



LNC Meeting Minutes, May 27, 2004

To: Libertarian National Committee
From: Bob Sullentrup
CC: Joe Seehusen
Date: 5/27/2004
Re: May 27, 2004

Attendance

Attending the May 27, 2004 LNC meeting in Atlanta were: Ken Bisson, Mike Dixon, Mark Nelson, Mark Cenci, Geoff Neale, Bob Sullentrup, Bill Redpath, Steve Trinward, Fred Childress, Lee Wrights, David Owens, George Squyres, Sean Haugh, Mike Fellows, Mark Hinkle, M Carling and BetteRose Ryan.

Credentials Report

Geoff Neale reiterated his belief the April 6 election of Bob Sullentrup by the Executive Committee replacing Steve Givot as LNC Secretary was authorized by the Party Bylaws. The Bylaws empower the LNC to conduct business as it sees fit, including the adoption of its Policy Guide. Aside from a small number of items not including the replacement of officers, the Executive Committee is duly authorized by LNC policies to name a replacement.

Nevertheless, Geoff asked the LNC to reaffirm the EC's decision and put to rest procedural questions raised outside the meeting. Lee Wrights moved to reaffirm the election of Bob Sullentrup as LNC Secretary. Sean Haugh seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Geoff also reported California removed Joe Dehn as its representative. According to California bylaws, the move triggered a ripple effect among those next in line. Joe was replaced by Dr. Lieberman and M Carling moved up to occupy Dr. Lieberman's slot as alternate. Mark Hinkle apparently moved up to senior LNC rep as opposed to junior LNC rep in that region.

Mark Nelson reported Jeremy Keil replaced Bob Sullentrup as Region 8 alternate.

Paperwork Check

Neither Sean Haugh's nor Mark Nelson's reports were in the LNC booklet.

Potential Conflicts of Interest.

Sean Haugh was named treasurer for a 527 group named Freedom Ballot Access.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved after Bill Redpath requested a report on ballot access.

Approval of minutes of LNC Meeting

Page 3 of 17 of the minutes of the LNC meeting of February 21, 2004 in Austin noted the approval of the September minutes. That section should have reflected the December minutes in St. Louis.

Owing to this discrepancy, the group declined to approve the minutes. Bob Sullentrup will check with Steve to resolve the discrepancy and submit the revision at the earliest opportunity.

Action Item: Bob Sullentrup

Chair's Report

Geoff Neale reported that while the Raiser's Edge project is resource constrained, the hardware has been purchased. The technical specifications make it out to be a huge box with protection against erratic power supplies, redundant (thus reliable) disk arrays, virus checking and, allaying the concerns raised by a certain member from a southwestern state just east of southern California, minimal carburetion as well. Technicians are in the Watergate office this week to take advantage of slow office activity with the convention underway.

Conversion of the data, some of which go back 27 years, will proceed in 'passes'. A pass typically takes 24 hours and involves follow up checks and verifications. The work had to be preceded by an analysis of some 3500 "source codes" to reclassify data. The first pass will occur the week of June 21st, with the 20-th through the 30-th being the best time of the month to do so based on monthly work patterns.

Geoff hopes to complete the work in two passes, not the three budgeted, which would save money if that can be accomplished.

Chair's Report

Mark Nelson moved to accept the convention report at this point rather than later. Sean Haugh seconded. Motion carried.

Geoff reported the convention passed its budgeted revenue target around May 17. The decision to lower costs on the booths and tables resulted in a greater volume that increased revenue over the Indianapolis convention. Also, convention registrations reflect a richer mix with more gold packages including the Neil Boortz breakfast.

Increased revenues will allow a second camera floating about the convention.

Expenses are mixed with catering, already up 25% over Indianapolis, reaching to 35%. We are under budget on printing costs and travel. Two weeks ago the commitment based on 1952 rooms was satisfied. Had 80% of that number not been reached, the Party would have been liable for 50% of the charges of the amount below that mark. Peak bookings are 437 on Friday or Saturday night, reflecting a number we will need in future years to determine the feasibility of prospective sites.

This convention recognizes a more complete set of expenses including state placards that were not in the convention analysis from Indy. Perhaps they were donated. Next time the plan is to reuse them and save the \$3.1k expense.

In addition, the impact on staff resources is reflected in an arrangement to target 10% of proceeds back to staff expense. While this may be inadequate, it begins to reflect some of the cost in a way that had not been done before. Geoff estimates staff work may amount to 1-2 man years on the convention.

The Jimmy Vaughn concert remains a big risk. We need 750 to break even and have 300 so far. Geoff is expecting a large walk-up crowd.

C-SPAN is covering the 5-6:30 debate, limited to Nolan, Russo and Badnarik. Geoff created a metric to gauge candidate activity. These three scored roughly 90, 45 and 45 with the others doing no better than four. The Presidential Debate is not covered in the Bylaws, and the action this year is intended to put the best face forward to the country and not simply turn over our stage to someone who might otherwise walk off the street, sign the pledge and collect 30 signatures.

Geoff has a MS Access database which handles credentialing, causing the Credentials Committee to ask, "what's left for us to do?"

We can expect a post convention report at the next LNC meeting in August or September.

Treasurer's Report

Bill Redpath noted the significant positive trends in our financial position. The net fund balance, assets less liabilities, has improved from (507)k to (205)k over 2003. In the first four months the improvement continued another \$100k .

The remaining unresolved item involves something the auditors pointed out – deferred revenues primarily from life memberships that should be recognized little by little as the income derived from those memberships are expended over the 'life', or average or expected lives, of the donors. The EC had decided to defer this determination until after the Raiser's Edge implementation.

Deferred revenues, revenue recognition, auditor's qualifications, decided not to estimate liability until after raiser's edge. Strictly an accounting mechanism, not cash flow,

Rod Severson reported latent accounts receivables, some dating as far back as 1999, have been cleaned up following auditor's recommendations. This has resulted in the balance of receivables being more current and more accurate.

Mark Nelson reported the Executive Director has directed staff that the salary associated with the *LP News* be recorded as an *LP News* expense. It was budgeted in the Salary Expense line of Management. This move was acceptable to the LNC. Accordingly, the associated salaries should be moved to the *LP News* line.

Executive Director's Report Update

Joe Seehusen, celebrating his one-year anniversary of employment, pointed to progress evident in several areas:

- \$400k improvement in position and cash flow
- Reassertion of control in several areas including the web site and accounting
- Membership is rebounding
- *LP News* with Dan Cloud is once again on solid footing
- Joe pointed to the solid performance of his staff and highlighted the contributions of Rod Severson and George Getz as exceptional
- The LP continues to make news, citing the LP's threat to Bush noted in recent articles with the point being the LP is relevant

Joe is scouting locations for the 2006 convention already and laid out his criteria including having strong local party as well as a location in the “center of it” that’s “inspiring to be there”.

On the down side, staffing remains strained and there is no infrastructure available to quickly ramp up to take advantage of the interest that typically stems from a presidential campaign.

These concerns and others Joe committed to raise with the next LNC in the form of a “heads up” list.

Legal Report

Bill Hall mentioned his report on legal matters highlighted by the perceived conflict between the Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws. The LNC requested Bill broach the topic in his next report.

Ballot Access

Bill Redpath noted the current behemoth of ballot access fights, Texas, was successful though challenging. The Greens and Reformers have not been successful there. Ralph Nader is suing to be on the ballot, but wants the same set of laws facing independents as parties. Accordingly, Nader’s suit will likely not help the LP. Texas was unusually tough with universities tossing petitioners, something unheard of before, and police running people off what was clearly public property. These are issues we will need to address.

In Oklahoma we have gathered over 20000 signatures and filed a lawsuit for access. Chances are good for a favorable outcome.

South Dakota is certified for ballot access with over 8000 signatures.

In West Virginia we have handed in 19000-20000 signatures where we need 13000. We await the results of the gubernatorial deadline in May, and still have some time before the August presidential deadline.

Maryland is finished and we await word on the outcome.

These states should be able to complete their ballot access drives independently: VA, TN RI, NJ, MN LA, IA, AR and possibly NH.

Three large states that need large numbers of signatures include IL, PA and NY.

Several states require 5000 or fewer signatures and include AL, CT, DC, ND, ME, and KY.

Bill estimates we will need \$40-45k each month in June, July and August to secure ballot access, or a total of roughly \$125k.

Questions Regarding Reports Submitted in Writing

George Squyres reported the work by the Platform Committee pertaining to Strategy 3, the platform reformat, is complete and asked for the support by delegations.

Action Items Previously Submitted in Writing

Mark Nelson moved the LNC accept the Audit report as contained in tab 6 of the booklet and to direct staff to work with the next LNC to incorporate the recommendations.

The motion passed unanimously.

The LNC also complemented Rod Severson’s work, and the LNC formally commended Rod Severson for his dedication and efforts.

Other Reports Not Previously Submitted in Writing

Mike Fellows mentioned that for states whose candidates can file at their conventions to ensure a notary is on hand to simplify the process. BetteRose Ryan noted a similar benefit in Colorado.

Action Items Not Previously Submitted in Writing

None

Other Reports Not Previously Submitted in Writing

Sean Haugh commended the LNC and expressed appreciation and pride in his working with fellow LNC members.

Ken Bisson offered the Board Member's Prayer and asked they be committed to the minutes:

Lord, Thou knowest I have been elected to the Board of Directors.

Keep me from becoming talkative and possessed with the idea that I must express myself on every subject.

Release me from the craving of getting involved with everyone's affairs.

Keep my mind free from recital of endless detail, Give me the wings to get to the point.

Seal my lips when I am inclined to tell about my complaints. My love to talk about them has grown sweeter as they are oft-repeated.

Teach me the glorious lesson that (occasionally) I may be wrong! Make me thoughtful, not nosy; helpful, not bossy.

With my vast storehouse of wisdom and experience, it does seem a pity to not use it at all.

But, Thou knowest Lord, that I want a few friends when my term expires.

Opportunity for Public Comments

Pat Dixon, of Texas thanked all the participants and donors who gathered 80000 signatures

Adam Mayer, chair of Oregon, thanked the LNC for considering Oregon as the site of its 2006 convention

Bill Redpath, noted Jim Lark collected 2000 signatures in Virginia and also helped in West Virginia

Barry Dively of Pennsylvania recommended a third parties forum to discuss strategies and collaborate on actions to overcome common obstacles such as ballot access.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the LNC is scheduled for May 31, 1:00pm in Atlanta.