

LNC Executive Committee Meeting

Teleconference

6 June 2001

REVISED DRAFT

Present: Jim Lark
Dan Fylstra
Steve Givot
Deryl Martin
Joe Dehn
Michael Gilson de Lemos

Also Present: Mark Cenci
Lois Kaneshiki (joined during setting of agenda)
Ben Scherrey (joined during setting of agenda)
Richard Schwarz

Staff: Steve Dasbach

Lark called the meeting to order at 8:35pm EDT.

Item: Setting of Agenda

Gilson suggested adding an item for discussion of LP News coverage of the Willis matter. This item was added.

Givot noted that he was still getting proposed changes to the minutes of the 23 May and 30 May meetings. Consideration of these minutes was deferred to the next meeting.

Item: Chair's Remarks

Lark described his plans for sending requests for information concerning the Willis matter to various people. He said he hoped to start sending such requests out that night.

Lark expressed thanks to Bette Rose Smith for her service as Colorado chair, and congratulations to Roger Taylor for becoming Hawaii chair.

There was discussion of the way in which requests for information should be sent to ensure that they get through and to have the best chance of getting a response, including such issues as e-mail vs. paper mail and friendly vs. formal. There was general agreement that the Chair should decide these things taking into account the various suggestions that were offered.

Dehn said his main concern is that the process not be dragged out.

There was a discussion of the possibility that some people might not respond due to concerns about getting into legal problems.

Fylstra said that he regretted that so much time was being spent on this investigation.

Item: National Director's Report

Dasbach said that the financial situation was improved, that we no longer had any payables due over 60 days, and that there was adequate cash for the upcoming UMP distribution.

Dasbach said that he had not yet authorized use of national funds for the Ohio ballot drive, but that petitioning had begun with local funds so that they could start getting signatures at a reasonable price. He said that the delay in availability of national funds would not have any immediate effect on the overall cost, but if the delay lasted more than a month the cost would start going up.

Dasbach reported that he had met with Mike Dixon to discuss fundraising.

He said that the preparation of a monthly budget was mostly complete.

He said that the office was short on staff because Crickenberger and the interns were working on petitioning.

Martin noted that August would be heavy on expenses including three payroll payments.

Dasbach noted that the two SPT meetings would be an expense in July. He said that he would be proposing an increase in the budget for SPT expenses because both the number of participants and the number of meetings had turned out to be larger than anticipated when the original budget was constructed.

Dasbach discussed various numbers from his spreadsheet report.

There was a discussion of the counts of office holders, including issues such as: how it is determined who is a "Libertarian" office holder, appointed vs. elected, and number of offices vs. number of people holding some office.

Gilson asked why there would ever be a question about funds being available for the UMP distribution. Dasbach said that such payments were given the highest priority, and that since it is a big payment that is always due in the middle of a month it is normally handled by making sure that enough cash is held from the pledge collection that is done at the beginning of that month. He said he always keeps this and payroll in mind when deciding whether there is enough cash to proceed with other things.

Givot asked about several revenue items that appeared to be below budget. Dasbach said that direct mail prospecting revenue could not come in until we started doing prospecting, which we could not do for lack of cash. He said that the pledge program was experiencing lack of growth and some dropoff, and that he was planning efforts to promote it. He said that there was still time to do enough telemarketing to the house list to bring this item up to budget, but that he was waiting until there was something suitable to call about. He said that major donor revenue was low because Crickenberger had not had time to work on it. He said that Internet/WWW revenue was not really as low as it looked because some online contributions had been counted under another category.

Item: Revenue/Reserve/CDs

Martin reported on his decision not to purchase a CD for the reserve at the end of May as scheduled. He said that it had been suggested that he should have checked with the EC before making this decision, but that the situation had not been clear at the time of the 23 May meeting and that there had been no time to discuss it at the 30 May meeting. He said the timing of revenue and expenses did not allow for the purchase without continuing to hold accounts payable past due. He said that one vendor with a payable more than 90 days past due had been getting very anxious. He said that Dasbach, Dunbar, and he had all agreed that it was preferable to pay the past due bills than to purchase an additional CD. He said that the past due situation had been cleared up for now and that he did not want us to rush into any policy decisions.

Lark said that he did not want to create problems with vendors and asked if the vendor was still concerned.

Dasbach said that there was no indication that there would be a problem with them and that Dunbar had sent an apology letter with the payment.

Givot moved that the EC expresses support for the Treasurer's decision.

Gilson said that while we are investigating a policy violation by Willis we should not be allowing what look like new ones.

Dehn moved to substitute that the EC approves a deferral of the purchase until the end of June. He said that the EC's authority to do this was implied by the fact that the EC was authorized to borrow from money already in the fund. He said that it would be better to go on record as having the EC approve this step rather than leave it to the Treasurer whose authority was less clear. He said that deferring it to the end of June would allow enough time to re-evaluate things without saying that the purchase could be put off indefinitely.

Givot said that what had been done was not borrowing because no CDs had been cashed in. He said that the planned purchase was just like any other budgeted expense which it was appropriate not to make if money was not available.

Fylstra said we were spending too much time on this and it showed that the policy was flawed.

Dehn said that this policy was not like a regular budget item because a specific schedule had been set by the LNC as a compromise with the original idea of putting money aside right away, and so this schedule should not be overridden without direct EC approval.

The motion to substitute failed by a vote of 2 (Dehn, Gilson) to 3 (Fylstra, Givot, Martin) with Lark abstaining.

The main motion as originally proposed passed by a vote of 3 (Dehn, Givot, Fylstra) to 0 with three abstentions (Lark, Gilson, Martin).

Item: Center for Voting and Democracy

Lark said that he had passed on the request from CVD for endorsements relating to proportional representation and instant runoff voting but that he did not think we should make such endorsements because there was not enough agreement among Libertarians about the issue.

Dehn said that while he favored these approaches, proposals to add them to the Platform had been made and failed so he agreed that we could not endorse them at this time.

Givot agreed.

Gilson suggested that we pass the request along to state parties. Dehn said that some state and local groups have already endorsed them.

Martin said it was something that was being considered by the SPT.

Item: LP News Coverage

Dehn said that it was clear that there had to be coverage, the only question was how much needed to be said at this stage. He noted that he had distributed a list of topics that might be included.

Dasbach said that even without any EC action on this there will be coverage, and he said that the Chair would have an opportunity to review what was going to be published.

Givot said that the EC should not get involved and that the decisions should be left to the Chair. He said that the coverage should be used to ask members to provide information.

Dehn said that he understood that the Chair wanted input from the EC and that if we were going to discuss what Givot thought should be included we should also discuss other people's suggestions.

Gilson suggested that the Chair take both Givot's and Dehn's suggestions.

Lark invited additional comments by e-mail.

Dasbach said that he would see that Winter worked on this story early so there would be plenty of time for review.

Dehn asked if anybody had any problem with any of the things he had suggested.

Dasbach said that it looked like too much to cover for now.

Dehn clarified that he was not saying that every item in his list of suggestions needed to have a whole section in the coverage, but that they were all things that should be touched on somehow.

Item: Application of Resolutions to Howell Campaign

Lark said that there was sentiment that list rentals and ads by a Carla Howell campaign should be given heightened scrutiny due to the involvement of Michael Cloud, but that Elias Israel had objected to this on the basis that it was unfair. He said that he understood the concerns that had been raised at the last meeting, but that the discussion had been hurried, that there wasn't any evidence of specific involvement by Cloud in the Willis matter, and that he preferred to leave this decision to staff.

Dasbach said that his understanding was that the recently passed resolutions did not require special treatment in this case but that he wanted to be sure of the EC's intent.

Dehn asked if there had been any request from the Howell campaign. Dasbach said there had been none, but requests could come with short notice and he did not want to be left not knowing how to respond.

There was discussion of how requests from typical customers and controversial customers would normally be handled. Dasbach said that the decision would normally be based on the content of the material, not who was the customer.

Givot said that the issue was one of a person who had been involved with the Browne campaign when Willis violated policy, and if he knew about it and was now involved in another campaign there could be a concern.

Dasbach said when there had been a concern about Cisewski we had still rented our list to the Kubby campaign, taking precautions similar to what was specified later in the Cisewski settlement. Givot suggested treating this case similarly.

Lark said it is clearly a case of someone who was involved with Willis but there was no direct evidence of wrongdoing on his part so he feels queasy about treating the campaign he is working on now specially.

Fylstra said he agrees with Lark and thinks we should not be considering this at all. He said we should operate on the basis of "innocent until proven guilty".

Givot said that our policy should be that people should not be treated differently on the basis that they had been active in a campaign.

Dehn said such a policy would provide no guidance, since it did not adequately distinguish this situation. He said that Cloud was not merely active in the Browne campaign, but was specifically identified with the fundraising letter activity that was the subject of Willis' misrepresentation, and also had been in charge of the campaign at the beginning when the whole question of work by Willis and Winter first arose. He said he did not see why it was considered a problem to apply the EC approval policy

in this case, because as a practical matter normal LP News and mailing schedules would allow enough time to get such approval.

Fylstra said we should not add extra obstacles without a concrete reason and that this was micromanagement.

Givot moved that the Howell campaign be treated the same as anyone else.

The motion passed by a vote of 3 (Fylstra, Givot, Martin) to 2 (Dehn, Gilson) with Lark abstaining. Gilson said he voted no because he needed more information.

Item: Remarks for the Good of the Party

Lark reported on his recent travels.

Gilson commented on Florida's success in retaining membership.

Item: Future Meetings

Lark noted that the next meeting is scheduled for 20 June.

He also noted that the regular schedule called for the following meeting to be on Independence Day and suggested we might want to change it. No decision was made.

Gilson moved to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:24pm EDT.
