

LNC Executive Committee Meeting

Teleconference January 16, 2001

Present: Jim Lark, Chair
Dan Fylstra, Vice-Chair
Steve Givot, Secretary
Ken Bisson (IN), At Large Representative
Joe Dehn (CA), Region 2 Representative

Absent: Mark Tuniewicz, Treasurer
Michael "MG" Gilson de Lemos (FL), Region 4 Representative

Also Present: Mark Nelson (IA), Region 1 Alternate
Dan Wisnosky (NV), Region 2 Alternate
Ben Scherrey (GA), Region 4 Alternate

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

Lark called the meeting to order at 8:43 PM EST. (The start of the meeting was delayed due to technical difficulties.)

Item: Approval of Agenda

Dasbach suggested adding an item to the agenda regarding forwarding a message regarding the Ashcroft nomination written by another organization.

Givot asked for an Executive Session for Executive Committee members only at the end of the meeting for the purpose of discussing the National Director's performance review.

The agenda was approved with the additions above.

Item: Chair's Comments

Lark said that Joe Cadrin (VA) and Phil Miller (IN) will be joining the LNC Strategic Planning Team. He said that Cadrin will fill a "libertarian movement" slot, and Miller will fill an "elected Libertarian" slot.

Lark said that 35 minutes is allotted to discussion of goals for the current year. He said that if there is no consensus on goal-setting, the Executive Committee should move on and continue to discuss goals at its next meeting.

Item: Forwarding Anti-Ashcroft Information

Dasbach raised the issue of possibly forwarding a message to the LP announcement email list on behalf of the Drug Reform Coalition Network. He said that Ashcroft has a terrible record regarding the war on drugs. He said that he believes it would be very appropriate to do so, allowing our members to judge for themselves if they wish to work to oppose Ashcroft's nomination.

Crickenberger said that the primary reason for forwarding the message is coalition building. He said that if we want other organizations to help us at times, we should be willing to assist other organizations on issues where we share agreement. He said that about 15 minutes of staff time would be required to forward this.

Bisson said that he believes that this group has taken positions in the past which have been consistent with our views.

Dehn said that there are two positions in the item to be forwarded that might raise some concern. He said that the document links the drug war to racial issues. He said that the document cites drug treatment as a better use of tax money and that the LP does not advocate using tax money for that purpose.

Lark asked whether the item, if forwarded, would include a disclaimer about the document which indicates that the LP does not necessarily agree with all of the content of the message.

Crickenberger said that he does not believe that such a disclaimer is necessary, but he is open to the wishes of the Executive Committee.

Dasbach said that he would rather make a positive statement than a negative statement to accompany the document, if the LP forwards it.

Dehn suggested drafting a more general disclaimer that could be used in the future when forwarding such documents.

Dasbach said that he would suggest deleting the fundraising appeal that appears at the bottom of the document. He said that staff will proceed to forward the document unless there is objection to proceeding.

Lark sought objections and there were none.

(Crickenberger left the meeting at this time.)

Item: Update on Strategic Planning

Lark said that he has some inquiries out regarding "movement libertarians" but has not lined up a second person for that category yet.

Dasbach said that he has sent out information about hotels and travel arrangements.

Dasbach said that 38 individuals from 31 states have signed up for the state chair's meeting.

Dasbach said that, excluding facilitator Givot, 20 people have indicated that they will be participants on the LNC Strategic Planning Team. He said that four LNC members and alternates have indicated that they will not be participating.

Lark confirmed that all meeting dates are firmly set, and that soon he should have the site of the meeting in NC.

Item: National Director's Report

Dasbach said that the McDaniels' lawsuit continues to move forward. He said that the LP's legal fees are estimated to be between \$5,000 and \$10,000. He said that they may be higher. He said that David Bergland is our local counsel in this matter. He said that LPCA is also a defendant in the lawsuit and is also being represented by Bergland.

Givot asked about the possibility that the suit will be deemed to be frivolous, possibly resulting in an award of legal fees to the LNC.

Dasbach said that Hall does not feel it likely that this would be possible.

Dehn asked what is involved in defending against this lawsuit that would cost this much.

Dasbach said that much of the cost would be from depositions.

Dehn said that the LPCA board is not aware of the details of this lawsuit or of the costs of retaining counsel.

Dasbach said that, although there is no written agreement with Bergland, the correspondence makes it clear that LNC will pay 50% of Bergland's fee and LPCA will pay 50% of Bergland's fee.

Dehn advised the Committee that he believes that the LPCA Chair does not have the authority to commit to paying this fee.

Dasbach said that he continues to be concerned about the LNC's financial condition. He said that until he has further returns from the Annual Report mailing he is unable to project the results of that mailing. He said that additional information on this should be available in about two weeks. He said that in the meantime he is limiting expenditures to basic operational costs and continuing ballot drives.

Dasbach said that the ballot drive in NE continues and should be complete in a few weeks. He said that the petitioners there will be moved to NC.

Dasbach said that petitioning will be required in OH according to the authorities there. He said that there is the possibility of legal action to avoid petitioning in OH, but that he is proceeding under the assumption that a ballot drive in OH will be necessary.

Item: 2001 Goals

Lark asked if anyone has a problem with the draft goals that he had circulated.

Dehn said that he is confused. He said that at the last Executive Committee meeting he understood that a very limited set of goals would be set forth. He said the current submission is more detailed than he expected.

Dasbach said that he has no objection to trimming back the number of goals. He said that the goals presented relate largely to things that staff has control over. He said that an additional goal - relating to strategic planning - over which staff has no control - should be considered.

Dasbach said that he would be interested in knowing if there is something that Dehn believes has been left out that he feels should be stated in a goal.

Dehn said that the first decision to be made is whether there would be a lot of goals or just a few. He said that if there will be a lot of goals, then there are others that he feels should be included. He mentioned a campus organizing goal as an example of this.

Dehn questioned aspects of the goal relating to customer satisfaction. He said that the methodology of conducting two surveys will inherently show improvement because

people will tend to express increased satisfaction solely because their opinion on customer satisfaction has been sought.

Givot asked whether failure to adopt any of the proposed goals would cause staff not to do anything that it planned to do if the goals are adopted.

Dasbach said that absent a statement that the staff should not do these things, staff will proceed to do them.

Givot said that one major purpose of goal adoption seems to be determining which benchmarks will be established to measure staff performance.

Lark said that they do serve other purposes, that one major purpose is as stated by Givot. He said that for several reasons, including the possibility of changes brought about by the strategic planning process, he intended to establish a minimal set of goals for 2001.

Bisson moved that Executive Committee recommends adoption of goals covering topics 2, 1, 7, and 3 on Dasbach's condensed goals relating to ballot drives, candidate totals and election victories, media coverage, and membership.

Fylstra seconded.

Fylstra said that he would like to add goal 5 relating to increasing the party's net worth.

Bisson accepted that as a friendly amendment.

Bisson said that the LNC will hash through whatever goals the Executive Committee suggests. He said that the purpose of his motion is to focus on a narrow set of goals which is consistent with a transition year.

Dehn said that he believes that adoption of a strategic plan should be included as an institutional goal.

Givot said that it would be common to have an institutional goal that sets a timetable for plan creation, review, and adoption.

Dehn moved to add a goal relating to completion and adoption of a strategic plan.

Bisson and Fylstra accepted that as a friendly motion.

There was agreement that the intention of the motion is to outline six areas for which precise language will be fleshed out in the coming weeks.

Dehn asked Bisson why he chose to include a goal relating to staff media activities.

Bisson said that he deferred to the ranking offered by the Chair.

Lark said that he believes that media coverage is important to the growth of the party and that the staff has considerable control over the outcome.

Bisson said that he also believes that it is an important function and that it would be the only goal relating to Bill Winter or his staff.

Fylstra said that we should not be devoting considerable staff effort to activities which are not supportive of core level goals.

The motion passed 3-0 with Givot and Lark abstaining.

Item: Remarks for the Good of the Party

Bisson suggested that the LP was not in much of a position to provide aid as requested by Libertarians in Costa Rica.

Lark said that they were seeking the ability to have access to the LP email list as well as the use of our mailing list and information enabling them to follow up with telephone calls.

Dasbach said that it would be extraordinary for the LNC to provide telephone number information.

Dasbach said that he cannot rent them our list because that would result in accepting funds from any foreign source. He said that this is prohibited by law, even in a non-federal account. He said that we could provide the list at no charge.

Lark asked if there is any policy relating to this or any example like this in the past.

Dasbach said that he cannot think of any policy or past experience which would directly apply to this request. He said that the LP's email list is never rented, although messages are sometimes forwarded on behalf of others.

Bisson said that he has no objection to providing some assistance. He outlined a mechanism to do so which might avoid some of the issues discussed.

Lark suggested that Executive Committee members who have further interest in this provide their input by email.

Item: Next meeting date

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, January 31 at 8:30 PM EST.

Item: Executive Session Relating to National Director's Performance Evaluation

The staff left the meeting at this time.

Attendees other than members of the Executive Committee left the meeting at this time as well.

The Committee then went into Executive Session.

The Committee returned to Open Session at 10:15 PM EST.

The Committee adjourned at 10:16 PM EST.