

Minutes of October 4, 2021, Meeting
Indivisible Tucson Action Alliance

Attendees: Thea Chalow, Sally Simmons, Joe Alexander, Di Alexander, Devon Sloan, Cindy Doklan, Eileen Hollowell, Dana Offerman, Misty Atkins, Jan Counts, Jackie Marshall, Beth Britton, Patricia Wiedhopf, Bill Yohey, Patricia Trainor, Susan Farrelly, Eloise Gore, Joshua Freeman, Sandy Kaye, Beth Smith, Sue Garcia, Pamela Powers Hannley, Jean Meconi, Sue Anderson, Fred Markussen, David Stevenson, Elizabeth Packard, Loyce Pickett, Nancy Stewart, Margo Nichols, Scott Stapp, Bobbie Zimmer, Cynthia Herron

Prior to the meeting beginning, Eloise Gore and Beth Bratton introduced themselves as first time attendees at an ITAA meeting.

Dana Offerman called the meeting to order at 3:34. There were 33 people in attendance. She congratulated members who attended the Women's March in Tucson on Saturday, October 2. There was a good turnout, although the local newspaper did not cover the event. Sue Anderson noted that there was other media coverage.

Dana announced that that Steve Bannon will be speaking at the Hilton El Conquistador for a Republican fundraiser on October 23. Those who wish to protest the use of the facility should call the hotel.

Dana then introduced the speaker for the day, Pamela Powers Hannley, representative from Legislative District 9. Representative Hannley gave a review of the last legislative session. She said that the legislature incorporated several items which could not pass on their own into the budget bill. Even some Republicans were concerned about this tactic. Several the items incorporated into the budget bill have been struck down by a Maricopa County Judge who has said they are unconstitutional. The Arizona Constitution requires that each bill apply to one subject and that proper notation of what is included in the bill be contained in the title of the bill. Among the items have been stricken as unconstitutional are provisions concerning mask mandates, vaccines, Critical Race Theory, voter integrity fund and allowing Arizona Game and Fish to register voters. (NOTE: The Arizona Supreme Court will hear oral arguments on the trial court's ruling on November 2, 2021, by-passing the usual procedure of having the Court of Appeals hear the case and requiring parties to appeal from that court to the Supreme Court).

The legislature also has been sued over a law which creates criminal liability for any doctor who performs an abortion if the doctor knows that the reason for the abortion is because of the disability of the fetus and for any person who aids a person seeking an abortion if the motive for the abortion is the disability of the fetus. Some of this law has been stricken down by a federal judge.

Rep. Hannley also discussed the referendum petitions that were being circulated. She noted that the voter suppression petitions did not gather enough signatures to pass and that the best remedy to Arizona's restriction on voter rights is to pass the John Lewis Voting Act and

HB 1 on a federal level. She urged members to continue to contact Senator Sinema to get her to abolish the filibuster. Of the referendum on taxes only the referendum with respect to the flat tax has enough signatures to be sure to get on the ballot.

There will be a great deal of turnover in the legislature in the next year and in 2022. Several legislators are resigning to run for other offices (Rep. Kristen Engel and Rep. Barry Lieberman). Some have or will resign before their term is over (Rep. Randy Friese from District 9; Bret Roberts from District 11). Others have announced they will not seek re-election, including Rep. Hannley and Rep. Domingo Garcia from District 10.

Representative Hannley talked about redistricting and showed the grid maps that have been presented. She noted that Legislative District 9 and Legislative District 10 would be split if the grid maps were used.

In response to the questions raised in the Q & A session, Representative Hannley expects a new bill to be introduced to set up a committee to investigate elections, as a response to the “fraudit”.

She was asked how we can be most effective in communicating with the legislature. She indicated that RTS is a good method and emails work to a lesser effect. She also believes in-person appearances at the legislature are good and that there will be more opportunities for in-person visits next session.

When asked how to put pressure on Sen. Sinema to have her reverse her position on the filibuster, Rep. Hannley referred to one of her recent podcasts on the filibuster. In that podcast, the filibuster’s use as a tool for racism and white supremacy was discussed. She suggested reminding Sen. Sinema of the racism implicit in the use of the filibuster and to continue to pressure the Senator.

Rep. Hannley placed the location of her podcasts, and You Tube channel in the chat: <https://powersforthepeople.net>.

She agreed that letters to the editor on the filibuster were appropriate and effective.

She was asked to provide her slides on bills that were invalidated by the Maricopa County trial judge.

After answering questions, Rep. Hannley was thanked by Dana and given a round of applause.

Dana then asked Eileen Hollowell and Jean Meconi to talk about the petition drive. Eileen explained that the legislature can put items on the ballot by a simple majority vote and that in this session they put three things on the ballot to be voted on in 2022. These include in-state tuition for out-of-state students, a proposal that if the courts hold one part of an initiative

or referendum unconstitutional, the legislature could scrap the whole initiative or referendum and that each initiative could cover only one topic.

For the referenda which were the subject of the recent drive, only the flat tax and the small business reclassification had enough signatures at first count to be submitted to the voters. The small business reclassification may not have enough valid signatures to meet the threshold of 110,000 signatures, however. Eileen then explained that the process, after petitions are turned in, is to have the Secretary of State look at each petition and if anything is wrong on any part of the petition, the whole petition is rejected. Then the Secretary of State takes a random sampling of 5% of the petitions to see if the vital information is correct for signatures. The petitions are then sent to each County Recorder to review the signatures from their county to see if they are correct. Finally, lawsuits challenging the petitions may be filed. A challenge has already been made to the flat tax petition as it deals with the budget. If a petition issue makes it to the ballot, a 100-word description must be written to include on the ballot, and it must be accurate. Challenges to this description also can be made. In addition, she reminded members that if the Maricopa County ruling is upheld by the Arizona Supreme Court, the legislature can still separate out each illegal piece and offer it as separate legislation.

Jean Meconi informed us that there were 215,000 signatures on the flat tax petitions and 124,000 on the small business reclassification. The voter suppression petitions only got 86,000+ signatures and 42% of those were from Southern Arizona. She said that the people she encountered in getting signatures were supportive and thankful for the efforts being made.

A discussion then ensued on how we can be more effective in the future. It was suggested that we need both grass roots and paid petition gatherers. The National Democratic party and the state party were not very helpful in this effort although the latter did have some signature gathering events toward the end of the collection period. David Stevenson suggested that we need to organize now for future efforts to get signatures on initiative and referendum petitions, and he suggested coordinating with other grass roots groups. Eileen noted that we did collaborate with Arizona Ground Game and Civic Engagement Beyond Voting this time. She reminded us that Red for Ed has been organizing with the teachers' union and other groups for 7 years. Susan Anderson suggested that we should do as Arizona Ground Game does and get in touch with neighbors.

Dana asked that anyone who has a suggestion email her at indivisible Tucson@gmail.com. She later noted that we are restricted in the use of some funds (matching funds from Indivisible) which would preclude us from using them in the petition process.

Misty Atkins then gave an update on the work of the Independent Redistricting Committee. The mapping tool that the IRC has online is difficult to use so the Commission is letting other maps be submitted. A big issue is competitiveness and comments to the Commission should emphasize the need for competitiveness. Since the state is approximately 1/3 Republican, 1/3 Democrat and 1/3 independent, the legislative and Congressional districts

should reflect this. At the hearing on the grid maps held in Tucson last week, there were more Democrats in attendance, so competitiveness was emphasized more. Misty told us that several alternative maps have been proposed and are on the website. She especially likes Map No. 0012 submitted by Barbara Tellman. The website to view the maps is at www.irc.az.gov

Beth Smith asked how else we could participate. Misty said that at each IRC meeting, you can submit written comments for the first hour. There will be more hearings on the maps as they evolve. Elizabeth Packard urged us to have more Democrats at the next meeting,

Jan Counts told us about the next Community Building event which will be at her house on October 22 at 10 a.m. The event will be limited to 10-12 members, and you will need to register to attend. Go to our website, indivisibletucson.org to register. After that, you will be given Jan's address.

Sally Simmons announced that there will be an in-person new member orientation from 10-12 at the Beyond Bread location on Ina and Oracle on October 30. An invitation will be going out to new members, but anyone can attend. Sally will need you to RSVP to her at sallybob75@comcast.net if you are attending so she can order enough coffee and pastries.

Dana closed the meeting by announcing that the next meeting will be on November 1 at 3:30 p.m. by Zoom. We will have Reginald Bolding, a Democratic candidate for Secretary of State as our speaker. We also are trying to contact Adrian Fontes, another Democratic candidate for Secretary of State, to speak. At some future meeting we will ask Tom O'Halleran to be our speaker.

The meeting adjourned at 4:58 p.m.