

Liberal Party of Canada (Ontario) Executive Board Recap

February 23rd & February 24th, 2008 - Stratford, ON

Dear Liberals:

The latest LPC (O) Executive Board meeting and policy/training day was held on February 23rd and 24th respectively. This was the first meeting held under this new format, which proved to be a successful and will be duplicated in the future.

Saturday was dedicated exclusively to Executive Board business.

Please find below some highlights of the weekend:

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 23rd, 2008

1. PRESIDENTS UPDATE - *Mike Crawley*, called the meeting to order and spoke to the following topics:

- Riding Presidents, noting they are the stewards of the party
- Chris Ethier and Luch Durante are the two new Ontario Desks in the OLO
- Brian Klunder, LPC Director of Membership and Fundraising
- Harry Mortimer, LPC Director of Compliance
- Greg Fergus, LPC National Director and Deputy National Campaign Director
- Format for this Executive Board meeting will be the new template for future meetings with Saturday for Executive Board business and Sunday for training and policy.
- Presence of 70 out of 106 ridings
- Presidents and designates that were new to executive board introduced themselves to the room.

2. EVP UPDATE - *Meredith Caplan, Executive Vice President*, initiated the discussion regarding the goals for 2008 with LPC (O) having a more focused approach in order to fulfill the role of the PTAs as per the new constitution:

- Training, The organization committee will be engaged and will be working on preparing handbooks for other table officer positions in the EDAs
- Policy: More policy sessions on the Sunday of Executive Board, ongoing policy resolution process, education session with caucus critics, surveying members for input.
- Grassroots fundraising: twinning program and help make the Victory Fund work for Ontario ridings.

- Communications: Regular communication per communications plan and calendar of important dates for the year ahead to be distributed.

In the spirit of allowing ample time for discussion and feedback before a formal proposal is circulated Mike Crawley and Meredith Caplan opened a discussion on the issue of fees for Executive Board.

With fees to party meetings deemed a contribution by Elections Canada, riding presidents and party officials are finding they are nearing their donation maximum, limiting their capability to donate to the central party, attend party fundraisers and join Laurier Club. LPC (O) struck a sub committee to address this issue and find an alternative way of funding Executive Boards and Regional Meetings. A proposal that would see riding associations pay a yearly fee for their Riding President or designate to attend these meetings was discussed and was very well received by the room. As some ridings are already paying these fees, it was viewed as a positive step to standardize this practice. This solution also solves a number of other planning and equity issues we have been facing:

- The difficulty to properly plan and prepare for the Executive Board meetings when attendance rates fluctuate and most individuals sign up at the last minute.
- Cost over-runs could be prevented if LPC (O) knew, in more accurate terms, how many people will be attending.
- We want to ensure maximum representation of all ridings. If a President cannot attend this will encourage a riding to send a designate.
- Some presidents cannot afford to pay the fee and therefore are not able to attend. This runs counter to our Liberal values of equal opportunity to participate and deprives ridings from receiving important information.
- This would mean that all ridings will share the cost of these important meetings equally.
- Riding Presidents will not have to monitor their ability to attend central party fundraisers and join programs such as Laurier Club or the Victory Fund.

This topic will be voted on at the September Executive Board meeting. A formal proposal will be circulated within the appropriate notice period.

3. PERSONEL COMMITTEE UPDATE - *Rob Jamieson, Chair of the Personnel Committee, reported:*

- LPC(O) period of restructuring is now complete
- Recent addition to the team is Erron Walker as our new IT person

- Five staff reaching out from the office and five staff in the field serving regions and commissions
 - gender equity in the office with five men and five women staff
- A great team has been built at LPC(O) and acknowledged the hard work they do for the party

4. POLICY UPDATE - *Maryanne Kampouris, Vice President Policy*, reported:

- There are now at least two policy representatives in every region
- The evergreen process is well underway, meaning the policy process functions year-round
- A policy rally in September to ready LPC(O) policy resolutions for November biennial convention
- Out of 106 ridings, only 20 have active policy committees; our goal this year is to increase the participation of EDAs in the policy process
- Sunday is devoted to policy and training—a model that has been adopted for all future meetings
- One stream is exclusively policy with an impressive line-up of speakers on the economy, manufacturing sector and agriculture; Speakers from both caucus and experts from the field

5. COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE - *Bardish Chagger, Vice President Communications*, introduced a push-pull to “Get Connected”:

There have been complaints from the membership regarding the number of e-mails being pushed out, noting LPC sends out:

- Liberal e-briefs
 - Liberal Responses
 - liberal.ca emails
- Significant numbers have asked to be removed from the list-serve
- Focus moving forward will be to pull individuals to the LPC(O) website for information
- Website is already relevant and current, with latest events, RSS feeds, headlines and riding information available so we want to pull people to the www.lpc.ca website
- Going forward, e-mails will be used to prompt members when new information is uploaded
- Regional sections are to be created for users
 - to find regional news and updates
 - highlight volunteers
 - share good news stories
- All EDAs are encouraged to send in their events, event pictures and to provide feedback

- 2° of separation: Information funnels from the Riding President to the Regional President; the Regional President will send it to the VP Communications for posting to the website
- Extranet contact— Help Desk: Scott Blurton, LPC, 1-866-574-5131 or helpdesk@liberal.ca

6. LPC (O) BUDGET - *Howard Stevenson, Treasurer*, presented the 2008 LPC (O) Budget:

- Factors reflected include:
 - a continuing healthy cash flow position
 - significantly reduced expenses compared to 2007 to reflect a projected reduction in revenue resulting in a traditional balanced budget
- 2008 Budget presented and adopted unanimously

7. REGIONAL MEETINGS - *Regional Presidents held meetings for their respective regions:*

Constituted Full Regional Meeting dates were tentatively chosen:

- Eastern Region Meeting in April 2008, tentatively April 26th, 2008.
- Golden Horseshoe Region Meeting in May 2008, TBA.
- Northern Region Meeting is May 10, 2008
- Toronto Region Meeting is May 24th.
- Central Region meeting is June 7th, 2008.
- SouthWest Region meeting is June 7, 2008
- Discussion focus on:
 - Region specific training needs
 - Top issues in ridings/regions for lunch discussion
 - Push-pull communication strategy, if time permitted

Regional Meeting minutes are available for each region, if requested

8. WORKING LUNCH - hot topic discussion with Mike Crawley, followed by speaker: Bonnie Brown, MP:

- Each regional president (or designate) reported on the top issues of their respective areas
- Hot topics
 - Infrastructure
 - Campaign rebate claw back of 50% by LPC
 - Poverty plan

- Security Certificate legislation that passed
- Afghanistan not as great an issue now that the Leader has taken a stand

Bonnie Brown, M.P., Oakville, gave a wonderful talk that resonated with the participants.

- Presidents and their members are doing the work of the party
- It all starts with us and recognizing the importance of what we do
- Membership entrusts us as their representatives; we at Executive Board are in a privileged position
- **So go back to your ridings, share everything you learn, include everyone you possibly can, and bring everyone, all your members, into the fold.**
- There are similarities between the Leader's job, and the job of the Riding President

9. FUNDRAISING REVIEW - *John Duffy, CFO for LPC, and Rob Jamieson, National Membership Secretary:*

A review of the party's national revenues & expenses was presented.

LPC is implementing the Victory Plan:

- A minimum of \$5 per month to the riding and \$5 per month to the party.
- Total minimum contribution is \$120 per year (similar to Chequemate)
- If every member did this – the bare minimum – the party would be well funded for the campaign AND every riding association would have a sizable war chest
- This approach gives max benefit and is tax receipted (costs \$2.50/month with tax credit)
- Materials will be sent to EDAs to explain implementation
- No additional cost for this program – LPC administers the entire program
- Donations to the EDA will go directly to them
- Donors receive their tax receipts at year end

10. TWINNING PROGRAM - *Kim McFarlane, KIFLA President and Meredith Caplan, EVP:*

At the Council of Presidents, Ontario EDA presidents stated the need for a twinning program; you spoke and LPC (O) listened:

- Pilot program will be starting soon, not compulsory
- Information sheets were sent to the EDA presidents and were gathered
- Stronger ridings will be asked to assist (be twinned with) weaker ridings

- Ridings will be asked to share their knowledge/experience in the areas of fundraising, membership recruitment, outreach and policy
- Comment was made that it might be beneficial to twin held ridings to unheld ridings, rather than strong to weak ridings

11. MEMBERSHIP REVIEW - *Rob Jamieson, LPC (O) Secretary:*

Online membership list accessibility:

- Able to access your membership online through the Extranet
- Fantastic online process—now available to all ridings
- Able to update membership lists hands on and in coordination with staff
- Accessible fundraising lists also available
- Volunteer requests tracked online

12. CAMPAIGN UPDATE:

Gordon Ashworth, National Campaign Director

Heather Chiasson, Director Election Readiness, LPC

Greg Fergus, LPC National Director and Deputy Campaign Director

Hon. Judi Longfield, LPC (O) Executive Director, Ontario Campaign

Director

There are 308 ridings across Canada:

- 85 incumbents
- 216 confirmed candidates
- 79 confirmed female candidates
- 270 ridings where candidates have been identified
- 108 female candidates are identified (not all are nominated)

Regarding the tour...

- There is a plane, bus, media buses, etc.
- Red Leaf has been established to handle all advertising.
- Advertising is being prepared for tv, radio, print, foreign language and digital medias
- Candidate support is available through the extranet with: Liberal U, talking points, news releases, graphic templates, fundraising letters, policy and contact information
- Fundraising best practices needs to be discussed at the Regional Meetings.

13. COMMISSIONS - *Ontario Young Liberals and Ontario Women's Liberal Commission:*

Jacob Mksyartinian, OYL President

Robyn Cassidy, OYL EVP

Kevin Spafford, OYL Communications Director
Meredith Caplan, OWLC Vice President—Federal
Eileen Shushat, OWLC Vice President—Communications

Presentations were given followed by a dialogue between Riding Presidents and presenters:

- Discussion focus on:
 - OYL/OWLC as a resource—how we can assist you
 - Benefits of having an OYL/OWLC club or representative in your riding
 - Visit www.oyl.org or <http://owlc.lpcoco.ca> for contact information

14. DATES TO REMEMBER: Please note the following dates in your calendar

- Eastern Region Meeting in April 2008, tentatively April 26th.
- Golden Horseshoe Region Meeting in May 2008, TBA.
- Toronto Region Meeting is May 24th, 2008.
- Northern Region Meeting is May 10th, 2008
- Central Region meeting is June 7th, 2008.
- SouthWest Region meeting is June 7th, 2008
- Policy Rally in works for September 2008
- Executive Board will be held in September 2008
- LPC Biennial potentially for November/December 2008

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 24TH, 2008

Sunday was a policy and training day, which was divided into three streams: Campaign Volunteer Training, Candidate Training and Policy. Invitations were extended to candidates and campaign teams.

STREAM 1: CAMPAIGN VOLUNTEER TRAINING

- Sessions were available on
 - Building your team—and ensuring all areas are covered (Paul Mulligan)
 - Election Day—the last day when everything must come together (Christine Innes)
 - First Contact Telephone Canvassing—determining your support (Mike O’Neill)
 - Door-to-Door Canvassing—the do’s and don’ts (Alasdair Robertson and Meredith Caplan)

- Election Readiness—what you need to consider (Don Nicholson and Helen Wilson)

STREAM 2: CANDIDATE TRAINING

- There were two sessions held for Candidate Media Training. Nick Masciantonio of Communiqué Studios and John Delacourt worked with candidates to focus on how to deal with media and get comfortable with the camera

STREAM 3: POLICY

- Sessions included:
 - Policy 101—have your say: this session was extremely successful with standing room only and several EDAs present.
 - Manufacturing—Carlos Gomes of ScotiaBank Capital provided insight and in depth information on the Canadian Manufacturing Sector and a fruitful discussion ensued.
 - Afghanistan—impromptu discussion with Dr. Carolyn Bennett.
 - Economy—a great discourse with Hon. John McCallum, Finance critic.
 - Agriculture—Greg McClinchey presented and made the Rural Caucus Discussion Paper available upon request followed by a practical application information discussion by Don McCabe of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture.

If you have any questions, concern, suggestions or concerns please don't hesitate to contact me or visit the website to contact the appropriate Table Officer or Regional President. For updates on LPC (O) events please visit our website at www.lpco.ca.