

Meeting the Mission

Mark Mattke, SWC Chief Executive Officer

Mark highlighted a couple of success stories featuring different customers that have received assistance from the Spokane Resource Center and the Next Generation Zone.

- The SWC received a \$1.7 million grant back in 2019 to support poverty reduction efforts in our community and serve recipients of basic food assistance and others.
 - Services are delivered out of the Spokane Resource Center and provide people that have multiple barriers with a holistic approach to breaking down those barriers, and then transitioning them into careers and family sustaining jobs.
- We shared a video about Isaiah, a customer we served at the Spokane Resource Center, who is one of the over 7,000 people we helped in the last two years since opening the center.
- There will be a new infusion of grant funding for the EcSA program coming a little bit later in the year which will help to sustain this effort, especially at this point in time as customer volumes have increased due to the pandemic.

Jessica Clayton, SWC Program & Development Director introduced Jen Ranney, Next Generation Zone Director and Victor Rapez-Betty, SWC Communications Manager, to share the success of our Youth Ambassador Program at the Next Generation Zone.

- Over the past year we have utilized social media as well as billboards and renewed our focus on marketing to our young adults in our community.
- The Youth Ambassador Program launched right before COVID hit in February of last year and it quickly pivoted to a virtual experience for young adults.
- This was really born out of a need to do a better job incorporating diverse youth voices in our marketing and outreach, and our young people help us market to other young people in our community.

- Jen shared that this was a heavy lift, and she could not have done this alone. She gave a special thanks to Mike Flynn, Stacey Wells, Terrence Nixon, Kelly, and the Spokane Workforce Council for support of the Youth Ambassador Program.
- She also gave a special shout out to Victor Rapez-Betty for taking time out of his schedule to help mentor the ambassadors and help push them to meet their true creative potential.
- They will continue to try and find creative ways to incorporate youth voice into our work at the Next Generation Zone.
- They brainstormed an idea to start an internship that would teach selected young people who are currently enrolled at the Next Generation Zone about marketing and to educate them about our workforce system and our branding.
 - They also help them in discovering and creating their own personal brand and then asking them to market our services through an empowered youth lens.
 - They wanted to walk the talk and provide an opportunity that offers day to day meaningful impact for both our youth and our system.
 - The internship started in spring of 2020 right before COVID hit and Currently the ambassadors are working a hybrid of virtual and in person.
 - They built the internship to have at least two to three interns at a time so they can work together and build off each other's skills and have the opportunity to lead youth focus groups and connect with their peers and learn from them as well.

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- They have eight ambassadors so far working with us currently and there is a mix of racial and cultural diversity, some have disabilities, most are self-taught, and a couple have had more formalized training, but most importantly they bring their true, authentic selves.
 - Just as we are passionate about knowledge, inclusion, and diversity it is not a new idea for this generation, it is really more of an expectation.
- They have created work that has far exceeded anything that they had previously and brought a unique perspective to our offerings, including informational videos such as the Voice your Vote campaign and welding marketing collateral. They have created flyer video combos for training programs including IT robot arm welding and the medical assistant apprenticeship program, these flyers have an embedded video in them that they created so others can learn more about the career.
 - In addition, they created marketing honoring our young adult healthcare heroes, the emergency rental system program, a diversity art contest and so much more.
- The ambassadors also designed the billboards with their original artwork and led the youth focus group to find out what was appealing to other young adults when it came to Snapchat ads.
- They want a young adult marketing movement, for their young adults to have a strong desire to work and find work that is meaningful to them, and they want to be able to see how the work they do contributes to the larger picture.
- In return they have taught us so much more than we have taught them, their voices are what our work is all about.

Victor shared that it has been a joy to work alongside the ambassadors and the young adults at the Next Generation Zone.

- They have led 21 social media campaigns, whether they are posts or ads, across four platforms.
- Snapchat was the newest addition to how we can reach out to young adults in the area and that came about through a focus group.
- Our analytics indicate that the ambassadors, through their peer-to-peer communication in their authentic young adult voices are actually communicating very effectively to our target audience
- Jessica shared that this has corresponded to a really big increase in our enrollments at Next Generation Zone.
 - In the last three months they have enrolled over 100 young people into programming and that is a record even prior to COVID.
 - Thank you to our youth ambassadors, to Jen, Vic, and all the staff who champion this.

Does this correspond to their career goals? Is this what they wanted to do or is it changing their idea of what they want to do?

- All of these young adults have come to us with some sort of natural affinity for wanting to do this.
- We have had a couple who are going into graphic design or are currently doing some graphic design. Rodney, for example, is already looking at entrepreneurship, so this is working out incredibly well for him.
- Emma, who is kind of a social media guru, expressed that this is her career goal.
- Marketing and the skills they are learning have broad applicability for a range of careers.

Staci Taylor mentioned the NAWB forum is looking for presentations between now and the end of the month.

- This would be great since it is really innovative and practicing what we preach for our young adults. It might go really well at the forum to show some of the pieces and videos.
- They were a recipient of one of the videos for the Providence MA program and they love it and have shared it a ton.

Would this group be someone that could consult with other businesses or is this more focused on work within the Next Generation Zone?

- We would really love this to be a replicable model and we are lucky that it is starting to gain some national attention right now.
- We have recently been asked to be on a panel to speak about this because it is starting to be recognized as an effective way to empower the youth voice.
- Our ambassadors are currently developing marketing that is going to be directed to businesses to talk about the power of youth in consulting with the business to help them figure out their own approach to reaching youth with social media and other platforms.

Review of Minutes

Review of February 10, 2021 meeting minutes.

Action: Motion and second to approve the February 14, 2021 meeting minutes. Approved unanimously.

Nomination of New Member – Derek Tyree

Dan Evans, Chair

Dan shared that the SWC has a current vacancy for a business representative and Derek Tyree, Organizational Development Strategist for STCU, has submitted his candidacy to join our board.

- Derek served on this board several years ago and a change in jobs resulted in his stepping off.
- He has remained engaged since then, including presenting as a subject matter expert at our annual workforce conference.
- Derek was interviewed by our board officers, who unanimously recommend his nomination.

Action: Motion and second to approve Derek Tyree to the board in the position of business representative. Approved unanimously.

Standing Committee Report – Executive Committee

Dawn Karber, SWC Chief Operations Officer

WIOA RFP Contract Extensions

The SWC released four RFPs for WIOA services for Program Year 2019 (July 2019-June 2020), with the option of extending for up to two additional years.

- The SWC voted to extend contracts last spring for Program Year 2020 (July 2020 – June 2021), and it is time to consider extending again.
- At its February 24, 2021 meeting, the Services and Oversight Committee discussed and approved extending contracts with our service providers for one more year and voted to forward to the Executive Committee for concurrence and action.
- This process is specifically regarding our WIOA Title I Formula Funding and does not affect any of our WIOA competitive or private grants.
- Staff will bring finalized PY21 allocations back to the Executive Committee after they are announced.
- The following contracts are affected for the next program year (July 2021-June 2022): One-Stop Operator, SRC Operator, Adult and Dislocated Worker Services, and Talent Solutions.
- Our current providers are doing an excellent job meeting the specifications of the RFPs during a tumultuous time in our economy, precluding the need to conduct a full RFP process during pandemic conditions.

- Also, despite changes to our service delivery caused by COVID-19-related closures and disruptions, the overall goals of each RFP are still relevant to the work that is happening at each of our sites.

For youth services and Next Gen Zone Operator, staff asked the committee to extend the current RFP through November of 2021.

- This is an unusual timeframe as it is part-way through the program year.
- However, the Next Gen Zone lease is up in November, and along with lease negotiations we are exploring potential program and physical re-design of the Next Generation Zone and may be considering a physical move.
- It makes sense to re-evaluate the goals outlined in the RFP at that time and make changes that coincide with a potential physical and/or programmatic redesign.
- This plan is aimed at potentially changing the goals outlined in the contract – at this time we do not anticipate that we will want to seek out new or different service providers.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTION

At its March 25, 2021 meeting, the Executive Committee took the following action:

Action: Motion and Second to extend our current RFP for WIOA Title I formula-funded services for Adult, Dislocated Worker, Talent Solutions, and WorkSource and SRC Operations from July 2021 through June 30, 2022 and our current RFP for WIOA Title I formula-funded services for Youth and Next Gen Zone Operations from July 2021 through November 30, 2021. Approved Unanimously.

Racial Equity – Improving our Workforce System.

Mark Mattke, SWC Chief Executive Officer

Mark shared that our workforce system focuses upon effectively achieving outcomes for all our customers and ensuring that our strategies and investments positively benefit members of our community who are often underserved.

- We recognize that racial inequity is found across all parts of our society and its institutions and that the workforce system has a responsibility to understand how it contributes to this and work to identify and eliminate barriers that prevent everyone we serve from advancing and reaching their individual and our collective goals.
- To better support this, we have been working with many partners to better understand how our workforce system is currently serving Black, Indigenous, and people of color.
- Staff have been conducting internal assessments of our budgeting and contracting processes, communications, and professional development to examine our existing practices through the lens of racial equity.
- Our next step as a board is to take on this work to develop our shared understanding of the challenges we face and catalyze improvements in our investment and service strategies.
- This work will take place over the next three board meetings and culminate at our October retreat.
- We are being assisted in this process by Greater Spokane Progress (GSP), a local firm with expertise in leading racial equity training and helping groups and individuals develop a common understanding and language so our community can work together and more effectively carry out this important work.
- Kurtis Robinson and Michaela Brown from GSP bring years of combined experience in this work and will offer their insights and facilitate our discussion.

Mark offered some background data on the racial composition of our community to level set our understanding of who lives here, and who our system is currently serving, to set a baseline we can measure progress from in the future.

- Spokane County demographics according to the US Census gives us our breakdown: about 89% of our population in Spokane County is white, about 2.4% is Asian, 2% is Black, 1.8% Native American/Alaskan native, and then 0.6% Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander.
- We are a majority white community, almost 90%, with a mix of other races that comprise the balance of our population.
- Compare this to our customer base of who we are currently serving at our three centers, just to give an idea of how we are already addressing this to some degree through programs, services, and then we can also measure our progress against that.
- At the Spokane Resource Center, we are disproportionately serving populations of color in our community with almost 30% of current customers from populations other than white.
 - Of those, 79% of them are at or below 30% of the area median income, which is only \$23,200 for a family of four which are very low levels of poverty.
 - We know that poverty disproportionately impacts Black, Indigenous people of color, and the customer data from the Spokane Resource Center certainly correlates to that.
- The programs that we operate there are designed to help a lot of different people in our community that are experiencing issues like housing insecurity, barriers to mental health or physical health, they may be justice involved, etc.
- We are doing good work there in terms of reaching into these populations in our community, but we have more work to do.
- At WorkSource, about 18% of our customers are from nonwhite populations and about 64% of them qualify as low income, with about half having a disability and 1/3 limited English.
- We know that when customers face multiple barriers to employment, including race, it places them even farther from opportunity and that requires more effort and investment to overcome the barriers, reach their career goals and reach self-sufficiency.
- At the Next Generation Zone about 30% of our young adult customers that we are serving report themselves as nonwhite.
- About 98% of them are low income, so we are serving a very low-income population of young adults.
- About 1/3 have a disability, about 1/5 are housing insecure, 17% are pregnant or parenting and 6% are justice involved so they are facing significant challenges that are compounded when also faced with racial inequities as they pursue their career goals.
- All our customer data points are showing that we, as a system, are already serving meaningful numbers of people of color from across our community, but the data also shows that these higher levels of poverty across our three centers and across our customers, and numerous other factors, instability housing insecurity are also linked together with race.
- We are undertaking this work together to identify our workforce systems, structural institutional and other barriers to serve these populations more effectively, get them to the outcomes that we are seeking, and then also changing policies, strategies, and doing things with the board to help improve access and outcomes for everyone in our community.

Mark shared that we are very fortunate to have partners in this work and we have engaged with Greater Spokane Progress to help us carry this out. We have two very experienced and skilled facilitators with us here today:

- Kurtis Robinson served as a commissioner for the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission.
 - He is the Executive Director for Revive - I did the time, and he is the Spokane NAACP's First Vice President. He also serves on the board of directors for Better Health Together,

Commissioner at Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission, and he is on the Advisory Committee for Spokane Regional Law and Justice Committee.

- Curtis is seemingly everywhere and doing great work in our community.
- He is also a certified recovery coach, a reentry specialist, and a certified credible messenger.
- He identifies as a 56-year-old BIPOC male and is a formerly incarcerated person from 1984 through 1987, with over 17 years concurrent abstinence from drugs and alcohol.
- Michaela Brown uses she/her pronouns, and she is a deeply curious, overthinking, heart in hand, lover of people.
 - Her background in collective impact organizing and commitment to advancing a world where everyone belongs has led her to serve in many community capacities focused on advancing individual and collective learning around diversity, equity, and inclusion.
 - Michaela is the Director of Community Learning for Accelerate Success in education equity partnership here in Spokane.
 - She is a Race Equity Facilitator for formal education, history, and leadership studies.
 - She has a passion for multicultural education, identity development, and community healing which has brought her to her newest role as an Equity and Leadership Facilitator with Just Lead Washington, where she is excited to continue to grow with and cheer on changemakers all across Washington state.

Michaela shared that we are going to spend some time talking about foundational concepts and really grounding ourselves in why we are doing this work, why we are beginning the journey of race equity.

- Many of you have already been on this journey and some of you are in different places entering the conversation.
- This past year has brought many issues to the fore, so we are going to talk a little bit about that and then we are also going to ground ourselves in some more conversations around implicit bias to really set us up for upcoming conversations, talking more about data, talking localizing the conversations within Spokane and specifically the workforce system.
- You all have already been doing the work, even looking at some of the data points and the things you have been saying, equity has already been on top of mind.
- The opportunity really is to get clearer on race equity and talking about the intersectionality that all our clients come to us with and being best positioned to serve them.
- The hope is to work ourselves out of the job eventually but that will take a while, so they are glad we are in this work together.

Kurtis said that as we continue to lean into this challenging conversation, which is uncharted territory, one of the things that has become very stark and right up at the front of pretty much everyone's mind in this room is an awareness of this issue: whose land was this and which people occupied this land before it became the Americas, before the Europeans got here.

- We are very intentional in this work, continuing to lift up these things that have, for multiple reasons, left the front of everybody's awareness at all times and we absolutely have a collective mind that it needs to be in.
- From this point on, here is how we do a people and land acknowledgement:
 - We want to begin by respectfully acknowledging that this workshop is being held on the occupied traditional lands of at least the Spokane peoples and so many others who have stewarded this land throughout the generations.
 - We pay our respects to elders both past and present.
 - We do this to offer recognition, respect, and gratitude for their resilience.

TAB 1

- We also intentionally counter the impact of the doctrine of discovery with the truth about the human beings who were already here, and who continue to resist colonization impacts, and fight to sustain their culture and people.
- We know it is insufficient to simply acknowledge the land that we occupy so we commit to centering the voices, leadership, and the solutions of indigenous peoples in our communities and around the world.
- We also stand in solidarity with indigenous peoples who are already leading the fight to protect our planet's biodiversity across the globe.
- We encourage you to support indigenous led organizations, to buy native, and to integrate the essential voices of indigenous peoples in your lives, all year long.

Michaela mentioned that we have several community agreements here that she hopes we can agree to foster in this space and then we will not need to reference them for future learnings:

- When we are in learning space with one another specifically talking about harder topics like race and inequities, we like to encourage folks to take space/make space.
 - That is just a reminder that if you are someone that is usually comfortable talking in these spaces, just be aware of how much you are talking and if you are someone that tends to be a little bit quieter, we really invite you to participate in ways that are comfortable for you.
- Honor confidentiality in the space and try to be present as much as possible: We know it is early, we know you are juggling lots of tasks in your daily lives so that as much as possible, try to be present for these conversations, speak your truth and let others speak theirs.
- Together we know a lot: We know that we all have various levels of expertise, there are folks on this call who can lead this training themselves and other folks are newer to the conversation, but we acknowledge that, together, we know a heck of a lot more.
- No fixing/No saving: This community agreement is really rooted in the idea that these conversations can be uncomfortable, and it is not really any of our responsibility to save the individual that is feeling a lot of discomfort because that is really an opportunity for them to move forward in their learning, and we really hope the same for ourselves.
- Turn judgment into wonders: A lot of times in these conversations someone might say something that might be a little problematic or rooted in not knowing and so we just really encourage folks, when that happens to, instead of going to a judgment place really turn that into a curiosity place, a place of wonder, to offer a space for further learning.
- Embrace imperfection, that includes the imperfection of your facilitators: We cannot be articulate all the time and this is her absolute favorite because as someone who sometimes stumbles upon their words she felt like, yes, she is safe.
 - Again, embrace imperfection for all of us because we are not perfect, and we do not expect perfection in these conversations.
- Additionally, expect and accept nondisclosure: These conversations are ongoing, this is lifelong work, and we are just beginning, as well.
- Establish brave spaces where we know we cannot always have safe space, because of dynamics of power, but we hope to encourage brave space greatness.

Michaela also shared a set of assumptions that we have going into today's learning.

- The **first** is that we live in a highly racialized society, so we are coming in naming that race does matter.
 - We saw the slides that Mark presented regarding the Spokane demographics and if we looked at the youth data, Spokane is very much changing just like the world, but we also see that the clients that you are serving are disproportionately people of color, so we come into this space recognizing that race does matter.

- **We are all a part of the picture** even though oftentimes, in this conversation, we are centering BIPOC communities: Black, Indigenous, People of Color.
 - When we are talking about race and race equity that includes white folks, that includes all of us doing this work.
- The **third** assumption is none of us are responsible for the past but all of us are responsible for the present and to some extent the future.
- As we talk about racial equity sometimes racism is playing out just in the nature of how internalized racial dynamics are and internalized dynamics of supremacy and inferiority together.
- She asked all board members and staff to introduce themselves and share what talking about race feels like.

It was mentioned that it is really important to distinguish what the confidentiality agreement means in terms of our board work versus this safe and brave space that we all want to create here.

Michaela said that it really is a foundation on how they operate in spaces, they like to use the saying that “What is said here, stays here. What is learned here, leaves.”

- When sharing we want to make sure that we are not sharing about people's specific names because that is the confidential piece, but the principles that we have touched on and the things that we are learning, those are the things they want to make sure that we personally and organizationally carry forward.
- Confidentiality is one of the principles to establish brave space as there is a lot of vulnerability.

Michaela shared a slide that detailed core embodied coping strategies: (Freeze, Fight, Flight, Dissociate, Appease)

- As we are talking about conversations of race or other challenging conversations, we feel it in our bodies, and it will show up for other folks in different ways.
- These conversations are just not intellectual, they show up in profound ways on our body so if you start to begin noticing that you are getting defensive, I encourage you to breathe through that and ask yourself some additional questions.
- Maybe communicate what you might mean or maybe you need to go off camera.
- If something is said and you just noticed that you are beginning to freeze up, or you know you cannot speak in the moment that is okay.
- She brought this slide up just to remind us that as we are having these conversations some various feelings might be coming up for us and she just encourages us to reflect on that as a part of the learning process and maybe try to ask ourselves some additional questions but also take care of ourselves, and if at all possible, let them know how they can support us in that.

Michaela mentioned that we also need to ground “why we are doing this work?” related to racial equity and eliminating other forms of inequity.

- Why are we doing that – because it is hard work, so it is important that we are grounded in our WHY.
- Not only our WHY as individuals but our Why as a collective, because when it starts to get hard it is important for us to be able to hold on to that WHY.
- Ada Shen-Jaffe, a phenomenal leader in the equity space and the criminal legal space as well, named this past year as the time of the triple pandemics.
 - We all know that we were facing COVID-19, but we also very much saw, and we are experiencing as a country, the results of poverty and racism.

TAB 1

- As we continue to experience intractable poverty and the impacts of socio economics on communities, we are naming that these are the times of the triple pandemics, where we are confronted with multiple public health crisis beyond just the Coronavirus but additionally, racism as well as the interconnectedness to poverty.

Kurtis shared one of his favorite YouTube videos with the message that “When you know your why, your what becomes more impactful, because you are walking towards or in your purpose.” And he also shared a visual reminding us of the Golden Circle theory by Simon Sinek that again, talks about the competitive advantage of organizations and systems that are able to clearly articulate their why for doing this work.

- Every organization on the planet knows WHAT they do. These are the products they sell or the services.
- Some organizations know HOW they do it. These are the things that make them special or set them apart from their competition.
- Very few organizations know WHY they do what they do. WHY is not about making money. That is a result. WHY is a purpose, cause, or belief. It is the very reason your organization exists.

Board members moved into small group discussions in breakout rooms to discuss the following questions:

- Why do you do this work?
- What values underlie it?
- Why do we prioritize equity and specifically race equity?

Each group shared the following points from their individual discussions:

Why do you do this work?

- It is an essential component of teaching, improving lives of selves and students, and to spread the message in the larger community.
- To be more comfortable having these discussions
- The recognition of work life as part of the whole life of people we work with and advocate for, understand challenges/differences and help people lead lives they want and what success means to each person.
- They see barriers all around to achieving what they have achieved, identifying part in institution, educating self then implementing that into system’s design.
- Understanding struggles faced by people of different backgrounds.
- Knowing how to properly message to my children, differently than I was messaged to.
- We don’t know what we don’t know.
- Seeing people you love being mistreated.
- To advocate for the people that we serve and encourage them to develop their voice.
- I believe we are capable of having a safe, healthy, and just community for everybody.
- Make this region the best place to work, live and raise a family with no qualifiers.
- Take complex services and make it accessible to customers.
- Representation in materials that we develop so that they are reflective of the communities that we serve.
- Reflecting on how are we getting our word out about our services?
 - What is our marketing strategy to these different groups of people?
 - Doing it the same way that we have in the past is not the way, so we need to prioritize equity and making sure that we are getting the word out to all our customers.
- There is a lack of diversity in applicants for job openings.

TAB 1

- We are being much more intentional with some of our community partners that are in those diverse spaces and we may need to consider recruiting outside of our area to bring in more diverse applicants.
- We have a pretty diverse workforce.
 - It is when you reach the level of supervision or managerial roles that we see a significant drop in diversity.
- We need to ask how we can develop programs that intentionally create those professional development and mentorship opportunities to help employees promote up into other positions.
 - Many organizations do not have succession planning, they do not have professional development, leadership training, or pathway that people can see where they feel like they are prepared to move up, so it needs to start early in their employment.
 - Sometimes it takes just that initial discussion, so people know it is triggered in their minds, this is something they could work towards.
- The work of the SWC is to elevate people economically and socially, and we know that our mission impacts communities of color more than other communities.
- We could not carry out our mission if we do not get this racial equity work done.
- We cannot offer effective services to people of color if we have not done this work.
- There are different cultures in different regions, even between Spokane and Tri-cities.
- It is absolutely necessary when looking at our history.
- There can be an unwelcoming atmosphere that white people are not aware of, but people from different backgrounds can see it.
- As a minority you have to learn how to “walk” in various spaces.
 - If we can learn how to help our customers do that without feeling uncomfortable – how to find success without having to change or hide who they are.
- Elevating race equity is important because that is where some of the greatest disparities are.
- You cannot solve other problems without solving this one.
- Being able to see people come from impoverished backgrounds and make their way with a little bit of help is really the “why” of all our work.
- There are a lot of great reasons as to why having only a surface level understanding of racial equity paired with having good intentions are not enough.
- The work can feel really good, so it is rewarding, purposeful and meaningful.
- Many people suffer from inequality and that impacts our entire community.
- Some of the values that underlie it: A big one that we had quite a bit of discussion on was empathy.
 - Understanding what other people are experiencing and going through with compassion, respect, equality.
- You cannot get to equality without equity, curiosity, and humility.
- We prioritize equity and in particular racial equity, the big thing that came up was that there is a disparity, in particular racial equity, compared to other types of equity, mostly based on our history.

What values underlie it?

- Understanding how to even get people to the door, to give everyone to opportunity to achieve, we must have a culture and systems to support people.
- When people are “in”, they are valued, seen, and supported.
- There is a constant need to have a culture that respects everyone.
- The desire to create equity so that the color of your skin does not matter.
- Having experienced direct racism and they want to ensure everybody has the same opportunity.

- Knowing that I have white privilege and it can be used for such good and positive building blocks.
- Understanding that it is important, everybody should have the same opportunities and we currently do not.
- Being able to educate family and friends with advocacy.
- We do not have a complete historical understanding and people find out after horrific events happen.
- Would like us to expand our historical knowledge of everyone, it feels urgent right now.
- Equity is important to understand because not everybody is starting at the same place or has the resources or tools to get to where they want to go.
- Anybody that goes into a service must have a caring heart and we want to help, listening is important even though we might hear the same story over and over, it is a different story, it is their story, and it is no matter if you are dealing with patients or customers or whoever, each of us have a story.
- Self-sufficiency, independence, economic opportunity, under-girded by human dignity of every person in our community.
- As a board member, hoping that the values we espouse are embraced by business and community partners.
- Valuing partnerships – we want to partner with our customers and really get what they are saying – “no decisions made about us without us.”
- Partnership + continued growth.

Why do we prioritize equity and specifically race equity?

- We have not prioritized this in the past.
- We are making up for lost time.
- Racial injustice is in the news and sparks conversations.
- America being confronted and held accountable for our actions.
- Learning how to meet people where they are instead of trying to force them into a situation - one size fits all does not work!
- Racial inequality does occur, even if you are not racist.
- In a Caucasian dominant environment, you have the ability to not think about racism.
- Not a level playing field for everyone, “just work harder” is not an answer.

Michaela thanked the groups for their willingness to explore their WHY together.

- She went over a few foundational concepts and referred to a glossary of terms to help inform the pre survey.
 - We will continue to go over terminology as a way of normalizing conversations about race and just make sure that we are talking about the same thing.
- There are multiple levels of equity work that are required, and the work is required at all levels.
 - There is work to be done at the internal subconscious level and credits will go into implicit bias, the individual level, the interpersonal level, the organizational institutional level, the community level, and the systemic level.
 - Equity work is required in all of those levels and we can examine racial equity how race and racism are showing up at all of these various levels.
- We cannot get to equality without first talking about equity and this is a reminder that these are two different terms, with two different definitions, that are oftentimes use interchangeably but they are quite different.

TAB 1

- Equality means providing every person the same resources and equity means ensuring every person has the resources they need to produce outcomes and opportunities and to build power.
- She explained that racial equity and the definition that we are using when we are talking about racial equity is when race no longer determines one's outcomes.
 - It is a proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes, and actions that produce equitable power access opportunities treatment and impacts and outcomes for all.
- What we mean when we say intersectionality is a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides where it interlocks and intersects.
 - Intersectionality represents an analytical framework that attempts to identify how interlocking systems of power impact those who are most marginalized in society.
 - This is one of Michaela's favorite quotes by Audreya Lorde who says, "There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives."
 - As we move forward in conversations we will definitely be talking about issues of intersectionality, because the clients that we are serving come, not just racialized, but with various other identities as well.

Kurtis shared how in in terms of our early stages, whiteness, and race, as we understand it, did not exist.

- It may be hard to understand now because it is so prevalent everybody seems to have a race, but race came into being, and we can trace that being and much of the formation of how we think about race, out of the new world.
- That is when people came to the Americas, from Europe: There were people from Africa, Europe, there were the native people and then there were the elites.
- The elites tried to organize the people from Africa and the workers from Europe into servers, and then they tried to control the native people to extract resources from them.
- At some point, if you are from Africa and the people from Europe decided to make common cause then they lived together, they worked together, they intermarried, they had children.
- It was not perfect, but it is what we would call interracial contact, and it did not seem odd at all.
- And at some point, it occurred to them that: We are doing all the work, we have no control over our lives so there is this rebellion, called the Bacon's Rebellion, where they rebelled against the elite.
- They demanded land and they demand a greater democracy; they demand a right to participate in the governance of the economy and the elites rejected that. This rebellion was quite successful.
- The elites responded by saying, "Look, we have too many workers and if they work together on a common cause, it is going to be hard to manage them." They tried to experiment with separating the Africans and Europeans, and it took them almost 100 years.
- They tried religion, they tried language, they tried place of origin, and stumbled upon race. They could not start to construct with race because race did not exist.
- They could not just think of it, they had to experiment, and they start passing new laws like anti miscegenation laws.
- They told the newly minted whites that they were wrong to identify with the elites, they are not an elite themselves, but they should identify with whites and should police the nonwhites by creating slave patrols.
- They created a new identity, the white identity, which had not existed before.
 - The white identity was that middle strata, a stratum of identifying with the elites and controlling the nonwhite.
 - It is important in terms of sameness that the elites did not think of themselves as white, they were Europeans, what they thought of themselves were the elites.

TAB 1

- There is always this anxiety and early definition of whites that were defined in terms of not being black, it was a negative definition.
- As we are unpacking this very challenging subject, we want to make sure that we know we are laying the context of what we are really talking about: the issues of race, the real impacts of race and racism, and the reality that racism is not a thing.
 - Race is a made-up thing, but it is a made-up thing that has been in operation for so long that it now pretty much has a life of its own and we have to deal with it.
 - We have to start pretty much all conversations out with race, and we need to reverse engineer from there.
 - One of the great tools for that is the implicit bias association test, developed by Harvard.
- People are often unaware implicit biases can predict behavior and people differ in their levels of their implicit biases.
 - System one of the brain operates unconscious, automatic, it is a fast and effortless.
 - System two is much slower it is conscious, deliberate, and it takes time and effort.
 - The human brain can process 11 million pieces of information in one given moment in time, but we are only conscious in that slow, deliberate part, of 40 vs 1,000,001 of the information.
 - We react before we even realize it and our mind sorts it into categories, we create associations between things, we fill in the gaps with only receiving parts of partial information, and we put them into objects, processes, and schemas.
 - Some important verified statistics on microaggressions are how resumes with ethnic sounding names are pushed down in selections for interviews, when Asian candidates are given priority regarding math and science, or African Americans submitting apartment rental applications with the same qualifications as white applicants are less likely than whites to be shown apartments or accepted for those rentals.
- We have been absorbing all this stuff all of our lives, racism, gender binaries, Eurocentric superiority mindset, class dynamics, compiled with intentional historical miseducation.
- We have been absorbing these principles, along with things like dominance, dehumanization including racism, mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually from the early developmental stages through our entire life and then next thing you know, we have got some slants, positive and negative biases, and we are operating and operationalizing them.
- Biases have formed, we experience things according to those biases we are taking in the information that way, then we are having Action and Reaction alignments based on those biases and then the whole entire thing, just reinforces itself and justifies whatever biases positive or negative that we are operating in.

Michaela mentioned that next time they are going to spend some time getting more grounded in some foundational concepts, diving in more explicitly to talk about different forms of racism and structural racism, and how they manifest themselves in different policies.

- For our continued learning, they hope that we will take the implicit association test if we have not already, and if we have a go ahead and try them out again.
 - They are just a great thing to continue to be abreast of and see how our biases have shifted over time.
- Additionally, they would love it if we had the opportunity to watch a 60-minute video from the *Race Department Illusion* series that really talks about how the race concept came to be.
- Kurtis has an inclusivity, self-inventory that he would like us to participate in that will be distributed to the board.
- There is an “extra credit piece” from Netflix called *Amend* that is based on the Fourth Amendment.

Standing Committee Reports

Executive Committee – Dan Evans, Chair

Review of Action Items

At its February 10 Special meeting, the Executive Committee took action on the following item:

Eviction Rent Assistance Program for Young Adults (ERAP) – Additional Funds

- The Eviction Rent Assistance Program (ERAP) for Young Adults is CARES Act Funds from Washington State Department of Commerce funds passed through the City of Spokane to assist young adults who have had their housing impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The grant allows us to pay past due, current due, and future rent with a focus on equitable distribution of resources to disadvantaged populations.
- This program is being administered by the Office of Homeless Youth and the Office of Family and Adult Homelessness at the WA Department of Commerce.
- The City of Spokane has awarded the SWC an additional \$191,301 to support Next Generation Zone youth with rental payments and the SWC will be subcontracting out \$179,301 to be integrated into existing educational and career programming at the Next Generation Zone to provide additional stability to youth as they work towards their educational and career goals.
- The team will serve 55 customers with \$2,500 and enroll 75%, or 42, into WIOA title 1-B services. 40% of customers are BIPOC households and 20% are Hispanic/Latinx.

Action: Motion and Second to accept \$191,301 in additional ERAP funding from the City of Spokane and increase the subcontractor awards to Career Path Services, NEWESD101 and Goodwill by \$179,301 combined. Approved Unanimously.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Addition of \$191,301 to the operating budget.

At its March 25, 2021 meeting, the Executive Committee took the following action:

Action: Motion and Second to extend our current RFP for WIOA Title I formula-funded services for Adult, Dislocated Worker, Talent Solutions, and WorkSource and SRC Operations from July 2021 through June 30, 2022 and our current RFP for WIOA Title I formula-funded services for Youth and Next Gen Zone Operations from July 2021 through November 30, 2021. Approved Unanimously.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

TBD when WIOA Formula allocations are released by the state.

Other Business

Mark announced that Shannon Brundle is leaving as a Program Manager for the SWC, and we are very sad to see her go. She has been with us for the better part of three and a half years and has been very instrumental in helping us with many vital projects, building our capacity, and leading development of our annual workforce conference and the internship toolkit. She has been our in-house race equity expert and managed a variety of grants over the course of time to great success. We are going to miss her, and we wish her well. We will still be seeing her; she is taking a job with the Employment Security Department managing the Economic Security for All Grants across the whole state. It is work she has been doing for us that she will take to the statewide level. So, thanks to her and thank you all again for engaging in this work.

Meeting adjourned at 9:35 AM.