

LPRC 2023 Bylaws Committee Report
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Committee Members: James Gholston, Susan Hogarth,
Cullene Lang, and Anna Mosashvili

Preface

Determining Our Starting Point

The Committee began by trying to ascertain the Bylaws document that would be the starting point for our deliberations.

In reviewing the Bylaws document on the LPRC website at the time we could see that amendments made during our 2022 Annual Membership Meeting had not been added to that document, and that the document on the website was inconsistent in other ways, such as numbering. So our first several meetings were devoted primarily to insuring that we had the most accurate possible document from which to begin our work.

Thanks to Anna Mosashvili, who provided us with the notes from last year's meeting, we updated the Bylaws document according to those notes and recreated the document with consistent numbering. The Committee then agreed that this would be our starting document, and, thanks to Joe Dehn, this cleaned-up document was posted to the LPRC website. The starting document can be found at www.lpradicalcaucus.org/bylaws and serves as the basis for the changes we are proposing this year. A PDF version can be found at [LPRC_Bylaws_2022.pdf](#) if you would like to print it out to have handy at our meeting.

We then proceeded to consider substantive changes to various parts of the document, focusing on rationalizing the membership section and looking for other ways to streamline the document. Even with the proposals we have made, we still have a long way to go to clean up our Bylaws, but we feel that we've made a good start this year on what will have to be an ongoing process.

Simple Clean-Ups

As we proceeded we discovered some items that various committee members thought had been changed (or should have been cleaned up) at some time in the past (but not last year). Rather than having our starting document be a “moving target”, and not having written documentation for these additional changes, we have included them as proposed changes for this year. We also passed some other simple, fairly obvious changes. See

the actual proposals in **Proposals – Section 1** below. These four proposals all passed 5-0-0, and we are suggesting that these proposals be adopted as a package but if anyone wishes to “peel” one of these items out and discuss and vote on it separately, we are happy to handle it that way.

Changes to the Membership Section

Although many parts of our Bylaws are redundant or inconsistent in wording, the primary focus of our streamlining work was to clarify the definition of LPRC Membership. We identified a number of aspects of the Membership section that various Committee members wanted to address:

- a fairly high dues bar (\$100/year) for anyone to be a voting member;
- multiple non-voting member categories;
- the notion of in-kind donations of time and effort as a substitute for monetary dues and the difficulties in documenting such work and assuring parity with monetary dues payments; and
- the requirement that membership in the LPRC include paid membership in both the national LP and a person's state LP organization at what is a troublesome time in some of these organizations, and can be difficult and time-consuming for each member to document and for the organization to verify.

Our proposal addresses all these concerns in **Proposals – Section 2** below.

Other Changes

Proposals – Section 3 includes four other proposals we passed, addressing current or anticipated concerns:

- electronic voting by the Board;
- creation of a Policy Manual for items that do not rise to the level of permanence or importance of the Bylaws (it is envisioned that future Bylaws deliberations by the Board or the membership will move a number of things out of the Bylaws and into this document);

- a clarification about types of committees (this would have been in Section 1 except that we included language about the Policy Manual which didn't exist previously); and
- removing the Nondiscrimination section from the Bylaws.

Additional Proposals from Committee Members and Others

A number of additional suggestions were raised by Committee members but are not included here because they did not receive a second or because we dealt with the underlying issue in a different way. Four proposals were suggested by members outside the Bylaws Committee. One was considered premature at the current state of our organization, one was not considered because we did not modify the section to which it would have applied, one was considered to more appropriately be addressed in a Policy Manual, and one was considered moot as it had to do with in-kind dues payments, which we are proposing be eliminated entirely.

Notes:

All changes are intended to take place at the close of the 2023 Annual Membership Meeting unless otherwise noted in the proposal.

Comments in italics are commentary/explanation relating to the proposal, not actual proposal language.

The format of “Passed x-x-x” means yeses-noes-abstentions.

Proposals

Proposals – Section 1: Simple Clean ups

1) Passed 5-0-0

Change the phrase “oppose all government policies” in Section II G 3 to “oppose all policies that extend government power,”

on the off chance some government makes a pro-freedom policy.

2) Passed 5-0-0

Section VII C Committee Meetings doesn't seem to belong where it currently is located.

We propose moving it to a more appropriate place, as item D 3 in Section V D Committees.

3) Passed 5-0-0

Proposal to standardize our Bylaws language to talk about our member meetings as Annual Membership Meetings rather than Conventions, and to allow for other membership meetings as needed beyond one per year, by doing the following:

Change the first line of Section VII to read:

The LPRC shall hold membership meetings as provided for in these Bylaws.

Change section VII A to be titled “Annual Membership Meetings” and change that paragraph to read as follows:

The Membership of the LPRC shall meet (1) in Conjunction with the Convention of the National Libertarian Party ("Convention Annual Membership Meeting") at said Convention; and (2) on a date corresponding to every anniversary of said Convention in years where no such Convention is held, or as near to such date as is practicable, which date shall be determined by a vote of the Board ("Non-Convention Annual Membership Meeting"). Non-Convention Annual Membership Meetings will be conducted electronically in the same manner as is the standing practice of the Board in conducting their General Meetings. For Annual Membership Meetings, all Members shall be

notified electronically at least 100 days in advance of the meeting via email or online group calendar, Facebook, etc.

Add a new section VII C titled “Other Membership Meetings” with the following language:

Additional Membership Meetings may be held electronically with 45-days notice to Members when authorized by 2/3 of the LPRC Board.

and renumber subsequent sections.

[Note: the changes below then implement the above changes throughout the Bylaws document.]

Change all instances of (upper or lower case) “the membership meeting” or “membership meetings” to “a membership meeting”.

Change all instances of (upper or lower case) “yearly membership meeting(s)” to “Annual Membership Meetings”.

Change all instances of (upper or lower case) “general membership meeting(s) to “Membership Meetings”.

Change all instances of (upper or lower case) “LPRC Convention Membership Meeting” to “LPRC Convention Annual Membership Meeting” and all instances of (upper or lower case) “general membership meeting in non-convention years” or “odd numbered year general membership meeting” or “non-convention membership meeting(s)” to Non-Convention Annual Membership Meetings”.

Change all instances of (upper or lower case) “LPRC general meeting(s)” to “LPRC Membership Meetings”.

Change all instances of (upper or lower case) “annual caucus convention(s)” to Annual Membership Meeting(s)”.

4) Passed 5-0-0

Proposal to revise our parliamentary authority further than we did last year.

When we added this section at the last Annual Membership Meeting we did not take into account the notion that we would want Robert's Rules to come into play only if we didn't

have specific language in our own Bylaws to cover a given circumstance, which the Bylaws Committee felt was the actual intention of the addition. Hence we propose the following:

Replace existing language in Section XIII Parliamentary Procedure with:

The business proceedings of the LPRC shall be governed by the rules in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws and any special rules of order or policies the organization may adopt.

Proposals Section 2: Changes to the Membership Section

Passed 4-0-1

Changes to definition of membership

Our omnibus membership proposal would result in the following changes:

- *reduce the dues to \$25/year, making membership more accessible financially;*
- *require only agreement with the NAP (which at this time is the minimum requirement for “membership” in the national LP);*
- *require a member to be registered to vote as a Libertarian when that option is available to them;*
- *require that a member not be registered in any other political party;*
- *require a member to indicate agreement with the Goals and Ideology of the LPRC; and*
- *remove all references to in-kind dues and non-voting memberships.*

See more discussion of the motivation for these changes in the Preface to this document.

Replace Section III A. Membership Qualifications and Eligibility with:

A. A Member of the LPRC is anyone who meets the following requirements:

1. Pays annual dues of at least \$25;
2. Has certified to the LPRC
 - a. that they oppose the initiation of force to achieve political or social goals (which, at the time of adopting this section, is the requirement for being considered a member of the national Libertarian Party);
 - b. that they are registered to vote as a Libertarian in their home state if such registration is available and they are eligible;

c. that they are not registered in any other party; and

d. that they are in agreement with the Goals and Ideology of the LPRC.

LPRC Membership expires one year from the last qualifying payment.

[Note: the changes below then implement the above changes throughout the Bylaws document.]

Keep subsections e, f, and g with appropriate changes such as renumbering and changing \$100 in section f. to \$25. Replace the second sentence in section e. with “A challenge may be answered with verification of Membership status by the Secretary.”

Remove Section III B completely and renumber subsequent sections.

Remove the final sentence of Section III E 1.

Change the title of Section III F to read “Voting Rights of Members”.

Change Section IV B 1 to read:

Only Members of the LPRC as described in Section III A are eligible for positions on the LPRC Board of Directors (“LPRC Board”).

Change Section IV B 2 b. to read simply “The coordinators of the LPRC State Committees (defined elsewhere in this document)”.

Change Section IV E 1 a. to read: “All LPRC Board Members must maintain current membership in the LPRC per the provisions in Section III A. An LPRC Board Member who allows their LPRC Membership to lapse or who is formally expelled from the LPRC is automatically ineligible to serve on the Board.”

Change references (upper or lower case) to “Board members”, “Board”, and “Board of Directors” to “the LPRC Board” as appropriate.

Change all references throughout the Bylaws to (upper or lower case) “Voting Member(s)” or “Voting or Non-Voting Member(s)” to simply “Member(s)” wherever these phrases refer to Members of the LPRC.

Change all references throughout the Bylaws to (upper or lower case) “Membership” or “Caucus Membership” to “LPRC Membership”.

Change references to “Section III A. 1.” throughout the Bylaws to “Section III A”.

[Parenthetical Note which is part of this proposal: The membership changes which effectively eliminate any existing non-voting memberships will take effect on December 31, 2023 so as to allow for existing non-voting members to be solicited for conversion to membership under this new definition.]

Proposals – Section 3: Other Changes

1) Passed 4-0-0 (one member not present at time of vote)

Provision for electronic decisions by the Board

Recently the Chair was forced to make an emergency unilateral decision, as she considered that there was not time even to schedule and hold a special Board meeting to consider the topic, and there was no provision for online voting by the Board. Her decision was later ratified by the Board but the preference of the Chair and the Bylaws Committee would be to provide a way to handle online voting in such circumstances. The language below was written to provide access to discussion and voting by all Board members, quick turnaround time, the ability to “amend” the language without having to invoke the amendment process that works in a meeting but is tedious to implement for an online process, and addressing transparency concerns by emphasizing that this process is only for emergency actions and that results of this process will be announced to the membership within 48 hours.

Add Section IV E Electronic Voting (and renumber subsequent sections)

- a. The Board may also transact business online by voting on motions considered by the Chair, or three Board members, to be an emergency requiring urgent action. Discussion and voting shall take place on an email discussion list or other online facility that is available to all Board members and is capable of supporting the requirements of this section.
- b. The voting period for a motion shall end when 72 hours have passed since proposal of the original motion. The voting period may end earlier if there is any motion (in the motion group – see d. below) on which all Board members have cast votes (including explicit abstentions).
- c. A quorum of the voting members of the Board must each cast a vote (or explicitly abstain) for a motion to be eligible for adoption. In order to be adopted, a motion must also receive the approval of a majority of those voting (not counting abstentions), or such higher requirement as may be required for approval of that type of motion.
- d. It is envisioned that a motion made for electronic consideration will be simple and straightforward. However, in the event the Chair or three other members of the Board prefer voting on alternate language, other motions may be proposed, as alternatives for a motion already under consideration. An original motion and all of its alternatives (if any) shall constitute a motion group.

e. Each Board member may vote on each motion in a group. Members may change their votes, including withdrawing them entirely, at any time before the end of the voting period.

f. If, at the end of the voting period, more than one motion in a group has sufficient “yes” votes to pass, the one with the highest number of “yes” votes shall be considered adopted. In case of a tie for highest number of “yes” votes, the one most recently proposed shall be considered adopted.

g. Since an action taken in the manner described herein is not taken in a Board meeting, all LPRC Members do not have access to listen to the discussion of such action, and the normal transparency of Board decisions to Members is compromised. To address transparency concerns, any such actions taken will be announced to the membership within 48 hours of the decision being finalized.

2) Passed 4-0-1

Proposal to create a Policy Manual *for policies that the Board would like to formalize but that don't rise to the level of permanence or importance of a Bylaw:*

Add new Section XIII (and renumber subsequent sections)

LPRC Policy Manual

Policies approved by the Board which are not included in these Bylaws will be documented and maintained in an LPRC Policy Manual.

Policies in said document are created by a simple majority of the Board and can be amended, removed, or superseded by a simple majority of the Board. A policy residing in the Policy Manual may be also be amended, removed, or superseded by a 2/3 vote of the Members at a membership meeting.

3) Passed 4-0-0 (one member not present at time of vote)

Proposal better defining types of Committees

Change Section V D 2 to read:

There are two types of Committees: Standing and Ad-Hoc. The Platform Committee and the Bylaws Committee are standing committees. Additional standing committees may be

specified in the LPRC Policy Manual.

This is a proposal that was initially considered to be one of those “passed in the past but never incorporated into the Bylaws document” but we have presented it here because we could not find documentation for this change being made in the past and we have now added a reference the Policy Manual which we are proposing creating at this meeting.

4) Passed 3-0-0 (one member not present at time of vote, one member not voting)

Delete Section III C Nondiscrimination and renumber as appropriate.

This language is simply boilerplate “woke” language from somewhere that a) should go without saying, and b) if we want to say something along these lines it should be covered in our Platform, not in this document.
