

March 2, 2009

Executive Board Summary

February 7th - 8th, 2009 Barrie, Ontario

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Dear Liberals:

This past weekend, Liberals from across Ontario gathered in Barrie for our LPC(O) Executive Board meeting.

Please find below some highlights of the weekend.

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE - *Mike Crawley, LPC(O) President*

Mike Crawley welcomed returning and new Riding Presidents, and all Liberals, to Barrie. Mike called the Executive Board meeting to order and provided a synopsis of the weekend's agenda. The luncheon with the Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada, the Hon. Michael Ignatieff, and the closing speech by the Hon. John McCallum, were highlighted. Mike thanked everyone for their attendance and welcomed present caucus members and special guests.

TREASURER'S REPORT - *Howard Stevenson, Treasurer*

The LPC(O) Budget for the Fiscal 2009 period was presented and passed unanimously. The projection was to achieve a Break-Even for the period despite reduced revenues flowing from the October 2008 Election which were offset with savings from structural and operating expenses. Cash flow remains positive. Results for the 2008 Fiscal Period, while preliminary pending year-end adjustments from LPC and an audit, reflect a small surplus versus a projected Break-Even Budget.

NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP - *Rob Jamieson, LPC Membership Secretary and LPC(O) Secretary*

Rob engaged Executive Board members with a lively PowerPoint presentation concluding in a very healthy discussion on membership rules. Rob confirmed that the permanent membership cards are in process and should be released by early March 2009. Moving forward, consensus was reached that the Party must focus on recruitment and engagement of members.

REGIONAL MEETINGS - Regional Presidents

Regional meetings were held for all six of Ontario's regions. Agenda items varied among each region though debates and thorough discussion was a commonality in each meeting. Regional Presidents will e-mail the minutes of these meetings to all their region's EDA presidents. Please contact your respective Regional President should you wish to be on their mailing list.

LUNCH - Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada, Hon. Michael Ignatieff, MP

Michael Ignatieff gave a vibrant and motivational speech. He spoke passionately about the kind of Canada Liberals stand for and outlined how he is putting the Harper Conservatives "on probation". He also spoke at length and in details about the organization that's needed on the ground, riding by riding, for us to compete with the Conservatives.

**RENEWAL COMMITTEE – Hon. Navdeep Bains, MP**

The discussion on the Renewal Committee was overtaken by questions about the Biennial Convention and the delegate fees that have been recently released. Navdeep came to Executive Board to make Riding Presidents aware of the work the Committee is undertaking:

- To review the work of the Red Ribbon Task Force
- To look at the leadership selection process
- To examine the federated structure of the Party
- To examine the contributions of the commissions
- To build a clear process that connects policy development to all levels of the Party

A full consultation with Party bodies, caucus, membership and liberally-minded Canadians is taking place and will end on March 6th. Based on received feedback, the Commission will put forward recommendations to the National Executive who will vote on which constitutional amendments are put forward to the Biennial Convention. Convention delegates in Vancouver will vote on the amendments.

Navdeep's vision is to have this process result in a Party that is more democratic, efficient and connected to our members; a Party that is ready to fight and win the next election.

Next Steps:

1. Submit your ideas to the committee directly at mrowe@liberal.ca
2. Participate in the online discussions on 'En Famille' and Forum Liberalis
3. Spread the word to all Liberals and liberally-minded Canadians that this is their opportunity to re-shape their party.

Submissions are due by March 6th

RIDING WORK PLANS - Mike Crawley, President, and Hon. Judi Longfield, Executive Director

A very positive response was received for the Riding Work Plans that were released via e-mail to riding presidents a few weeks ago. Mike and Judi commented on how the plan will help ridings move forward, providing them with the outline of what's required for an Association to be successful. This plan provides a six month focus in the areas of documentation, community outreach, financials & fundraising, Elections Canada compliance, membership, lists and participation. To help associations get started on their community outreach program, a guide to planning Town Halls was provided.

VICTORY FUND – Ontario Chairs: Meredith Caplan, EVP, and Howard Brown

The Victory Fund is an affordable way for individuals to personally contribute to the success of the Liberal Party of Canada and their riding association. Meredith and Howard gave a factual presentation and provoked an engaging dialogue among riding presidents. With already 1200 members in Ontario and over 1800 in Canada, Ontario is leading the way!

We have over 70 Ontario Ridings on the Moneris system. Riding associations not signed up on Moneris are missing out! Most of them have Victory Fund donations waiting for them at LPC that haven't been transferred to their association's bank accounts. Signing up with Moneris would allow EDAs to receive donations within three business days. Associations can sign up for Moneris by contacting their field worker at LPC(O).

For more information please contact the Victory Fund Chair in your association. For Victory Fund Regional Chairs, please contact your Regional President.

For more information see www.victoryfund.ca.

Next Steps:

- Make sure your association is signed up; contact your LPC(O) Field Worker for assistance
- Make sure your riding association has a Victory Fund Chair
- Get to know your Regional Victory Fund Chair; contact your Regional President for assistance and contact information
- Ask your Regional Victory Fund Chair to come out to an association meeting and deliver the Victory Fund presentation to your members

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS - Brian Nichols, Constitutional and Legal Affairs Committee Chair

With 12 Proposed Constitutional Amendments and one Proposal submitted by EDAs, Brian chaired a session on Constitutional Amendments that was a fruitful debate. Only four of the 12 proposed amendments passed. The other eight were defeated by the will of the room. Much debate transpired on the principle of "One Member One Vote". It was resolved in unanimous support to have a committee struck that will report to the Management Committee. This resolution came to pass in the hope of having something available in proper format to be submitted to the Biennial Convention in Vancouver.

CHANGE COMMISSION - Doug Ferguson, LPC President, and Hon. Carolyn Bennett, MP

In front of an attentive and passionate audience of about 100 LPC(O) executive members, Doug Ferguson, Carolyn Bennett and Ontario VP Policy, Maryanne Kampouris, spent two hours discussing the activities of the Change Commission and the role of the Liberal-only online forum "En Famille."

Mr. Ferguson and Dr. Bennett laid out their goal: not only to define new processes for the Party to follow, but to "change the culture of the party from one of entitlement and arrogance to one of change and inclusion."

In particular, Dr. Bennett pointed out that voters observe how Liberals govern themselves and reckon that they will govern the country in a similar fashion. Therefore, the Party must act in a fair and transparent manner.


POLICY 'EN FAMILLE' REVIEW - Maryanne Kampouris, VP Policy

Maryanne spoke on the successes and challenges of the Policy Process in Ontario. For the first time, EDAs and regions are hosting policy debates and think tanks, and they are engaging their members in developing policy resolutions. They are preparing for Vancouver by participating in the formal policy resolution process that included regional policy rallies in the summer of 2008 and the 'En Famille' debates and discussions that recently ended in January 2009.

444 people signed up to participate in the 'En Famille' Ontario policy forum. 227 people voted on-line. Maryanne gave special recognition to LPC(O) Staffer Patrick Storr, and to Ron Hartling, and the volunteer team assisting him with 'En Famille', for the high level of dedication and support they provided to our members during the launch of the 'En Famille' initiative.

Successes:

- For the first time Commission resolutions were included with those from EDAs in the debate and voting process from which 10 resolutions were selected from Ontario to be sent to the Biennial process.
- Commissions and EDAs worked together to blend and arrive at consensus so that the resulting product was that of quality, and based on consensus.
- High engagement of youth in the PTA-based process.

We successfully piloted the formal resolutions debate and voting process in the largest PTA within the Liberal Party of Canada.

Continued...

POLICY 'EN FAMILLE' REVIEW continued

Challenges:

- Some people signed up for the national budget discussion on 'En Famille' and did not realize that they were not accessing the Ontario Site. Therefore when they came to vote, they did not have Ontario credentials. We were able to rectify this in some cases but not in all.
- Some individuals felt that the site was not 'intuitive', thus turning away some users because they found it complicated and/or confusing.
- Site governance is still in development and required a high level of oversight and administrative effort by volunteers and LPC(O) staff as we resolved a variety of issues on an almost-daily basis.
- There was no barrier to voting more than once for the same resolution, therefore, some individuals used the opportunity to overweight their preferences. The good news is that this did not affect the final outcome.
- Accessibility was limited to people who had Internet access. Some individuals used public Libraries, and regional/commission policy reps assisted members in using the site and voting. People without voting privileges felt that they were denied an opportunity to be heard, even though their comments were captured and viewed by other party members as well as caucus.

Next Steps:

- The Ontario Forum on 'En Famille' will be open until February 21st to collect member reactions on the recent process.
 - National Policy process leading to the Vancouver biennial (details attached).
- Request has been made to the national committee to reconsider the number of **voters** per EDA who can participate in 'En Famille' in order to provide more participants with voting privileges.

**WINNING WITH MEMBERSHIP - Alasdair Robertson, Presenter**

Alasdair delivered a very effective workshop on Membership Recruitment. As highlighted on the recently released Riding Work Plans, recruitment is a priority in "the way forward". The workshop was very well received especially due to the timing of the presentation. New and creative ideas were provided for the recruitment and engagement of new members.

Stay tuned:

- LPC(O) is refining the *Winning With Membership* workshop. The workshop and sample documents will be electronically released to Riding Associations for use within your riding.

LUNCH – Hon. John McCallum, MP, Finance Critic

Executive Board concluded with an insightful speech by the John McCallum followed by an exchange of comments and questions with the Riding Presidents, candidates and representatives. Compared to the brutal and partisan November Economic Update, he mentioned that the Liberal caucus was somewhat satisfied with the budget that the Conservative Government recently brought to the floor of the House of Commons. He was pleased that the Conservatives realized actions need to be taken, and that they used borrowed ideas from the Liberals, though these actions do not go far enough. He disputed the media's commentary on this being a "Liberal budget" as a Liberal Government would do things differently including making Employment Insurance more accessible to Canadians that need this benefit quickly in today's rough economic times.