

LNC Executive Committee Meeting

Teleconference

June 22, 1999

Present: David Bergland, Chair
Hugh Butler, Vice Chair
Steve Givot, Secretary
Joe Dehn

Staff: Steve Dasbach, National Director
Ron Crickenberger, Political Director (Joined during the Archimedes discussion)

Also present: John Buttrick (AZ), At-Large Representative
Ken Bisson (IN), Region 3 Representative
Dan Fylstra (NV), Region 2 Alternate (joined at the end of Web Site RFP discussion)

The meeting was called to order by Bergland at 8:36 EDT.

Item: Web Site Design Request for Proposal

Dasbach reported that he has sent copies of the draft Request for Proposal (RFP) to Dehn, Fyistra, Butler and Bergland. He said that he had received comments from Dehn and Flystra and is awaiting comments from Butler and Bergland before redrafting the RFP and sending it to potential bidders.

Dasbach asked Butler for comments as to whether the degree of specificity in the RFP is sufficient.

Butler asked how many firms would be bidding on the job.

Dasbach said that the RFP would be sent to at least three firms. He said that three firms had expressed continuing interest in the project.

Butler said that bringing in a large number of bids would present both advantages and disadvantages. He said that we may receive a large number of inferior proposals, but that by sending it to many firms we may attract bids which suggest ways to improve the project.

Bergland asked whether the budgeted amount of the project is \$50,000.

Dasbach confirmed that \$50,000 is the budgeted amount. He said that he expected that each vendor would respond with a description of what that vendor would deliver for the \$50,000 available.

Givot asked whether it was prudent to identify the \$50,000 budget to vendors. A discussion on that topic ensued.

Dasbach said that the next draft of the RFP would be sent to the entire Executive Committee.

Givot asked about possibly announcing the availability of the RFP in LP News.

Dasbach said that there was probably insufficient time to do that, but that he had no problem with sending an announcement to the LP's announcement email list.

Item: Financial Report

Dasbach reported on the current financial status. He referred to the report which he had previously distributed to Executive Committee members. He said that things are going well, although the funding for the OK ballot drive is not yet available. He said that this does not present a problem right now, because the individual who will be starting that drive is not planning to start work on it immediately.

Bergland asked about the \$10,000 of currently outstanding Archimedes pledges shown in the financial report.

Dasbach said that this is a single, uncollected pledge that should be forthcoming.

Butler asked Dasbach where the funding for the web site project would come from given that OK ballot drive and next Archimedes mailing are not currently funded.

Dasbach said that half of the anticipated cost has been pledged and that he expects the balance to be raised by an email appeal.

Item: Archimedes Status Report

Dasbach reported that the total cost of the Archimedes mailing was about \$330,000. He said he currently estimates that between \$245,000 and \$250,000 will be received in response to the Archimedes mailing.

Givot asked whether -- in light of the \$80,000 to \$85,000 projected loss from the current mailing -- Dasbach was concerned that the loss on the next million piece mailing might be greater.

Dasbach said that a portion of the next mailing will be to new lists, with older fatigued lists being rotated out. He said that he continues to believe that \$110,000 would be sufficient to cover the largest anticipated loss from the next mailing.

Givot asked when the next mailing is scheduled to be sent.

Dasbach said that it would be sent in late July. He said that delaying that mailing by more than a few weeks would make it impossible to do a third mailing in 1999 that would not come too close to year end holidays.

Givot asked how Dasbach expected to raise the \$50,000 required for the next Archimedes mailing, the \$40,000 required for the OK ballot drive, and the \$50,000 required for the web site development project.

Dasbach said that the \$50,000 for Archimedes will come from major donor solicitations. He said that the OK ballot drive funding will come from revenues from a direct mail piece which has already been paid for and sent, but not all revenues received. He said that the first half of the funding for the web site project is already pledged, but not received, and the balance will come from an email solicitation.

Flystra asked whether LP had experience sending prospecting mailings during the summer.

Dasbach said that there had been some experience and that he did not believe that the timing of the July letter posed particular problems.

Dehn asked several questions about the details of follow-up mailings to inquiries. He asked whether the materials will be sent to the APRC or Executive Committee for review.

Dasbach said that he would be happy to send the drafts out for members of the Executive Committee to see, but that he feels that review by the APRC would be neither timely nor appropriate. He said that he does not intend to put the project on hold until everyone provides their input and goes through a revision-by-committee process.

Dasbach said that about 100,000 pieces of the next mailing will be a split list test which will test different versions of the letter.

Item: FEC Presidential Debate Issue

Bergland asked what should be done by the LP regarding this issue.

Dasbach said that it would be strange for the LP not to express an opinion on this subject.

Dasbach said that the FEC currently has rules that requires debates sponsors be non-partisan organizations and that they use objective criteria to determine who is invited to participate.

Bergland said that the FEC has control over presidential campaigns and, therefore, sets rules for the conduct of debates.

Dasbach said that it is his understanding that direct corporate sponsorship of the debates would run afoul of FEC rules and, therefore, the FEC provides the ability of corporations to underwrite the costs of the debates by channeling the money as gifts to not-for-profit organizations that sponsor the debates. He said that the FEC has established rules to govern the debates to attempt to assure that the debates are not used as a vehicle for sponsoring only certain candidates and circumvent the ban against corporate contributions.

Dehn expressed concern that taking a position calling on the FEC to better enforce existing laws and regulations would place the LP in a position of advocating either removing certain tax exemptions or restricting contributions.

Givot questioned whether it is appropriate for the LP to advocate one type of regulation over another when the method advocated involves taking control from private organizations and giving it to a federal regulatory agency.

Buttrick expressed similar concern.

Dasbach said that he does not think that we should be supporting the proposal. He said that the entire means of deciding who participates in the debates is currently bogus. He said that it is a phony organization that sponsors the debates. He said that our comments should say that the FEC should do something to ensure that the criteria be objective.

Dehn said that our comments should say that the FEC should not be involved at all and that corporate contributions should be permitted.

Dasbach said that if the FEC's position is that debate sponsors should use objective criteria, then we should say that the current criteria used by the Commission on Presidential Debates are not objective.

Bergland said that our comments should oppose the proposed rulemaking. He said that we should also say that the current rules subsidize the current bogus debate commission. He suggested that our comments be followed by a news release on this subject which might include comments other than those made in our written comments to the FEC on the proposed rulemaking.

Dehn said that our formal comments will be taken to be the party's position. Therefore, he said, all of our points should be included in the written comments submitted to the FEC. He said that our comments should not say what the FEC should do in its rulemaking.

After a lengthy discussion, no consensus was reached on what LP's position should be. Givot said that he is not predisposed to support submitting a comment which states what the FEC should do to regulate the debates.

It was agreed that Bergland, Buttrick, and Hall would look into the current status of the law. It was agreed that staff would draft a proposed comment to submit to the FEC and circulate it to the Executive Committee.

It was agreed that if a meeting to discuss or reach consensus on the LP's comments is required, it will be held on July 6 at 8:30 PM EDT.

Item: Arizona Affiliate

Dehn asked whether the issue of the AZ affiliate had been resolved.

Buttrick said that it may not be resolved.

Dehn asked that the LNC receive a written report on the current status. He said that Fylstra's previous written report to the LNC indicated that the problems in AZ had been resolved, but that this no longer appears to be the case. He said that it will be the LNC that may have to eventually address the matter, perhaps as soon as August. Therefore, he said, the LNC should receive an updated report.

Buttrick said that he would submit a written report.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:12 PM EDT.