In no particular order, I offer the following updates and chronicles:

**BitCoin**

I have directed staff to proceed with establishing an account with a merchant provider that will allow us to accept BitCoin donations. Robert has assured me that as long as we can get the proper disclosures and reporting in place that this does not present undue costs to the LNC. While no political party yet accepts BitCoins, and the FEC has not established any rulings, we believe the way in which this provider handles the transactions that it is for all intents and purposes no different than PayPal.

When donating with BitCoin, a donor would specify a dollar amount. The provider would debit the donors BitCoin account, and credit our account in US dollars. Using this method should eliminate the need to consider the donation an “in kind” contribution.

The two considerations we are keeping in mind are security of our banking (because the provider would have to have normal account access authority), and the security of our donors information. The first we are going to solve by creating a new bank account for just BitCoin transactions. The second is a risk that we necessarily have to accept with any provider, but this provider is relatively new, relatively small, and therefore diligence is warranted.

Provided that we can get what we need from the provider, we will add a BitCoin button to our donation pages as an option. Data entry will be made by staff from confirming transaction emails from the provider.

I am considering this an experiment. We will easily be able to monitor the account activity. While I am not sold on exactly how beneficial this will be, I will remain optimistic, and trusts those who claim it would be a good thing to assist us in promoting the use of BitCoin in their various and sundry circles, and show the critics to be wrong.

**Electronic Distribution of LP News**

We currently post past issues of LP News on our website so that people can download them. Existing practice is for the current issue to be unavailable for some period of time, usually until the next issue comes out.

The software package we use is also capable of producing LP News in e-book format, without requiring purchasing any additional features. Staff has estimated that the actual time (cost) involved in doing so would be about three hours per issue, once the learning curve has been flattened.

However, now we come to a policy decision revolving around whether we should support electronic distribution of LP news, and under which constraints.

Carla has stated that she feels that LP News is a member benefit that would be diminished if we offered LP News for free. Therefore, we should not make electronic version available on a timely basis, but only as an archival or historical artifact.

I do not share this opinion. I feel that people join and support the LP to advance liberty, and that the LP News is a mode of communication between leadership and our members. I also feel that the vast majority of our members would actually endorse and support a far wider distribution of LP News. To me, it’s just like distributing position papers. The members pay for their production because they want the information disseminated.

I will seek counsel of the LNC during my report.

In my vision, I do not anticipate mandating the move towards electronic distribution at this time. I will not tell our members they cannot get a printed LP News. To begin with, I just want the pdf version to be available immediately. I also want to email the members when it is available, even if they have yet to receive their hard copy. I anticipate that some members may tell us to ONLY send them a pdf version, and think we should accommodate them at some point. I also think that some members may desire getting LP News in Kindle format distributed automatically, whgich I would alos like to do.

How and when we move into the electronic world with LP News is what we need to firm out. This will be a policy decision, and our choices are simple: either the LNC defines the policy, or I will under Standing Executive Orders within the Policy Manual.

**Organizational Maturity**

Many have bemoaned the lack of “institutional knowledge” within the LNC and LPHQ. To paraphrase Michael Cloud: “It’s not that we’re reinventing the wheel – we’re reinventing the flat tire”.

We consistently rely on anecdotal knowledge. Examples of this are everywhere in the LP. The reason I want an SLA is precisely because there is no document anywhere that tells a state chair what LPHQ will do to help them, and what it will not.

Within our office, this is manifested prominently by a lack of cohesive and consistent documentation or our processes.

There are many reasons why it makes sense to document what and how we do things, including:

* Foremost is that as an organization, we must be concerned with continuity. If knowledge is contained only within the mind of one person, then we are at extreme risk should something untoward happen to that person. Not only is this risk unacceptable, it can be mitigated with minimal cost.
* Training time for new staff, or interns, is unduly expensive. Good manuals minimize learning curves.
* Oversight of processes is damn near impossible. It is the job of this board to provide oversight.
* Opportunities for process enhancement are enhanced when processes are documented.

As a starting point for this exercise, I asked staff to assemble a list of all the processes that are performed by LPHQ. This list included the business area, and what the state of existing documentation is.

Staff defined 87 processes. Of these:

* 10 are well documented.
* 14 are documented to some extent, but need updating
* 21 are situational, and do not warrant documenting
* 42 are not documented

It is my intent to have all processes (other than the situational) documented by year end. I will be sitting with staff and addressing a priority and timeframe that will not unduly affect ongoing activities, and you will be kept apprised of the progress.

The only thing that has not been addressed is the form of the documentation. It is my intention that these processes be documented in a hosted wiki. Having used wikis for this purpose, I find them to be ideal for documentation, for several reasons, including:

1. A single version of the truth. The wiki always contains the latest and greatest. Hard copy documents go stale.
2. Wikis are searchable.
3. Wikis take up no desk space.
4. Wikis support authority controls, allowing staff to make on-the-fly changes when situations change, while restricting update capabilities to process stewards.
5. Wikis support business continuity. If our office explodes, the documentation is isolated.
6. Authorized users can review and oversee the documentation independent of physical presence in the office.
7. Wikis are easy to use, and really cheap.

My first goal is to choose the right wiki software, install it, and get our existing well documented processes populated first. After that, we’ll augment.

**Service Level Agreement**

While I’m on the topic or organizational maturity, we have made progress on an SLA with our affiliates, but we’ve also hit a major stumbling block.

Several of the affiliate chairs have come out wholeheartedly in favor of an SLA. Pat Dixon specifically took the lead with the LSLA, and has assembled some valuable documentation. Additionally, staff presented a list of “things HQ will do” and “Things HQ will not do”. From this, we should be able to generate a good agreement.

Pat Dixon’s approach was to get the LSLA to approve a draft document that could be submitted to the LNC for review, so that we could go into the May LSLA meeting with a product. Alas, that is not to be. The LSLA has decided that they do not have the authority to enter into an agreement like this, since it exceeds their charter.

I find myself in somewhat of a quandary, because our Policy Manual states that only the LNC can approve special agreements with affiliates, and if the affiliates cannot speak with one voice, we do not seem to have a process by which we can actually craft a universal agreement.

Therefore, I am going to proceed with more of a declaration than an agreement. I’ll call it a one-sided agreement. The SLA will be produced as a statement of how the LNC and LPHQ will act, and what services they will and will not deliver.

Some have questioned the need, but virtually no one has said that we do enough to explain to affiliates what our role is – IN WRITING.

**Legal Offense Fund**

I think this is a good idea. I also think that this, in effect, is about a 90% overlap with our Audit Committee. Diana Visek has made good progress on her committee, and I think we should punt this entire effort to her team. I will let her report in Chicago.

**Crowdfunding**

Brett Pojunis has located a provider and negotiated a preferable rate. The next step is to define the scope and constraints of this project. I have not had the time to move this forward, and would like some help. However, I am not interested in help as defined by the volunteer. I am interested in help from people who understand how to work within a collaborative team structure. Any volunteers?

**You Might Be**

This is still in the planning phase. Once I have a decent plan together, I will be seeking some donors to get the ball rolling. What I will be needing are some web development skills.

**IT Strategy**

I have asked Jillian Mack to produce a high level IT Strategy document. She has done so. It is now in the hands of the IT committee. It is my intent to adopt this strategy.

**International**

Intermittently, I am trying to advance the idea of an international alliance of libertarian parties from around the globe. I have been invited to address conferences in Prague and Moscow. I also have been discussing with the UK LP for their Chair to attend a US convention or event.

Right now it seems likely that the UK LP Chair will be in attendance at FreedomFest and at our LNC meeting. There were several other international Chairs at the least FreedomFest. I am thinking of hosting a reception for international leaders at that event.

In the same light, I would like to create a new discussion group hosted by us for international LP Party leadership. Perhaps I will call it global@lp.org. Robert has said that the cost of doing so is minimal. My only question is whether this is something the LNC would endorse or oppose. You guys tell me.