

Liberty for America

Journal of the Libertarian Political Movement

Volume 5 Number 8

Much Good News Starting on Page 3

January 2013

LNC Paralyzed!

—Editorial—

It's Time for Impeachment

Since 2000, this newspaper and its predecessor, Let Freedom Ring!, have covered Libertarian National Committee activities in great detail. Indeed, we have given the LNC more extensive investigatory coverage than has any other news source.

The current situation on the National Committee is utterly unacceptable. Motions cannot be brought to a vote. Motions that may have passed cannot be acted upon, because the official results are unknown. Meeting Minutes reach draft format, but are perpetually in need of correction. When vote totals are reported, they are frequently found to be incorrect.

You can't run a serious political party this way. Party members should demand immediate change. To contact the LNC: <http://www.lp.org/lnc-leadership> for email addresses.

There is only one solution. National Secretary Ruth Bennett must forthwith for cause be impeached ("suspended" is the term of art in the Party Bylaws) and removed from office. The cause, of course, is failure to discharge the duties of the office. The process is complex. First the LNC must vote to suspend. Then the vote must survive the suspended officer's appeal to the Judicial Committee.

Fortunately, the National Party has at hand an excellent replacement Secretary. Chuck Moulton is an attorney and former Vice Chair. He is willing to serve.

Former National Convention delegates may recall charts and graphs of LNC votes — those were Chuck's work. Moulton delivers. Those, by the way, were the charts and graphs that Bennett had removed from delegate tables at the 2012 NatCon before they could be read. Readers may also recall that Bennett nominated M Carling for Judicial Committee and gave the 2012 NatCon its floor fees.

Secretary Blocks All Business!

Since early December, our Libertarian National Committee has been totally paralyzed, unable to transact business or vote on motions because the National Secretary has been inactive.

Party Bylaws are clear. The first step in an LNC mail ballot is that the Secretary posts the motion and its maker and seconders. LNC members then have ten days to vote. Finally, the Secretary reports the vote count and the Chair rules if it passed.

This process has crashed to a stop. Why? The Secretary is not carrying out her steps in the process. Several months ago, LNC Regional Representative Dan Wiener of California offered a motion that the LNC should buy a building. Voting on that motion was to have completed on December 8. The motion is believed to have passed 12-4.

We have now missed the holiday giving season and the end-of-year cutoff for 2012 donations. Why? We are now well into January, and the Secretary has yet to announce the outcome of the vote. Readers might suspect that buying a near-million-dollar building is an extremely important decision, one on which every LNC member would vote, but there are missing votes. Did LNC members fail to vote? Did LNC members send them straight to the Secretary? No one knows.

Mark Hinkle has submitted to the LNC a replacement motion on buying a building, a motion with very different financial terms. If it passed, Hinkle's motion would supersede the Wiener building purchase motion. The motion had the sponsors, but has not yet been put up for a vote. Until this motion is dealt with, the building decision is in a state of paralysis.

Then there is the matter of the donation levels. The National Party has dues for sustaining members (\$25) and life members. It also has "donation levels", titles given to people who have given some amount or another. A full year ago, the National Committee voted to increase the donation levels and the life membership level. As Summer approached, nothing had been done to implement the levels, so the increase was postponed for another six months, to 1/1/2013. As December approached, Mr Hinkle was restored to the National Committee. He promptly moved to repeal these increases. After all, he had been Chair

when the levels were put into effect, and he did not agree with them. Now he had a chance to refight his battle of the last LNC term. His motion apparently failed. We say apparently because, once again, as of this writing the outcome has not been reported.

At about this time, it was observed that in October the staff had ordered huge amounts of material referring to the old dues level, material that would have to be tossed if the dues were changed. National Chair Neale promptly offered a motion to postpone the dues increase for another six months, noting that it was December, and no effort had yet been made by the staff to implement the dues changes in literature or on our web pages.

In addition, under our current web maintenance contract it seems that changes in the web page cost \$4000 per page, while several pages would need changing. Yes, that is four thousand dollars, not forty dollars and no cents. Mindful that our lease at the Watergate is approaching expiration, so that there is some likelihood that the party's address will need modification, a case could be made that we should change the membership and address information at the same time.

Supporting articles and material will come after our good news section (next page).

Chair Passes Motions by Decree

Just after I typed the above, the National Chair put out a statement ruling that certain motions have passed, even though the Secretary has not reported a final vote count. We quote the message as forwarded to us by LNC members:

"I have not as of yet received official notice of the final tabulations of multiple mail ballots.

I have reviewed the Bylaws, and find no way to substitute the action of the Secretary in any official way regarding the final results of mail ballots.

That being said, the Chair is the one person with the authority to rule that a motion passed or failed. I am deciding to take the authority upon myself to rule on certain mail ballots. Each of us received a copy of all mail ballots known to be cast. These votes are known and uncontested. Each of these ballots have been separately tabulated and reported by known and trusted LNC members. The results reported are sufficiently lopsided to make the results to be relatively unquestionable.

It is more important at this time that we have rulings than indecision based upon the absence of rulings, so I am ruling that:

The motion to hold the next LNC meeting in Chicago has passed.

The motion to postpone the implementation of the membership level changes to 7/1/2013 has passed.

Dan Wiener's motion for purchasing a building has passed.

If I missed a vote, and you think a ruling is appropriate, please let me know.

If you wish to challenge the ruling of the Chair. You will have to get cosponsors and then get the Secretary to submit a mail ballot. Good luck."

Where Your Money Went

For the Period 10/18/2012 through 11/26/2012, the national party raised \$127,096, spent \$171,085, and ended with \$225,141 cash on hand. That number includes the party's building fund. Total receipts so far for the year came to \$1,507,691, while total spending came to \$1,594,339.

For the period spanning the general election, the LNC's largest single expense was \$33,500, paid to LNC member Michael Cloud for Copy Writing Services.

We have employees. Our staff salaries, insurance, and the various related taxes (medicare, social security, withholding and filing fees) came to \$36,315.22 spread over six people. Quickbooks Payroll Service cost \$151. Four people were paid \$2395 for administrative support services. That does not include \$6812 for staff travel, including facilities, etc., for the last LNC meeting. In addition to staff, we paid \$4735 to a telefundraising consultant, \$1500 for FEC filing and amendments, and \$3000 to the Party's counsel.

The staff needs an office. Office rent, taxes, and utilities came to \$18,951. Postage and postage meters, and shipping, came to \$3404. Office supplies cost \$1518. Copier lease and maintenance came to \$1154. A subscription to The Hill cost \$239.

We spent a considerable amount of money on information technology. Note \$11,306 to Blackbaud for the annual maintenance fee, \$3194 for Email Marketing Services to IContact, \$1375 to Rackspace US for website hosting, \$1148 for server hosting to Softlayer Technologies, \$1026 for telephone services to Telecompute and Broadview, \$138 for address and phone verification to Lexis-Nexus, \$91 for Cable and Internet to Comcast, and \$10 to DataJack for MiFi Services

The Party did outreach, including to members. Non-candidate printing, mailing, and membership cards came to \$16533. Printing LP News cost \$2329. We raised money. Raising money costs money, including \$3697 in bank fees, merchant processing fees, and the like.

The party did politics. Ballot access petitioning and litigation came to \$15870.

Liberty for America is edited by George Phillies, 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester MA 01609 (508 754 1859). To Subscribe, go to LibertyForAmerica.com and click on the 'subscribe' button. Subscriptions, sent by email to your computer, are free. Back issues of **Liberty for America** magazine are available on the web at <http://LibertyForAmerica.com/LFAMagazine.htm>.

Good News

NatCon Working Committees

Our National Convention has three supporting committees found in Party Bylaws: Bylaws and Rules, Credentials, and Platform. Some committee members are appointed by state affiliates. Others are appointed by the LNC. Geoff Neale has just announced that he is starting the selection process. He writes:

"I will be placing the selection of the 2014 Bylaws, Credentials and Platform committees on the agenda for the upcoming LNC meeting on March 16 & 17 in Chicago. According to the By-laws:

The Platform Committee is comprised of one member from each of the ten largest affiliates, which means that the following states can select one member and any number or ranked alternates: CA, TX, FL, OH, NY, VA, IL, PA, CO and GA.

The Credentials Committee is comprised of one member from each of the five largest affiliates, which means that the following states can select one member and any number or ranked alternates: CA, TX, FL, OH, and NY.

Additionally, all of these committees have additional openings which are filled solely by the LNC.

Please pass this information along to any interested parties in your affiliates.

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Liberty for America will be performing political acts, and other activities that the Federal government calls "Federal Election Activity" and hence FEC-reportable. We must therefore funnel dues to our PAC, "Liberty for America". Dues will not be used to support candidates.

Your Donations are not tax deductible. Federal law requires us to request the occupation and employer of donors of \$200 or more in a year. Paid for by Liberty for America. Your donations may be used in relation to a Federal Election.

If you make appointments before the LNC meeting, please forward your appointments to me. At the meeting, we will appoint temporary chairs for each committee. Each committee will subsequently appoint their own chair. After the meeting, appointments and replacements can be communicated directly with the appropriate committee chair.

The Editor fills in some details: The size of an affiliate, for the purposes of committee appointment, is determined by the number of delegates that each affiliate was allotted at the most recent national convention. That convention occurred in May 2012. Each state party appointing a committee member gets to appoint alternates for their committee member.

The LNC also appoints people to committees. The LNC gets to appoint ten persons to the Platform Committee, five persons to the Rules Committee, and all ten members of the Bylaws and Rules Committee. Only five members of the Bylaws and Rules Committee may be LNC members. At least five LNC appointees to the Platform Committee may not be from affiliates that got to appoint a Platform Committee member.

Committee appointments are important. A good credentials committee would have seated the legitimate Oregon delegation. A good platform committee would put us unambiguously on the side of women via being prochoice, and unambiguously against the national security state by calling for the abolition of national security agencies that are waging war on America, the American people. A Bylaws Committee might eliminate some of the damage done by the LNC gang of ten and their allies.

Libertarian Almost Wins State Rep Race

South Carolina, State House of Representatives District 26

	Percent	Votes
Jeremy C Walters (LIB)	46.77%	5,243
Raye Felder (PET)	52.62%	5,899
Write-In (NON)	0.62%	69

Shifting 3% of the vote, only 350 votes, from Felder to Walters, would have given Libertarian Walters the victory. Walters did very well by walking the district. You can do that in small districts, and it really works. The LNC was told about this race on a regular basis by Stewart Flood. Here we had a race that the LNC might have been able to tilt via legal investments. It didn't.

PET is a petition candidate, someone who got onto the ballot via petitioning rather than being nominated by their state party. Winner Raye Felder was a Republican, but lost the Republican line over paperwork issues and had to petition.

Florida LP Hires Lobbyist

Florida State Chair Adrian Wyllie writes:

"I am pleased to announce that we have three registered lobbyists representing the Libertarian Party of Florida in the 2013 Florida Legislative session.

"With a powerful lobbying team led by renowned, professional lobbyist John Hallman, we're taking our message to directly Tallahassee. Our lobbyists will be in their offices, in their hal-

lowed halls, and speaking in their committee meetings. With every breath, our lobbyists will be promoting the cause of economic freedom and individual liberty. They will challenge our elected representatives to nullify unconstitutional federal laws. They will see us and they will hear us.

“Our lobbyists are backed by a fully-staffed legislative committee; dedicated to reviewing proposed state legislation, writing new bills to repeal bad laws, and defending freedom for all Floridians. We will be introducing bills to restore your property rights and to strengthen your individual rights. For the first time in our history, we will become a political force to be reckoned with, and the LPF will be leading the charge for liberty.

“This is a huge step for us in making the transition from minor party to major party. It requires significant funding to accomplish.”

McMahon is New Connecticut Chair

Former Massachusetts State Chair Carol McMahon, who holds elected partisan office as a Libertarian, has been elected State Chair of Connecticut. Former State Chair Dan Reale had to resign due to issues outside his control.

On the Social Security Number Issue

In our last issue, we reported on a petitioner for the LNC who wanted to be paid, had not been paid, and as we understood the matter was declining to supply his Social Security number. We have now spoken to the person in question, who was very polite and friendly in correcting us.

The actual issue, he tells us, is that he *does not have* a Social Security number. Furthermore, he declines to obtain a Social Security number. Now, it is not common for Americans not to have a Social Security number. However, there is no legal requirement that you have a Social Security number. Some people indeed do have the alternative number that the IRS supplies. Other people are not in the income range where there is an issue.

According to him, the LNC is not allowed as a point of law to require anyone to get a Social Security number before they can be paid as a contractor. He supplied very extensive legal references claiming to prove his case.

Your editor is not an expert in the area, and has no idea whether these references clearly prove the petitioner's point, or whether a knowledge of the entirety of Federal Law would make clear that the references have been supplanted or have been overridden by more recent legislation. I suppose that this is for some an interesting issue, certainly if you want to be paid and the issue provides an obstruction to payment, but it is a bit off-topic relative to this newsletter.

I would say, however, that if the LNC and its ballot access committee view this as an issue, and require Social Security numbers for payment, they could have saved everyone a great deal of difficulty if they had an absolute policy of collecting social security numbers and taxpayer ID numbers as a condition for being given the contracts. Whether or not this policy

Welcome to Liberty for America!

A magazine. A web site. An organization. **Liberty for America** has had several inquiries on launching **Liberty for America** Chapters across America. A draft set of state/regional By-Laws appears on the **LibertyforAmerica.Com** web site.

would be legal is apparently in dispute, and we certainly do not pretend to be giving legal advice.

LNC Member Paid From Treasury

If you read our above article *Where Your Money Went*, you will note that the party's largest expenditure at the time of the general election was to LNC member Michael Cloud for copy writing, we gather of fund raising letters. It is our understanding that he is being paid on a commission basis, the rate being 15%, which is claimed to be at the bottom end of rates for writing fund raising letters.

We have inquired of LNC members if the existence of the contract was revealed to the LNC by the Chair or in the legal report. There was a conflict of interest disclosure, we are told. The basis for such a report is the LNC Bylaws, which reads

LNC Policy Manual

3) Contracts and Contract Approval

All contracts or modifications thereto shall be in writing. The Chair shall approve any contract in excess of \$7,500. All contracts of more than one year in duration or for more than \$25,000 shall be reviewed and approved by General Counsel prior to signing by the Chair. Independent contractors doing business with the LNC are required to sign formal contracts that clearly set forth the parties' intention that they be treated as independent contractors. Each contract for director-level employment must be circulated to the LNC on a strictly confidential basis after it has been reviewed by Counsel and the EPCC.

The Members we contacted did not recall having seen such a report. LNC Minutes are a work in process. LNC Members might specifically ask if the contract was indeed approved by the Chair or if, given the huge amount involved, any research was done on identifying competing authors.

LPUS Membership Resumes Decline

After a Summer period in which National Party membership increased markedly, membership numbers appear to have resumed their longer-term secular decline.

Early in the year, membership appeared to be declining, so for 2012 the number of oath-taking dues-paying members at the end of each month was

January 13,492

February 13,538

March 13,406

April 13,179
May 12,923
June 12,870

We then reach the period in which LNC members Vohra and Pojunis should be credited with revamping the Facebook pages. Membership increased markedly as witness these counts:

July 12,960
August 13,361
September 13,788
October 14,070
November 14,182

That's an increase rate close to three and a half thousand LP members per year. The decline was clearly flattening in November. We then reached December 2012. Party membership resumed its decline, down to 13749 at the end of December.

Membership counts --expiring members, renewals, new members --fluctuate a great deal from month to month. Nonetheless, it appears that one marked change in membership numbers was the renewal rate, which went from 744 of 791 in August and 573 of 835 in September down to 468 of 1017 in November and 708 of 1381 in December. The number of December renewals may look as good as the August number, but those numbers must be read against the number of expirations, which was much larger in December than in August. In addition, the rate of recruiting new members went from 589 and 679 in September and October to 240 in December.

Readers may contrast this with a series of messages said to be from former Treasurer Aaron Starr and forwarded to the LNC-Discuss list. In the Editor's opinion, these messages are appreciably more intelligent than much of the discussion on the LNC list. We quote parts of two of them. In September, the forwarded message read:

Colleagues,

I would appreciate it if the LNC Chair or another member of the LNC would forward this to the entire National Committee. I am glad the discussion of membership has been brought up because I have noticed something disconcerting.

Our party typically experiences a lot of growth in the number of new donors during Presidential election years. That is not happening this time. Please examine the attached two charts. You will find that growth is quite anemic this year compared to the 2008 Presidential election cycle, and what growth we have been seeing is occurring later this cycle.

I have not formulated a hypothesis for why performance has been so lackluster. I'm sure there are multiple contributing factors, some of which are bound to be exogenous to our organization. I do not have monthly data for the 2004 Presidential election cycle; if someone can provide that 2004 data to me, I could incorporate it into this chart.

I am quite concerned about this situation because in the year following a Presidential election donations and membership levels tend to drop significantly. Hopefully the Double the LP

project will perform well. Unless we see a major pickup during the next two months, we should not be surprised to see financial challenges during 2013. Our past experience has been that it is often difficult to even make payroll in the post-election year, so we should definitely think twice before committing large amounts of money in 2013 for any bold new initiatives."

The observations were repeated with monthly updates. The November observations led to the summary: "With the cumulative number of new donors at 4,407 so far this year versus 6,213 at this time in 2008, we're bringing in new donors at a rate 29% below what we did during the last Presidential election cycle."

Meanwhile, we are charging ahead into purchasing a building.

Building Purchase Passes

The vote on the Wiener motion? (See last issue) The vote appears to have been

YES -- Neale, Hagan, Cloud, Vohra, Kirkland, Mack, Wiener, Capozzi (alt), Blau (alt), Lark, Visek, Frankel (alt)

NO -- Bennett, Hinkle, Olsen, Starchild

ABSTAIN -- Wrights

LATE -- Redpath (voted YES on December 15th)

This was in many ways the most important single vote the LNC has taken in some time. Pojunis, Tomasso, and Myers did not vote. The Regional Alternates voted early on; if Pojunis, Tomasso, and Myers agreed with their alternates, they might have kept silent.

On December 16, David Blau posted to the LNC Discuss list the message "I am formally requesting from the Secretary a final vote count on the motion to purchase office space, and a clear ruling from her whether the vote passed with the 2/3 required to incur debt. The vote has long since concluded, and I do not recall seeing an officially recognized tally. Our fundraising efforts have been hampered by this delay, and we have lost or nearly lost the holiday fundraising period in its entirety. If any donors want to give this year AND in January, time is rapidly running out.

Please post the final vote count on the LNC public list immediately. A reply to this email will suffice. If a final count is not forthcoming within 48 hours, I will request that Dr. Lark post the count in lieu of the Secretary, and I will ask consent from the body that his count be considered official."

Indeed, in the end time did run out.

In January, Chairman Neale ruled that the building purchase had passed.

Representative Norm Olsen warned of consequences:

"One of the reasons I have been opposed to purchasing a building is that it will become a serious distraction from all the other items on our plate. This is an excellent example. In coming up with 18 items to add to the funding list in no particular order, guess what (intentionally, unintentionally, subconsciously?) gets listed first. Yup! The building fund. It is my prediction that:

a) managing/maintaining a building,

- b) concern about the next mortgage payment,
- c) concern about the \$5,000 per month additional payment (which is supposed to be very difficult for a future LNC to change),
- d) and worry about a looming balloon payment, will always cast a dark shadow over everything else we try to accomplish and whatever the subsequent five LNC committees try to accomplish.

Donation Levels

The dues charged to become a sustaining member of the National Party are fixed in the Bylaws at \$25. Only the National Convention delegates can change this. However, the LNC gets to set levels for life memberships. In addition, there have always been an extended series of donation levels, at which you got certain extra benefits. Donation levels, which the Bylaws refers to as 'dues', are a standing fundraising maneuver.

Last year, as covered in this newspaper, the LNC spent an enormous amount of effort setting new dollar amounts for the donor levels, including at least one new level. Implementation of these levels was set for July 1 of 2012. Then implementation was postponed to January 1, 2013.

No sooner was Mark Hinkle reappointed to the LNC, than he submitted a motion to cancel the new donation levels. His motion appears to have been defeated. However, so soon as his motion went under, Geoff Neale offered a motion to postpone implementation of the new donation levels until July 1.

One of the reasons for the delay was revealed in a message apparently from Mark Hinkle, forwarding to the LNC statements said to be made by a senior staff member. The statements included:

"Standard Preprinted Renewal Letters and Reply Devices: \$2,974.00 for 20k (based on the ones we just recently did back in early Oct – for which we have multiple cases left in our storage area and at the mail house).

We would need some extra reply devices for our inquiry packets which we do in house so figure perhaps 12k total for \$740 based on previous invoice.

I am assuming XXXX can take care of re-doing the graphics and layouts – the above is strictly for printing.

Web site reprogramming: \$4,000.00 (T/E is likely NOT to be able to do this by Jan 1 but will prioritize to do ASAP by end of Jan). This is only for reprogramming this page: <https://www.lp.org/membership> We would not be doing anything with this page however since membership categories are not mentioned: <https://www.lp.org/contribute> . If we want both pages done that would likely be \$8,000..."

Readers may find some implications of the above forward to be at least surprising. Scott Lieberman is identified as raising key issues, as in the following message said to be from him:

"I have a few questions as a result of the above e-mail:

1. Since staff has known for a year that these new levels were coming, why were so many cases of new pre-printed forms bought two months ago?

2. Now that we're at the last minute, Robert says Terra Eclipse probably can't make this change by January 1st. Since staff has known for a year that these new levels are coming, why has Terra Eclipse not been asked to do this before the last minute?

3. Does anyone on the LNC actually believe that it would cost \$4,000 to update the single webpage at <https://www.lp.org/membership>? It's just not that complicated.

4. Since the Immediate-Past-Chair acknowledges that we should see drops in revenue and membership for the next year, why did he keep making motions in Arlington County last month to increase the projected revenue in the 2013 budget when we were already budgeted for increased revenue for 2013?

Scott Lieberman"

Related to the matter of staff actions resembling a pocket veto of the dues level changes, note the following obscure message from Starchild. Starchild is discussing vigorous complaints from State Chairs about LNC press releases congratulating the party for spoiling the election of Republicans. These messages are seen as toxic to our party. Starchild wrote "I share the concerns voiced by Adrien and other LP state affiliate officers and members about the harm that using "spoiler" arguments does to our party and movement, and agree with both his and Paulie's comments below. The difficulty we seem to be having in getting this messaging from the national office to stop is troubling in light of some of the concerns that people raised at one of our secret sessions during the last LNC meeting. Unfortunately I am not allowed to go into detail, but I think LNC members who participated in that session will understand what I'm talking about."

There was then debate about the latest postponement motion. One of the more thoughtful responses came from Regional Alternate David Blau:

"I will shortly be voting against this motion on the public list. I wish to give my reasons here.

Changes to our membership levels have been in the works for longer than I have been attending LNC meetings, which began in April 2011. A motion was made at that time by the (already extant) Membership Support Levels Committee to alter the requirements of becoming a lifetime member, with a proviso to take effect in July 2011. The minutes of the first meeting I served as an alternate, in August 2011, show that the motion made in April was tabled because the subcommittee hadn't quite gotten the wording precise yet, but the LNC has a while has been discussing this issue for almost two years now.

The final motion was eventually made at the December 2011 meeting (that's a year ago). It was adopted by a 14-4 vote, showing strong support among the members of the LNC at the time, and called for an initial implementation date of July 1, 2012 (six months ago). It was clearly felt by a majority of the previous LNC that this was an achievable time frame. Moreover, the Staff Reports section in the minutes of the last meeting

of the previous LNC on May 2, 2012 indicate that "the requirement [for life memberships] goes up to \$1500 in July [2012]".

The current LNC changed the implementation date at its first meeting on May 6, 2012. The minutes of that meeting (which I have only seen in "draft" form as published on our website), state: "Mr. Kraus explained that there are enormous potential problems with the implementation of a new dues structure such as needing to pay for printing costs to update materials, redoing the website, etc." No indication was given as to why these costs were not incurred and these challenges undertaken in the period beginning December 20, 2011 when the LNC passed the original motion. I believe I remember this question being asked at the May 6 meeting, without an informative answer being given. With scant evidence, I am left to assume that there was a breakdown in implementation at the staff level, at the Executive Director level, and/or by the former Chair. In any event, the deadline for implementation was moved to January 1, 2013 without objection.

The changes that have been in effect for over a year still have not been implemented. I do not know why. There was no discussion of the issue at the July 2012 LNC meeting, according to the official minutes. I do not see any official minutes posted from our November meeting, but I do not recall any discussion of the issue at that time either. With respect to the last six months, I am left to assume that the responsibility for the breakdown in implementation lays with the staff, the ED, and/or the current Chair. No matter the cause, I have no reason to believe that the changes to the membership levels will be implemented by the date proposed by my colleague Mr. Hinkle.

I am voting "no" in the hope of lighting a fire under someone's ass to actually implement the will of the LNC. This motion amounts to a pocket veto of the previous LNC's decision, and in my opinion sets a dangerous precedent."

Blau received a response, identified as being from Mark Hinkle, implying that the LNC should obey its staff:

"David,

A prior LNC ordered the LP staff to first double the basic dues to \$50 from \$25 and then the same LNC ordered the LP staff to eliminate the dues. And the following LP national convention then took that authority away from the LNC because it is and was a boneheaded decision. The last LNC refused to heed the warnings of the LP staff regarding raising membership dues. And, I'm guessing they didn't survey the membership either.

Can we say *deja vu* all over again?

And with my motion, it's clear that support for this move has clearly weakened. And this LNC has, for some strange reason, not surveyed our membership to see what they think of this idea. Perhaps this LNC doesn't want to know what our membership thinks. Perhaps, like the prior LNC's decision regarding putting all LP candidates on the web site, this LNC doesn't want to know what our membership thinks because it's widely at odds with a slim majority of this LNC. And that's a very dangerous viewpoint, IMHO.

As I've said many times, we're a service organization, but we seem to be acting as though it's our members that are here to

serve us. I rather think it's the other way around.

Our staff, specifically Robert Kraus, who knows more about our membership than anyone on the LNC recommends against this. And we've not done any surveying of our membership. No test marketing. And it's going to cost money to implement. Do we really want to raise our dues in a down economy in a post-election year where we historically always loose membership anyhow? This is insanity. I would expect this out of Congress. They are insane and completely out of touch with the voters.

But, us? The LNC? We should know better. We should act better. Bad idea, bad timing, too costly. If we keep this up, count on a repeat of the last LP national convention. As I said, *deja vu* all over again.

Yours in liberty.....Mark Hinkle,
LNC At-Large & Retired LP Chair

Firearms For Freedom

LNC In Action

The Libertarian Facebook pages posted a series of vigorous defenses of our glorious Second Amendment. You can thank Arvin Vohra for doing this. See [facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10151293185747726&set=a.10151293185712726.498653.5978057725](https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10151293185747726&set=a.10151293185712726.498653.5978057725) and [facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10151295735662726&set=a.10151295735632726.499125.5978057725](https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10151295735662726&set=a.10151295735632726.499125.5978057725) Vohra wrote: "By being clear, principled, and not totally cowardly about gun policy, we have seen a dramatic increase in traffic on the FB page, in terms of new "likes", reach, # of shares, and # of people talking about the page."

Then he and supporters crafted a radio ad in support of the Second Amendment and tried to get the LNC to respond. His most recent message on this shows complete non-responsiveness from the LNC on the issue:

Hi All,

As we discussed in the last meeting, we want to move more in the project-based fundraising direction. As we saw with recent events, appropriate projects may come up unexpectedly, and give us golden opportunities to raise money to effectively actually fight to reduce government.

For that to work, however, we have to be able to get fundraising emails out. About a week ago, I submitted a fundraising email to Carla, Michael, and Geoff, as well as to the rest of you. I resubmitted it a few days ago just to Carla, Michael, and Geoff. While many of you responded with helpful comments, the people with the ability to get the information out to the email list have been completely silent.

Right now, it's the holiday season. My response to that: So the F(** what?

Did Diane Feinstein take the holidays off when it came to fighting for more government and less liberty? Are we so big and powerful that while enemies of freedom are attacking, we can afford to be asleep?

To use a medical analogy: we are not like a medical spa. We are not even like an emergency room. We are much more like a medical tent in the middle of a battlefield, and right now we are on the losing side of a bloody as hell battle. From what I understand, medical tents on battlefields are open during the holidays. When one person is going to be unable to access the email list due to family responsibilities, there should be a backup person, and we should know who it is.

Part of our responsibility as a board is to raise money, particularly for the kinds of projects that can make a huge difference in terms of our actual freedom. If we're delayed to the point that the project becomes irrelevant, we are fundamentally hamstrung.

Let me put this in a bit more perspective: Thus far, professionals and volunteers, including myself, have set up a petition, written a radio ad, had the radio ad professionally recorded, done fundraising via facebook (and via Mark Hinkle's contact list), written a fundraising email, gotten feedback, adjusted the email, formally submitted it. That all took less time than it has already taken those with access to the email list (as far as I know, currently limited to Carla, Michael, and Geoff) to press "send."

And while we have done that, the other side has organized vigils, fundraising campaigns, hundreds of petitions with millions of signatures, appeared all over the media, introduced a new "assault weapons" bill...

Am I missing something major here? Should this be submitted as a formal motion? Motion to direct staff to copy and paste email text and press send? Even with the 10 day delay to record votes, that might be more efficient than what's happening now. Right now, we are rivaling the government in terms of delay, unintentional obstructionism, and inefficiency. Moving forward, we need a much faster system. Politics has started moving much faster since the 1790s, and even then, they were faster than this.

-Arvin P.S. If this does need a formal motion, then I suppose I am seeking cosponsors.

LP.ORG Advertises for Reeves Faction

While the announcement was pulled, for a period of time the LP.org web page displayed an announcement calling the attention of Party members to an Oregon State Convention run by the Reeves faction in Oregon. The Oregon affiliate, Chair Wes Wagner, was seriously not amused, particularly when rumors circulated that the announcement was also appearing in LP News.

In related Oregon News, the Reeves faction has filed articles of incorporation for "Libertarian Party of Oregon". Our Oregon affiliate has written the National Chair and National Party counsel, calling their attention to this matter, which is contradictory to the LNC's claim to have trademark protection for "Libertarian Party". Our Oregon affiliate reports that it has received no response from the LNC.

In other Oregon News, the litigation from the Reeves faction

has apparently reached the interrogatory and deposition stage. When matters become public, we expect to have considerably more information.

LNC Goes Downhill

And if I seem to be a bit tired of reporting LNC InAction, consider the tenor of the following exchange. Let me emphasize that I am not blaming Goldstein:

Message said to be from Goldstein:

It is always easier to retain members than to get new ones. One of my members just posted this on our Central Committee Facebook page:

This abrupt little message was e-mailed to xxx about his membership expiration. The note does not at all make one want to click on that renewal link. Comparing the note pasted below to the verbiage on the LP.org membership page which does sound encouraging,

Dear Mr. xxxx

Your Libertarian Party membership expired in September.

You can renew here: <https://www.lp.org/membership>

If you prefer, I can send you a donation form.

Please disregard this message if you recently renewed.

Sincerely,

XXX XXXXXX

Perhaps Geoff and Carla could give some guidance to XXX about using friendlier language in his communications. I know XXX is an independent contractor but he is still speaking on our behalf.

In Liberty,

Sam Goldstein, Chair

Libertarian Party of Indiana

The responder said to be from Hinkle was:

Sam,

You've CC'd the entire LNC and all of the Affiliate Chairs, yet only 2 people (Geoff Neale and Carla Howell) can implement what you're asking for. Or 3 if you include Bob Johnson. So, why CC 50-60 people that have no authority to do what you ask?

I would suggest this course of action:

1. call or email Bob Johnson and offer a suggested improvement. He has an incentive to get people to renew, so I'm sure he's open to ideas.

2. if calling or emailing Bob doesn't work, try contacting Carla Howell (privately) to suggest the improvement(s). Bob Johnson reports to her.

3. if calling or emailing Carla Howell gets you no satisfaction, try calling or email Geoff Neale. Again, privately. Carla Howell reports to Geoff Neale.

4. if none of the above works, then try the entire LNC for resolution of the problem, as you see it. Geoff Neale effectively reports to the entire LNC and the membership as a whole.

Normally, I'd follow my own advice and just email this to you directly, but there are several other people, both on the LNC

and the Affiliate email list (to which I don't have access, but to which maybe someone will forward this to them), that like to complain first to the world rather than seek to solve the problem in a more direct or timely fashion or diplomatic way. Let me put this another way, had you contacted Bob Johnson privately, he might have implemented the suggestions you had. The result: Bob thinks you're here to help both him & the LP. You think Bob likes your ideas and is open to suggestions and perhaps the membership renewals become more effective. Win, win, win. However, if you go public to the world first, perhaps Bob now views you as someone out to get him reprimanded or worse: fired. If Bob views your "suggestion" this second way, is he MORE or LESS likely to implement whatever suggestion(s) you have? I think we all know the answer to that question: LESS likely! And perhaps Bob now views you as an adversary.

And how does that open the lines of communication? It doesn't. And how does that improve the membership renewals? It doesn't. Perhaps your suggestion(s) are good ones and you "force" the issue by going over Bob's head to Carla or Geoff. And the end, you've got a WIN, LOSE, LOSE situation. When you could have had a WIN, WIN, WIN situation. And which scenario is going to help grow the Libertarian Party?

1. an unfriendly adversarial atmosphere
2. an friendly cooperative atmosphere

I know which one I've seen throughout most of the LP's history, it's #1 BTW. And perhaps that's one of the reasons why the LP hasn't grown as fast as it could.

There was a brief interruption in that adversarial dominated culture while I was LPC Chair (1997-2001). As a result, LPC membership went from 2,000 dues paying member to over 7,000 members. We hired an Executive Director and opened not one, but two offices. We produced monthly newsletters and monthly fund raising letters and elected a record number of Libertarians to non-partisan office. We also ran a record number of Libertarians for partisan office. Just about everything we did worked and worked well. It was, by far, the best period in the LPC's history. And while I was the LPC Chair that set the 3 primary goals, it was a very cooperative group of people (both paid and volunteers) of both LPC members and the national LP that made it work.

And ever since 2001, the LPC has been shrinking and slowly dying. Last year, only 2 Libertarian candidates appeared on the November ballot as Libertarians: Gary Johnson and Jim Gray. Membership is way way down, revenue is way way down, the number of candidates we run is way way down. The LPC shut down the office we opened in Southern California and moved to an Executive Suite that seems to be rarely staffed in Sacramento. The monthly newsletter is gone. And thanks to the passage of Prop 14 (Top Two), our ballot status may be in question.

So which do we want:

1. a cooperative, friendly, supportive LP that grows membership, revenues, number of candidates running.... or
- 2.. a adversarial, dysfunctional, combative LP with a shrinking membership, declining revenues and fewer candidates...

The choice, as always, is ours. What shall it be?
Yours in liberty.....Mark Hinkle,

Which drew the answer:

Pretty amusing comments Mark since you have been full of nothing but contempt and vitriol toward anyone who opposes any of your ideas since you rejoined the LNC after your defeat last spring. Perhaps you should listen to your own advise when addressing Norm Olsen, Scott Lieberman and others.

I sent my concerns to both lists because I have expressed my concern about several issues to Geoff privately on several occasions with no resolution. I wanted to know if other state chairs were getting similar complaints about this issue.

I'm not surprised that national membership is down. A severe lack of leadership and accountability over the past term has lead many Hoosiers to put their trust and money in our very functional and active state party instead of the train wreck that is the LNC.

Please refrain from criticizing my actions in the future until your own house is in order.

Live Free, Sam Goldstein, Chair

The person identified as Hinkle has repeatedly offered the claim that while he was state chair his state party grew from 2000 to 7000 members. On a past occasion when the claim was advanced, the person making it was vigorously told off as:

"What the Immediate Past-Chair "forgot" to tell you is that the overwhelming bulk of that increase in our state LP's membership was because the Immediate-Past-Chair was the Chair of the LP of California during the time period that the Libertarian Party instituted the Unified Membership Program.

Yes - as LP of California Chair, signing his name on the dotted line of the UMP agreement did markedly increase the membership of the Libertarian Party of California. But 45 other state chairs also increased their membership by something like 1.5 to 2.5 times the day after they signed the UMP agreement. If you want to know how good Mark Hinkle was at increasing the membership totals of the LP of California, you would have to compare the percentage increase in the membership in the LP of California with the increase in the membership of all of the other states that participated in the UMP after they signed their agreements.

Or, you could do a proxy for that number by just figuring out the percentage that nationwide National LP membership increased from the month after the Immediate-Past-LNC-Chair signed the UMP agreement for the LP of California until the month he left the Chair position in California. Then, one could compare that to the increase in the membership of the LP of California during that same time period. Without those numbers, the Immediate-Past-LNC-Chair's claim that he more than tripled membership in the Libertarian Party of California is extremely misleading.

Scott Lieberman"

Liberty for America

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Where Your Money Went

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