

Western Wisconsin Organizing Co-op Steering Committee Meeting  
August 3, 2016  
Simply Dunn Pottery in Downsville, WI  
E4606 County Road C (Menomonie)

1. **Meeting called to order** at 6:02 pm. **Attendance, Present:** Joe Plouff (Chair), Terry Meyer (Vice Chair), Steve Hanson, Rev. David Huber, Joan Pougiales, Jeff Smith (ex-officio), Paul Miller, Kelly Holzer, Myron Buchholz, **Special Guest:** Kevin Kane, **Absent:** Nick Smiar, Craig Brooks, Elaine Wendt, Barbara Wise, Karli Wallace Thompson, Caryn Treiber, Judith S. Hull
2. **Approval of Minutes:** No changes. Terry moved and Paul seconded to approve, unanimously approved.
3. **Organizer Update:** Jeff reported:
  - a. on the big win of the living wage ordinance in Eau Claire County, and that other communities - like Eau Claire City and St. Croix County - are looking to us to help them pass their own.
  - b. He is looking at getting a grant to help us fight against the payday lenders. The deadline for this is October sometime.
  - c. Candidate screening: Jeff has been getting responses to his email asking about having a candidate screening gathering, which might be a picnic, perhaps in Elk Mound due to its central location and easy access. Jeff raised the issue of whether we - as the Steering Committee - want to be endorsing candidates.
  - d. Phone calling/phone tree - Jeff has heard from a few people who would be willing to be phone callers to alert people to events and things happening. He asked for any ideas about how to make a phone call system more efficient and usable.
  - e. Membership numbers: Jeff reminded us that given the busyness of the current election season, we might not reach our goal until after the election when that all dies down.
4. **Kevin Kane report on Citizen Action Wisconsin:** Kevin updated us on what is happening outside of our co-op:
  - a. The Photo ID lawsuit has been mostly successful, in terms of people not being required to have one (they can sign an affidavit), and they are appealing it to go after the entire Photo ID law.
  - b. Healthcare: have been pushing to get healthcare providers to provide optional plans with zero deductibles for prescriptions and doctor visits. They have gotten four providers to do so, which he estimates will save people about \$45 million in drug co-pays. They also pushed to cease the Humana/Aetna merger, and the DOJ is now suing to stop the merger, and Humana is likely not to liquidate. Which is to say, the fight has gone national.

- c. Poll worker recruitment: they have been training people how to work the polls and to get people to work them, with a goal of 100 people, for which they have 95 people now.
  - d. The Radioactive campaign is moving forward. They have found an organizer for it, with their membership drive starting in a few weeks.
  - e. They are trying to get a Green Bay cooperative going. They have asked someone to be the coordinator, but not definite yet.
  - f. National People's Action, Alliance for Just Society, US Action, and some others have merged in the past year over thirty states. They had a meeting in Milwaukee, and got over 100 people to go into a payday loan place in an African-American neighborhood to protest after they saw what we were doing up here with the payday loan protests.
  - g. Jeff and Kevin are meeting a person in LaCrosse to see about starting a co-op there, too.
  - h. Money in the Bank: Kevin handed out a document about the current financial situation [[see 160803\\_coop\\_meeting\\_minutes\\_attachment\\_1.pdf](#)]. We have about 20 people who pledged but didn't pay; and about 50 whose giving has lapsed. If we get these folks back on board, we would need about 40 more new ones to cover our expenses and get us financially sound.
5. **Strategies for Organizing Cooperative through 2016 Campaign:** Now that we had the living wage ordinance success is a good time to recruit more people. Let us ride high on the success! Joe said that also now that the LWO is done, Jeff will have more time to focus on membership growing.
6. **Recruitment and growth of membership:**
- a. Need to keep reminding people that we will still be here post-election and beyond.
  - b. It costs us about \$65K per year to cover Kevin, Jeff, and have a little in our slush fund
  - c. Kevin went through the fifteen points in the document he handed out [[see 160803\\_coop\\_meeting\\_minutes\\_attachment\\_2.pdf](#)].
  - d. Then discussion about awareness building:
    - i. Jeff, Joe, and some local members will be doing a press tour through area, including Pierce, Buffalo, Dunn, Chippewa, Eau Claire, and LaCrosse counties.
    - ii. Chippewa Valley Forum, a writing group in Barron County (which Joe is part of) are designing a web-based portal for writing articles and LTTEs, and expansion into other social media like facebook, twitter, making Internet memes. They would like to expand beyond Barron County. Talk to Joe if you are interested in being involved as a writer, editor, social media person, etc. They also want to begin with sending out LTTEs about the Citizen Action Coop (not about issues, but about the coop itself).
    - iii. Member and recruitment events wherever the press tour goes.

- iv. Set a deadline with a countdown on the Citizen Action Western Wisconsin Coop website so people can see how close we are.
  - v. Recruiting the lapsed members.
  - vi. Pre-empting the state budget by using our issues teams and presenting/publishing our own budget before the Assembly does. We thought that one benefit of membership in the coop is to be able to help create or have input on this budget.
  - vii. Volunteer help; more people from our membership volunteering to help plan events and to help at the events.
  - viii. Kelly, Joe, and Joan will work on a messaging document to use for membership recruitment and communicating our plan to the membership, specifically related to the pre-emptive budget. They will get a letter out to the steering committee for feedback in a week or two.
7. Timeline for the next few months:
- a. August:
    - i. Joe and Kelly will draft a letter from steering committee to all members to celebrate living wage victory and discuss next steps. Goal is to have a draft by end of next week
    - ii. Jeff and Kevin will identify all the delinquent current members that need to be followed up with, and with Paul's help we will get them to re-sign up. We will also clean and fix the system so we never have this issue again
    - iii. Joe and Jeff will prepare for and schedule a media tour of the towns in our geographic area to meet with local papers to discuss co-op and issues, with an eye to a follow up meeting in that community in subsequent weeks. Goal is a local member to also join (ex: Hudson member joined to meet Hudson Star Observer etc)
    - iv. Jeff will take lead on setting up the 9to5 events in Chippewa Falls and Wausau to specifications to get them off of our plate, as well as the plan to get the cards signed asap
    - v. We will begin to schedule small events and house parties in counties where members live with local members' help for September as part of "Victory lap" listening tour
    - vi. Ensure that all (100%) events scheduled are on our event page website so it looks like we have a lot of activity coming up
  - b. September:
    - i. On Sept. 1, launch initiative to recruit ~70 new members (over the 61 day period of Sept. 1 to Oct. 31) following the success of the Living wage effort to augment the ~70 we hope to re-engage internally
    - ii. Begin the 61-day 70-member countdown on our Citizen Action website so people can see how close we are
    - iii. Hold the series of small events and house parties for post living wage "Victory Lap" listening tour. Discuss budget plans and listen to members. Implicit in conversation is that we will be around post-election

- iv. Create a plan to call through lists of names Citizen Action has of non-coop members in these counties to invite to local events
  - v. Through phone calls and in person events, finish the Payday comment mini-project by collecting ~300 additional comments from Wisconsin citizens
  - vi. Explore with Citizen Action if any media events/actions can be done with little effort on the topics of health reform/wage issues/outsourcing/state budget fight
- c. October:
- i. Continue recruitment drive countdown with the goal of 70 new members and ~70 re-engaged lapsed current members by Oct. 31
  - ii. Begin to plan a GOTV strategy where-ever members see appropriate
  - iii. Continue budget discussions with members
  - iv. Conclude payday loan effort
  - v. Explore with Citizen Action if any media events/actions can be done with little effort on the topics of health reform/wage issues/outsourcing/state budget fight
  - vi. Finish up the house parties
- d. November:
- i. GOTV!
  - ii. Have a "Member Assembly" of 60-100 people scheduled post election for the Sept-Oct house parties to funnel people to, to build off of election and into state budget, and build energy/excitement. Explore Elk Mound as a location.
8. **Next meeting:** Sept. 7 at 6 pm at Plymouth UCC in Eau Claire.
9. **Adjourned** at approx. 7:45 pm.