

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING
GRAND DEMOCRATS
MAY 24, 2017

The meeting was called to order by President Bill Shields at 6:33 p.m.

The pledge of allegiance was led by President Shields.

A motion to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2017, meeting was made by Jane Cohen and seconded by Frank Reed. The minutes were approved.

President Shields gave the Treasurer's report. Checking account balance is \$1,148 and the Savings account balance is \$3,200 for a total of around \$4,400.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: President Shields welcomed all attendees and asked visitors to please stand. President Shields then informed the audience that there are lots of activities going on in our area and encouraged participation in them. He mentioned LD-22, a formal organization of the Democratic Party in our State. This is the legislative district in which we are located. He referenced their website: LD22democrats.org and encouraged the audience to check out the website and attend their meetings which are held the 3rd Thursday of every month at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 17540 N. Avenue of the Arts in Surprise. LD-22 has been training Precinct Committeepersons and is still looking for more so, if interested, please contact LD-22.

The second group President Shields highlighted is "Indivisible Surprise" which is an independent political activity group headed by Wendy Garcia. This group also meets at the Unitarian Universalist Church the 1st Thursday of every month at 6:00 p.m. Indivisible Surprise coordinates many types of activities such as rallies, marches, etc.

President Shields announced that we have several petitions available for signatures on the side tables in the room—the school voucher referendum and the referendum on citizen initiatives as well as petitions for several persons running for office. He encouraged attendees to please help collect signatures on the referendums if possible.

President Shields stated that the school voucher issue is not just in Arizona but across the country and has been an issue for many years. He mentioned the National Coalition for Public Education (NCPE) is opposed to vouchers and encouraged the audience to check out their website at: www.NCPE.org to learn more.

President Shields then spoke on the proposed Trump budget and how it relates to education in Arizona. He stressed the importance of becoming involved to keep the funding for our public schools. We must sign petitions, contact our representatives, march, or whatever we can do.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Fundraising Committee: Judith Bridges announced our Fall fundraiser will be held on November 12 at the home of our President and his wife. She said a "hold the date" note will be coming to all members soon. Plans are to have food, drinks, a silent auction, and perhaps entertainment.

Program Committee: Barbara Nelson announced our speaker for the June 28 meeting will be Katie Hobbs who is running for Secretary of State. Barbara informed the audience that this position is very important because, in Arizona, the Secretary of State is the 2nd in command to the Governor. She encouraged all to attend.

Membership Committee: Paula Parkel announced we now have 186 members.

OLD BUSINESS:

President Shields informed the audience that our Brochure has been updated and sent to the Printer. We hope to have these available at our next meeting

President Shields also informed attendees about the pamphlet providing information about the Grand Dems and our activities available at the membership table to take and distribute.

NEW BUSINESS:

President Shields announced the We The People Summit to be held on June 24 at the Phoenix Convention Center. This will bring together a wide variety of groups for an educational summit. He encouraged interested persons to look up the website (<https://www.pafcoalition.org/wethepeople>). Cost is \$35.00.

SPEAKER: Sharon Levinson introduced our speaker for the evening, Cloves Campbell, Jr. Mr. Campbell is Executive Director for Arizona Commission of African American Affairs as well as Co-Publisher of the Arizona Informant Newspaper. He previously served in the Arizona Legislature for two consecutive terms.

Mr. Campbell spoke about the Arizona Informant Newspaper telling us they are proud of their 45 year history of recording African American history. He stated that they do not publish "fake news". They primarily report on good things happening in the African American community. The Arizona Informant just gave out their 100th student scholarship and all of their students, previously awarded scholarships, have graduated from college.

Mr. Campell then explained that as the Executive Director for the Arizona Commission of African American Affairs he serves as a liaison between the African American community and the legislature as well as the Governor to keep them apprised on what is happening. He said the Commission consists of nine members who step up to the

plate and tell members of the legislature when they are doing something right or wrong. He said the legislature has not been as receptive as the Governor in this regard. He said that Governor Ducey does listen.

Mr. Campbell encouraged everyone to get their “real news” from all sources— newspapers, TV, radio, but not FOX. He challenged the audience to continue to meet, continue to get involved and stand up for what’s right. He said we must all pay attention to legislators who propose and pass bills opposed by the very organizations who must carry out their laws.

Mr. Campbell then fielded several questions from the audience and President Shields thanked Mr. Campbell for his presentation.

The 50/50 raffle collected \$132.00 and the winner of half (\$66.00) was Cheryl Scarpota. Also a campaign button from the 2008 Obama campaign was given as a second prize and the drawing for that was won by Margarita Hernandez.

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Cotton, Secretary