



**Meeting of the Water System Advisory Committee (WSAC)**  
**January 9, 2019 Meeting Notes**  
**Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Avenue**  
**Room 4901**  
**5:30 pm – 7:30 pm**

WSAC Members	Present?	SPU Staff & Guests	Role
Joel Carsley	Y	Natasha Walker	CAC Program Coordinator
Steven Cole	Y	Kathy Curry	Water System Policy Liaison
Paul Reed	Y	Sheryl Shapiro	CAC Program Manager
Rodney Schauf	Y		
Teresa Stern	N		
Michael Godfried	Y		
Kat Dej-Panah	P		
Wendy Walker	Y	<b>Guests</b>	
Ky Lewis	N	Nina Page	Guest
Annie Saunders	Y	Robert Smith	Guest
<b>CDWAC Members</b>	<b>Present?</b>	Akemi Smith	Guest
Thy Pham	Y	Michael Sanchez	Guest
Andrew Schiffer	Y	Christina Heinlen	Guest

**1. Regular Business**

- WSAC Chair, Rodney Schauf, opened the meeting at 5:39 PM.
- Meeting notes from the November WSAC meeting were reviewed and approved.
- Sheryl indicated emergency exits and exit procedures.

**2. WSAC Membership Updates**

- WSAC Alum, Michael Godfried, stopped by to say goodbye.
- Sheryl provided a status update on membership and the status of open spots on the roster. She encouraged referrals for membership, events, and community activities.

**3. SPU Race and Social Justice / Service Equity**

This topic is part of a series of meetings on the City of Seattle’s Race and Social Justice Initiative to explore what that Initiative means for SPU work, and how SPU’s Community Advisory Committees can play a role in advancing that work. Members were asked to watch SPU’s “Why Equity” video in advance of this meeting, seen here:

<http://www.seattle.gov/util/AboutUs/SPUandtheCommunity/ServiceEquity/index.htm>

Sheryl Shapiro shared history on the City's 2035 City-wide Comprehensive Plan, which was the first time a Growth and Equity Analysis was part of Environmental Impact Statement for the City's Comprehensive Plan. The Plan explicitly affirms Race and Social Justice as one of the core values which guide the goals and policies of the Plan. This is notable because the Plan offers the framework and vision for growth and sustainability in the City, and guides big-picture decisions, including those made by SPU. SPU specifically focused on two Elements of the Plan: Utilities and Environment. For the documents, see:

<http://www.seattle.gov/opcd/ongoing-initiatives/comprehensive-plan#projectdocuments>

WSAC members watched the Seattle Public Utilities 2017 Race and Social Justice Report to Seattle City Council presented on 4/24/18. The video can be viewed here: <http://seattlechannel.org/mayor-and-council/city-council/2018/2019-civil-rights-utilities-economic-development-and-arts-committee?videoid=x91004>

In the video, SPU leadership, management, RSJI Change Team Co-Chairs and Branch Equity Team members from 3 lines of business shared updates on various Race and Social Justice Initiatives. They noted that the Seattle Office of Civil Rights also has a liaison to the work at SPU. Highlights included:

- ✓ Developing a strategic relationship between the RSJ Change Team and the SPU Executive Team.
  - ✓ Applying the Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) to the 1996 Graffiti ordinance.
  - ✓ WMBE (Women Minority Business Enterprises) wins and challenges, including the importance of prompt payment. This was an example of SPU monitoring their own internal performance to evaluate impacts to WMBE businesses.
  - ✓ EISE Community Partnership Program, reviewing the results of the 2016-2017 pilot project and discussing the goals for the program in 2018.
  - ✓ Implementation of the Branch Equity Team (BET) model, along with anecdotes from three members.
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- **A CAC Member** asked about the Seattle Office of Civil Rights (SOCR). Sheryl Shapiro, Change team member and CAC Program Manager provided some history on the role of SOCR, beginning with Mayor Nickels. SOCR has historically supported SPU in training and RSJI activities. They also staff the City's Core Team. Sheryl also provided an overview of the structure for doing RSJ work in the City's Departments through Change Teams, and how SPU has created additional support for the work through the creation of the Environmental Justice and Service Equity Division as well as Branch Equity Teams (BETs).
  - **A CAC Member** asked if there has been resistance to the BET model? Sheryl responded that staff have grown more open as they have better understood how this model can bring about change. She then briefly described the differences between individual, structural and institutional racism.
  - **A CAC Member** asked if there is a summary of the results of changes since RSJI was initiated in 2004. They specifically asked if City employees behave differently now. Staff responded that there was a learning curve, and referenced the City Council video watched, in which an SPU engineer discusses his perspective change as an engineer. She noted that there may not be statistics, but now the City has shared language, vocabulary and tools to examine and discuss

race and social justice and equity. A CAC member added that workforce statistics could reflect some of these changes.

- **A CAC Member** noted that there are some things the City measures already, such as the number of individuals being promoted within different racial groups, the male-to-female wage gap, and the differences in these statistics between fields. They added that implicit biases often manifest in the way that companies hire.
- **A CAC Member** asked about City goals to measure our progress.
- **A CAC Member** asked about what individual employees must do to engage with the City's RSJI goals. Staff present shared their experiences, including RSJI components in their performance reviews and RSJI impacts in their work. Staff also provided more detail on the City's RSJ Toolkit, and the integration into program decision making. An example blank toolkit can be viewed here: [http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/RacialEquityToolkit\\_FINAL\\_August2012.pdf](http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/RacialEquityToolkit_FINAL_August2012.pdf)
- **A CAC Member** referenced a City Council member's question in the video, regarding the suggestion for institutional messaging around City Departments' intolerance for hate-talk, or phobias. Other CAC members shared their feelings on this suggestion.
  - A few members noted that they would welcome the idea of a service provider denouncing racism.
    - "I would welcome a service organization saying racism is not okay. Those who are racist are loud and clear about their messaging. And those of us who share the anti-racist mindset, need to put that out there as well. I am an SPU customer and I would be really proud [of SPU] for standing up and saying that it is not okay to treat our employees in a bigoted fashion. "
  - Members were "disturbed" by the incident at the North Transfer Station described in the video, where a customer wrote in a letter about an SPU employee who they felt did not "speak good English." A member shared about their experience with English as a second language, and the fear of sounding "Un-American." They noted that not everyone has access to learning fluent English. They also shared about their parents' experience being treated differently because of their accents. A retraining of the way that we interact and see people is a first step, they added.
  - Sheryl will share some videos, articles, websites and see what CACs are interested in and see how this work touches SPU, the work of the Committee.
- **A CAC Member** inquired into how SPU's Community Connections team, and associated underrepresented communities, are being invited to engage with the Advisory Committees. Sheryl shared more about Community Connections and the building of mechanisms that expand our reach and partnership potential.
- **A CAC Member** shared that they were disappointed in the low attendance of CRUEDA Committee Council members in the video presentation watched, and was disappointed in the level of questions from City Council member.
- **A CAC Member** asked about work being done to re-examine the graffiti ordinance, noted in the video. Staff responded that SPU's Change Team is working on policy, and to stay tuned.

- **A CAC Member** shared that there is an effort in the City to remove redlining from deeds and covenants. They asked if SPU may begin to examine existing ordinances to remove inequities. Staff responded that SPU may do that with policies, but that they do not have control over ordinances. **She said she will pass that idea on.**

#### 4. King County Equity Maps

CAC Program Coordinator, Natasha Walker, presented a series of maps put together by King County's Equity & Social Justice group. She explained that at a previous Creeks, Drainage & Wastewater Advisory Committee (CDWAC) meeting, a CDWAC member had shared how he had used these maps in the process of applying for a grant. Walker focused on the Equity Index, a layer in the map. The King County Census Viewer overlays census data and can be viewed here:

<https://www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/equity-social-justice/tools-resources/maps.aspx>

Sheryl Shapiro said that **she would also share a link to a SPU-generated video discussing application of the RSJ tool kit to the claims processes,** viewable here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxazKNpxDm8>

Sheryl also noted that she **would share a link to an Implicit Bias test for those interested.**

- **A CAC Member** shared that they appreciated the conversation during today's meeting, and really appreciated that the CACs, as a group, are having this conversation.
- **A CAC Member** shared that they felt racism was the worst problem in the U.S., if not the world, and that it is deep-rooted and institutional. They added that it is psychological, and hard to fix overnight. They felt the first step is embracing others' cultures and trying to see what others can teach us.

#### 5. Community Insights, Around the Table

- **A CAC Member** shared about two upcoming events, **to be emailed out:**
  - Spotlight on Conservation Science, Seattle Audubon Program Meeting on Thursday, Jan. 17, 7-8:30pm
  - Thornton Creek Alliance's "Beaver Management in Urban Settings" on Thursday, Jan. 17, 6:30-8:30pm
- **A CAC Member** applauded SPU on their commitment to the RSJ effort. They inquired about whether other City Departments are required to do the same kind of work.
- **Staff** introduced the February WSAC topic: Regional Water Conservation, to include a very interactive exercise from SPU employee and SWAC Alum, Anna Dyer.
- **Staff** shared about an Environmental Justice Summit reception on Friday night that they would be attending.
- **A guest** added that it was inspiring to hear about SPU employee training on RSJ. Other groups and companies could learn from the curriculum developed here.

**Adjourned 7:36 PM**