

Libertarian Party of North Carolina

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

15 September 2022

In Attendance:

Joe Garcia, Chair
Reid Deal, Vice-Chair
Ryan Brown, Secretary
Kimberly Acer, At large
Jonathan Hopper, At large
Sarah Brady, At large
Brian Irving, Executive Director

Absent:

Mike Ross, Treasurer (Excused)
Steven DiFiore, At large

LPNC Guest members:

Mac Browder
Phil Jacobson
Dee Watson

Call to Order:

Joe Garcia called the meeting to order at 8:36 PM, EST.

Chair Report:

Dee Watson has come on board as the new Political and Policy Director. Dee is focusing on candidate support at the moment. David Coatney is running for North Carolina's 11th congressional district. Susan Hogarth has sent out an email soliciting volunteers to help with his campaign. The Cape Fear Libertarian Party is hosting their FreedomFire event on Saturday October 8th.

Previous Minutes:

The previous minutes were accepted without objection.

Treasurer Report:

Primary Checking Balance - \$29,650.84. PayPal Balance - \$1,147.43. Federal Checking Balance - \$190.54.

Officer Reports:

The Executive Director's report is attached in full below.

Committee Reports:

Convention Committee Report: We have initial numbers that we will send to the hotel. 35 rooms minimum with the ability to increase as we get closer to the event. There is a new proposed schedule that would allow all business to be done on Saturday.

Electronic Voting:

There were no electronic votes since the last meeting.

Old Business:

- Craven County Affiliate issues: Kimberly Acer has contacted members from Craven county. They are not holding meetings and are not filing paperwork. Angela Humphries, from Craven County, does not believe the situation is fixable as is. Kim is wanting to communicate more with Jessica Tuck, the Craven County treasurer to get more information. Joe Garcia recommends that Kim set up a meeting with the listed executive committee in Craven County.
- Issue Paper policy: Phil Jacobson reads a statement, attached in full below, to the executive committee. There is discussion around policy in general and operational considerations that needs to be considered before changing this policy.
- Executive Director's report new business
 - Strategic Planning Committee: **Joseph Garcia moves "to appoint a Strategic Planning Committee to revise and update the Comprehensive Strategic Plan adopted in June 2019 and appoint for the Communications, Outreach, and Political and Public Policy Director, Affiliate Team and Coalitions Coordinator and positions."** The motion was seconded by Ryan Brown. After discussion, the motion passed unanimously.
 - Messaging Working Group status: **Joseph Garcia moves "to dissolve the Messaging Working Group."** The motion was seconded by Ryan Brown. The motion passed unanimously.
 - NDA Policy Review: It was agreed that the NDA policy would not be reopened for comment. It was agreed that in the future new policies will be posted 5-7 days prior to the Executive Committee voting.

New Business:

- Executive Committee statement of support for Brian Irving as Executive Director: Joe Garcia presents a statement of support for Brian Irving. Sarah Brady moves **"to adopt the statement of support drafted by Joe Garcia."** The motion was seconded by Ryan Brown. After discussion, the motion passed 3-1. Yes: Joe, Sarah, Jonathan. No: Ryan. Absent: Kim, Steve, Ried. The full statement is attached below.

Other Business:

- The proposed LPNC beach trip will be discussed in more detail later after a formal proposal is put together.
- The funding for John (Stratton) Lobdell's proposal, the Freedom Fire Fest on October 8th will be discussed later as John was not still on the meeting as we came to new business.

Adjournment at 10:45 PM EST.

Submitted, Ryan Brown, Secretary

To: LPNC Chair and Executive Committee

Subject: Executive Director Report

Sept. 15, 2022

For the past month, I've not been as active as Executive Director as I should be because I'm uncertain about what I can accomplish and what support I can expect from the Executive Committee to do it. The Aug. 18 Executive Committee meeting discussion concerning criticisms of my work as Executive Director turned into an evaluation of my performance, as the minutes note—but with no final resolution:

The Executive Committee addressed some criticism directed towards the Executive Director and other growing pains the LPNC is experiencing. No specific action was taken by the Executive Committee, but all involved members of the LPNC are committed to working together to address these growing pains.

That left me with questions about what I was expected to do and no answers. Following the meeting, I asked the Executive Committee to publish a written response on the executive-public Slack channel so that the LPNC membership could understand the role of the Executive Director and staff. I think the Executive Committee also owes Phil Jacobson a response. Only one member responded. Thank you, Kim Acer.

On Aug. 19, I posted a question on the Slack channel regarding the new NDA policy and asked for Executive committee guidance. On Aug. 31, I posted recommendations regarding the Messaging Working Group and the Strategic Plan review, again asking for action from the Executive Committee.

I still have no answers. No executive committee member has commented on these recommendations, nor has anyone other than Kim responded to the accusations. (In case you missed them, the Slack posts are attached.) So I'm asking the committee to formally respond to the accusations and take action on my recommendations at this meeting.

It's been difficult for me to do my job as "principal administrative assistant" to the Chair and to "supervise staff members, including volunteers," and administer the "the day-to-day affairs of the Party" without knowing whether the Executive Committee will back my actions.

Some long-time volunteers have publicly questioned my motives and actions as Executive Director. Volunteers perform undefined volunteer duties not listed or defined in the approved organizational plan without coordinating beforehand with other staff members. Some operate without approved job descriptions or titles, doing whatever they want.

There are significant gaps in the written organization plan and job descriptions. For example, several people handle IT, but there's no clear definition of what encompasses IT, no listing of specific duties and responsibilities of anyone on the IT team, and no written or discernible process for solving IT problems and issues. When I tried to obtain that, the response was, "someone with taking care of it" and, "it's worked so far."

While I realize there will be growing pains in transitioning to a different way of operating, I'm not sure the entire Executive Committee agrees with the plan of organization or the new way of doing things. It is also clear that many long-time volunteers don't understand it, some don't want to understand it, and some want to continue to do things the way they've "always done them."

To continue as Executive Director, I need a clear mandate from the Executive Committee on whether or not the LPNC wants to create an organized, professional, and effective party staff (of volunteers) and whether you are willing to make and support the make hard decisions necessary to do that.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/Brian Irving
LPNC Executive Director

Attachment 1

Slack – Aug. 19 8:05 AM

I appreciated the feedback from the Exec Comm members last night about my performance as Executive Director. As I requested last night, I would like the Exec Comm to consider the question below. And I ask for a written response published on this channel so that the LPNC membership can understand the role of the Executive Director and staff.

1. What do you want the LPNC staff to do? (The big question)
2. What authority should they have to act? What specific decisions should be brought to the Exec Comm for approval?
3. Are Slack DMs between staff members OK, or should all discussions be conducted in Slack public channels? If in public channels, please identify which are public channels.

Slack – Aug. 19 9:17 AM

Question for Chair & Executive Committee re Issue Paper and NDA Policies. At last night's Exec Comm meeting, some people questioned the process of approving the issue paper and NDA policies. The issue paper policy will be reviewed at the next meeting to consider Phil Jacobson's objections.

Dee Watson and others questioned the process used to approve the NDA policy. Several members suggested we have a public comment period for any new policy. I'll do that if and when I'm asked to develop future policies. But I heard no motion to take action on the policies you've already approved.

So my question is: Does the chair or executive committee want me to take any action to review the NDA policy? If so, what?

Slack – Aug. 31 2:24 PM

These two items would have been in my report at the now-canceled Executive Committee meeting. I post them here for committee action.

Messaging Working Group. On my recommendation, the LPNC Executive Committee created a working group to develop themes for LPNC messaging. The group included Sarah Brady (Political Director), Erik Raudsep (Outreach Director), Phil Jacobson (Messaging Committee chair), and Brian Irving (Executive Director). In forming the group, I also invited Sean Haugh (Social Media manager). Due to accusations of secret meetings and the resignation of two appointed members, I dissolved that working group before we started any work. After reviewing Executive Committee minutes from July 21, I realize I did not have that authority since the Executive Committee created the group.

I leave it to the Executive Committee to take whatever action they deem necessary to confirm or reverse my decision. If it is reformed, I recommend I not be involved other than as an advisor.

Strategic Plan. Also, on my recommendation, at the July 7 meeting, the Executive Committee tasked me with undertaking a review and update of the Comprehensive Strategic Plan adopted in June 2019. Given the same accusations against me regarding the messaging working group, and to avoid the appearance that I may be writing the plan myself to suit my purpose, I should not continue this work.

I recommend that the Executive Committee reestablish the strategic planning committee to review and update the strategic plan and that the committee includes the Outreach and Communications directors and the Political & Public Policy director (when appointed).

To: LPNC Chair and Executive Committee

Subject: Executive Director Report Addendum

Sept. 15, 2022

These are actions being take by staff members:

1. The Political Director is uploading candidate info to the LP database. (Dee Watson)
2. State Fair is 39% manned. Will there be any additional LPNC promo materials available other than what is already in storage? (Brad Hessel)
3. IT overview class Sept. 19. Won't be another in October or November. (Brad Hessel)
4. The communications director's report is attached.



Communications Director Report - September
Presented for the LPNC Exec Committee on September 15
Rob Yates, LPNC Communications Director

Accomplishments from Prior Month

1. Draft Communications Strategy distributed for comment and feedback.
2. Gained access to and training on Nationbuilder to distribute e mails and post to website.
3. Press releases for Gastonia Rally and for Davidson College 3rd Party Senate Debate.
4. Began efforts to get verified on Twitter.
5. Proposed LPNC "Retreat" (details for EC consideration on next slide)

Goals for the next month

1. Deliver newsletter on the first Tuesday of every month.
2. Use Comms resources to support candidates in whatever way possible
3. Fully plan LPNC Retreat for November
4. Line up times and guests for 3rd season of LPNC podcast.

Libertarian Party of North Carolina Retreat Idea for EC Consideration

1. Rent a house in the Caswell Beach, NC area (there or surrounding beaches) from Thursday November 17 – Sunday November 20.
2. Plan a mix of structured events and free time. Events to include sessions intended to provide open conversation and feedback, training, fun and team building, and service.
3. Team building also included in group-based meal planning.
4. There are lots of ideas for things to do; specific ideas and plans would be finalized if we get approval to move forward.
5. Rob would take the lead on planning. Open to anyone and everyone who wants to help.
6. Currently, approximately 17 people have expressed that they would attend.
7. This event would neither take away from nor conflict with the Cape Fear LP event. Discussed with Kim Acer, and she would attend both. If this goes well, potential to work together to plan one event for next year.
8. Ask for EC is \$\$\$ to cover the house and some or all of the food. Estimated total cost \$3000-\$3500.

Statement of Support, written by Joe Garcia

“The LPNC Executive Committee expects the Executive Director and staff to fulfill their responsibilities as outlined in the LPNC bylaws, the approved job descriptions, and other guidance from the Chair and Executive Committee. No recent action by the current Executive Director or any staff member contradicts that expectation.

The Executive Director and staff have the authority to operate as autonomously as possible. The Chair and Executive Committee should be involved when it concerns finances, organizational policies, hiring/firing, or other actions that affect the entirety of the LPNC members. Trusted staff members selected by the elected Chair and approved by the elected Executive Committee should be free to do their jobs and to be held accountable based on their performance, just as in any other professional organization.

At times, direct messages and other private conversations between staff members will be necessary. Staff members, committees, and teams need to feel comfortable holding candid discussions to make decisions, not to mention upholding our promise to protect people’s private information (regarding Contacts and financial info) as well as security, data, political strategy, and documents.”