



GRAND  
Democrats

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## GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

November 13, 2024

6:25 – 7:35 pm

### Call to Order

President Bob Walling invited James Hirsch to sing and play his song “Time to get up and pull up our sleeves...” The membership joined in saying the *Pledge of Allegiance* and singing *The Star-Spangled Banner*.

### President’s Remarks

Bob recognized:

- Greg Freeman, candidate for Maricopa County Assessor, who expressed his thanks for the community support he received, reminded us that we still have the same values despite our losses and that there will be another important election in 24 months.
- Tom Tzitzuri, candidate for LD29 seat in the Arizona House, who will not run again but urges all to continue the fight.
- Veterans of the Armed Forces
- President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris for their outstanding service 2021-24.
- All the candidates who filled the Democratic slate in the 2024 Election and deserve our thanks for their hard-fought campaigns.
  - Kamala Harris – US President
  - Greg Whitten - CD8 House
  - Quacy Smith – CD9 House
  - Eric Stafford – LD29 Senate
  - Tanair Ochoa Martinez – LD29 House
  - tom Tzitzura – LD 29 House
  - Ylenia Aguilar – AZ Corporation Commission
  - Jonathan Hill – AZ Corporation Commission
  - Joshua Polacheck – AZ Corporation Commission
  - Greg Freeman -MC Assessor
  - Tyler Kamp – MC Sheriff
  - Laura Metcalfe – MC School Superintendent
  - David Sandoval – MC board of Supervisors #4
  - Tim Stringham – MC Recorder
  - Tamika Wooten – MC Attorney

- The Democratic victories in the 2024 Election:
  - Election of US Senator Ruben Gallego
  - Election of Terry Goddard and Heather Macre to the Arizona Water Conservation District Board
  - Passage of Proposition 139 to put women's reproductive rights in the Arizona Constitution
- The outstanding efforts of our Election Committee Volunteers led by Lynne Leonard, Sherry Douglas, Kathy Wyse, and Ken Kessler and the Rally Committee led by Jonita Bigelow and Barbara Nelson.
- Retiring Board members: Treasurer Jim Coffran, Members-at-Large Kevin Boivin and Barbara Nelson
- Retiring Committee Chairs Kay and Larry Sawatski.
- There are sign up sheets for the 2025 committees. The 2026 election cycle begins in January 2025. Arizona is still "Blue" as long as we have our Democratic Governor Katie Hobbs, Secretary of State Adrian Fontes, Attorney General Kris Mayes and U.S. Senators Mark Kelly and Ruben Gallego.
- James Hirsch summed it up in his song, *Joy*, dedicated to Presidential Candidate Kamala Harris.

### Program:

- Armonee Jackson is the first Black President of the Young Democrats of Arizona. Her interest in justice began when she learned her father lost his right to vote due to a felony conviction in his youth. After a lifetime of honest living, he is still unable to vote in 2025 while the candidate at the top of a ballot is a felon with 24 convictions and a voter! She became an activist in high school protesting police violence against Blacks. She is now leading an organization dedicated to creating coalitions for political action, getting young people registered and recruiting candidates.
- Francesca Martin, Deputy Director of the Keep Arizona Blue Student Coalition, thanked Grand Dems for writing 3,000 post cards. Her organization works to find leaders for the future by reaching out to young people, 250,000 of whom did not vote, with texts, canvasses, round tables, postcards, voter guides, and community events. They support reproductive freedom, workers' and LGBTQ rights, public education and gun safety. They supported young people running for school boards like Jacob George who was elected to the Balsz School District Board. They work in opposition to Turning Point, a national organization based in Arizona that recruits young people to support Republicans.

### Business Meeting:

- Sherry Douglas reported that 90 volunteers for the Elections Committee got 500 signatures for Proposition 139 to put women's reproductive rights in the Arizona Constitution, wrote 13,700 postcards, made over 2000 phone calls, distributed voter guides and worked at the polls to get out the vote for Democrats.
- Suzi Walling moved and Bill Shields seconded a motion to elect the proposed slate of officers for 2025. There being no nominations from the floor, the membership elected:
  - President        Bob Walling
  - Vice President   Ken Kessler (will not rise to President)
  - Secretary        Carole Parnell
  - Treasurer        Karen Manning

- Member-at-Large Sherry Douglas
- Member-at-Large Carol Karsten
- Member-at-Large Clay Lattimer

Suzi Walling will continue as Past President.

- The meeting concluded with the auction of a Donkey Pin for \$50, the drawing for the 50/50 Raffle and cake for everyone.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carole Parnell, Secretary