

Las Animas County Republican Party

Colorado GOP 2024

Colorado GOP: A Comprehensive Strategy for Renewal and Electoral Success

DARREL L. PHELAN, SR
8-27-2024

Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. Current Challenges
 1. Electoral Position
 2. Internal Organizational Issues
3. Need for Transparency and Strategic Planning
4. Concerns Regarding Organizational Conduct
 1. Leadership Focus and Effectiveness
 2. Procedural and Ethical Concerns
 3. Need for Accountability and Transparency
5. Impact on Party Unity and Effectiveness
 1. Erosion of Collaborative Governance
 2. Consequences for Party Governance
 3. Implications for Electoral Success
6. Grassroots Engagement and Volunteer Networks
 1. Rebuilding Grassroots Connections
 2. Volunteer Recruitment and Retention
 3. Leveraging Local Knowledge
7. Messaging and Communication Strategy
 1. Developing a Cohesive Narrative
 2. Diversifying Communication Channels
 3. Training Party Representatives
8. Candidate Recruitment and Development
 1. Expanding the Candidate Pool
 2. Candidate Training and Support
 3. Building a Candidate Pipeline

9. Crisis Management and Reputation Recovery

1. Immediate Crisis Response
2. Long-term Reputation Rebuilding
3. Stakeholder Engagement

10. Establishing Performance Metrics and Accountability

1. Defining Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
2. Regular Performance Reviews
3. Transparency in Reporting

11. Call for Unity and Strategic Focus: A Crossroads for the Colorado GOP

1. The Current Impasse
2. The August 24th, 2024 Meeting and Its Implications
3. The Case for Leadership Change
4. Weighing the Options
5. The Path Forward

12. Conclusion

1. Introduction

The Colorado Republican Party stands at a critical juncture in its history. As both a political entity and a strategic communications organization, our primary objective is to develop and promote a brand that resonates with voters, ultimately leading to the election of our candidates and the implementation of conservative policies. However, recent challenges have highlighted the urgent need for a comprehensive strategy to renew our party and enhance our electoral prospects.

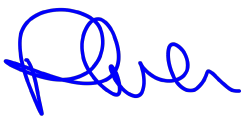
This document presents a thorough analysis of our current situation and outlines a strategic roadmap for the Colorado GOP's renewal and future success. It addresses internal organizational issues, external challenges, and provides concrete strategies for improvement across various critical areas of party operations.

The importance of this work cannot be overstated. The future of conservative governance in Colorado depends on our ability to adapt, overcome our current obstacles, and present a united, effective political force. This document is a call to action for all members of the Colorado GOP to engage in this crucial process of renewal and strategic realignment.

Still, it is my personal opinion that those involved with the State of Colorado Republican Party, more particularly in the State's Executive Committee (SEC), lack the professionalism and expertise required to lead such an organization.

Also, there is too much animosity in the ranks to consolidate a solution or manage the operation to mediate a measure correctly. Therefore, I call on the Republican National Committee (RNC), with oversight responsibility to mediate a solution to help reset the party – allowing it to move forward.

Respectfully:



D. Lee Phelan, SR, CHAIR, Las Animas County Republican Central Committee

2. Current Challenges

2.1. Electoral Position

Recent electoral outcomes indicate a concerning trend for the Colorado GOP. We have experienced a series of defeats that have left us on the brink of a super-minority status, significantly limiting our ability to effect conservative changes in Colorado's governance. This situation calls for a candid assessment and strategic realignment.

2.2. Internal Organizational Issues

As a recent addition to the Republican management team, I must emphasize that we all share responsibility for our current position, regardless of our tenure. It is incumbent upon us, as members, to ensure our organization maintains its core mission and effectiveness. Internal conflicts, lack of transparency, and questions about leadership effectiveness have further complicated our challenges.

3. Need for Transparency and Strategic Planning

In an effort to understand our current strategy and ensure organizational readiness, I recently took the initiative to contact the Colorado GOP State Executive Committee (SEC).

Specifically, I requested two critical pieces of information:

1. Updated financial statements
2. The current marketing plan

The rationale behind this request was clear: as an organization functioning akin to an advertising agency, the Colorado GOP should have a comprehensive marketing strategy. This strategy should encompass various media channels, including radio, television, and event appearances, all aimed at enhancing the GOP's chances of success in the November election.

Given that we are now in the full swing of the election cycle, with only 70 days remaining before Election Day, one would reasonably expect that:

1. A robust marketing and advertising plan would be solidly in place
2. This plan would be well into its implementation phase
3. With our primary candidates selected and our presidential nominee established since March 2025, a detailed campaign calendar should be readily available

It's important to note that this inquiry was not intended as a "gotcha" moment. On the contrary, given the doubts circulating about the current administration's leadership, I anticipated that they would be eager to dispel any misconceptions by promptly sharing this data.

However, the response I received was far from satisfactory. Instead of the requested information, I was met with what can only be described as evasive communication. This lack of direct answers and transparency is reminiscent of the communication issues experienced prior to the August 24, 2024 meeting.

The inability or unwillingness to provide basic strategic and financial information is deeply concerning. It raises questions about our organizational preparedness for the upcoming election and our commitment to transparency within our own ranks. As members of this party, we have a right and a responsibility to understand our strategic position, especially at this critical juncture in the election cycle.

This situation underscores the urgent need for greater transparency and more effective communication within our organization. Without clear insights into our financial standing and marketing strategy, it becomes exceedingly difficult to assess our readiness for the challenges ahead or to make informed decisions about our party's direction.

4. Concerns Regarding Organizational Conduct

Recent actions and communications from the State Executive Committee, particularly those involving key leadership positions such as the Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary, have raised significant concerns about organizational priorities and governance.

4.1. Leadership Focus and Effectiveness

There appears to be a misalignment between leadership actions and the party's core mission. Observations suggest that efforts to maintain current leadership positions may be taking precedence over advancing conservative initiatives statewide. This shift in focus is evidenced by:

1. Limited visible efforts to build voter engagement
2. Lack of robust ballot collection strategies
3. Absence of innovative promotional campaigns to support our candidates

These deficiencies are particularly concerning given the critical nature of upcoming elections and the need for strong, unified party leadership.

4.2. Procedural and Ethical Concerns

Several incidents have raised questions about adherence to established procedures and ethical standards:

1. **Bylaw Changes:** There have been instances of bylaw modifications that appear to deviate from proper amendment procedures. These changes, if implemented incorrectly, could undermine the organizational structure and decision-making processes of the party.
2. **Financial Management:** Concerns have been raised regarding the allocation of funds. There are questions about whether all financial transactions have been conducted in strict accordance with party regulations and campaign finance laws.
3. **Communication Practices:** The quality and content of official communications have been subject to criticism. There have been instances of:
 - Ambiguous or misleading statements
 - Delayed or incomplete responses to inquiries
 - Potentially inappropriate use of official GOP communication channels for matters that may not align with party interests

4.3. Need for Accountability and Transparency

To address these concerns, there is an urgent need for:

1. A comprehensive review of recent bylaw changes to ensure they were enacted properly
2. An independent audit of financial transactions and resource allocations
3. The establishment of clear communication protocols that prioritize transparency and accuracy
4. A renewed commitment to focusing on voter engagement and candidate support strategies

It is crucial that these matters be addressed promptly and thoroughly. The integrity of our party processes and the trust of our members are fundamental to our success. As we approach critical elections, we must ensure that our organizational conduct aligns with our stated values and serves the best interests of our party and its members.

5. Impact on Party Unity and Effectiveness

The current dynamics within our party leadership structure are causing significant strain on our organizational effectiveness and unity. Of particular concern is the relationship between the State Executive Committee, led by the Chair, and the State Central Committee (SCC).

5.1. Erosion of Collaborative Governance

Recent observations suggest a troubling trend in the leadership approach of the State Executive Committee, particularly its Chair:

1. **Prioritizing Capitulation Over Cooperation:** There appears to be a preference for unilateral decision-making rather than collaborative problem-solving. This approach manifests as:
 - Resistance to input from the broader SCC membership
 - Limited opportunities for meaningful debate on critical issues
 - An expectation of compliance rather than engagement from committee members
2. **Marginalization of the SCC:** Actions and communications from the Executive Committee suggest an attempt to diminish the role and authority of the SCC. This is evidenced by:
 - Bypassing established decision-making processes
 - Limiting access to crucial information needed for informed decision-making
 - Scheduling important meetings at times that may restrict full SCC participation
3. **Centralization of Power:** There are indications of efforts to concentrate decision-making authority within a small group, potentially undermining the representative nature of our party structure.

5.2. Consequences for Party Governance

These practices are having severe repercussions on our party's ability to function effectively:

1. **Ineffective Governance:** The SCC, designed to be the primary governing body of our party, is at risk of becoming a rubber stamp rather than a deliberative and decisive entity. This weakens our organizational checks and balances.
2. **Loss of Diverse Perspectives:** By marginalizing the broader SCC, we lose access to a wealth of experience, local insights, and strategic thinking that is crucial for developing effective statewide strategies.
3. **Decreased Engagement:** SCC members, feeling disempowered and sidelined, may become less motivated to contribute their time, resources, and expertise to party activities.
4. **Fractured Unity:** The adversarial relationship developing between the Executive Committee and the SCC is creating factions within the party, undermining our ability to present a united front to voters.
5. **Strategic Stagnation:** Without robust debate and diverse input, our party risks becoming inflexible and unresponsive to changing political landscapes.

5.3. Implications for Electoral Success

This internal discord has direct implications for our electoral prospects:

1. **Resource Misallocation:** Energy that should be directed towards voter engagement and candidate support is instead consumed by internal power struggles.
2. **Public Perception:** Visible internal conflicts can erode public confidence in our party's ability to govern effectively.
3. **Candidate Support:** Our ability to recruit and support strong candidates may be compromised if potential nominees perceive a dysfunctional party structure.
4. **Grassroots Disengagement:** Party members and volunteers, crucial for successful campaigns, may become disillusioned and withdraw their support.

6. Grassroots Engagement and Volunteer Networks

6.1. Rebuilding Grassroots Connections

To reinvigorate grassroots engagement, the party should:

1. Establish regular town hall meetings and listening sessions across the state, ensuring party leadership is accessible and responsive to local concerns.
2. Develop a robust system for collecting and acting on feedback from county-level party organizations and individual members.
3. Create opportunities for meaningful involvement beyond fundraising, such as policy working groups or community outreach initiatives.

6.2. Volunteer Recruitment and Retention

A strong volunteer base is essential for campaign success. The party should:

1. Implement a structured volunteer recruitment program, targeting diverse demographics and skill sets.
2. Develop a comprehensive training program for volunteers, ensuring they have the skills and knowledge to be effective advocates for the party.
3. Establish a recognition and reward system to acknowledge the efforts of dedicated volunteers and encourage long-term commitment.

6.3. Leveraging Local Knowledge

Local party members and volunteers often have invaluable insights into community needs and concerns. The party should:

1. Create channels for local insights to inform state-level strategy and policy positions.
2. Empower local leaders to tailor party messaging and outreach efforts to their specific communities.
3. Facilitate knowledge sharing between different regions to spread successful local strategies across the state.

7. Messaging and Communication Strategy

7.1. Developing a Cohesive Narrative

The party should:

1. Craft a clear, compelling narrative that articulates the party's vision for Colorado's future.
2. Ensure consistency in messaging across all levels of the party, from state leadership to local candidates.
3. Tailor this overarching narrative to address the specific concerns of different regions and demographics within Colorado.

7.2. Diversifying Communication Channels

To reach a broader audience, the party must:

1. Develop a robust social media strategy that goes beyond simple broadcasting to engage in meaningful dialogue with voters.
2. Utilize a mix of traditional and new media outlets to reach different segments of the electorate.
3. Explore innovative communication methods, such as podcasts or live streaming events, to connect with younger voters.

7.3. Training Party Representatives

Ensuring that all party representatives can effectively communicate the party's message is crucial. The party should:

1. Implement a comprehensive media training program for candidates and party spokespeople.
2. Develop clear talking points on key issues that can be consistently communicated across the party.
3. Regularly assess the effectiveness of messaging through focus groups and voter feedback.

8. Candidate Recruitment and Development

8.1. Expanding the Candidate Pool

To ensure a diverse and talented pool of candidates, the party should:

1. Implement a proactive talent scouting program to identify potential candidates from various professional backgrounds.
2. Create pathways for young Republicans to gain experience and exposure within the party structure.
3. Actively recruit candidates from underrepresented communities to better reflect Colorado's diverse population.

8.2. Candidate Training and Support

Providing comprehensive support to candidates is crucial. The party should:

1. Develop a robust candidate training program covering campaign management, fundraising, media relations, and policy development.
2. Establish a mentorship program pairing new candidates with experienced party members.
3. Create a resource center providing candidates with access to policy experts, campaign strategists, and communication professionals.

8.3. Building a Candidate Pipeline

Long-term success requires a sustainable pipeline of future leaders. The party should:

1. Engage with college Republican groups and young professional networks to identify and nurture potential future candidates.
2. Create opportunities for aspiring candidates to gain experience in local government roles and party positions.
3. Implement a leadership development program focused on preparing the next generation of party leaders and candidates.

9. Crisis Management and Reputation Recovery

9.1. Immediate Crisis Response

To address the current situation, the party should:

1. Form a crisis management team composed of respected party members and external PR professionals.
2. Develop a clear, honest narrative addressing the party's challenges and the steps being taken to resolve them.
3. Implement a rapid response system to address misinformation and negative press promptly.

9.2. Long-term Reputation Rebuilding

Rebuilding trust and credibility will require sustained effort. The party should:

1. Commit to increased transparency in party operations and decision-making processes.
2. Regularly communicate progress on internal reforms and organizational improvements.
3. Highlight positive initiatives and successes at both the state and local levels to reshape the party's image.

9.3. Stakeholder Engagement

Rebuilding relationships with key stakeholders is crucial. The party should:

1. Conduct outreach to disaffected party members and donors to address their concerns and rebuild trust.
2. Engage with media outlets to ensure fair and balanced coverage of party activities and reforms.
3. Develop partnerships with community organizations to demonstrate the party's commitment to serving all Coloradans.

10. Establishing Performance Metrics and Accountability

10.1. Defining Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The party should establish KPIs in areas such as:

1. Membership growth and retention
2. Fundraising targets
3. Voter outreach and engagement metrics
4. Candidate recruitment and election performance
5. Media presence and public perception indicators

10.2. Regular Performance Reviews

To maintain accountability, the party should:

1. Conduct quarterly reviews of progress against established KPIs.
2. Implement a system for regular feedback from county-level organizations and key stakeholders.
3. Hold annual strategic planning sessions to adjust goals and strategies based on performance data.

10.3. Transparency in Reporting

To build trust, the party should:

1. Publish regular reports on party performance and progress towards goals.
2. Establish an independent audit committee to review financial and operational performance.
3. Create channels for members to provide input on performance metrics and hold leadership accountable.

11. Call for Unity and Strategic Focus: A Crossroads for the Colorado GOP

11.1. The Current Impasse

It has become increasingly evident that the ability to work productively with the current leadership has been severely compromised. This impasse is not merely a matter of personality conflicts or minor disagreements, but a fundamental divergence in vision, strategy, and governance style that threatens the very foundation of our party's operations.

The current leadership's approach, which appears to prioritize maintaining power over advancing party interests, has led to a breakdown in trust and cooperation within the party. This situation has created an environment where constructive dialogue and collaborative problem-solving have become increasingly difficult, if not impossible.

The gravity of this impasse cannot be overstated. It hampers our ability to function effectively as a political organization, diminishes our capacity to attract and retain talented individuals, and ultimately undermines our electoral prospects. We have reached a point where maintaining the status quo is no longer a viable option if we wish to remain a relevant and effective force in Colorado politics.

11.2. The August 24th, 2024 Meeting and Its Implications

The meeting held on August 24th, 2024, marked a significant moment in our party's recent history. The decisions and actions taken during this meeting have far-reaching implications for our party's direction. The State Central Committee (SCC) now faces a critical choice:

1. Adopt the results and decisions of the August 24th meeting, effectively endorsing the new leadership's approach and vision.
2. Petition the State Executive Committee (SEC) to hold new elections for the entire SEC, despite the proximity to the 2024 election campaigns.

This meeting and its aftermath have brought to the forefront the deep divisions within our party and the urgent need for decisive action to address our organizational challenges.

11.3. The Case for Leadership Change

Several factors contribute to the growing sentiment that a change in leadership is necessary:

1. **Erosion of Trust:** The current leadership's actions have led to a significant loss of confidence among SCC members and key stakeholders.
2. **Strategic Stagnation:** There is a pervasive belief that the current leadership lacks the vision and capability to effectively navigate the complex political landscape of Colorado.
3. **Donor Confidence:** Reports suggest that numerous potential donors are hesitant to contribute to Colorado GOP efforts under the current leadership. This reluctance could severely hamper our ability to fund crucial campaign activities.
4. **Internal Cohesion:** The ongoing conflicts have created deep divisions within the party, undermining our ability to present a united front to voters.
5. **Operational Effectiveness:** Concerns about financial management, communication practices, and decision-making processes have raised doubts about the party's operational capabilities.

11.4. Weighing the Options

Both potential courses of action - adopting the August 24th meeting results or calling for new SEC elections - carry significant implications:

1. **Adopting August 24th Results:**
 - Pros: Maintains stability in the short term; avoids disruption during campaign season
 - Cons: May perpetuate existing issues; could lead to continued loss of donor and member support
2. **Calling for New SEC Elections:**
 - Pros: Opportunity for fresh leadership and renewed party unity; potential to restore donor confidence
 - Cons: Risk of short-term disruption to campaign efforts; potential for intensified internal conflicts

11.5. The Path Forward

Given the gravity of our current situation, it is the belief of many SCC members that the risks of maintaining the status quo outweigh the potential disruption of leadership change.

Therefore, I propose the following course of action:

1. The SCC should accept the Elections of August 24, 2024, or formally petition the RNC to mediate a determination over the results.
2. This process should be initiated immediately to minimize impact on ongoing campaign efforts.
3. A clear transition plan should be developed to ensure continuity of essential party functions during the election process.
4. All candidates for SEC positions should be required to present comprehensive plans for addressing the party's current challenges and strategic vision for future success.

While the timing of this proposed action is far from ideal, given the proximity to critical elections, the alternative of continuing under the current leadership is viewed by many as untenable. The long-term health and effectiveness of the Colorado Republican Party must take precedence over short-term considerations.

I call upon all members of the SCC to carefully consider these options and to act decisively in the best interests of our party, our values, and our future electoral prospects in Colorado. The time for half-measures and compromise has passed. We must take bold action to reinvigorate our party and restore its position as a formidable force in Colorado politics.

12. Conclusion

In conclusion, it is imperative that we address these challenges head-on, foster unity within our ranks, and develop a robust strategy to regain our political influence in Colorado. The future of conservative governance in our state depends on our ability to adapt and overcome these obstacles. The path forward requires courage, commitment, and a renewed focus on our core values and mission. By taking decisive action now, we can lay the foundation for a stronger, more effective Colorado Republican Party that is truly prepared to meet the challenges of the future and serve the interests of our state's citizens.

What is factual, is most of the requirements to win elections are not incorporated in the Colorado GOP's strategy for the 2024 election, even though current leadership has been on the job for more than 17 months.

Worse, they don't want to listen – or learn – save to stave off a removal process. Even then, it's merely a smoke-and-mirrors ploy to dishearten the membership – which disenfranchises members to the rank of the unaffiliated and destroys relationships with financial donors.

There should not be any reason why COLORADO shouldn't flip RED in this election cycle but for the ineffectiveness and inability of the current leadership to build a cohesive team to deliver results. There can be not correction without direct Republican National Committee influence to rectify the proper processes, train new leaders in proper decorum and process, and in HOW TO BUILD THE TEAM!