

# Libertarian Party of New York

## Chapter Development Guide



Information Compiled and Organized by Edward Garrett, Andrew Kolstee & Kimberly Richards

## Introduction

### Why Chapter Development is Crucial

As of this writing, the state of New York has 62 counties of which only fourteen have official chapters for the Libertarian Party of New York. Considering that New York is one of the most economically and individually oppressive states in the nation, representation in less than a quarter of its counties isn't nearly enough.

More distressingly, many registered voters who attempt to enroll libertarian are coming to find that their county's Board of Elections fail to recognize "LBT" as an option. Not only does this mean that our individual voter preferences are not being recorded, it means that it skews the data concerning voter demographics and crowds out third party candidates on ballots. Without this presence, many individuals whose political ideology essentially mirrors that of the Libertarian Party do not even realize we are option.

In other words, we lack visibility on all levels.

This is why chapter development is necessary and your role as a temporary county chairman is so essential to not only your – but all of our – liberty.

It may seem a daunting task, and while it can certainly be challenging, rest assured that you have the insight, experience, and support of every member of the LPNY at your disposal.

*We can do this.*

Chapter 1

Who You Are Matters: Being a Temporary County Chairman

**What is a Temporary County Chairman?** A Temporary County Chairman (TCC) is an individual appointed by the Libertarian Party of New York (LPNY) who is responsible for functioning as a liaison for libertarians in their county and, more importantly, building up the party base to ultimately become a viable, official county chapter.

Becoming a Temporary County Chairman for the LPNY is a frustration-free process. Generally, if you're a libertarian and willing to take on this important responsibility, you will be invited to attend (either in person or via conference call) a regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the LPNY where you will be interviewed and if all passes muster, your appointment as a Temporary County Chairman will be approved.

Depending on your location, one of the Vice Chairman of the LPNY will be responsible for overseeing your progress and providing guidance as necessary. Below is the breakdown based on county.

Jim Rosenbeck			Christian Padgett	
Allegany	Genesee	Otsego	Albany	Rockland
Broome	Hamilton	Schulyer	Bronx	Saratoga
Cattaraugus	Herkimer	Seneca	Columbia	Schenectady
Cayuga	Jefferson	St. Lawrence	Dutchess	Schonarie
Chautauqua	Lewis	Steuben	Greene	Suffolk
Chemung	Livingston	Sullivan	Kings	Ulster
Chenango	Madison	Tioga	Montgomery	Washington
Clinton	Monroe	Tompkins	Nassau	Westchester
Cortland	Niagara	Warren	New York	
Delaware	Onandago	Wayne	Orange	
Erie	Oneida	Wyoming	Putnam	
Essex	Ontario	Yates	Queens	
Franklin	Orleans		Rensselaer	
Fulton	Oswego		Richmond	

Forming an official Chapter in your county, while challenging at times, is not in and of itself a complicated process. According to the bylaws of the Libertarian Party, all that is required to form an official chapter is that you make a “good faith” effort to notify the registered Libertarian Party of New York members residing in your county of your intent to form a Chapter, and hold a Founding Convention with no less than seven of them.

Simple...right?

<b>Registered Member of the LPNY</b>	An individual who is current on their annual dues (\$25 / year) with the Libertarian Party of New York. This can be done online ( <a href="http://ny.lp.org/donate">ny.lp.org/donate</a> ) or by sending a check, cashier’s check, or money order to: <i>The Libertarian Party of New York P.O. Box 98 Hamlin, NY 14464</i>
<b>Good Faith Effort</b>	This can be as simple as posting your intentions on a Meetup or Facebook page dedicated to your county, or as complex as sending our written correspondence, making phone calls, and taking out ads.
<b>Founding Convention</b>	A one-time meeting in which seven or more registered LPNY members who are County residents gather to elect officers, adopt bylaws, establish committees, and outline their chapter’s goals for the coming year.
<b>Annual Convention</b>	A special meeting held once a year in which termed-out Officer positions are open for election, bylaws are revised, the Chapter’s progress is reviewed and goals for the coming year are established.
<b>Governing Body Meetings</b>	Regularly scheduled monthly Chapter meetings wherein finances are reviewed, the previous meeting’s minutes are approved, old business is addressed, and new business is heard.
<b>Chapter Officers</b>	Consists of a Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, and Representative to the State.
<b>Bylaws</b>	Outlines the Chapter’s mission, defines membership and the duties of the Officers, sets dues, and establishes the protocol that governs elections, voting privileges, candidate vetting, subcommittees, and governing body and annual Convention meetings.

## Chapter 2

### Who's In Charge: The Hierarchy of the Libertarian Party of New York

The Libertarian Party of New York is divided into two groups: the Officers of the State Party and the Officers, including Representatives to the State, from each of the fourteen county chapters. Some chapters, such as Brooklyn, Capital District, Greater Rochester, Hudson Valley, Manhattan, and State Island represent more than one county, but the ultimate goal is to have the members of those chapters split into their own respective county chapters.

The Officers of the State Party include the Chair, two Vice Chairs, the Secretary, the Treasurer, five At Large Committee Members, and the Immediate Past Chair. Those individuals are as follows:

Position	Name	Phone	Email
Immediate Past Chair	Mark Axinn	212-753-5599 x 226	markaxinn@hotmail.com
Chairman	Mark E. Glogowski	585-802-4971	mglogowski08@gmail.com
Vice Chair	Jim Rosenbeck	585-760-4507	rsnbk@aol.com
Vice Chair	Christian Padgett		libertychrisny@yahoo.com
Secretary	Blay Tarnoff	917-609-0707	lpny@eblay.com
Treasurer	Gary Triestman	845-679-0246	garyonthenet@gmail.com
At Large Committee Member	Kevin Wilson	315-292-8306	kevinawilson12@gmail.com
At Large Committee Member	Phil Ricci	585-344-1641	philjricci@gmail.com
At Large Committee Member	Chris Edes	585-202-7741	chrisedes@dynamic-mail.net
At Large Committee Member	Rob Porter	619-804-2345	barzbub@hotmail.com
At Large Committee Member	Brian Waddell		brianwilliamwaddell@gmail.com

Each chapter has a Representative to State who is responsible for reporting on the activities, and acting in the interest, of their chapter at the monthly state party meetings. Those individuals are as follows:

Chapter	Representative	Phone	Email
Brooklyn	Gary Popkin		garypopkin@yahoo.com
Capital District	Tom Timmons		timmons_thomas@yahoo.com
Chautauqua	Andrew Kolstee	716-640-2089	andrewkolstee@gmail.com
Erie	Ed Garrett	716-998-5364	info@wnylp.org

Chapter	Representative	Phone	Email
Genesee	Lisa Whitehead		<a href="mailto:rnwhitehead@verizon.net">rnwhitehead@verizon.net</a>
Greater Rochester	Steve Becker	585-288-4312	<a href="mailto:drsbecker@aol.com">drsbecker@aol.com</a>
Hudson Valley	Jan-Erik Janson	845-616-5041	<a href="mailto:jejanson1@gmail.com">jejanson1@gmail.com</a>
Manhattan	Helene Jnane	917-708-0532	<a href="mailto:helenejnane@yahoo.com">helenejnane@yahoo.com</a>
Nassau	Carmelin Mitchell		<a href="mailto:xyl0271@optionline.net">xyl0271@optionline.net</a>
Niagara	Steve Walsh	716-434-0116	<a href="mailto:slwalsh49@roadrunner.com">slwalsh49@roadrunner.com</a>
Queens	John Clifton		<a href="mailto:mrjclifton@yahoo.com">mrjclifton@yahoo.com</a>
Saratoga	Chris Laing		<a href="mailto:cj-laing@hotmail.com">cj-laing@hotmail.com</a>
State Island	Richard Bier	917-554-6640	<a href="mailto:richard.bier@gmail.com">richard.bier@gmail.com</a>
Suffolk	Chris Garvey	631-598-0752	<a href="mailto:ChrisGarvey1@verizon.net">ChrisGarvey1@verizon.net</a>

In addition to the Representative to the State, each Chapter is typically comprised of a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer, as well as their general, special and/or governing body members. In Chapter 7, we will go into more detail on the specific duties of each officer and the definition of membership when adopting bylaws, but for the time being, below is a list of each chapter's Chair. This information is useful, as many of the current Chairs were once Temporary Chairs themselves and can provide invaluable feedback and support.

Chapter	Chair	Phone	Email
Brooklyn	Gary Popkin		<a href="mailto:garypopkin@yahoo.com">garypopkin@yahoo.com</a>
Capitol District	Todd Haggarty	518-312-7942	<a href="mailto:gilhags@hotmail.com">gilhags@hotmail.com</a>
Chautauqua	Andrew Kolstee	716-640-2089	<a href="mailto:andrewkolstee@gmail.com">andrewkolstee@gmail.com</a>
Erie	Ed Garrett	716-998-5364	<a href="mailto:j4garr@yahoo.com">j4garr@yahoo.com</a>
Genesee	Dave Olsen		<a href="mailto:dolsen1959@gmail.com">dolsen1959@gmail.com</a>
Greater Rochester	Erik Granger	585-653-8574	<a href="mailto:erikgranger@gmail.com">erikgranger@gmail.com</a>
Hudson Valley	Gary Triestman	845-679-0246	<a href="mailto:garyonthenet@hotmail.com">garyonthenet@hotmail.com</a>
Manhattan	Brian Waddell		<a href="mailto:brianwilliamwaddell@gmail.com">brianwilliamwaddell@gmail.com</a>
Nassau	Gary Donoyan	516-312-8782	<a href="mailto:gdonoyan@verizon.net">gdonoyan@verizon.net</a>
Niagara	Brandon Czerwinski	716-361-7554	<a href="mailto:brandon.a.czerwinski@gmail.com">brandon.a.czerwinski@gmail.com</a>
Queens	Tom Stevens		<a href="mailto:drtomstevens@aol.com">drtomstevens@aol.com</a>
Saratoga	Chris Laing		<a href="mailto:cj-laing@hotmail.com">cj-laing@hotmail.com</a>
Staten Island	Richard Bier	917-554-6640	<a href="mailto:richard.bier@gmail.com">richard.bier@gmail.com</a>
Suffolk	Michael McDermott		<a href="mailto:msmwizard@aol.com">msmwizard@aol.com</a>

Last but certainly not least, are the Temporary County Chairs (TCCs). Currently, we have eleven active TCCs, all of which are concentrated in central and western New York. Since they are currently in the exact same boat as you with respect to building up their county's libertarian base and forming an official chapter, they are a great source of moral support. Much of the

recent success in Western New York with the formation of the Erie, Niagara and Chautauqua County Chapters can be directly attributed to the support their TCCs provided one another.

<b>County</b>	<b>TCC</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
Broome	Shawna Cole		<a href="mailto:guyscallmeshawna@stny.rr.com">guyscallmeshawna@stny.rr.com</a>
Chenango	Jack Roque	607-316-3679	<a href="mailto:jack.roque@gmail.com">jack.roque@gmail.com</a>
Oneida	Charles Millar	315-725-4513	<a href="mailto:millarc@verizon.net">millarc@verizon.net</a>
Otsego	Patrick Rigney		<a href="mailto:rignpm04@suny.oneonta.edu">rignpm04@suny.oneonta.edu</a>
Rockland	Brian MacRae		<a href="mailto:om_ah_hum@hotmail.com">om_ah_hum@hotmail.com</a>
Steuben	Brent Pryslopski		<a href="mailto:bpryslopski@gmail.com">bpryslopski@gmail.com</a>
Tioga	Rich Purtell	607-425-9730	<a href="mailto:rpurtell2@stny.rr.com">rpurtell2@stny.rr.com</a>
Tompkins	Joe Mainville		<a href="mailto:jmainville38@gmail.com">jmainville38@gmail.com</a>
Wayne	Wesley Meadows		<a href="mailto:wmeadows147@gmail.com">wmeadows147@gmail.com</a>
Wyoming	James Wanke	585-689-1373	<a href="mailto:jwanke@rochester.rr.com">jwanke@rochester.rr.com</a>

## Chapter 3

### First Things First: Laying the Groundwork

In film, there's a saying, "the more work you do in pre-production, the less you have to fix in post." This saying applies to more than just film; if you do a good job laying the groundwork for your Chapter, you'll experience less problems further down the road.

#### **Set a Budget**

While the Libertarian Party has been around since 1972, many state chapters lack the funds to encourage chapter development in their counties, and the LPNY is no exception. As a result, a TCC may find themselves personally responsible for bankrolling their chapter before it has even gotten off the ground. That being said, it's entirely possible for a TCC to recoup some of their costs initially from the LPNY and later, their own chapter through membership donations and dues. Below is a list of possible expenses, based on the experience of previous TCCs.

1. *Office Supplies* – Your home will become your office, and as such, you'll find yourself needing office supplies like printer toner and/or ink, paper (both printer paper and cardstock, if you choose to make your own postcards), pens, envelopes, a lockbox for donations, rubber bands, paper clips, file folders, notebooks, mailing labels, etc.
2. *Stamps* – The LPNY has a bulk mailing permit, but you might prefer to go the route of just procuring your own stamps. A first class letter costs \$0.49 / letter (or \$.485 if you choose to use Stamps.com and print your postage at home like one chapter did), while a postcard stamp costs \$0.35 / postcard. Many times, it takes upwards of seven letters before you get some of your more reticent contacts to respond, so budget accordingly.
3. *Social Media* – Most social media is free, but some social media sites are not, while other free sites have certain paid functions. If you choose to get a Meetup account, you will have to pay to setup a page for your group, while other sites, like Facebook, will allow you to set up pages for free, but will charge you (based on what you're willing to spend), to run ads and boost specific posts.
4. *Mailbox* – While you can use the LPNY's mailing address for your initial correspondence, you will eventually want to invest in a mailbox for your chapter to 1) keep your home address private and 2) provide a mailing address for membership that can easily be turned over to your Secretary when the time permits. Both UPS and the USPS offer mailboxes, but the USPS is less expensive.
5. *Website* – Using programs like Wix or Wordpress, you can easily design your own website, but you will still have to pay for either a domain name through companies like GoDaddy or web-hosting from Wix or Wordpress.



6. *Event Fees* – If you choose to participate in events, such as County Fairs, before your Chapter is off the ground, many of them require fees for you to have an exhibitor/vendor presence. Additionally, they also require...
7. *Event Insurance* – The LPNY has year-long event insurance that should cover all their endeavors, so you'll want to check with the Chair before investing in your own. If you choose to invest in your own, you can purchase one-time only event insurance at [www.exhibitorinsurenw.com/quote/](http://www.exhibitorinsurenw.com/quote/).
8. *Miscellaneous* – Some of the past TCCs have chosen to invest in things like business cards (e.g., VistaPrint, Moo.com, or at-home Avery Business Cards), banners, professional-looking literature, phone-tree systems (e.g., Grasshopper), t-shirts and other apparel.

All of these are merely suggestions and what you choose to spend is entirely up to you. Before you do spend anything, check with the Vice Chair of the LPNY responsible for your Chapter's development first to see if any of it can be covered by the LPNY. If it cannot be covered by the LPNY but you choose to purchase it anyway, keep an itemized list of expenses to provide to your Chapter's newly-elected Treasurer for record-keeping and possible reimbursement.

### **Social Media**

It's important in today's tech-based culture not to forget the importance of employing social media to not only communicate with your base, but build it. Many people connect to organizations and causes they believe in via social media to keep abreast of current events, declare their allegiance, and network with like-minded individuals. Bonus for the Temporary Chair who finds themselves responsible for financing their endeavors is that most social media, with the exception of certain functions or sites, is 100% free to use.

1. *Facebook* – Easily one of the most popular and populous social media sites, Facebook is an invaluable, relatively free tool to use to provide a reference site for your chapter's membership, bring attention to your cause, and build your base. If you currently lack a personal account, you will need to set one up first before you are able to establish a page and/or group for your organization. Later, if you decide to have someone else be responsible for managing your Chapter's Facebook page and/or group, you can always adjust the settings on your page and/or group to appoint others as administrators.
  - a. *Pages* – Even if you have a website, you will want to set up a Facebook page for your Chapter. A page functions as a formal, proxy website for your organization where you can post all the relevant contact information (e.g., date of formation, mailing address, website address, contact numbers, associated emails, and a mission statement), set up and broadcast events (i.e., founding conventions, governing body meetings, etc.), and post all the official communication that comes from your chapter. Individuals who join your page can post to your wall, but administrator's posts on your page will supersede theirs in terms of visibility and priority. This is a more valuable tool than a group.

- b. *Groups* – Unlike a page, a group is more informal and all posts to the wall, whether by an administrator or member, are given an equal amount of play. Groups are best when used as a forum for discussion. It is recommended you set one up in addition to, but not in lieu of, a page.
  - c. *Advertising* – Facebook provides page administrators with the option to invest in advertising to either advertise your page or boost specific posts. This does cost money, but Facebook allows you to determine how much you’re willing to spend and for what length of time you wish to run your ad(s), adjusting the level of exposure accordingly.
    - i. *Advertising Your Page* – Choosing this option allows you to target the specific demographic and area you wish to reach, and advertises your page both on the margins and in the newsfeed of individuals who meet this criteria. This is the more expensive option of the two mentioned, but it permits direct access to your page and results in a higher yield of direct page likes by a receptive audience. The benefit of this, beyond expanding your base for future posts, is creating the illusion of popularity. While many libertarians are innately contrarian, individuals who are on-the-fence politically might find your message more credible if your page is shown to be followed by many people.
    - ii. *Boosting a Post* – If you have a specific post on your page that you want to reach a wider audience than just your membership (e.g., an event notification or relevant news articles about your endeavors), you can use this option. Doing this will advertise only your post, and might not result in direct likes to your page, but it costs less, runs for a shorter amount of time, and is post-specific.
  - d. *Other Libertarian Pages and Groups* – Join as many pages and/or groups that target your area, demographic, and ideology, because you can post information about your Chapter’s endeavors. Many of the newer Chapters have been incredibly successful in expanding their base by not only posting in their Chapter’s pages and groups, but by also posting on pages related to their cause and area. Don’t be afraid to share your page’s posts or events to other local pages or even national level Libertarian pages & groups. There could be people in that group who know people in your area that you might not otherwise reach.
  - e. *Tags* – While this may seem like an insignificant detail, tags on your page, posts, hashtags, ect provide a way for people out there searching to find you. This will be beneficial to you in the long run, not just on Facebook, but your website as well. Label every photo, use key words & make your website pop up in searches. Remember that someone searching for local libertarians may not be aware of the structure of the organization, so include tags about cities in your county.
2. *Twitter* – As equally popular as Facebook, Twitter is one of the most frequently used social media sites by celebrities, businesses and organizations. Unlike Facebook, however, it does not permit length posts (their character limit is 140-characters) or

event creation, but it does utilize the hashtag (or pound sign, “#”) option which allows individuals seeking the same hashtag to find you. The more hashtags you use, the more reach you have. In addition, you can respond to other Twitter users using the at (@) symbol before their handle (e.g., @Niagara\_LP) and post to not just your Twitter feed, but theirs, as well.

3. *Google+* - Google+ was purported to be the Google alternative to Facebook, but it’s failed to get the traction necessary to become as popular. Nonetheless, many people, especially individuals who already utilize Google Mail (gmail), have Google+ accounts. You will need to set up a gmail account for your Chapter in order to access this feature, but you can create your own page for your Chapter and post your developments, new articles, and other relevant information there, too.
4. *Hootsuite* – Hootsuite is not a social media site, but rather a social media aggregator. The purpose of a social media aggregator is to allow individuals or organizations to manage all their social media accounts using one platform, thus eliminating the time required to login and post individual messages in every single one. While Hootsuite is not the only social media aggregator available, it is the one currently employed by Chautauqua, Erie and Niagara County Chapters and allows them to write just one post for their Facebook page, Twitter feed, and Google+ accounts that posts to all three. In addition, it allows you schedule posts, so you can sit down one evening and pen 100-posts scheduled to be parsed out over the course of 6-months if you so desire. For a fee, you can upgrade to more advanced options that allow you to add upwards of 500-social media sites, but for your earnest beginnings, it is recommended you opt for the free, 3-social media site option.
5. *Meetup* – Meetup is not free, but it is incredibly beneficial. Meetup is a site where people can join for free, designate their areas of interest, and be directed to social or political groups that cater to these interests. For a fee, you can setup a page for your Chapter, schedule events, and build your base. One chapter opted to set up a Meetup page, and that is how their current Chair and several other members who are not connected to Facebook and on their mailing list, were able to find them.

### **Record Keeping**

One of the most important things you can do, not just for your own sanity but for your chapter’s well-being, is keep detailed records of your endeavors. In addition to the itemized list of expenses recommended above, you will also want to keep track of who you contacted, when and what the results were; any modifications made to your mailing list; any correspondence received, when and how you handled it; who has paid dues to the LPNY in your area; agendas and minutes for meetings you have prior to Convention (agenda writing and minute taking are covered in more depth in Chapter 6); and, any other relevant information that pertains to your efforts. The reason for this is simple: while your role as a TCC is integral to the LPNY’s efforts, the ultimate goal is to establish a viable chapter where these duties will be divided amongst

several officers who will need to see what you've done and take it from there. The better the records you keep, the easier it will be for them to pick up where you left off.

## **The road ahead**

You will begin that most dreaded of all tasks, conducting meetings. You might begin with enough people to get started right away, or it might take some considerable time to find enough people. On that note, it is helpful to remember that this might be a long process. When you encounter other libertarians in the area who want to help, for goodness sake let them. You start out as a one man/woman show, but the whole point of this is to not remain that way. The one libertarian who shows up to your informal meeting & might even aggravate you a little at first could later turn out to be your most valuable asset. But also, don't bet the bank on finding a well-motivated Libertarian who will dive right in & do tons of work. Even at your founding convention, you should be prepared to run for a position in the county organization & it might be chairman.

## Chapter 4

### Finding Your Audience: Determining Your County Base

There are three types of libertarians in your county that serve as low-hanging fruit when you're attempting to establish first contact: current and former registered members of the Libertarian Party of New York, current and former registered members of the National Libertarian Party, and voters currently enrolled as Libertarian (LBT) with your County's Board of Elections. For the sake of actually getting your Chapter chartered, you only need seven current LPNY members to attend your Convention, but all three types together serve to create an impressive mailing list of individuals who are likely to be receptive to your message.

#### **Libertarian Party of New York (LPNY) Members**

The LPNY ([ny.lp.org](http://ny.lp.org)) keeps records of all their current and former members. In addition to their mailing addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses, they also record the last date of active membership. The Secretary of the LPNY is responsible for keeping these records, and can provide you with an Excel or Access spreadsheet of all the individuals in your county.

#### **National Libertarian Party Members**

The National LP (<http://www.lp.org/contact-us>) also keeps records of all their current and former members. You can get this information either directly from the National LP, or you can request a copy from the Secretary of the LPNY. In some cases, there will be redundancies between the LPNY Member List and the National LP Member List if an individual registered with both their state and national parties, but many times you will end up with a completely different, and equally important, set of individuals to call upon.

#### **Enrolled Libertarian Voters with the Board of Elections**

Each County has their own Board of Elections that is responsible for maintaining data on voter registration which they are required by the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to make available to anyone in the public who inquires. While you can call or email, usually your best bet is to go to their office and make your request directly. They can provide you with a CD copy of all the voter data for your county, or print out hard copies of specific queries for a fee (\$0.10 / sheet.) Individuals who enrolled as Libertarians are recorded as "LBT", but it's important to be aware that the libertarian option in many counties is usually "Other: \_\_\_\_\_" with a write-in answer to be provided by the individual registering to vote, and will frequently be recorded in their system incorrectly as either "LIB" (Liberal) or "OTH: BLANK." Thus, it would behoove you to not only request all voters enrolled "LBT", but also "LIB" and "OTH: BLANK" to ensure you do not miss anyone when putting together your mailing list.

While your County’s Board of Elections is legally obligated to provide you with this information, it is not altogether uncommon for them to drag their feet. In our experience, your best method of approach is to not only visit the Board of Elections in person, but also enlist the assistance of the Commissioner from the opposition party to the one currently in power as they will likely be more sympathetic and thus helpful. What this means, for example, is if your County is controlled by Democrats, enlisting the assistance of the Republican Commissioner at the BoE might prove more fruitful than going through the Democratic Commissioner.

### Other Sources

In addition to the individuals who have previously thrown in with the Libertarian Party, there are numerous organizations and clubs whose beliefs and political opinions would make them sympathetic to our cause. Examples include, but are not limited to, gun clubs and gun rights groups (e.g., S.C.O.P.E., Gun Owners of America, NRA); Gay, lesbian, transgender, bisexual and questioning (GLBTQ) groups such as campus-based clubs or PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays); Objectivists (e.g., Ayn Rand Institute); university and college political groups like Students for Liberty (SFL), Young Americans for Liberty (YAL), or an on-campus Libertarian Party; organizations that support decriminalization for narcotics like National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) or a county- or city-based Cannabis Movement; groups that are against eminent domain (the Castle Coalition; Institute for Justice) or mandatory minimums for drug offenders (Family Against Mandatory Minimums); and, organizations that are in favor of overturning wrongful convictions (The Innocence Project.) Finally, reaching out the libertarian-minded think-tanks, such as the Cato Institute, International Society for Individual Liberty (ISIL), or the Liberty Movement, can provide you with excellent networking opportunities to meet like-minded thinkers as well as access to some of today’s brilliant thinkers in the liberty movement.

Once you have all these lists, you can organize them by creating a single mailing list to help you notify libertarians in your county of your intention to start an official chapter. How you organize this list is entirely up to you, but below is a sample of the Excel spreadsheet used by Niagara County to help their former TCC and current Secretary keep track of their members, active or otherwise.

LAST	FIRST	ADDRESS	CITY	ZIP	EMAIL	PHONE	LPNY Member
Adams	John	1234 Liberty Way	Albany	12345	Foundingfather3@aol.com	716-555-1234	12/31/2015
Bates	Norman	678 Bates Motel	Anytown	56789	mamasboy@gmail.com	716-555-6789	12/31/2015
Mouse	Mickey	135 Mouse House	Disneyland	13579	jointheclub@yahoo.com	716-867-5309	12/31/2015

*\*Editor’s Note: To protect the confidentiality of the NCLP’s membership, we provided fictional member names.*

## Chapter 5

### Words That Work: Establishing First Contact

Now that you've put together your initial mailing list, you can begin the oftentimes challenging process of making contact. In commercial sales, it is often said that for every 100 businesses you cold-call (i.e., contact unsolicited), only one will result in new business. Even in politics, where others could undeniably benefit from what the Libertarian Party is offering, this rate of return holds true. In the case of the recently formed chapters in Erie and Niagara County, they both had mailing lists in the hundreds but barely managed to get their requisite seven members to attend their Convention, despite doing their due diligence and sending out frequent emails and letters, as well as making multiple phone calls and social media blasts to their target audience. While a 100:1 ratio can be discouraging, it's important to remember that every single person who joins forces with us today is one more person than we had yesterday.

#### **Do Your Research**

While you are essentially a one-man show as a TCC, you are still a representative of the LPNY and should keep that in mind when sending out communication. As such, you should make a point to familiarize yourself with both the LPNY's and the National LP's platforms to ensure you represent their views before you begin. That being said, ultimately what you choose to write comes entirely from you. In our experience, sincerity is best – especially when dealing with libertarians who are, by their very nature, suspicious of anyone in politics.

#### **Denotative v. Connotative Meaning**

Every word has both a denotative and connotative meaning. Denotation is the literal, objective textbook definition of a word or phrase; it's exactly what you would expect to find in Webster's Dictionary. Connotation, on the other hand, is the entirely subjective perception of a word; it's all the feelings and ideas, positive or negative, invoked when that word or phrase is employed. A prime example in American politics is the "illegal immigrant" versus "undocumented worker." Both terms have the same denotation, but "illegal immigrant" has a negative connotation so Republicans will use it, while Democrats pandering to the Latino vote prefer "undocumented worker."

This difference is useful when applied to another concept in communication: persuasion and social influence.

## Chapter 6

### Going to Convention: How to Lay a Successful Foundation for Your Chapter

Everything you have done up to this point is to get your Chapter to its Founding Convention, but you still have a lot of work to do. Aside from making sure you have done everything you are required to do in order to get chartered, you also need to lay a solid foundation for your Chapter, so you will continue to be successful and gain momentum going forward.

The Founding convention is essentially a big general meeting where bylaws are voted on & adopted & the chapter officers are elected. You may find yourself conducting informal meetings prior to the founding convention, they will follow a similar format excepting the election of officers & adoption of bylaws.

#### **Notifying Your Membership**

LPNY bylaws require you make a “good faith” effort to notify all registered LPNY members in your county of your intention to go to Convention. This can be as simple as sending out an email, posting an event notification on Facebook, or scheduling a Meetup, or it can be as involved as designing, printing and mailing out letters or postcards to every single person on your mailing list. Different TCCs have chosen different routes, but the one that is most likely to yield you the best rate of return at your Convention is to establish as much contact as possible. We recommend the following:

1. Set up an event on your Facebook page for your Chapter.
  - a. Invite everyone on your contact list, regardless of their interest or location.
  - b. Post it in every libertarian, area-specific, or politically-sympathetic group you belong to.
  - c. Opt to boost your post, so it reaches a wider audience.
  - d. Encourage members of your page to share it on their page, as well.
2. Schedule an event in Meetup and share it with everyone in your County-specific email address book, regardless of whether or not they belong to Meetup.
3. Email everyone on your mailing list about the event.
4. Send out letters or postcards notifying everyone else on your mailing list about the event.
  - a. Letters cost \$0.49 / each to mail, so you may want to consider going with postcards, as they cost \$0.35 / each.
    - i. To qualify for mailing at the First-Class Mail postcard price, it must be rectangular, at least 3-1/2 inches high x 5 inches long x 0.007 inches thick. No more than 4-1/4 inches high x 6 inches long x 0.016 inches thick.



- ii. You can buy cardstock at your local office supply store and a paper cutter, and use programs like Word to create your own template or use one of theirs, adjusting the fields and content according to what you want.
- 5. Schedule reminders for your Twitter, Google+ and Facebook accounts using Hootsuite for the days leading up to the event.
- 6. Make follow up phone calls with your membership, especially with the individuals who have already expressed interest in participating.
- 7. Send an email a week prior to your Convention date with the agenda, a copy of the bylaws you plan on adopting, details about each officer position and associated duties, and any other relevant data.

### **Drafting an Agenda**

How you craft your agenda is up to you, but many TCCs and Chairs opt to use *Robert's Rules of Order* as a guide. If you're unfamiliar, according to Wikipedia, "*Robert's Rules of Order* is the short title of a book, written by Brigadier General Henry Martyn Robert, containing rules of order designed to be adopted as parliamentary authority for use by a deliberative assembly. As such, it is a guide for conducting meetings."

Below is the suggested form for an agenda as outlined in *Robert's Rules in Plain English, Second Edition* by Doris P. Zimmerman:

- I. Call to Order
- II. Opening Ceremonies (optional)
  - a. Welcome remarks
  - b. Invocation (God first)
  - c. Pledge of Allegiance (country after God)
- III. Minutes of the Previous Meeting
- IV. Reports of the Officers
  - a. Report of the Treasurer
- V. Report of the Executive Board (annual meeting)
- VI. Reports of Standing Committees
- VII. Reports of Special Committees
- VIII. Special Orders
- IX. Unfinished Business and General Orders
- X. New Business
- XI. Announcements or Program (speakers, special business)
- XII. Adjournment

You are by no means obligated to use this agenda, particularly as many of the suggested items on this list will not even apply to your Founding Convention. In the appendix, we have included

the agendas of several counties from their Founding Conventions to help give you an idea of what those look like and what worked for them.

In accordance with Section III of the LPNY bylaws, the organizing Convention must be held, attended by seven LPNY members (dues-paying members) residing in the region. III.B.1.

4) No LPNY member residing in the region can be denied the right to attend the organizing Convention or join the County Organization once it is chartered. III.B.1.

5) A set of bylaws must be adopted at the organizing Convention covering:

a) Membership requirements (if any).

b) Provision for at least one annual Convention.

c) Procedures for selecting County officers and positions.

(Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, & State rep are elected positions, others may be appointed at the discretion of the Chair)

d) Procedures for amending the County By-Laws.

e) Procedures for endorsing candidates for public office.

f) Provision for division of treasury and other pooled resources (if there are any) in the event of a county's secession from a County Organization of more than one county to form a County Organization from a smaller included geographical unit. (Only required for a regional chapter)

So, you will need:

1. At least 7 (10 if succeeding) LPNY members (paid \$25 at [ny.lp.org](http://ny.lp.org)).

2. A set of bylaws (sample provided in appendix).

3. Libertarians Enrolled with the board of elections to serve as county officers.

4. A venue the appropriate size for your convention.

5. An agenda for the founding convention, sample follows.

A: Seating, Introductions:

B: Call to Order,

C: Roll Call/Determination of a Quorum (sign in sheet)

D: Adoption of the Agenda

E: Resolution to form the chapter, Adoption of Bylaws, Each member signs.

F: Election of County LP officers, (Chairperson, Vice-chair, Treasurer, Secretary LPNY state rep)

G: Speakers (if any)

H: Appointment of committees for Membership, Events, Fundraising, Elections

I. Unfinished Business and General Orders :

K. New Business :

L. Program, if applicable (special agenda items)

M. Announcements

N. "Good of the Order" (Any remaining questions?)

O. Adjournment.

The TCC serves as chair "pro term" of the meeting (or can appoint someone) until a chair is elected. A secretary pro term should also be appointed prior, so that meeting minutes (basic

outline of actions taken) can be recorded. "Members" of the meeting (as opposed to members of the organization that is about to be formed) are entitled to speak, make motions, engage in debate, and vote at the meeting until bylaws are adopted, at which point the bylaws dictate who may and may not vote, etc. A "member" of the meeting is anyone who is in the category of invited persons and is sincerely interested in the goals of the organization that is being formed. That would include any LPNY member living in the region being formed (including any such resident who joins the LPNY that day) and anyone else who was invited or would have been invited. However, anyone who is not in sympathy with the intended goals of the organization may be asked to leave (except LPNY members who reside in the region), as the sponsors have the right to have the organization fulfill the purpose they intend (so long as it comports with the requirements of the LPNY Bylaws if they wish to be chartered).

It is recommended that a simplified form of Robert's Rules of Order be adopted as parliamentary authority, this can simply be stated in your bylaws.

Know that the call of the meeting has the force of bylaws: any subject outside the scope of the call of the meeting may be ruled out of order by the chair or, if necessary, by the assembly. (This is not necessarily true if Robert's Rules of Order has not been adopted.)

Adopt the bylaws in a single vote, if you can. Otherwise, people will start voting on specific provisions and tinkering with them on the fly, often for no reason other than they want to feel important by putting their mark on the proceedings. Preferably, the bylaws should have been prepared in advance by someone or a committee prepared to defend it as written.

After the completion of the meeting, the minutes, bylaws, and evidence of "good faith effort" to notify the membership should be emailed to the LPNY secretary for review, so that the LPNY state committee can vote to approve your county's charter at the next state committee meeting, held the first Sunday of each month. Your organization is not truly official until this step is completed.

## Chapter 7

### Now what?

Great, now you've completed your steps. You got people together for your founding convention, adopted bylaws, elected officers, & been chartered by the state committee. Now, time to do things.

#### **Tabling**

Setting up a table at an event is harder than it looks. Generally you are required to provide everything from handouts (like brochures, copies of the US constitution, bumper stickers), Voter registration forms (can be downloaded & printed from county board of elections website) LPNY & National LP membership forms, maybe a computer or tablet with internet connection so people can sign up on the spot. Operation Politically Homeless quiz, the giant Nolan test is a good way to help people gauge where they belong on the political map is a handy tool. Have an attractive table, have an eye-catching banner, have some freebees. Always have volunteers dress appropriately, present a professional image. Always have someone in front of the table actively engaging passersby. This can be done in a variety of ways, such as "Have you heard of our Lord & Savior Ron Paul? (or Murray Rothbard)" or "Are you tired of having taxes so high you can barely afford your rent?" Try to engage this person & put a flyer in their hand, Ask them if they're registered to vote. Offer a voter registration form & assist them with filling it out (for example, checking the 'other' box & filling in Libertarian. & making sure this individual is residing in your county.) Consider incentives, a bumper sticker if they filled out a registration, maybe a t-shirt or mug or book if they signed up to the local, state or national LP. Buying books, t-shirts, or even bottles of water & candy bars in bulk for individual sale is a good idea, remember you can accept debit cards with the free "square" device if you have a smartphone.

#### **Opportunities**

- Focus on specific issues – Guns, gun rights orgs are fuming with republicans who abandoned them on the NY Safe Act.
- Showing up at functions – Show up at town halls, county fairs, get people out there & protest when a worthy cause shows up.
  - Activism, boots on the ground
- Presence at local events – County fairs
- Expanding social media to reach other groups
- Options for participation – introverts placement in comfortable situations
- Expanding options to give people room to grow
- Lead by example / support others
- Support at state level for local issues
- Share new ideas – credit for positive results
- Reaching out - promote – educate in schools
- Express positives

## **Fundraising**

Asking for money sucks, but even a well-designed website with creative donation options only nets so much cash. Pass the hat – Libertarians who attend meetings, few as they are, tend to throw in a few bucks when they can & this is helpful. These funds should be immediately be entrusted to the treasurer who will record the amount donated for the next treasurer's report. Try this at business meetings & social events. Try hosting events (BBQ, social events), Piggy back conventions on fun events, Issue driven sponsorship (candidate), Specialty nights (smaller), Speakers – sell tickets, Partnerships with institutions, corporate sponsors, YouTube Marketing, On line merchandise store, Piggy back on pre-existing conventions and events, Email/phone campaigns, Raffles at events or meetings.

## **Activism**

There are uncountable ways to do grassroots activism & many issues to focus on, such as a tax day protest at post office, Lawsuits (If one finds oneself lucky enough to have a libertarian lawyer in your area, this may be one of your most beneficial resources) Utilize the press, show people you are not afraid to challenge a corrupt law head on in court. People will respect a party of doers. Hand out flyers (effective?), Warning people about speed traps, Public bulletin boards, Letters to editor / op –ed, Protesting in public area, in front of city hall, ect. All of these are opportunities to earn media attention, then share all over social media, linking back to your website or social media page.

## **Campaigns**

There are probably hundreds of elected offices in every county that libertarians can run for, a list of these offices in your county can be provided by the LPNY. Not everyone needs to run for president. We face a steep challenge in terms of petition signature requirements, but it can be overcome. Below are some tips for carrying petitions that have proved helpful in the past.

### **Petitioning Tips** (Provided by Blay Tarnoff, LPNY secretary)

- Don't talk to anybody for more than 20 seconds (unless there are NO other people around). Anybody who does not sign in the first 20 seconds is very unlikely to ever sign; they just want to talk to you to convince themselves that you are nuts or to convince YOU that you are nuts or just to waste your time. Even if you can convince them to sign after, say a couple of minutes, you've just lost the opportunity to approach everyone else who passed by during that time. You could lose 10 sigs just for the chance to get one, which you probably won't get anyway.
- Carry at least three boards (the thinnest foam core you can find -- about 9 x 12 -- works great; it has no weight). Tape a statement of what we stand for on the backs (see sample attached).
- Always have a very friendly smile and ask people, "Excuse me, sir, do you live in (Town or county as applicable) If they say "yes" then thrust the petition into their hands and say, like you

are stating a sentence, not like you are asking a question, and with a look of concern but not unfriendly, and nodding your head "yes", "Would you sign this petition please? It's just to get more candidates on the ballot in November." (If you ARE the candidate, then you have to say something else. Try something like "Would you sign this petition to help me to appear on the ballot in November? I'm running for Town Council." and see how that works. Modify the speech as you see how it works.) (Remember: the attitude is that you are doing them a favor, not that they are doing you one. Never beg or ask for help.)

- If the signer objects for any reason, say "It's just to get the candidate (or 'me') on the ballot; it does not mean you are promising to support or vote for him/her/me; anybody should have a chance to run for office, don't you agree?" Most people will agree at that point. If not, move on.

- If the signer says "I never heard of him (you)" or "What does he (do you) stand for?" just turn over the board to show them what we stand for which you previously taped on the back.

- Once they take the petition, whether it is to read the back or to sign it, politely excuse yourself to approach someone else with another board.

- VERY IMPORTANT: when the first person comes back with the board, look at everything they filled in and make sure they filled in all the necessary information; for anything that's missing, ask them and YOU write it in (except for their signature, of course).

- ALSO VERY IMPORTANT: Once they agree to sign, SHUT UP, i.e. stop talking politics; I can't tell you how many people grabbed back the petition and crossed off their name because I said something I thought I was saying in solidarity that surprised them after they had signed.

- Also carry in your bag a few copies of Chris Garvey's laws regarding petitioning (also attached). If anyone tells you that you cannot petition on public property, be nice, ask if you can just tell them something, hand them a copy, and tell them that petitioning on publicly owned property is a federally protected right and that anyone who interferes with a petitioner can be fined up to \$1000 plus one year in jail plus attorney's fees. If they say they have to speak to someone about this, say OK but if you do, then interfering with you after that becomes a maximum \$10,000 fine plus 10 years in jail plus attorney's fees. It is probably a bluff if there are no Federal candidates on the petition, but it may work anyway.

- When approaching groups of people, especially lines like a line of people waiting for a movie, for example, **always approach from the rear so that people who you have not yet approached do not see your interaction with any previous signer.** The reason? Some people will say "yes" and some will say "no". But, as soon as one person says "no", the odds that the next guy will also say "no" is ten times greater if he heard the last guy say it. If you are in front of the crowd, everyone who heard the first "no" will also say "no", and everyone who hears them say "no" will also say "no", in a chain reaction that will not end until you finally get to someone who either

thinks for himself (extremely rare) or who didn't catch what was going on because he was preoccupied. Why do people do that? 1) They think the first guy "knows" something or 2) there is a natural human desire not to disappoint someone that works in the petitioner's favor but that guilty feeling is lessened when diluted by others (IOW, the person says to himself, "The first guy already made you feel bad so that guilt is not on me.").

And one more thing, if you are carrying two different petitions, modify the starting question to distinguish which petition the signer should be given. So, for example, if one petition were for an area in Ulster County and another were for an area in Greene County and people who didn't live in either area could sign either petition, instead of asking, "Do you live in Woodstock?" you could ask, "Do you live in Ulster County or Greene County?" Whatever their answer, your response is, "Great, then will you please sign this petition?" (If they say "neither" then hand them whichever petition you have more of.) IMPORTANT: Mark the top of each petition with, in this case, a "U" or a "G". Don't attempt to determine on the fly which petition to hand the person; you will have enough to keep you busy without adding to your confusion. Make it as simple as possible for yourself.

### **In closing**

With all this said, the work of a TCC is far too great to do without volunteers, assistance & money. While, of course business meetings will be run by the Chair, I advise separate committees of volunteers to work on each of the fields discussed here: Communication (Social media, PR, Fliers, Webmaster, e-mail), Fundraising (probably run by treasurer), Membership (Membership drives & "Tabling"), Campaigns (vetting, support), & Grassroots (Lawsuits, protests, Town hall meetings, letters to editors of local newspapers) Volunteers are very necessary, if you try to go it alone, you may burn out & get very little accomplished. Volunteers also are doing these things because we all care about the causes we support & are not getting paid to do these things. Sometimes, life gets in the way & we all need to remember that our volunteers are human too. (Never ever yell at a volunteer!) If a volunteer is not having success in one area, consider re-assigning them to an area better suited to their talents.