

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING
GRAND DEMOCRATS
APRIL 26, 2017

The meeting was called to order by President Bill Shields at 6:32 p.m.

The pledge of allegiance was led by President Shields.

A motion to approve the minutes of the March 22, 2017, general meeting, as published on the website was made by Ira Strumwasser and seconded by Sharon Levinson. The minutes were approved.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: President Shields welcomed all attendees and asked any new members or guests to please stand. President Shields then had the following remarks. He asked the audience two questions:

Are you happier now than you were on January 20?

What about those first 100 days (97) when the new President was going to make all those huge changes?

He then proceeded to list several items for the record.

1. Three failed/less than successful military operations.
2. Two travel bans held up by Federal courts over their constitutionality.
3. The historical non-vote of repeal of the ACA.
4. Falsely accusing Obama of wiretapping Trump Tower.
5. Top level official's cozy relations with the Russians being investigated by two Congressional Committees and the FBI.
6. Over 400 senior staff positions throughout the government yet to be filled.
7. A tax reform proposal that rewards the super rich and buries the little guy.
8. Funding for a border wall in trouble within his own party.
9. Appointing an avowed enemy of public education to the Department of Education and an EPA Director who wants to disband the agency.
10. More and more evidence of conflicts of interest popping up every day.

He mentioned that the President did have one success in his Supreme Court nominee, who was confirmed, but only after the Republicans used the “nuclear option” thereby killing a defining feature of the U.S. Senate, in place since the founding.

President Shields reiterated the need for us to stay active—speaking truth to falsehood and justice to injustice. He said this was certainly the message delivered by Bernie Sanders and Tom Perez in Mesa last week.

He cautioned the audience to engage in civil discourse with those who may have a different perspective—independents and moderate Republicans. Talking and ranting among ourselves is just “talking to the choir”.

The need for civil discourse can’t be expressed more because anything less is counter-productive. When both sides are shouting neither side is listening. We need to speak from reason not rage and respect not recrimination. He challenged us all to persist in our resistance but to do so calmly firmly and confidently.

TREASURER’S REPORT: Paula Wilson reported our current balance is \$4,318.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Membership Committee: Paula Parkel reported we currently have 177 members. She reported that in 2014 our number was 245 members so we encourage membership by anyone interested.

Program Committee: Sharon Levinson announced our May 24 speaker will be Cloves Campbell, Co-Publisher of the Arizona Informant and member of the AZ Commission on African American Affairs. She mentioned that Cloves father was the first African American in the Arizona Legislature and responsible for the legislation requiring expiration dates on perishable goods in Arizona. Our June 28 speaker will be Katie Hobbs who is running for Secretary of State in 2018.

OLD BUSINESS: President Shields reported that LD-22 is planning to produce a Newsletter and a decision was made by the Board that we would provide an article in that Newsletter and not produce one of our own.

Our Brochure which is out of date is currently being revised and will be sent to the printer soon

NEW BUSINESS: President Shields reported that we had 13 volunteers who helped with the recent SCG Garage Sale. We did not have any garage sale items to sell, but did sell some mugs and T-shirts as well as 2 memberships.

President Shields attended the recent Sanders/Perez rally in Mesa and said it was an exciting event. He also brought to the attention of the audience that petitions were available on a side table for signing for candidates Kathy Hoffman, running for Superintendent of Public Instruction; and, Katie Hobbs, running for Secretary of State.

SPEAKERS: Co-Chair, Programs Committee, Barbara Nelson introduced our two speakers, Tom Chabin and Bill Mundell. Tom and Bill were former candidates for the Corporation Commission in 2016. Even though they did not win the election, they have still been working tirelessly to keep us informed on the activities of APS.

Mr. Chabin began by telling us how APS is taking our money and using it to corrupt Arizona politics. Last election APS spent between \$7 and \$10 million of our dollars to get their candidates elected.

Hearings are going on at this time before a judge on the proposed rate increases by APS. The audience was encouraged to go to the website for the Corporation Commission and listen to the live proceedings on these hearings. Once the judge makes a decision on this case, it will go to the Corporation Commission for the final decision. This is the time to get involved and write letters, send cards and notes and even attend the proceedings of the Commission to let them know your concerns.

Bill Mundell explained that during the last month of the election he and Tom were the number 1 and 2 candidates; however, during the last two weeks of the campaign when APS put forth the money for numerous TV blasts, they ultimately lost. He also said the comments that FBI Director Comey made concerning Secretary Clinton had a dramatic affect on all Democrats down the line. While going door-to-door to voters, the results of that comment were painfully obvious to them for Democrats.

Currently there are three groups opposing the rate increases by APS and they are AARP, Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEET) and Public Interest Regional Group (PIRG).

Mr. Mundell will be running again for Corporation Commission in 2018 and we are all encouraged to help put him on the Commission this time.

Mr. Chabin is considering a run for the Legislature in his district in 2018.

Numerous comments and questions from the audience were answered and everyone was encouraged to get involved with this issue.

President Shields thanked our speakers for their informative presentations.

The 50/50 raffle resulted in \$90.00 for the treasury (the winner donated his winnings to the club). A second drawing was made for a donated "Stick It To Trump Doll". The winner of the doll was Barbara Nelson.

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Cotton, Secretary

