

THE CITY ASKS FOR YOUR “COMMENTS AND DIRECTIONS” REGARDING THE APPLICABILITY OF THE CITY MINIMUM WAGE ORDINANCE TO CITY EMPLOYEES (THOUSANDS OF WHICH ARE REPRESENTED BY THE IAM). THE CITY WOULD HAVE YOU BELIEVE THAT THE REASON CITY MANAGEMENT NEEDS THIS “DIRECTION” IS BECAUSE THE IAM AND THE CITY ARE BARGAINING OVER WHETHER THE CITY MINIMUM WAGE ORDINANCE IS APPLICABLE TO CITY EMPLOYEES. CITY MANAGEMENT IS INTENTIONALLY MISLEADING YOU, ONCE AGAIN. TO BE CLEAR: THE IAM HAS ALWAYS TAKEN THE POSITION THAT THE CITY MINIMUM WAGE ORDINANCE APPLIES TO CITY EMPLOYEES. TO BE EVEN CLEARER: THE IAM HAS ALWAYS AGREED WITH THE CITY COUNCIL’S JANUARY 19, 2016 RESOLUTION THAT THE CITY MINIMUM WAGE ORDINANCE WOULD APPLY TO CITY EMPLOYEES. THE IAM HAS NEVER OPPOSED THE APPLICATION OF THE MINIMUM WAGE ORDINANCE TO CITY EMPLOYEES. FROM A MORAL STANDPOINT, THE ONLY JUSTIFIABLE POSITION IS TO APPLY THE CITY MINIMUM WAGE TO CITY EMPLOYEES. ALL OF THE JUSTIFICATIONS FOR A CITY MINIMUM WAGE APPLY EQUALLY TO CITY EMPLOYEES.

[[[QUOTING FROM THE ORDINANCE DRAFT]]]

WHEREAS, THE CITY HAS RECOGNIZED THAT INCOME INEQUALITY IS ONE OF THE MOST PRESSING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ISSUES FACING THE CITY OF LONG BEACH (THE CITY); AND

WHEREAS, WORKERS, WHO MUST LIVE PAYCHECK TO PAYCHECK, ARE FREQUENTLY FORCED TO WORK TWO OR THREE JOBS TO PROVIDE FOOD AND SHELTER TO THEIR FAMILIES; AND

WHEREAS, REDUCED WORKER TURNOVER MEANS THAT WORKERS WILL HAVE MORE TENURE WITH SAME EMPLOYER WHICH CREATES INCENTIVES FOR BOTH EMPLOYERS AND WORKERS TO INCREASE TRAINING AND PRODUCTIVITY, AND

WHEREAS, THESE WORKERS OFTEN RELY ON THE PUBLIC SECTOR AS A PROVIDER OF SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES AND, THEREFORE THE CITY HAS AN INTEREST IN PROMOTING AN EMPLOYMENT ENVIRONMENT THAT PROTECTS GOVERNMENT RESOURCES; AND

WHEREAS, THEREFORE, BY PAYING A HIGHER THAN STATE OR FEDERAL-MANDATED MINIMUM WAGE, THE CITY SEEKS TO PROMOTE THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE OF THOUSANDS OF WORKERS BY ENSURING THEY RECEIVE A DECENT WAGE FOR THE WORK THEY PERFORM.

THE IAM HAS ONLY SOUGHT TO BARGAIN THE **EFFECTS** OF THIS NEW MINIMUM WAGE ON IAM-REPRESENTED EMPLOYEES. THE COMPRESSION OF THE WAGE SCALE IS ONE SUCH EFFECT THE IAM WANTED (AND STILL WANTS) TO BARGAIN. THE IAM NEVER TOOK THE POSITION THAT THE MINIMUM WAGE ORDINANCE SHOULD NOT APPLY TO CITY EMPLOYEES.

ON APRIL 8, THE CITY IN FACT CONFIRMED THAT THE CITY HAD DECIDED THAT THE MINIMUM WAGE ORDINANCE WOULD APPLY TO CITY EMPLOYEES.

THE CITY THEN STARTED TO BACKTRACK AND REFUSED TO CONFIRM THAT THE MINIMUM WAGE ORDINANCE WOULD APPLY TO CITY EMPLOYEES.

IN APRIL, THE CITY UNILATERALLY TERMINATED BARGAINING WITH THE IAM, AND THE CITY HAS REFUSED TO ANSWER THE IAM'S QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE APPLICABILITY OF THE MINIMUM WAGE ORDINANCE TO CITY EMPLOYEES.

CITY MANAGEMENT DOES NOT NEED FURTHER DIRECTION. THE COUNCIL'S DIRECTION IN JANUARY WAS PERFECTLY CLEAR – THE CITY MINIMUM WAGE APPLIES TO CITY EMPLOYEES. DO NOT BE DECEIVED BY THE DUPLICITOUS CLAIMS OF CITY MANAGEMENT.

I WOULD FURTHER SUBMIT TO THE COUNCIL THE FOLLOWING OPTION.

THE LONG BEACH MINIMUM WAGE IS NOT TARGETED TO GO INTO EFFECT UNTIL JANUARY 2017. WHY NOT PLACE TONIGHT'S COUNCIL ITEM NUMBER 12 IN ABEYANCE FOR 60 DAYS, ORDER THE CITY MANAGER TO MEET AND CONFER WITH THE IAM OVER THIS ITEM. I AM MORE THAN CONFIDENT WE WILL RESOLVE ISSUES RELATING TO THE LB MIN WAGE. THE COUNCIL CAN THEN ADOPT THE ORDINANCE IF IT CHOOSES TO IN 60 DAYS.

THIS WILL ELIMINATE THE UNFOUNDED CONCERN OVER THE IAM LITIGATING THIS MATTER IN COURT OR AT PERB. THE IAM HAS NO INTEREST OTHER THAN TO PROVIDE A FAIR LIVING WAGE TO THOSE WHO EARN THE LEAST AT THE CITY OF LONG BEACH.

THANK YOU.

RICHARD SUAREZ