

Libertarian Party of California Executive Committee Meeting Minutes for 12-20-2003

1. Call to Order at 10:08 am

Officers:

PRESENT Aaron Starr, Chair
PRESENT Lawrence Samuels, Northern Vice Chair
PRESENT Mark Selzer, Southern Vice Chair
PRESENT Monica Kadera, Treasurer
PRESENT Daniel Wiener, Secretary

Regional Representatives:

PRESENT Ed Bowers, Region 61
PRESENT Steve Cicero, San Diego
ABSENT Mark Hinkle, Santa Clara
ABSENT Joe Dehn (Santa Clara alternate)
ABSENT Bruce Cohen, Orange County
PRESENT Timothy Johnson (Orange County alternate)
PRESENT Frank Manske, East Bay
ABSENT Terry Floyd (East Bay alternate)

At-Large:

PRESENT Ted Brown
ABSENT John Scott Ballard
PRESENT M Carling
PRESENT Bruce Dovner
ABSENT Rick Nichol (alternate)

2. There were no public comments

3. The following items were added to Old Business:

7d. Website (10 min)

7e. Status of Regions (15 min)

The following items were added to New Business:

8d. Rental of membership list to Senate candidates (10 min)

8e. Rental of membership list to Scott Wilson (10 min)

8f. Positions on March 2004 ballot propositions (10 min)

4. There was nothing on the Consent Calendar

5. Officers & Staff reports:

- a. Chair. Aaron Starr is once again employed and can no longer work full time on the Libertarian Party.

The membership test mailings are deliberately being delayed ten days until after the New Year. 3,000 pieces in each of two mailings will be sent to registered Libertarians who voted in the last election or recently registered. If the results are good, one or both of the pieces will be rolled out to the rest of the list of registered Libertarians in California.

Work has progressed on a proposed "People's Veto Act" initiative measure which would streamline the referendum process and make it possible to repeal existing statutes. Draft wording for the initiative is complete. Aaron spoke to John Dunlap, head of the California Restaurant Association, who headed up the effort to put SB2 (the new mandatory employer health insurance law) on the ballot. Even though they collected ample signatures, that referendum drive has just been struck down by a court over a technicality. Dunlap is obviously very unhappy, and is very interested in the People's Veto Act. He's setting up a January meeting in Sacramento for a presentation to a lot of heavy hitters.

Aaron is proposing a new project in 2004, bigger than Operation Breakthrough. It would target existing elected officials to urge them to switch to the LP. There are 29,000 elected officials

in CA – schools, city councils, special districts, etc. Judge James Gray has agreed to sign a letter which will ask them to join and help lead the Libertarian Party to greater influence. Obviously very few if any higher-level or partisan office holders will switch, but some low-level ones may. If 1 out of 1000 did so, it would be well worth while.

- b. Northern Vice-Chair. A big victory was scored in Monterey county, where Measure Q (a 1/2% sales tax hike for the county hospital) failed to get a 2/3 Yes vote even though proponents spent about half a million dollars and outspent opponents 100 to 1.
- c. Southern Vice-Chair. Kern County is now having meetings, with ten people rejoining and more registering Libertarian. Imperial County now has a Chair and Vice-Chair pro-tem. Mark is trying to get his public access TV show on in every city in California.
- d. Secretary. Lori Adasiewicz has moved to Maine and is getting married. Dan Wiener has been selected by the Operations Committee as the new Secretary pending a decision by this meeting. Lori still has all the Secretarial records so it will be a while before the transition can be completed.
- e. Treasurer. The current budget shows everything on-track. The current-year surplus is \$36,720, giving a total cumulative surplus to date of \$50,311. Much of that positive balance has been built up in anticipation of election-year expenditures, so it will be drawn down in 2004. Administrative and office work is being done by Aubri Webb. The absence of an Executive Director has save about \$4 thousand per month (gross), but that absence will really be felt now that Aaron Starr is again employed. The "Actual vs Budget" summary chart is available on-line at:
http://www.peoplesveto.org/lp/2003_12_20_LPC_budget.jpg [152 KB file]

6. 2004 Budget Adoption

The proposed budget was reviewed and discussed. No changes were made. Lawrence Samuels moved to adopt the budget as presented. M seconded the motion. It was passed unanimously (12-0) on a roll-call vote. The FY 2004 budget is available on-line at:
http://www.peoplesveto.org/lp/2004_LPC_budget.jpg [139 KB file]

7. Old Business

- a. The Sept. 20, 2003 minutes were adopted (after a minor correction) without objection.
- b. Daniel Wiener was elected as the new Secretary by a vote of 11-0-1 (Dan Wiener abstained).
- c. M Carling was elected unanimously by voice vote to replace Lori on the Operations Committee.
- d. Bruce Dovner volunteered to become webmaster for the LPC web site and to upgrade all the information on that site, including a listing of all LPC candidates and regional officers and recent ExCom minutes. M moved to appoint Bruce webmaster, and the motion was approved unanimously by a voice vote.
- e. The status of regions was reviewed. M Carling has a Beta version of the membership database which is slightly more accurate than the one on the LPC web site. Regional chairs will be sent access passwords. Region 28, Napa County, has no known leadership or contact person; it was moved to deactivate Region 28 and passed without objection. Regions 37, 42, 44, 45, and 67 are now compliant. It's possible that additional regions are compliant, but Lori's Secretarial records must be obtained to make sure. And in at least one known case (Region 27) an email to Lori has bounced back. Since all regions should be in the process of holding annual elections and noticing their membership, it is hoped that any remaining problems will soon be cleared up.

8. New Business

- a. Terry Floyd & Steve Cicero were previously appointed to the Credentials Committee. They need to get lists of convention delegates from Regions. How many convention delegates each region will have shall be determined as of 12/31/2003; M Carling will take action to produce a list, and the Secretary will distribute it by 1/20/2004. Phillip Heath was added to the Credentials Committee without objection.
- b. M Carling gave a brief convention report. He has held discussions with hotels for 2005, but it is still too early for commitments.

- c. Aaron gave a brief synopsis of events preceding Cullene Lang's termination of membership in the LPC. There were some questions and some discussion regarding Cullene's email request for reinstatement. Cullene was not present and no motion was made.
- d. Daniel Wiener moved to offer the use of the LPC mailing list to the two U.S. Senate candidates, Gail Lightfoot and Jim Gray, under standard terms. Motion seconded and passed by voice vote.
- e. Frank Manske moved to allow Scott Wilson the use of the LPC mailing list for his Shut Em Down campaign under standard terms. Seconded and Passed 8-0-4. There was considerable concern that Scott might suffer a significant financial loss from such a mailing, and that he should be strongly discouraged from proceeding.
- f. Propositions on the March, 2004 ballot:
 - 55. School Bond. The LPC ExCom voted 12-0 to take a position in opposition.
 - 56. State Budget and Tax "Reform" package. Reduces the vote the Legislature needs to pass a budget, from 2/3 to 55%. The LPC ExCom voted 12-0 to take a position in opposition.
 - 57. Bond to cover 2003 deficit. The LPC ExCom voted 12-0 to take a position in opposition.
 - 58. Balanced budget act. Ted Brown reported that Tom McClintock (who's writing the argument against Prop 57) had contacted Richard Rider and asked him to write an argument against Prop 58. Ted read Richard's argument, which detailed the many loop-holes and flaws in the measure. The LPC ExCom voted 12-0 to take a position in opposition.

Ed Bowers will send out a press release announcing the Libertarian Party's opposition to these Propositions.

- g. An Open Primary initiative was being circulated for the Nov. 2004 ballot. This measure would have severe deleterious effects on the LP and other minor parties. Richard Winger contacted Steve Westly (the principal sponsor and financial backer) to express his view that the measure is unconstitutional. The argument, based on previous Supreme Court rulings, is that the initiative would restrict ballot access since minor parties would be barred from the November ballot and no candidate can win on the primary ballot even if that candidate receives a majority of the vote. Westly has asked Richard to meet with him, and meanwhile signature-gathering efforts have been suspended. Richard requested a motion by the LPC indicating our opposition to the initiative as presently written; he's already gotten other minor parties to oppose it. He thinks this will strengthen his hand when negotiating with Westly. M moved that the LPC express its opposition to the Voter Choice Open Primary initiative and express its support for Instant Runoff Voting as a preferred solution to the concerns of the proponents. Seconded and Passed 10-0-2.

9. Committee Reports:

- a. Newsletter - The newsletter has a monthly cost of \$800 for printing, \$0 for postage (since it's wrapped around the national LP newsletter), \$350 for the editor, \$325 for the graphic artist, and about \$50 for incidentals, or roughly \$1,500 total. That's under 40 cents per copy for 4,000 copies. Mark Selzer suggested occasionally inserting voter registration forms into the newsletter; the forms themselves would be provided by the state at no cost to the LPC, but postage might increase and there'd be some insertion cost. A motion was made and passed 8-1-3 to investigate the extra cost.
- b. Member Acquisition & Retention (general) - Dan Wiener reported on progress with Google on-line advertising plans to recruit new members. Web page designs should soon be ready for test runs.
- c. Member Acquisition & Retention (specific issue) - No report
- d. Member Communications - No report
- e. Fundraising - No report
- f. Legislation - No report
- g. Events Planning & Oversight - The revised 2004 convention contract is ready for signing. No copies were available, so it will be put to an email ballot this coming week. Aaron noted significant items: It will be a 2-day convention, March 13-14, held in the main hall without breakout rooms. Business will be interspersed with speakers and other events. There will also be a Presidential debate Friday night (March 12). In order to eliminate "free rider" subsidies, the Convention Contractor will have the option of charging delegates a hall access fee in an amount not to exceed the Hotel's published cost of renting the hall (\$2,500 per day) divided by 125 delegates (i.e., \$20 per day). This fee will not apply to non-delegate observers, and the Contractor

- has indicated he intends to waive it for students. Delegates who buy any convention package will not have to pay the fee; it will be built into the cost of the package. A motion was made to support the provision in the contract allowing for the above hall access fee; it was Seconded and Passed 9-3.
- h. Infrastructure Development - M will add a function to the membership database which will allow downloading into an Excel spreadsheet.
 - i. Awards & Recognition - Recent attempts to recognize regions have failed for two reasons: They were excessively complex; and individuals, not regions, are motivated by awards and recognition. The committee is working on new awards for individuals and is aiming to make the new award program as simple as possible.
 - j. Volunteer & Staff Development - Nothing major
 - k. Candidate Recruitment & Elected Officials - Ted Brown reported that we've recruited 74 candidates for 72 partisan positions. This number was depressed partly due to the lack of National LP emailings urging people to file for Congressional seats (only one was sent out). The two contested LP primaries are for U.S. Senate (Gail Lightfoot vs Jim Gray) and 13th State Senate (John Webster vs Mike Laursen). In 9 races (3 Congressional, 1 State Senate, and 5 Assembly) the Libertarian is the only other candidate on the ballot. Bruce Dovner provided lists of registered Libertarians to candidates seeking signatures to qualify for the ballot. Tim Johnson and others complained about the level of useless chatter on the LPC-candidate email list; Ted Brown needs to moderate it to keep it on topic or serious candidates will unsubscribe or ignore it. The other minor parties have only 30 candidates combined on the ballot (21 of which are Green); Ed Bowers will send out a press release.
 - l. Candidate Training & Support - No report
 - m. Media Relations - Nothing major
 - n. Visual Presentation - No report
 - o. Voter Registration - Nothing major
 - p. Program Committee Coordinator - Bruce Dovner is trying to get committee members from regions.
 - q. Audit Committee - Tim Johnson was appointed Chair of the Audit Committee, and Dave Hollist and Jerry Douglas were appointed as members, without objection. An audit report will be completed by the end of January.
10. The next Executive Committee meeting will be held at 5 pm on Sunday, March 14, 2004 at the end of the state convention at the San Jose Doubletree Hotel.

The next Executive Committee teleconference call will be held on Sunday, December 28, 2003 at 11 am.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:34 pm.