

# LNC Executive Committee Meeting

## Teleconference January 4, 2000

Present: Jim Lark, Chair  
Dan Fylstra, Vice-Chair (joined the meeting during the discussion of the AZ matter)  
Mark Tuniewicz, Treasurer  
Steve Givot, Secretary  
Ken Bisson (IN), At Large Representative  
Joe Dehn (CA), Region 2 Representative  
Michael "MG" Gilson de Lemos (FL), Region 4 Representative

Also present: Lorenzo Gaztanaga (MD), At Large Representative  
Mike Dixon (IL), Region 1 Representative  
Ben Scherrey (GA), Region 4 Alternate

Staff: Steve Dasbach, National Director  
Ron Crickenberger, Political Director

*Lark called the meeting to order at 8:44 PM EDT.*

### **Item: Setting of Agenda**

Lark requested adding an item to determine the next Executive Committee meeting date for 5 minutes.

Givot requested addition of an item on accounting policy for 10 minutes.

Dehn asked where preparations for the LNC-SPT meeting would be discussed.

Lark said this would be covered under the Chair's Report and the National Director's Report.

MG requested addition of an item to comment on the situation in AZ.

The agenda was modified with the proposed changes without objection.

### **Item: AZ**

MG said that he continues to be involved in searching for a solution to the problems in AZ. He said that he has had discussions with Jason Auvenshine regarding this matter and that he is optimistic.

Lark said that he shares MG's optimism that the parties in AZ can work out a resolution to their problems.

## **Item: Chair's Report**

Lark said that Dasbach will discuss the technical arrangements for the upcoming LNC- SPT meeting.

Lark reported that he has contacted several people to fill the open positions on LNC- SPT.

Lark said that Joe Cadron of Yorktown, PA is willing to attend all of the meetings. He said that Cadron is a strategic planning consultant by profession and a former LP member. He said that he seeks input regarding this possible selection.

Lark said that Fylstra had contacted Bob Poole of the Reason Foundation regarding this position.

Fylstra said that he is unsure that Poole can make the time commitment, but that Poole is enthusiastic that the LNC is undertaking this process and very enthusiastic that the LNC is seeking out "small-l" libertarians to participate in this process.

Lark said that others have provided him with names to consider for these openings.

Lisa Bullion (Chair, LPFL) has indicated that she will be able to make all of the meetings.

Dasbach said that it is important to include someone who has been involved in a considerable way in a serious campaign.

Crickenberger agreed.

Lark said that while Phil Miller has indicated a willingness to participate, but cannot participate in all of the meetings.

MG said that he reacts very positively to both Bob Poole's comments and Lark's efforts. He asked Lark to consider seeking out an African-American to fill one or more of these positions.

Dehn said that, in reviewing the tape of the December LNC meeting, he noted that the intention of the LNC was to bring in people who bring something incremental to the process - not just someone who happened to have been elected to a minor office.

Crickenberger suggested possibly inviting Paul Jacob to be a participant.

Tuniewicz asked how Paul Jacob is currently involved in the libertarian movement.

Givot said that he is actively involved in the term limitations movement.

Dasbach suggested a small honorarium might induce some of these people to participate.

Givot said that he has no objection to such an arrangement.

Lark asked the Executive Committee members for their comments offline in the near future.

Gaztanaga said that he knows a person who is active in the freedom caucus of the Democratic Party who is definitely a libertarian.

Lark asked Gaztanaga to send the relevant information directly to him.

Fylstra asked whether Lark had contacted Michael Tanner.

Lark said that he has not done so and that he would be happy to contact Tanner.

Dasbach said that Tanner has been extraordinarily busy, but that with the election over he may have time to participate.

Tuniewicz asked Lark to confirm that there are currently two "small-l" libertarian slots to fill as well as one elected Libertarian slot to fill.

Lark confirmed this to be correct.

## **Item: National Director's Report**

Dasbach discussed the financial results that he had reported on in writing.

Dasbach said that the year-end results were well below targets. He said that several factors contributed to this. The primary factor was the direct mail piece sent to about

10,000 to 12,000 people at the end of November. He said that projected revenues were \$50,000, while actual revenues were only \$15,000.

Dasbach said that there were also shortfalls in several other revenue areas.

Dasbach said that expenses for the period were below budget, but not sufficiently below budget to fully offset the revenue shortfall.

MG asked Dasbach what the cost per piece was for the mailing

Dasbach estimated the cost to be about \$0.50 per piece.

Dasbach said that a hotel has been selected for the 2002 convention. He said that it was not the best-located hotel, but that some of the contractual provisions required by the best-located hotel were unacceptable. He said that two of these provisions were: pre-charging all attendees for their hotel rooms and not waiving certain charges which would have cost the party several thousand dollars.

Dasbach said that the selected hotel is "slightly less convenient" than the best-located hotel. He said that the selected hotel is connected to the convention center by a skywalk.

Dasbach said that the final arrangements should be completed within the next week or two.

Dehn asked when people can start making reservations for the LNC-SPT meeting in Indianapolis in February.

Dasbach said that he has "every confidence" that there will be no problem finding a hotel, but he does not want to send anything out until it is certain.

Dehn asked about the schedule for the February LNC-SPT meeting.

Dasbach said that on Sunday he assumes that state chairs would end their formal meeting after lunch, but that LNC-SPT would run substantially later.

Lark said that he had seen a proposal from Givot that the meeting on Saturday would start at 8 AM and end at 6 PM and that the Sunday meeting would start at 8 AM and end at 4 PM. He asked if there is any objection to that schedule.

There was no objection.

Crickenberger reported on ballot access.

Crickenberger said that, at present, the NC ballot drive had gathered about 20,000 signatures of which about 16,000 were in hand and about 4,000 in the field. He said that he sees no manpower problem with completing this drive. He said that there is a fuzzy deadline for completion. He said that the state could convert registered Libertarians as early as February 1, but that it is not in the state's interest to do so because of certain statutory processes they have to undertake to convert those registrations. He said that he does not believe that the state will attempt to convert these registrations because they are aware of the progress being made in the ballot drive.

Crickenberger said that the NE ballot drive is about to start. He said that there is also a fuzzy deadline for complete. He said that the state is likely to maintain Libertarian registrations because it knows that the ballot drive is underway.

Tuniewicz complimented Crickenberger on the quality of the written Political Director's report provided before the December 2000 LNC meeting. He asked Crickenberger what he is looking for in the coming year or two.

Crickenberger said that he expects significant political activity in NJ, including an attempt to qualify for state matching funds. He said that the qualification amount to receive state matching funds in NJ has risen somewhat, but that LPNJ is working to achieve this. He said that the legislature is considering changing the qualifications for receiving matching funds.

Crickenberger said that he is looking for substantial progress in VA with Bill Redpath running for governor. There has never before been a statewide LP candidate in VA. He said that no ballot access help from the national party is anticipated in this effort.

Tuniewicz asked if LPNJ has selected a candidate for governor.

Crickenberger said that Mark Edgerton has been the nominee for quite some time. He said that Doug Friedline - Jesse Ventura's campaign manager - may be involved in the campaign.

Crickenberger said that Aaron Russo of LPNV is very seriously considering running for governor.

Dehn asked about prospects for state legislature candidates in those states.

Crickenberger said that he expects a record number of state representative candidates in VA. He said that about 12 are needed to set the record.

Crickenberger said that he is unsure of the plans of LPNJ to run state legislature candidates.

Dehn asked Crickenberger what he thinks about the idea that the LNC should push affiliates to run state representative candidates?

Crickenberger said that he certainly supports the idea. He said that he plans to run for Congress again and wants LPVA to run a full slate of state representative candidates in his district.

Dehn asked Crickenberger whether it is difficult to get on the ballot for state representative in NJ?

Crickenberger said that it is not difficult to do so.

Dehn said that this may be the party's best opportunity to have a "full presence at a high level." He said that concentrating on these two states might show a commitment to a continuing presence which would not be shown with just running candidates for "random offices."

Lark said that Dehn's point is relevant to the next agenda item - 2001 goals.

Dehn asked where things stand on the matter of preparing an annual report for LP News?

Lark said that his preference is to publish a one-part report in March.

Dehn said that he is concerned about delaying from February until March. He said that he wanted the LNC-SPT participants to have this information available. He asked whether a pre-publication copy of the information could be made available to the LNC- SPT participants so that they could have it before the February LNC-SPT meeting.

Dasbach said that the web site could be used to get this information out prior to the March issue of LP News being distributed.

Dasbach noted that Tuniewicz has pointed out that the Reason Foundation has put an excellent annual report online. He said that the Reason Foundation report does not

include some of the items we propose to include, such as a list of specific goals and how well the organization did in meeting those goals.

Givot asked Dasbach whether the Reason Foundation published its organizational goals at the start of the year as the LNC did?

Dasbach said that they probably did not do so.

Fylstra said that he does not think they did so. He said that their trustees tend to be their largest donors, and that they probably have this information from other sources.

Givot said that the fact that we did publish our goals to the membership is what moves him to want to report on our performance to our members.

Dasbach said that this may affect the sort of goals we adopt or publish in the future.

MG noted that the Reason Foundation's size - revenues about \$5 million per year - is comparable to ours.

## **Item: Adoption of Year 2001 Goals**

Lark said that because of the ongoing systems analysis and upcoming strategic planning process, he believes that the party should adopt a minimal set of goals for 2001 which encompass what needs to be done to continue as a political party.

There was no objection to this approach.

Dehn said that the first portion of the discussion should be devoted to what constitutes a "core goal" as opposed to other goals. He said that, given the upcoming strategic planning process, the party's goals should be to complete the strategic planning process (with the measurable being adoption of a strategic plan by August) and maintaining the party's strengths in areas that are believed to be essential regardless of what direction the strategic plan takes, including (1) maintaining financial health, (2) achieving certain ballot access goals, and (3) maintaining some level of membership.

Dasbach said that he supports Dehn's suggestion if the goals are stated in a manner which sets minimum levels but makes it clear that our goal is to exceed those minima. He said that expressing the goals in terms of achieving new records or milestones would be a positive step.

Dasbach said that some goals, such as adoption of a strategic plan, are binary; they are either achieved or not achieved. He said that other goals are measured on a

continuum, such as membership levels or financial health. He said that some goals, such as ballot access, are best specified by listing specifics to be achieved, e.g. a list of states in which ballot drives will be completed.

Givot said that he has no objection to what Dehn and Dasbach are saying as long as there are hard numbers included in the appropriate goals before it is adopted.

Fylstra asked for a rough idea of the record number of odd-year candidates and wins.

Crickenberger said that the old records were about 370 candidates and about 35-40 victories.

Dasbach said that this includes candidates for non-partisan office.

Dehn said that he did not include candidate or victory goals as a core goal because he was focusing on infrastructural issue.

Dasbach said that the candidate goal is important for several reasons. (1) we are a political party. (2) we need solid accomplishments to report to members to justify their continued support.

Dehn said that, based on the discussion, he believes that a candidate goal would be appropriate to include.

MG said that one of the things that will come out of the strategic plan will be a better understanding of how we relate with the state in these various processes. He said that we don't currently have a good sense of what the inputs and outputs are of various processes. He said that, in the past, he has found it helpful to establish ranges for goals. He said that there is a learning process going on and that setting ranges might prove helpful. He said that it would be helpful to know what critical actions will be taken to achieve these goals so that we understand what is controllable by staff.

Dasbach said that - regarding strategic planning - all that staff will do is attend all meetings and to provide support as requested by LNC-SPT.

Crickenberger said that regarding the number of candidates, while staff cannot control the number of candidates, it can influence the outcome. He said that staff can also attempt to help by direct recruiting of candidates. He said that as long as the goal is within reason, he has no problem with quantifying that goal.

MG said that other factors include how much work is being done by national and how much work is being done by LP affiliates.

Givot said that he is very pleased with the discussion - particularly reference to what the staff can "control" and "significantly influence." He said that it is essential that we only adopt goals where the staff can do one or the other or where the LNC itself can accept direct responsibility for implementation.

Givot said that he does not support adopting ranges for the various goals. He said that minimum acceptable levels should be specified and that the staff should be given the greatest flexibility to decide how to allocate resources to achieve and, where appropriate, exceed the minimum levels have been achieved.

Dasbach said that staff intends to review all literature in any event. He said that we may want to adopt a goal relating to this.

MG said that literature review is an "input," not a goal.

Crickenberger said that there seems to be a consensus to move away from the concept of "core" and "supporting" goals. He asked for discussion of this.

Dasbach said that we should focus on the most important things. He said that some of the 2000 goals were "too trivial" to be stated as goals.

Fylstra said that the prior year's process was the best job yet, but was a long way from the "laser like focus" that is needed.

Givot said that, in effect, last year the staff proposed about 15 goals and the LNC selected 4 as its core goals, leaving staff free to work on the others as resources were available - and setting an incentive structure to achieve more than the core goals.

Dehn asked for an update on two projects: training tapes and campus organizing.

Dasbach said that the master training tapes are now done.

Dasbach said that 30-40% of one staff member's time and a significant money has already been allocated to campus recruiting.

Lark said that he has been involved in trying to do this for some time. He said that he has never been able to come up with a good numerical goal to actually measure what he really wants to measure. He said that what is really needed is a good information pipeline to know what groups are out there and what we can do to support them.

Dehn said that he has heard, for years, about campus organizing, but that he feels we need a quantifiable goal to know if we are achieving anything.

Dasbach said that, for the first time, there is a permanent staff point of contact at LPHQ actively working in the area of campus organizing.

Dehn said that without a measure, we won't know what is being accomplished.

MG said that one thing that will come out of the strategic planning process will be a better sense of the procedures to be used in the future.

*(Bisson left the meeting at this point.)*

Givot noted that Dasbach said that the resources have already been allocated to do things, but only now are we determining what should be done - or at least what our priorities are. He said that this is exactly the opposite sequence that should be used. He said that this was the reason he voted against adoption of the 2001 budget. He said that he will be abstaining any vote on the adoption of goals - whenever they come up or whatever they are - for the same reason.

## **Item: Accounting Policy**

Givot said that he believes it is appropriate - at year end - to accrue as revenue all receipts which are in hand at LPHQ but either not yet processed or not yet deposited in the bank. He said that the only reason that such receipts are not included in revenues is that clerks have yet to process them. He said that this is an arbitrary basis for determining inclusion or exclusion from the reporting year. He said that clerical efficiency does not and should not effect the fair reflection of the party's balance sheet at year end.

Dasbach said that there has been no indication from auditors that we need to do this. Dasbach said that the auditors considered accruing payroll liabilities at year end and recommended that it is not necessary to do so for payroll. He said that, if anything, a year-end entry would be the only thing we would want to do.

Givot said that a year-end entry, reversed at the start of the new year, is all that he is suggesting.

Tuniewicz said that he is familiar with both the payroll and undeposited cash issues. He asked if the amount is material.

Dasbach said that unprocessed checks plus web site generated credit card charges totaled about \$12,000 at year end. He said that this could have been processed before year end had more staff resources been devoted to this.

Tuniewicz said that given the explanation and dollar amount involved he would not make any annual accrual unless the auditors have a strong feeling to the contrary.

Givot said that it would be better to work to process all receipts by year end since that would avoid the need to consider or discuss making such an adjustment. He said that while \$12,000 is not material in terms of the party's annual revenues, it is material in terms of the party's net worth.

Tuniewicz said that, given the dollar amount, he would not recommend taking any action.

Dehn asked whether expenses are accrued even if the bill is not received before year end.

Dasbach said that such expenses are accrued as of the date of invoice. He said that the party does not accrue pledge payments except for a end-of-year adjustment provided by the auditors. He said that promised contributions other than pledges are not accrued.

Dehn said that there seems to be an inconsistency between how revenues and expenses are accrued. He said that by providing an oral report of the amount of unprocessed receipt at year end, then actually including them in the results for the following year, some may be confused by the double reporting of the same revenue.

Dehn suggested that this matter keeps coming up because Dasbach keeps citing these numbers. He said that if Dasbach didn't provide the numbers, perhaps there would be no discussion.

Givot said that he thinks the numbers should be reported.

## **Item: Remarks of the Good of the Party**

MG said that there are new libertarian web sites up and running in Japan, Poland, Turkey, and Greece.

MG said that the libertarian Costa Rican senator is planning to make a US tour this year. He said that he would like to know who would like to meet with him.

Dasbach asked whether the Committee members are people familiar with a representative who has been elected to the NH legislature who describes himself as a "libertarian" who has made public statements on why it is alright to murder policemen or to beat one's wife.

Lark said that he had an excellent trip through NC, SC, and FL and that there are many active and talented people working for our cause in those states.

## **Item: Setting of Next Executive Committee Meeting Date**

Lark said that Givot recommended returning to a monthly meeting schedule with a commitment from staff to distribute a bi-monthly written report which provides information specifically requested by the Executive Committee as a routine reporting topic.

Givot said that this would be a much more efficient use of the Executive Committee members' time.

Tuniewicz said that he prefer to continue meeting every other week. He said that he feels he gets better information and stays better informed.

Dehn agreed with Tuniewicz. He said that because of the special circumstance of strategic planning meetings may be advisable to synchronize the LNC-SPT meeting with Executive Committee meetings - perhaps having an in-person meeting at the same time.

MG suggested that meeting every third week may be best.

Consensus was reached to hold the next Executive Committee meeting at 8:30 PM EST on January 16 and the following Executive Committee meeting at 8:30 PM EST on January 31.

There was preliminary discussion of holding meetings on February 13, February 27, March 13, and March 27. No action was taken. It was agreed that there would be discussion of this early on the agenda of the next meeting.

*The meeting was adjourned at 10:41 PM EST.*