

LIBERTARIAN PARTY OF NEW YORK

State Committee Meeting January 31, 2004

John Clifton called the meeting to order at 1:12 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Rest Area located off Route 87 in Sloatsburg, New York.

PRESENT: John Clifton (Chairperson), Christopher Garvey (Suffolk County LP Representative), Jim Harris (Nassau County LP Representative), Werner Hetzner (Treasurer), Thomas Ruks (Vice-Chair), Bonnie Scott (Vice-Chair), Donald Silberger (Hudson Valley LP Representative), and Dr. Thomas Robert Stevens (Manhattan LP Representative)

ALSO PRESENT: Jeff Bennett (Temporary Chair of Rockland County), Hardy Machia (Guest), and Gary Treistman (Editor of *FreeNY*)

Chairperson John Clifton announced quorum was present.

MOTION: that Dr. Thomas Robert Stevens be designated Acting Secretary in the absence of the elected Secretary, Catherine Ruks.

T. Ruks/Silberger Passed unanimously.

OFFICER REPORTS

Treasurer's Report: Werner Hetzner

1. Mr. Hetzner distributed to the State Committee a copy of the Financial Disclosure Report he submitted to the New York State Board of Elections (Exhibit #1). He indicated our end of December balance was \$24,705.48 and our current balance is \$21,923.24.
2. Mr. Hetzner indicated our ads in Entrée Magazine would start running in February, 2004. He reported that 4 more ads are expected to run (for a total cost of \$1,200.00) and that the magazine has a circulation of between 6000-8000 people.
3. Mr. Hetzner stated that John Clifton and Bonnie Scott attended the State Chairs' Conference in Raleigh, North Carolina and he feels the fee for their attendance should be reimbursed to them.

MOTION: to reimburse John Clifton and Bonnie Scott \$75.00 for the fee they paid to attend the State Chairs' Conference in Raleigh, North Carolina.

T. Ruks/Hetzner Passed unanimously.

4. Mr. Hetzner commented that when someone purchases a membership using the Click & Pledge option located on the LPNY website, a small charge is incurred thus preventing us from forwarding the entire amount collected to national. Thus, when someone becomes a member in that manner, the LPNY is currently paying that additional charge.

PARTY FUNCTION REPORTS

Membership Committee Report: Thomas Ruks

- 1. Mr. Ruks indicated it is his desire to concentrate on lapsed 2003 LPNY members in order to encourage them to renew their memberships.**
- 2. Mr. Ruks stated we have on average 60 new members each year. However, it is a challenge to get them to renew. The majority of LPNY members are multi-year members, but it changes a lot as to who those multi-year members are.**
- 3. Mr. Ruks reported that 1,600 LPNY members caused their memberships to lapse during the past five (5) years.**
- 4. Mr. Ruks informed the State Committee that our Mailing List currently has over 14,000 names on it. However, it is his estimation that 30% of the information contained on that list is no longer current.**
- 5. Mr. Ruks asked the County organizations to forward to Bonnie Scott (Vice-Chair & Webmaster) updated information regarding their dues, elected officers, and time and location of their meetings so she can update the state's website.**

College Outreach Coordinator: Dr. Thomas Robert Stevens

- 1. Dr. Stevens stated he has so far identified and confirmed campus contacts for the following eighteen (18) colleges and universities in New York State: Columbia College Libertarians at Columbia University (Will Thomas & Damian Najman); Columbia Law School Libertarians at Columbia Law School (Damian Najman); Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University (Adam Scavone); College Libertarians of Cornell University at Cornell University (Curry Taylor); CUNY Baruch College (Kimberly D. Bloomston); Elmira College (Dr. Bryan C. McCannon); Fordham University (Salvatore "Sam" Russo); Ithaca College (Prof. Kim Gregson); New York City College of Technology (Prof. Gary Popkin); New York University (Michael Robert Miller); Rochester Institute of Technology (Dawn Pepin); SUNY Binghamton (Prof. Charles Goodman); The College Libertarians of Brockport at SUNY Brockport (Adam Chamberlain); SUNY Buffalo (Don Stillwagon); The College Libertarians of SUNY Fredonia at SUNY Fredonia (Aaron Stadler); SUNY New Paltz (Prof. Don Silberger); Syracuse University (Kimberly Gehl); and UR Libertarians at the University of Rochester (Eric Miller).**
- 2. Dr. Stevens reported that to help coordinate these campus contacts, he formed the Libertarian Freedom Council, which he chairs, and has appointed two Deputy Coordinators to help him carry out his duties and responsibilities. He stated the Libertarian Freedom Council is an evolving coordinating body operating without formal bylaws. All campus contacts have been invited to serve on the Libertarian Freedom Council as voting members although participation is not mandatory. A Yahoo! Group is currently being used to facilitate communication and to share information regarding each chapter's organizing activities and events. Dr. Stevens informed the State Committee he has appointed Joshua Michelman to serve as Deputy Coordinator for Chapter Development (DCCD), and David Kachoui to serve as Deputy Coordinator for Programming (DCP). Dr. Stevens stated that Mr. Kachoui has taken over responsibility for coordinating the Speaker's Bureau, which was formed prior to Mr. Kachoui's appointment.**

3. Dr. Stevens noted the Libertarian Freedom Council now has twenty-one (21) voting members who are the following: Dr. Thomas Robert Stevens (Chairman), Joshua Michelman (DCCD), David Kachoui (DCP), Adam Chamberlain, Prof. Charles Goodman, Prof. Kim Gregson, Steve Healey, Werner Hetzner, Dr. Bryan C. McCannon, Eric Miller, Michael Robert Miller, Damian Najman, Dawn Pepin, Prof. Gary Popkin, Salvatore “Sam” Russo, Adam Scavone, Aaron Stadler, Don Stillwagon, Prof. Don Silberger, Curry Taylor, and Gary Treistman.
4. Dr. Stevens indicated the Speaker’s Bureau currently has ten (10) members who are the following: Bob Armstrong, John Clifton, Joseph Dobrian, Christopher B. Garvey, Jim Lesczynski, Tom McConnell, Donald Silberger, Ph. D., Gary Snyder, and Werner Hetzner. He stated the Speaker’s Bureau can and should be utilized by anyone in the LPNY who is in need of a Libertarian speaker. Each of the individuals serving on the Speaker’s Bureau has agreed to accept speaking engagements without the need of the sponsoring organization to pay an honorarium. However, if the speaking engagement is not local and travel expenses must be incurred, the speaker may request reimbursement.
5. Dr. Stevens reported he has asked the webmasters for the state and national web sites to update the information they have listed for college and university contacts in New York State with the information he has provided to them.
6. Dr. Stevens stated that minimal requirements for campus libertarian groups are currently being discussed. These minimal requirements might include requiring college chapters to use the word “Libertarian” in their name, to designate a contact person to represent their school as a voting member of the Libertarian Freedom Council (LFC), to have that contact person submit monthly status reports regarding their chapter’s progress, and to require campus contacts, prior to their graduation or their leaving school, to forward the names of two individuals who have agreed to serve as contacts for the LPNY in order to guarantee continuity at each school.
7. Dr. Stevens asked for the authorization to create an Award to be given to individuals who help get a Libertarian high school, college or university chapter officially recognized by their respective school.

MOTION: that Dr. Thomas Robert Stevens be authorized to issue an Award (to be named by him) to every individual responsible for helping to get a Libertarian high school, college, or university chapter officially recognized by their respective school.

Harris/T. Ruks Passed unanimously.

Operations Director: Bonnie Scott

1. Ms. Scott provided the State Committee with an update regarding the LPNY’s website and who is accessing it. She stated a rough analysis of the top searches indicates people came to our website by searching for the following key terms: “Second Amendment”, “Libertarian”, “Smoking”, “Guns For Tots”, and “Marijuana”. She stated we get the most hits through Google.
2. Ms. Scott states she needs to follow up with Click & Pledge in order to make changes to enable people to pay their LPNY Annual Convention fee on line without our having to subsidize the processing fee.

3. Ms. Scott stated that she has updated the database with new information she obtained regarding those who were on our mailing list in Chenango County.
4. Ms. Scott reported the National LP has purchased new software called Razor's Edge.
5. Ms. Scott stated her opinion that e-mailing a press release is now becoming about as effective as having mailed it.

Cross-County Initiative: Jim Harris

1. Mr. Harris reported he does not have detailed maps of all the cross-county districts in New York State.
2. Mr. Harris stated he feels the cross-county initiative is going to be a long-term project but he plans to get things going this year. He is convinced the cross-county initiative is a worthwhile project since it promotes petitioning efficiency.

National Update: Bonnie Scott

1. Ms. Scott reported that the National Convention would be held in Atlanta, Georgia from May 27-31, 2004. She indicated she is currently compiling a list of possible delegates who would like to attend.

Legal Update: Christopher B. Garvey

1. Mr. Garvey indicated the Board of Elections has now filed their appellate brief appealing the Federal District Court opinion granting libertarians in New York State the right to write in "Libertarian" in order to be recorded as registering in the "Libertarian Party". He stated the argument date on the appeal has not yet been set. Mr. Garvey noted that the Board of Elections appealed only the first Order of Justice Gleason and not the second Order, which included the Libertarian Party. Since the time for the Board of Elections to appeal the second Order of Justice Gleason has already expired, at least theoretically, Justice Gleason's Order regarding the right of individuals to register as Libertarians should be final as to us.

LPNY Convention Update: Thomas Ruks

1. Mr. Ruks reported has entered into a contract to hold the LPNY Annual Convention at the Holiday Inn Martinique in Manhattan on Saturday, April 24, 2004 from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.. The arrangements include a luncheon for 40 people and the use of two rooms, which will include a TV and a VCR. Our total upfront cost will be \$2,500.00, \$1,000.00 of which is due now and another \$1,000.00 which will be due by the end of February. He stated he is trying to arrange for speakers who will not charge any honorarium. However, it is anticipated some money will be allocated for speakers out of the budget provided to him by the State Committee for the convention.

MOTION: to recess for five (5) minutes.

Stevens/Garvey Passed unanimously.

The State Committee Meeting recessed at 3:55 p.m.

Chairperson John Clifton called the State Committee Meeting back to order at 4:00 p.m.

Candidacies & Petitioning Report: Bonnie Scott

1. Ms. Scott stated Jeff Bennett is seeking the nomination of the Libertarian Party for the 38th State Senate District and Don Silberger is seeking the nomination of the Libertarian Party for the United States Senate. Ms. Scott indicated Mr. Bennett's primary issue is going to be opposition to the smoking ban and Mr. Silberger's primary issue is going to be opposition to the war on drugs.
2. Ms. Scott echoed the view of Chairperson John Clifton in her desire for the LPNY to identify a Petitioning Chair by the June, 2004.

Newsletter Report: Gary Treistman

1. Mr. Treistman reported that 853 people currently receive the LPNY newsletter, *FreeNY*. He handed out sample copies of the current issue and mentioned that due to bylaw notification requirements, the next issue of *FreeNY* must arrive at members' homes from March 5-31, 2004.
2. Mr. Treistman mentioned some ideas he has for brainstorming new projects for the LPNY. Discussion resulted in the following motion:

MOTION: that the State Committee authorize the expenditure of \$150.00 as a prize in a contest in *FreeNY* to be granted to the individual who offers the best suggestion for a project that promotes an understanding of individual liberty.

Hetzner/Stevens Passed unanimously. (Bonnie Scott requested her abstention be specifically noted)

COUNTY ORGANIZATION REPORTS

Manhattan LP Report: Dr. Thomas Robert Stevens

1. Dr. Stevens reported that at the Manhattan Libertarian Party Convention held at the 1050 Restaurant at 735 Tenth Avenue in Manhattan on Saturday, January 10, 2004, he was elected to serve as the Representative of the Manhattan LP to the State Committee.
2. Dr. Stevens informed the State Committee that the Manhattan LP Convention was a huge success that resulted in a cover story on the convention appearing in the *New York Press*. He suggested the State Committee commend the Manhattan LP for having run such a successful convention.

MOTION: to commend the Manhattan LP for having run a successful annual convention and for generating sufficient press interest to have obtained the cover story in the *New York Press* entitled "Libertarians at the Gate".

Stevens/Garvey Passed unanimously. (Bonnie Scott & Werner Hetzner abstained)

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Werner Hetzner outlined his fundraising proposal to the State Committee which included his plan to mail fundraising letters to individuals and corporations who have previously donated money to political causes and whose names and addresses are maintained by the New York State Board of Elections. No motion was made to finance this fundraising proposal since questions were raised as to whether the list of donors maintained by the New York State Board of Elections can be legally used in this manner.**
- 2. Gary Treistman suggested the LPNY consider sponsoring a six (6) week symposium for members at which short-term and long-term goals of the party could be discussed. He offered to pay half the cost of this proposed symposium, up to \$500.00, if the State Committee approved his proposal. Dr. Tom Stevens offered to help Mr. Treistman brainstorm the idea.**
- 3. John Clifton suggested the LPNY sponsor upscale fundraisers, such as a house party in the Hamptons. Dr. Stevens mentioned he thought the idea was a good one and suggested fundraisers that would charge members \$50.00 and offer refreshments, finger food, and a guest speaker.**
- 4. Bonnie Scott stated that to be on track to obtain 50,000 votes in the next gubernatorial election, the LPNY must obtain 30,000 votes this year. She also stated we need to expand our fundraising and membership recruitment efforts.**

MOTION: to adjourn.

Stevens/T. Ruks Passed unanimously.

The State Committee Meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Dr. Thomas Robert Stevens
Acting Secretary**