

15/Now Tacoma Minutes, 04/27/2019

Attendance:

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

ATTENDEES: *Ryan, Anthony, Alan*

Introductions:

Attendees were already acquainted, and no introductions were needed.

Adoption of Minutes and Approval of Agenda

1. Proposed agenda was adopted.
2. Minutes of last meeting were briefly discussed, and nobody had any corrections or additions.

Announcements

1. Alan briefly described our Facebook stats. Our FB page has had a good post-engagement-to-people-reached ratio, which marketing experts like.
2. We announced our new web page, located at <https://15nowtacoma.org/>. Our webmaster will be working on and updating the site, as well as working on its SEO.

Reports/Discussion

1. **Minimum Wage Amount:** Ryan observed that we have been discussing whether our initiative should specify a \$15/hour, \$17/hour, or even greater minimum wage. Meeting participants discussed having a formula that would keep up with inflation while raising the minimum wage to the level of a living wage. There are several studies about what constitutes a living wage in our area. Alan referred to MIT's *Self Sufficiency Standards* study for our area (*Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue*). We also discussed the importance of rent inflation rates for low-wage workers.

Alan emphasized that our focus should be on the slogan "*For a minimum wage that's a living wage.*" This slogan will put our opponents on the defensive.

2. **Report on Initiative Qualification Process:** Alan reported on the signature gathering process, based on the prior experiences of the *Original 15 Now Tacoma* group.

He described the several steps involved in submitting a proposal to the voters as set forth by law. We should be able to use much of the previous initiative language, but some of it will have to be revised and updated.

So far, Ryan and Alan are on the initiative writing team, and Mark may well be interested in participating, which would be a real gain for us. Mark did the largest part of the legal research for the previous initiative.

When we have finalized the initiative language, we file it with the City Clerk's office. The City Clerk then has one (1) day to submit it to the City Attorney.

Then the City Attorney then has 10 days to verify that the petition is proper in terms of form and style. The City Attorney contacts us if there are corrections or deficiencies but does not offer legal advice on how to remedy them.

If the initiative passes muster in these regards, the City Attorney then writes what the law calls a “*concise title*” for the initiative. This title is really a brief paragraph that sums up the intent of the initiative in as objective a fashion as possible.

The City Attorney then files this title with the City Clerk as the official title of the measure. The City Clerk then assigns an initiative number to the initiative.

If we don't like the title the City Attorney came up with, we can appeal it to the *Pierce County Superior Court* within 10 working days. The court then makes a final determination, which can't be appealed. Based on our past experience, we don't anticipate any appeals to the court will be necessary.

Then, after a subsequent 10-day waiting period, we can begin gathering signatures.

But we will need to be strategic in timing our signature gathering campaign so that the initiative appears on the 2020 presidential election ballot instead of some off-year election or even a by-election. The presidential election will have the largest turnout of more progressive voters. This would be to our advantage.

We will then have an 180-day period to gather signatures. To qualify for the ballot, we will need at least 10% of the number of valid votes cast in the previous mayoral election. That number comes to 3545 valid signatures.

Most initiative campaigns have had about a 30% rejection rate. But on our last effort to qualify the \$15/hour minimum wage, we had around a 50% rejection rate.

This means we will probably have to collect between 7100 and 7200 signatures to ensure we have enough valid signatures to comply. That comes to an average of about 280 signatures a week or 40 signatures a day.

To do this, we will need to mount a focused and organized campaign. We will need to recruit signature gatherers, the more the better.

We can and should view recruiting signature gatherers from the community neighborhoods as an outreach campaign to those communities. We will also need to conduct training workshops on how to gather signatures, what to do if people try to interfere with our signature gatherers' efforts, or try to chase us away.

We will also need to follow up with volunteer signature gatherers' efforts, systematically collect completed petition signature sheets and registration forms in a timely fashion. These undertakings will represent a significant and challenging organizing task, but one that we can do, based on our experience.

3. **Upcoming Events for Outreach Activities:** We briefly discussed a series of future events which may present us with outreach opportunities for recruiting volunteer activists and potential signature gatherers. They included:
 - A. Pride July 13
 - B. Taste of Tacoma June 21-23, 2019, Point Defiance Park
 - C. Proctor Arts Festival 03 Aug 2019
 - D. Tacoma Holiday Food & Gift Festival at Tacoma Dome 19-20 Oct 2019
 - E. Ethnic Fest Ethnic Fest 2019 will begin at 12:00 PM on Jul 27, 28
 - F. Farmers Markets beginning in June, various locales.

4. **Discussion on Committees:** We discussed forming several working committees. Right now, Alan and Ryan are in the Initiative Writing committee. We will need volunteers for a leaflet design committee. As we recruit more volunteer activists, we will firm up the details. We will also need a Conference Organizing committee for organizing forums in the community to talk about these issues. Alan will contact Randy M to see if we can get some help from his group, and Alan will try to contact professors Rob Larsen and Peter Bohmer for potential support in organizing some outreach or being speakers at our forums.

Motions

We will be needing a credit union or bank account. This requires that we have an elected chairperson, two treasurers, and a recording secretary. We agreed Ryan T will be the chair, Alan will be the recording secretary, and Alan and Ryan will be the co-treasurers.

Next Meeting Plans:

COORDINATORS

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

LOGISTICS:

- **Event:** General volunteer activists meeting
- **Time/Date:** TBA
- **Place:** TBA

Adjournment:

5:00 PM

04/30/AOS