



Free New York

Vol. 54, No. 11

The Official Newsletter of the Libertarian Party of New York

November 2025

LARRY SHARPE NOMINATED FOR GOVERNOR 2026 LIBERTARIAN CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Larry Sharpe Nominated for Governor ...	1-2
Ballot Access or Boycott.....	3-4
County Affiliates.....	6-7
LPNY Directory.....	8



by Andrew Kolstee
LPNY Secretary

Larry Sharpe was nominated for **Governor** by the Libertarian Party of New York at its 2025 **Nominating Convention**, held on **October 25** at the **Homewood Suites by Hilton** in **Rochester, New York**.

LPNY Chair **Duane Whitmer** called the meeting to order. The nominations for statewide candidates were among the earlier items of business. Two candidates were nominated for Governor: **Larry Sharpe** and **Christopher Olenski**. **None of the Above (NOTA)** is always a choice on party ballots.

In the first and only round of voting, **Sharpe was nominated** after receiving 12 out of 20 votes of the State Committee. Olenski received 5 votes and 3 votes were cast for NOTA.

Other statewide offices, including Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, and Comptroller, will be filled before a March 15, 2026 deadline set by the State Committee, as the party works to assemble a full and competitive slate of candidates for 2026.

This is Sharpe's third run for Governor. His first run in 2018 garnered over 95,000 votes and gave

the Libertairan Party ballot access for the first time in New York history. However, the state budget snuck in changes to ballot access laws, increasing the signature threshold and vote requirement to get ballot access.

Sharpe's second run occurred under these new laws in 2022, in which he had just over 42,000 raw signatures (which was more than Lee Zeldin's raw signature account for the Independence Party line, after removing the 11,000 fraudulent signatures), but was not enough for the required 45,000 signatures. The Libertarian Party of New York and Green Party of New York were involved in a three-year court battle to overturn these requirements from 2020 to 2023.

Other business at the convention included the election of New York's representatives to the Libertairan National Convention committees. For Platform, Onondaga County Secretary and State Platform Committee member **Rose Leatherman** will serve as the Represent-

(continued on page 2)



(continued from page 1)

tative while Suffolk County Vice Chair **Christian Padgett** will serve as Alternate. For the Credentials Committee, State Treasurer **Chance Haywood** will serve as Representative while Monroe County Chair **Steve Becker** will serve as Alternate. Additionally, 30 del-

egates were appointed to represent New York. Additional delegates will be appointed once an exact number is known.

The convention was concluded with remarks from LNC Region 6 Representative **Patrick Ford**, as well as Libertarian attorney **James-ostrowski**, who is running for

LNC Chair. The convention concluded with a moment of silence in honor of former statewide candidate and state Vice Chair **Donald Silberger**, former Chair **James Rosenbeck**, and LPNY founding chair and 1980 Presidential nominee **Edward Clark**, all who passed away in the past few months.



www.LarrySharpe.com

BALLOT ACCESS OR BOYCOTT

by Vincent O'Neill
State Committee Member (JD10)

The Democrats did not hold presidential primary debates in 2024, despite the fact, or because, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. was challenging Biden for the nomination. (He then became an independent candidate for President.)

The refusal to debate challengers to the status quo is the typical response of the Democrats and Republicans. The most likely reason for this behavior is the fact that neither party has anything worthwhile to offer on any important issue.

Another particularly grievous example comes from New York. For the previous 50 years, a political party was required to have its gubernatorial candidate receive 50,000 votes in order to have guaranteed ballot status for the next 4 years.

This is what happened in the 2018 New York gubernatorial election, and its aftermath. It refers to Libertarian candidate Larry Sharpe.

“On Election Day, Sharpe received 95,033 votes (1.6%) and came in fourth place behind Cuomo, Republican challenger Marc Molinaro, and Green Party candidate Howie Hawkins. Sharpe’s vote total achieved automatic ballot access for the Libertarian Party of New York for the first time in the party’s history.

The 95,333 votes for Governor 2018 Libertarian Party Candidate Larry

Sharpe received was MORE THAN 6 TIMES MORE THAN THE PARTY’S VOTE TOTAL OF 15,209 IN 2014.

The Republican Party’s percentage of the vote declined from 40.6% (to Democrat Andrew Cuomo’s 54%) in 2014 to 36.2% (to Democrat Cuomo’s 59.6%) in 2018, a decline of more than 4 percentage points.

In 2019, assorted Libertarian legislative candidates in New York received a total of 37,751 votes. This was a vast improvement over any previous year.

The response of the New York Democrats and Republicans was to retroactively change the requirement to achieve ballot access from the 50,000 votes for governor requirement of the previous 50 years to 130,000 votes every two years, on April 4, 2020 thereby, cheating the Libertarian Party of New York of its ballot access.

In addition, they also tripled the number of petition signatures required to place a candidate on the ballot, from 15,000 to 45,000.

To repeat, this was after the Libertarian Party vote total was MORE THAN 6 TIMES MORE THAN ITS TOTAL 4 YEARS BEFORE WHILE THE REPUBLICAN PARTY TOTAL DECLINED BY MORE THAN 4 PERCENTAGE POINTS.

This atrocity is a typical example of Republican and Democrat behavior.

The “Supreme Court” refused to hear the case brought to address this matter, and the only legislative solutions proposed have attracted little to no support and also fall short of addressing this atrocity. The only acceptable solution is to admit that the Libertarian Party satisfied all requirements for permanent ballot status and to restore automatic ballot status for the next four years, plus any additional time the party has been cheated of automatic ballot access.

Starting with April 4, 2020, that number is 3 election cycles and counting, bringing the current total to 5+ years and counting.

If New York Republicans and Democrats continue with this behavior, the response should be to call for a BOYCOTT of all Republican and Democrat candidates in New York State unless or until this situation is rectified. (This would be particularly easy to do to the Republicans. We’d rather have them vote Libertarian, but in addition, practically all Republicans are also on the Conservative line.)

Anything else is simply a stalling tactic designed to perpetually deny the automatic ballot status the Libertarian Party of New York earned while paying lip service to the issue and shedding a few crocodile tears.

Keep in mind that the major political reform to come out of Watergate was to create campaign finance restrictions in order to make sure that

(continued on page 4)

(continued from page 3)

a Eugene McCarthy would never again be allowed to challenge the establishment candidate.

The Commission on Presidential Debates is an extension of this idea. Every presidential election since 1988, when they excluded Ron Paul, has been an ELECTION ABOUT NOTHING, which follows a long period of noise about nothing while avoiding real issues, which is one reason the national debt is \$38 trillion and rising.

It took 9 months for the national debt to increase from \$36 trillion to \$37 trillion. It took a mere 73 days to go from \$37 trillion to \$38 trillion.

This is why an alternative to the

current system designed to protect the Republican/Democrat must be proposed. Offering intelligent alternatives will be a victory as long as they are introduced.

Taxpayer-funded primaries, publicly funded elections, ranked choice voting, and the Commission on Presidential Debates which has managed to exclude everyone except the Republican and Democrat Presidential candidates are all part of the same proposal. In addition, the rules involved to receive “matching funds” are beyond absurd in New York.

All must be refuted, and alternatives proposed.

The Republicans and Democrats will have to respond.

If they fail to support them, but cannot refute them, there will be repercussions.

Additional Ballot Access Proposal:

For all offices, from village dog catcher to President of the United States, the requirements will be the same. Ballot access will require 1,000 signatures from registered voters. The time frame to get them will be the two months from late spring to early summer, May 1 to July 1.

Registered voters will be permitted to sign for more than one candidate.

Individual parties can enact their own requirements for candidates in addition to this.

Support the LPNY!

LPNY.org/donate

See pages 6-7 for County Reports

Don't see your county listed?

**We are looking for Libertarians
to organize new County Affiliates!**

Contact us for more details!

affiliates@lpny.org

COUNTY AFFILIATE NEWS

BRONX

CONTACT:
Kim Antonio,
Acting County Chair

CHAUTAUQUA

NEXT MEETING:
Tues., Dec. 9, 2025 @ 7:00 PM
on Zoom
(second Tuesdays)

CONTACT:
Andrew Kolstee, Chair
akolstee@lpny.org

LEARN MORE:
www.chautauquaLP.org
fb.com/chautauquaLP

CHEMUNG

CONTACT:
Nick Grasso, Chair
ngrasso89@yahoo.com

LEARN MORE:
lpchemung.org

COLUMBIA

NEXT MEETING:
Wed., Dec, 17, 2025 @ 7 PM
Google Meet
(third Wednesdays)

CONTACT:
Scott Hoskins, Chair
scottdhoskins@gmail.com

DUTCHESS

NEXT MEETING:
Sat., Dec, 20, 2025 @ 5 PM
Village Restaurant
& Pancake Factory
1540 Route 44, Pleasant Valley
(3rd Saturdays)

CONTACT:
Robert Cocomello, Chair
Catrina Rocco, Vice-Chair
info@dutchesscountylp.org

LEARN MORE:
dutchesscountylp.org

ERIE

CONTACT:
Duane Whitmer, Chair
chairman@eriecountylp.org

KINGS (BROOKLYN)

NEXT MEETING:
Tues., Dec. 16, 2025 at 3 PM
@ Fourth Avenue Pub
76 4th Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11217
(3rd Tuesdays)

CONTACT:
Christopher Skelly, Chair
cskelly@lpny.org

MADISON

CONTACT:
Mark Braiman, Chair
mbraiman@lpny.org

MONROE

NEXT MEETING:
Thurs., Dec. 4, 2025 @ 7 PM
(first Thursdays)
Contact us for the link.

CONTACT:
Steve Becker, Chair
drsbecker@aol.com

LEARN MORE:
monroecountylp.org
Ask about the Google Group
and social meetings

NASSAU

NEXT MEETING:
Thurs., Dec. 11, 2025 at 7 PM
@ Landmark Diner
(2nd Thursdays)

CONTACT:
Jon Gunther,
Executive Committee Chair
jonguntherlibertarian@gmail.com

Blay Tarnoff,
County Committee Chair
LPNY@eblay.com

NEW YORK (MANHATTAN)

CONTACT:
Chance Haywood, Chair
chaywood@lpny.org

ONEIDA

CONTACT:
Keith Redhead, Chair
kredhead@lpny.org

ONONDAGA

NEXT MEETING:

Wed., Dec. 17, 2025 at 6:30 PM
Liverpool Public Library
(3rd Wednesdays)

CONTACT:

Rachel Becker, Chair
reb4128@rit.edu
onondagacountylp@gmail.com

ONTARIO

CONTACT:

Nathan Dingey,
Acting County Chair

ORANGE

NEXT MEETING:

Held 4th Thursdays. Location
varies. Contact us for details.

CONTACT:

Juan Ayala, Chair
livefree@juanrayala.com

QUEENS

NEXT MEETING:

TBD
Stamatis Greek
and Mediterranean Restaurant
29-09 23rd Ave., Astoria

CONTACT:

John Clifton, Chair
mrjclifton@yahoo.com

RENSSELAER

NEXT MEETING:

Wed., Dec. 3, 2025 at 6:30 PM
Alexis Diner, North Greenbush
(1st Wednesdays)

CONTACT:

Jennifer O'Connor,
Acting County Chair
joconnor@lpny.org

RICHMOND (STATEN ISLAND)

NEXT MEETING:

Thurs., Dec. 18, 2025 @ 7 PM
@ Coffee and Collectibles
(3rd Thursdays)

CONTACT:

Susan Overeem Cummings,
Chair
susanovereem@gmail.com

SARATOGA

CONTACT:

Naz Garabedien, Chair
nazareth.garabedian
@lawsonproducts.com

SCHOHARIE

CONTACT:

Mason Hovack,
Acting County Chair

SUFFOLK

NEXT MEETING:

TBD
Panera Bread, Deer Park
(usually 4th Thursdays)

CONTACT:

Robert Schuon, Chair
rschuon@mindspring.com

ULSTER

NEXT MEETING:

Mon., Dec. 8, 2025 at 6:30 PM
Hickory BBQ, Kingston, NY
(second Mondays)

CONTACT:

Sam Kniffen, Chair
samkniffen01@gmail.com

LEARN MORE:

www.UlsterLP.org

WAYNE

MONTHLY SOCIAL:

Sat., Dec. 27, 2025 at 10 AM
Yellow Mills Diner
2534 NY-31, Palmyra, NY 14522
(last Saturdays)

CONTACT:

Jim Dayton, Chair
jdayton@lpny.org

LEARN MORE:

lpwaynecounty.org

WESTCHESTER-PUTNAM

NEXT MEETING:

Thurs., Dec. 11, 2025 at 7 PM
McCarthy's Pub
374 NY-52
Carmel Hamlet, NY 10512

CONTACT:

Rajib Maitra, Chair
rajib.maitra1@gmail.com

LPNY DIRECTORY

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	COMMITTEE CHAIRS	
<p>Duane Whitmer Chair Daniel Castello Vice Chair Andrew Kolstee Secretary Chance Haywood Treasurer Christopher Skelly Communications Director Mark Axinn Fundraising Director Justin Carman IT Director Richard Purtell Legislative Affairs Director Pietro Geraci Outreach Director Paul Grindle Political Director Catrina Rocco Volunteer Director</p>	<p>Daniel Castello Platform Committee Chair Andrew Kolstee Rules Committee Chair Daniel Castello Strategic Planning Committee Chair</p>	
STATE COMMITTEE		
<p>Mark Axinn (JD1) Morry Davis (JD1) Paul Grindle (JD2) Gary Popkin (JD2) Evan Lebrecht (JD3) Justin Carman (JD3) <i>Vacant</i> (JD4) <i>Vacant</i> (JD4) <i>Vacant</i> (JD4) Daniel Castello (JD5) James Fitch (JD5) E. Rose Leatherman (JD5) Mark Braiman (JD6) Charles Dorgan (JD6) Samuel Hordeski (JD6) Steven Becker (JD7) Justin Pelletier (JD7) Sean Phelan (JD7) James Ziobro (JD7) Maura Botsford (JD8)</p>	<p>Andrew Kolstee (JD8) Wendi Szabo (JD8) Duane Whitmer (JD8) <i>Vacant</i> (JD8) Pietro Geraci (JD9) Catrina Rocco (JD9) William Schmidt (JD9) Jeffrey Denecke (JD10) Jonathan Gunther (JD10) Vincent O'Neill (JD10) Christian Padgett (JD10) Robert Schuon (JD10) Blay Tarnoff (JD10) Francisco Olvera (JD11) Irwin Mark Weinblatt (JD11) <i>Vacant</i> (JD12) Susan Overeem-Cummings (JD13) Chance Haywood (ex-officio) Richard Purtell (ex-officio) Christopher Skelly (ex-officio)</p>	
info@lpny.org	www.LPNY.org	866-336-3120