

Tuesday April 10, 2020  
12:30 – 2:00  
Meeting Minutes

**Waste Equity Advisory Group Members in Attendance:**

AJ Simpson	City of Roses Disposal and Recycling
Carl Peters	Recology
Brian Heiberg	Heiberg Garbage and Recycling
Val Solorzano	Chick of All Trades
Laura Tokarski	Trash for Peace
Dom DeWeese	ORTOP
Alex Witter	Chetco Construction

**Waste Equity Community Consultants in Attendance:**

Rob Nathan  
Nate McCoy  
Liz Start

**Meeting Facilitators:** Try Excellence – Dr Steven Holt, Ericka Warren

**BPS Staff in Attendance:** Arianne Sperry, Josephine Davis

**Community Members in Attendance:** Beth Vargas Duncan (ORRA), Dean Kampfer (Waste Management), KJ (Republic Services), Kalissa Scopes, Jackie Lang (Waste Management). Attendees with no displayed name: 503.206.7886, 503.705.0007 (both dropped off the call)

**Welcome**

Dr Holt welcomed everyone to the meeting, reviewed Zoom meeting logistics, roll call.

**Update on Future Advisory Group Meetings**

Arianne shared that the purpose of reviewing the City and BPS' equity framework today is to establish a shared understanding of equity and what it means as we move into the visioning and goal-setting process, which we will start in May and continue into June. In May we will be asking what equity in the waste collection system looks like. What are we trying to achieve? In June our goal is to develop evaluation measures that will help us track progress as we implement the Waste Equity Workplan.

After June our pace will slow a bit and we will move to quarterly meetings as discussed, so we will meet in the Fall and then again in January of next year. We are hoping to have some data to share with you over the summer, including responses to some of the questions you have already asked. We are also excited to share the results of the first workforce demographic survey of the hauling workforce.

When we come together again in the Fall, we plan to focus on the Access and Opportunity Program that is identified in the Waste Equity Workplan but has not yet been developed. This program is to support and build the capacity of COBID-certified companies interested in expanding in the waste collection industry.

## Presentation by Desiree Williams Rajee: City of Portland's Equity Framework

### Portland's Story

- Racial equity became formally part of the City's work through the 2012 Portland Plan; led to legislation and mandates for equity work.
- Office of Equity and Human Rights was opened in 2011 to focus on institutional change to advance needs of underrepresented communities.
- Climate Action Plan (most recent version) adopted 2015, set the stage to require BPS programs to apply an equity lens which led to the creation of the Waste Equity Workplan.

### Equity as Design, Broken Systems Analysis

- Inequity is a product of design because systems are designed for particular users. Today, we acknowledge that there are users that do not benefit from the initial designs (institutions were built primarily for white property owners).
- In general, equity is thought of from an individual perspective, doesn't allow us to investigate the systemic issues very deeply.
- Desiree's definition of Equity: The correction of broken systems in order to eliminate disparate outcomes based on identity. What is broken about the system, who is it broken for? We must examine who it was designed for so that we can redesign with equity in mind.

Breakout Exercise: Examine the statement – *"There are few minority or woman owned business operating in the Solid Waste Franchise System."* Why might this be true? (ask 5 times, continue to ask why to each answer)

- Group One (Carl, Val, Nate, Arianne): Access to capital, Large companies/consolidation, the white men, knowledge of the industry, closed door system.
- Group Two (Brian, Dominique, Liz, Erika): Business attrition, over the years business have sold and folks retired, city wanted to deal with fewer haulers, city was dealing with mom and pop businesses - weren't able to get all the data they wanted.
- Group Three (Laura, AJ, Alex, Dr Holt, Rob): Those individuals historically don't have access to capital and property, lending institutions, generational wealth gap, women and people of color didn't have the right to vote or own property, because the people making the rules were not people of color or women and those folks made rules to benefit them, it was easier for certain folks to prosper based on a system of power, centered around race, gender and capitalism franchise and powers - consolidation of power through systems.

Exercise illustrates process of uncovering how systems were designed to benefit certain folks and not others. What people have access to is a function of how the system is operating, what people are experiencing (at the individual level) is a symptom of the problem, not the problem itself.

### Racial Analysis

- Racism is usually discussed at the level of personal actions and words, but it is important that it be examined at the systems level instead.
- Desiree's ISM acronym: Institution, Structure and Management = systemic
- All "isms" have three components: privilege, bias and power.

- Privilege: Opportunity or advantage that is not based on merit. When considering earned vs. unearned privilege, is earned privilege real? Important to examine all factors of unearned privilege that might be hidden behind the perception of earned privilege. Historically, earned privilege has been leveraged as a narrative in our society (if you work hard, you will succeed) which can prevent you from seeing unearned privileges
- Bias: implicit and explicit. We usually focused on explicit, easier to articulate and remove yourself from. Implicit operates more subtly, it's instinctual and has served as a survival mechanism. We need to acknowledge that we have historically been taught to have bias against brown and black people. This creates implicit bias in our decision-making that we need to be aware of.
- Power: Ability to influence outcomes. This committee has power to influence. We don't often dissect who has power and how it is used.
- What are the systems we have inherited? We must be able to acknowledge how we built systems that got us to today to build better systems in the future.

### Why Do We Lead with Race?

- Can be confusing because people often interpret it as leading with "only race." But this does not mean exclusively race. It means that analysis should start with race because we don't want to forget. There are a lot of different ways that a community can have disparate outcomes, but race tends to be the predominant one.
- Historically we have tried to address inequities primarily using an economic disparity lens and the racial lens is never used.
  - In Portland specifically this has been a problem within government, reports from Urban League and Coalition for Communities of Color released during the time that the Portland Plan was being developed produced information confirming that communities of color were fairing worse than other populations across the board including health, education, justice system, job opportunities, housing etc. – particularly Black and Native populations.
  - Race was never explicitly part of Portland's analyses prior to the Portland Plan, and in fact was discouraged because of race-blind policy.
- There is an important business case for equity that was realized during the Portland Plan. That is that if the City wants to be successful for the long-term it needs to invest in its communities, specifically communities of color. As the demographics shift in our city, we want to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to meet the potential in order to meet the future demands upon the City.

### Targeted Universalism

- Concept was originally written about by black women in the 60s and 70s and has recently become adopted by government in recent years and made more popular by John Powell from the Haas Institute – now the Othering and Belonging Institute. There is a brief training video and curriculum on this concept here: <https://belonging.berkeley.edu/tu-video-curriculum>
- Thinking of a bell curve, decisions are usually made based on the needs of the people in the middle, which have historically been white, middle class, homeowners.
  - Government has historically had the goal of widening and investing in the middle thinking that folks above the middle don't need help and that the folks below the

middle would benefit if the middle was expanded. Instead, this approach widened disparities and increased wealth for the folks above the middle.

- Rather than focus on the middle, we should start in the margins. Need to identify what the barriers are for the folks in the margin and if we can address those barriers it can create universal access for everyone.

#### Refining Definitions of Equity

- **Procedural Equity:** Ensures that processes are fair and inclusive in the development and implementation of policy or procedures. Who is involved in the decision-making process? Are we including the voices of those that are most impacted?
- **Distributional Equity:** Ensures that resources and benefits from a policy or program are distributed fairly while prioritizing those with higher needs.
- **Structural/Intergenerational Equity:** Integrates sustainability concepts - what did we inherit and what is it that we want to leave behind for a better future? You can do this through creating systems of accountability within the structures of city government.

#### Equity Inquiry Exercise/Worksheet

- Originally had planned to cover this in a second break out group but ran out of time.
- Gives the opportunity to take the three definitions listed above to craft questions as we advance the work of defining equity within the waste collection system. You can use these definitions as lenses to analyze how we build a more equitable system.
- As we move forward, we should consider – what are the procedural, distributional and structural equity implications of the work we are doing?

#### Power Analysis

- Power is a critical piece to analyze; if you are not talking about shifting power, you're not really talking about equity.
- It is a tool to talk about the relative power dynamics, helps to identify where all the individual stakeholders land related to their influence in the process, also helps understand where they fall based on access vs. need.
- Helps to identify barriers, based on target universalism and can assist in creating strategies on what should be highlighted and reinforced.
- This can be a tool that we bring to the work we are doing, particularly when considering who has power to influence outcomes.

#### **Wrap Up**

Ran out of time for a group debrief, if you have any questions or comments about today's meeting, contact Arianne. Next meeting is May 19 and will likely be a Zoom call again considering COVID-19. Advisory group is welcome to participate in May planning meeting (email with details to follow), but if you can't attend please email Arianne or Josephine with comments/feedback.