

15/Now Tacoma Minutes, 03/23/2019

Attendance:

COORDINATORS: Facilitator: *Ryan T, Note Taker, Alan OS.*

ATTENDEES: *Randy, Ryan, Anthony, Rebecca, Val, Mary, Alan*

Introductions:

Attendees briefly identified themselves.

Last meeting report: Minutes of last meeting were distributed, and nobody had any corrections or additions.

Reports/Discussion

1. **Minimum wage amount:** We discussed two aspects of a minimum wage demand.
 - (1) Should we set the amount at \$15/hour, \$17/hour, or perhaps something else?
 - (2) How should we deal with the effect of inflation eroding our initial minimum wage?

The last initiative had specified yearly upward adjustments to make sure the minimum wage kept up with inflation.

Ryan reported that he and Alan had come up with two different ideas on how to accomplish this. Alan had favored indexing increases to the CPI-W as defined by the Department of Labor (DOL) for our area. Ryan had thought we should index the minimum wage increases to the rate of rent inflation in the Tacoma area as HUD specifies it. Attendees discussed these alternatives, and the question was left open.

Rebecca, Randy, and Anthony said they were on board with Ryan's idea. Alan said he was beginning to lean that way as this would currently mean more for the workers. Rent inflation last year was about 10%, and CPI-W was only 1 or 2 percent.

Anthony suggested perhaps another approach. He said labor contracts typically agree to multi-year increases over the life of the contract. These contracts are often negotiated for a period of 5 years. He suggested we might consider writing the initiative to specify increases for several upcoming years.

Rebecca wondered if we could have language that just specified such increases must be sufficient to maintain a "living wage," without specifying a specific percentage.

Alan briefly described the mechanism for adjusting the minimum wage that the last \$15/hour initiative mandated. Increases would be based on the CPI-W for our region. Every five years, a wage review board would conduct a study to ensure that these increases were sufficient to maintain a living wage and that the City Council had provided sufficient resources for enforcing the law.

2. **Outreach activities:** In discussion, we recognized our need to increase the number of volunteer activists in 15 Now Tacoma. We decided that anyone who supports our campaign should be welcomed as equal members and participants, as long as they supported our campaign, regardless of any other political, social, or religious views they may have. Our group should be broadly based as possible and non-exclusionary. That way, it would reflect Tacoma's working class.

Ryan then asked meeting attendees for opinions on how we can reach out to others in the community and expand our membership.

Randy suggested public forums, perhaps debates. He says he and his group have had some experience in this, and he said he would be willing to discuss this with others in his group. Val said she was new to Tacoma, and she found out about this meeting from Facebook. She suggested outreach activities utilizing social media such as Facebook, etc. Alan suggested our volunteers should share 15 Now FB meeting announcements with FB friends. They should let neighbors, co-workers, and other associates know about these meetings if they might be interested in our issue. Alan also said our volunteers could try to involve whatever organizations they may belong to.

Anthony said that he thought we would get more attendees as we developed more focus in our campaign, our meetings, and our activities.

3. **Other Agenda Items:** There were several other agenda items we did not cover owing to lack of time. Not discussed were:
 - a. Plans for outreach at community events such as May Day, Ethnic Fest, Pride, inviting people to become volunteers and attend our meetings
 - b. A timeline and deadline for submitting an initiative for the 2020 ballot.
 - c. Brief description of last initiative and what we can learn from it.
 - d. Common objections raised to increasing the minimum wage.

Next Meeting Plans:

COORDINATORS

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

LOGISTICS:

- **Event:** General Meeting for further discussion.
- **Time and place:** TBA

Adjournment:

At 5:00 PM

03/26:AOS