

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING
GRAND DEMOCRATS
SEPTEMBER 27, 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.

No corrections or changes were offered to the minutes of the June 28, 2017, meeting and a motion to approve the minutes as published on the website was made by Jan Ashton-Beazie and seconded by Sharon Levinson. The minutes were approved.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS: President Shields asked new members and guests to please stand and around 15 persons stood. He then welcomed everyone in attendance. The crowd numbered close to 100 persons. President Shields then said he wanted to share two numbers with the audience. They are—47 and 58. There are 47 weeks until the Arizona primary and 58 weeks until the General election in 2018. He stressed we have lots of work to do if we are going to nominate and elect strong local candidates for office. President Shields pleaded with those in attendance to get involved. There are many opportunities from becoming involved with the Grand Dems here in Sun City Grand to becoming a Precinct Committee Person within our Legislative District 22. We are outnumbered by registered Republicans more than 2 to 1 and it will become very important to be sure all registered Democrats vote as well as reach and convince a large number of independents that our candidates are the right candidates to vote for.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Our Treasurer, Paula Wilson, was out of town and President Shields gave the Treasurer's report. Income since June has only been \$121.00 and expenses have been \$1,312.29. We printed new brochures as well as the postcards announcing our upcoming meetings. However, our balance for the checking account is \$484.47 and savings account is \$2,618.10 for a total of \$3,102.57. The motion to approve the report was made by Sharon Levinson and seconded by Judith Bridges. The report was approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

PROGRAM: Barbara Nelson, Co-Chair, announced the speakers for our upcoming meetings for the rest of 2017. October 25 we will have Kathy Hoffman and David Schapira, candidates for Superintendent of Public Instruction. November 15 will be Steve Farley, candidate for Governor. We do not have a December meeting.

Beginning in January 24, 2018, we invited candidates who will be vying for Trent Frank's position. They are: Judith McHale, Bob Musselwhite, Hiral Tipirneni, and Brianna Westbrook. February 28, will be candidates for Jeff Flake's U.S. Senate position. They are: Deedra Abboud, James Moss, Dale Russell, Bob Bishop and Richard Sherzan.

March 28 will be candidates for the Arizona Legislature in the House. They are: Val Harris and Terri Sarmiento. April 25 will be candidates for the Corporation Commission and they are Tom Chabin and Kiana Sears.

We are aware that not all of our invitees may be able to attend because some of them do not live near us but the invitations will be sent to them. We will continue to invite any other candidates running for office as we hear of them for future meetings in 2018.

MEMBERSHIP: Paula Parkel, Co-Chair, announced the largest our membership has been since our inception was 224 members. We now have 198 members which is great news for the Grand Dems and we are hopeful in 2018 we can increase that number. She reminded members that if they want a name badge she will order them for \$10.00. See her after the meeting.

FUNDRAISING: Judith Bridges, Chair, announced our November 12 Fundraiser Party. It will be held at the home of our President and his wife, Bill and Judy Shields in Sun City Grand. We will have American regional appetizers, desserts, beer and wine and a silent auction. The cost is \$25.00 per person and she had copies of the invitation for anyone interested who did not receive one by email. Deadline for reservations is November 4.

OLD BUSINESS: President Shields reported that the Board is working on a Candidate Questionnaire which will probably include less than 10 questions for us to ask candidates concerning issues we feel are important. We will be reporting on these at the next meeting.

Club elections are now open. We have three Board positions to be filled. They are Secretary and two At-Large positions. He encouraged everyone to consider filling these positions as well as volunteering for other activities of the Grand Dems. We have reserved tables at the November Grand Dems Garage Sale and the Fall Fest and need volunteers to staff our tables at these events. Barbara Nelson was circulating through the audience to get sign-ups for help at these events.

NEW BUSINESS: President Shields called on Frank Reed, the Legislative District 22 Chairman to tell us what is happening and how we can help. Frank reported that Precinct Committee (PCs) Persons are still needed. There will be a PC training and recruitment summit on October 16, 2017, at the Rio Vista Recreation Center, Lakeside Room in Peoria. At this summit, current and potential PCs will have an opportunity to learn what PCs do, how to use the computerized voter list, how to canvass, hold house parties, run a phone bank and how to use social media. He encouraged everyone to get involved. He provided his email (frank.reed123@gmail.com) and had flyers about the summit in the back of the room for interested persons to pick up.

An audience member brought up the Permanent Early Voter List (PEVL) and Frank expanded on this telling the audience how easy it is to sign up for this which allows voters to receive their ballots in mail for return by mail without waiting in long lines on election day to vote. He mentioned that if you are currently a registered voter you can go on-line at the County Recorder's office and sign up. If you are not a registered voter you can still go on-line to the County Recorder's office and print out the form. Frank also told the audience if anyone had a problem with this they could contact him for help. Someone asked when PEVL votes are actually counted. Frank said on election day, however, you can go on-line to track that they actually received your mailed-in ballot.

SPEAKER: Sharon Levinson, Program Co-Chair, introduced our speaker for the evening Dr. David Garcia. Dr. Garcia has announced his candidacy for Governor of Arizona in 2018. He is a native of Arizona and a fourth generation of the Arizona Public Schools. He served in the Army. He graduated from the Honors College at ASU and received his master's and doctorate from the University of Chicago. He is currently Associate Professor at ASU Teachers College.

Dr. Garcia began by telling us who he is, what he will do and how he plans to win.

He is married with two daughters who attend public school. He was the first in his family to finish college. He enlisted in the Army Infantry and trained as a chemical warfare specialist. With the GI bill he was able to finish college and earn a quality education. He acquired legislative experience while serving as a research analyst for the Arizona State Senate and leading the Arizona Department of Education as Associate Superintendent. He earned respect and accolades from people on both sides of the political aisle.

The big issue he believes is education. There is a lack of commitment to education in Arizona which has been going on a long time. Without a commitment to education he believes Arizona cannot attract businesses to start, build and stay in Arizona. He has a teacher's commitment to education and he will begin by changing the way schools are currently being financed in the State. Teachers need to be treated and paid like the professionals they are.

Health care is the second largest issue. He believes that various versions of the Affordable Care Act will gradually lead to Medicare for All - single payer programs.

Economics is another major issue, which, without education reforms, will have a difficult time attracting the kind of businesses to start up and stay in Arizona. He believes there is no reason that Arizona should not be the number 1 State in solar power in the country.

Immigration is so very important to Arizona. Arizona was built on immigrant labor and we will not turn our back on the immigrant population. The message must be that we will not break up their family. He believes we must provide the necessary work permits to immigrants so they can work here and return to their homes outside the U.S. Most immigrant workers want this and it is good for us as well.

How he plans to win is by getting out in the communities that don't vote. He wants to take his message to young people and wants to interact with people in a people to people campaign. He will seek small donations to build up his campaign fund. He has been endorsed by Democracy for America and looks for support from other groups—not corporations looking for favors.

He thanked the audience for our interest and provided us with his website (dg4az.com) for anyone wishing to know more about him and his campaign and also asked for signatures for his petition to get on the ballot.

He ended by saying the one subject that keeps him up at night is WATER. We do live in a desert and more people are coming here all the time. He believes we need to do more to address this inevitable subject.

President Shields thanked Dr. Garcia and presented him with one of our coffee mugs.

The drawing was held for the 50/50 raffle which collected \$92.00. The winner of half was Barry Bridges.

No further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Cotton, Secretary