



GRAND
Democrats

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GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

March 26, 2025

6:25 – 8:05 pm

Seating was in the Gila Room at round tables with questions to discuss

1. Should discussion take place before or after the speakers?
2. Should the Grand Democratic Club continue as a PAC raising money for the Democratic party and its candidates or should it concentrate on social and educational events for the members?
3. How important is it for this club to continue and, if so, how can we attract new leadership?

Call to Order

Vice President Ken Kessler opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Program

Clay Lattimer introduced the speakers

- Heather Macre, whose 2024 reelection campaign we supported, is now in her third 6-year term as an unpaid member of the Central Arizona Water Conservation District Board (CAWCDB) which oversees the Central Arizona Project (CAP).
- Paloma Greenwald is a nurse and activist on health and environmental issues for the Sierra Club, Grand Canyon Chapter.

Business Meeting

- Suzi Walling reported that the Sunday Sundaes fundraiser brought in more than \$2000.
- Suzi also reported on the Round Table Discussions at our February meeting.

Top issues of concert to members were

- ▶ Trump & Musk: Disinformation/how to combat it; supporting Russia
- ▶ Democracy
- ▶ Our Senators: how they voted, lack of action
- ▶ News outlets & social media/freedom of the press
- ▶ Nepotism & corruption/transfer of wealth
- ▶ Medicaid
- ▶ Women's health/voting rights/the Budget

What do members want from the club

- ▶ Information about political issues and AZ politics

- ▶ Group support with others who share values and perspectives
- ▶ Advocacy and how to use our power
- ▶ Strategies to engage and to take action

What about discussion groups?

- ▶ Liked small round table discussions
- ▶ Had trouble hearing

Do you want more ways to resist?

- ▶ Yes...rallies, boycotts, text campaigns, calling senators
- ▶ Share names and contact information for our elected officials
- ▶ Define acronyms that are used in meetings
- ▶ Explain how the political structure works in simple terms

Are you interested in serving on our committees

- ▶ Not familiar with them
- ▶ If aware, they're only part-timers, reluctant to commit to a schedule

What are your sources of information:

- ▶ CNN, MSNBC now suspect
- ▶ Indivisible and Substacks, Heather Cox Richardson, Jessica Craven
- ▶ Overwhelmed by all the information, don't know who to follow on YouTube, podcasts
- ▶ On a news hiatus

- We have filled our quota of precinct committee members for La Solana precinct but still need volunteers for Grand and Granite Falls
- Join the *Where's Abe Hamedeh Rally?* at his office in Surprise on March 31st or the *Hands Off Rally* on April 4th at Bell and Civic Center Drive at 9 am.
- Sign up for the Advocacy Program at granddems@gmail.com, keep up with the news at Civic Engagement Beyond Voting www.cebv.us or find rallies at www.fiftyfifty.one.
- Bob paid tribute to two notable Democrats who died this week:
 - Raul Grijalva, Representative of AZ Congressional District 7

In the words of the Sierra Club, Grand Canyon Chapter:

Our hearts go out to the family, staff, and the many many friends of Representative Raúl Grijalva. He was such a force for good and for people and the planet -- and he was persistent -- he did not give up, even in the darkest hours. Rep. Grijalva used his voice to promote environmental justice and he helped many others find and use their voices too. Even as he was preparing to leave this world, he was fighting for it, speaking up against the attacks on those most vulnerable and on the lands that he worked so hard to protect. From Grand Canyon to Oak Flat to the Borderlands, from immigrants to Indigenous people to veterans, young and elder, he was their advocate, he was our advocate. We will miss him. Representative Grijalva, we honor and thank you. To his family, we are so very sorry and we want to thank you for generously sharing him with the people of Arizona and the United States.

- Bill Shields

He served four terms as president of the Grand Dems, brought us many notable programs and led the organization through COVID. In his honor, the Board has created

The Bill Shields Volunteer of the Year Award to be awarded in November 2025.

Adjournment

Following the drawings for 50/50 and the Wine Snob, the meeting adjourned in order to resume discussions at the round tables.

Respectfully submitted,
Carole Parnell, Secretary

What you should know about Arizona's water, CAWCDB and CAP

- Arizona is one of seven states that drain into the Colorado River Basin.
- In 1922, six of the states signed the Colorado River compact dividing 15 million acre-feet of the river's annual flow between the Upper and Lower Basin states. Arizona did not sign that compact until 1944 when it was provisionally given 2.8 million acre-feet of California's allotment. The remaining 1.5 million acre-feet goes to Mexico. Eleven Native American tribes also have claims to Colorado River water.
- One of the most pressing concerns is the impending expiration of the current rules governing the operations of Lake Mead and Lake Powell in 2026. These reservoirs are vital sources of water for Arizona, and ongoing negotiations among the seven states will determine how much water each state will receive after the existing rules expire. Arizona's water supply, already strained, could see even more drastic reductions, especially since CAP holds junior water rights on the Colorado River, meaning it could face deeper cuts.
- The Colorado River Basin Project of 1968 authorized the construction of a 336-mile system to deliver river water to the populated areas of Arizona. Construction on CAP began in 1973 and was completed in 1993.
- The CAWCDB Board was created to oversee the maintenance of CAP and collect taxes to repay the federal government for construction. It will be up to CAWCDB to manage any reductions in water that may be negotiated.
- The Colorado supplies 36% of Arizona's water, 3% comes from reclaimed water, 18% from in state rivers and 14% from ground water. Municipalities and industry get 54% of the CAP water, 45% goes to tribes. Agriculture no longer gets a share.
- In addition to managing Colorado River water, CAWCDB plays a role in replenishing groundwater, a crucial resource for housing development on the outskirts of Phoenix. As metro Phoenix continues to expand, the board's decisions will influence whether there is enough water to support that growth while maintaining sustainable groundwater levels.
- For those concerned about the developments of rental housing in Phoenix, residential density is good for water usage because it reduces per capita water demand. Higher net residential density leads to lower energy use, negative net carbon emissions, and life cycle cost of water distribution systems.
- For those concerned about the water usage by the growing chip industry, the good news is that these plants are using only a fraction of their water allowance because of recycling and reusing the water within the facility.
- As for wasting water while waiting for it to get warm, recirculating pumps can be installed for about \$200 each as they were at The Colonnade Life Care Community just this month.
- For more information, go to knowyourwaternews.com. The CAP University program provides free educational sessions for citizens and stakeholders. CAP is also planning a Visitor Experience Center at their headquarters building by late 2026.

It was a tough week for environmental protection as we saw more announcements about the Environmental Protection Agency gutting important rules. At the Arizona Legislature, HB2679, which allows electric utilities to issue bonds to pay for debt in assets without proper accountability, oversight, or consumer protection, and that would shift major costs to future ratepayers, plus tip the scales toward more fossil fuels, passed out of the House 35-21-4. All of the House Republicans voted for it and they were joined by the following Democratic Representatives: Aguilar, Lupe Contreras, Connolly, and Luna-Najera. Please let them know you are disappointed in their vote and thank the representatives who voted No. You can see the vote here and by clicking on "Show House Third Read." You can find contact information for all representatives here. Back again next week, is HB2223 wind farms; construction; policies; procedures (Marshall: Blackman, Diaz, et al) includes numerous new mandates for wind energy generation facilities that are clearly intended to stop wind projects from being sited. Please take action and send a message to your representatives asking them to oppose this anti-clean energy bill.

See more at www.sierraclub.org/Arizona