



M E M O R A N D U M

Date: February 25, 2016

To: Board of Park Commissioners

From: Charles Ng, Executive Sponsor of Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR)'s Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI), and Seattle Parks and Recreation's RSJI Change Team Leadership Subcommittee

Subject: Overview and Summary SPR RSJI efforts and Accomplishments

Requested Board Action

This is an informational briefing about the City of Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI). It will include an overview and summary of the 2015 accomplishments of the RSJI Change Team, working closely with SPR Leadership.

RSJI Description

The Race and Social Justice Initiative is a citywide effort to realize the vision of racial equity. The Initiative works within City government and with community leaders to get to the root cause of racial inequity: institutional racism. RSJI is led by the Seattle Office of Civil Rights and an interdepartmental team of City staff. All elected officials in the City of Seattle have endorsed and are promoting RSJI.

Brief History

The RSJI was launched in 2004 by former Mayor Greg Nickels, who recognized that there are institutional barriers that create disparities and inequities in the provision of city services to all citizens and communities, as well as within city governments, particularly to those who are underserved and underrepresented. The RSJI required all city departments to become more culturally competent, inclusive, and equitable in its delivery of city services. It also required city departments to look at developing its policies and major initiatives through a RSJI Lens and build a workforce that is reflective and representative of the city's changing demographics. The Seattle Office of Civil Rights (SOCR) was charged by the Mayor to lead efforts and oversee the implementation of this Initiative.

Early Adopters

All city departments were required to create RSJI Change Teams to lead RSJI efforts in their departments. SPR was one of the first departments to get on board. SPR created a RSJI Change Team that consists of a diverse cross section of employees, ranging from management to front

line staff. The SPR RSJI Change Team's focus in its early years consisted of learning and receiving Seattle's Office of Civil Rights RSJI trainings and raising awareness about institutional racism and its negative impact on communities of color, employees of color, as well as other forms social inequities, including those related to gender, sexual orientation, and people with physical disabilities. While this focus is still relevant today, the last 5 years' work has been about implementing and effecting change that will result in equitable outcomes in the city's provision of services and workforce equity.

RSJI Change Team Charter Mission Statement

Mission Statement

The Change Team supports the Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) and the City's commitment to eliminate racial disparities and achieve racial equity in Seattle by ending institutional and structural racism and inequities in City government. Our mission is to increase access and opportunities for underrepresented and underserved communities to participate in city programs and services, therefore making a difference in people's lives.

2016 RSJI Work Plan:

The SPR RSJI Change Team completed its work with the SPR Management Team to create the 2016 SPR RSJI Work Plan (To be presented at meeting).

Going forward, the SPR RSJI Change Team would like to be a resource for the Park Board and provide any tools and technical support it would like to receive to help it perform its work through a RSJI lens.

Additional Information

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