

PPA Community Meeting
September 24, 2006
Economy Committee—Living Wage Subcommittee
Meeting Summary

The living wage subcommittee discussed the work program for the next three community meetings. The members decided to identify key learnings at tonight's meeting and begin brainstorming on recommendations at the October meeting. They will also email the facilitator (Langford D. Holbrook) any requests for research or information that they need to start developing recommendations in October.

Vision Statement Comments

Prior to reviewing the subcommittee's existing learnings the group had some comments on the PPA Vision Statement presented in the plenary session. The primary concern was that the members did not feel the reference in the vision to "jobs that pay higher wages" was clear in that it is also applied to the existing low wage jobs in ACC and not just new jobs. They felt that there should be a statement added that better reflected the impact and importance of higher wages and benefits to the community as a whole. The subcommittee's specific comments follow:

- Where is the business/employer participation and buy-in in the Vision? Without their buy-in the vision will not happen.
- A Prosperous Athens is a community (employment market) that pays a living (family supportive) wage to employees of existing ACC employers and future ACC employers.
- A Prosperous Athens is a community where the employers are involved/vested in the PPA's efforts to end persistent poverty. *{Note: It was pointed out that the Chamber is a co-convenor and that many businesses are represented on the Steering Committee and throughout the PPA community}.*

Learnings

The subcommittee reviewed the learnings published in the Interim Report as well as other documents. They agreed to identify a few that best represent what they have learned. Once the group settles on the key learnings they will begin developing recommendations. The learnings that follow are preliminary:

- Many jobs pay wages that do not meet the ACC cost of living.
- A living (family supportive) wage benefits employees, employers, families and the community at large. It's good for business.
- A living (family supportive) wage is the right thing to do.
- Equity in wages in ACC is affected /influenced by race, class and gender.

Additional Information

The sub-committee wants to see more information on the **community conversation held with local religious leaders**. They were impressed with what they saw on the PPA website and felt this conversation could further inform them in their efforts to develop recommendations addressing wage equity and fairness in ACC.