

15/Now Tacoma Minutes, 01/26/2019

Attendance:

COORDINATORS: Facilitator: *Ryan Talen,*

ATTENDEES: *Sara M, Alan OS, Mark P, Randy M, Anthony J, Ryan T, Alannah B, Vince K, Max M, Joseph L*

Introductions:

As individuals, we briefly stated our names and a few facts about ourselves

Discussion

Initial discussion centered on whether the \$15/hour minimum wage issue is currently a high enough concern among Tacomans for us to mobilize an effective campaign. Attendees spent some time on this question.

For example, Vince and Max said this issue had already sailed and other issues occupied people's attention more. Mark raised this point also.

Vince, Ryan, and others also wondered if \$15 would be an appropriate figure. Costs have risen since our initiative campaign. It was said that perhaps \$15 would be too modest a demand.

Attendees also raised concerns about the nature of an organization or group such as ours. How broad should our group be? Would we take up other issues as well? Would broadening our focus dilute our efforts too much? Several attendees felt that our original group had not been clear enough about this.

Max and others thought a minimum wage initiative campaign might be doable, but it would be a slog. We'd have an uphill battle. There are other issues that Tacoma's activists are more invested in. One hot topic seemed to be the housing issue, especially with low-income renters, evictions, etc. Activists locally have won some significant victories. Several attendees stated that taking on housing would be duplicating the efforts of already-existing groups who've won some significant victories.

Ryan said his interest was in helping workers, especially low-income workers. He said rent was a problem for so many. Sarah said she was interested in building the workers' movement. She sees mobilization as key to building the workers' movement but suspects that a failed initiative campaign is not empowering and could demoralize workers. She said some activists felt burned out when our ballot initiative went down to defeat.

Alan said that although our 15/Now initiative had suffered an electoral defeat, we nevertheless won a partial victory. We forced the city and its corporate backers to sponsor a modest raise in the minimum wage. They conceded that they acted because of our organizing. They recognized our initiative might have won had they not made this concession. Alan felt this partial victory was a lesson for the Tacoman working class on how to fight independently.

Alan said that by coordinating the activity of activist groups and individual workers, the \$15/Now campaign had given people valuable lessons on how to fight. He said such coalitions can be a "school of revolution" in that it emphasizes independent direct political action instead of relying on the corporate interests to achieve reform.

Alan also mentioned that the 15 Now Tacoma website still existed and could be updated. He also mentioned that we still have a Google account and email address.

Attendees at this meeting agreed that we wanted to meet again to continue this dialog. Ryan and others said we had had a good discussion.

Next Meeting Plans:

COORDINATORS

- **Facilitator:** Ryan T
- **Note Taker:** Alan OS

LOGISTICS:

- **Event:** Group Discussion Meeting
- **Time:** 4:00 to 5:00 PM, 02/23/2019
- **Place:** Red Elm Café
1114 M.L.K. Jr Way
Tacoma, WA 98405

Adjournment:

At 5:00 PM