



GRAND
Democrats

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GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

June 26, 2024

Call to Order:

President Bob Walling opened the meeting at 6:30 with the singing of the National Anthem.

Welcome and Introductions:

Candidates: Tom Tzitzura and Tanairi Ochoa-Martinez for LD 29 State Representative, Aly Cline, Ed Cuningham and Kevin Sartor for Surprise Mayor, Bernadette Greene Placentia for West Mec Governing Board and Heather Macre for Central Arizona Water Conservation District (CAWCD), as well as speaker Cathy Sigmon from Civic Engagement Beyond Voting (CEBV). Earle Greenberg for City Council in District 2 came in later.

Secretary's Report:

There were no additions or corrections to the minutes of May 22, 2024 emailed to all members and published at GrandDems.org. They were approved.

Treasurer's Report:

There were no questions about the Treasurer's Report of 6/22/24 emailed to all members prior to the meeting and the report was accepted.

Bylaws Amendment:

Suzi Walling moved, Pam Barton seconded and the membership approved the following amendment to the Bylaws:

ARTICLE III – BOARD

Section B. Members of the Board – The members of the Board are the officers of the club:

President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer and three Members-at-Large. All board members and nominees of Board positions shall be registered Democrats or Independents and members in good standing.

President's Remarks:

Any Grand Dems member who is a registered Democrat or Independent wishing to serve on the **2025 Board** is urged to contact the Nominating Committee of Suzi Walling and Carol Karsten.

Bob attended **Vice President Kamala Harris' Reproductive Freedom campaign event** in Phoenix on Monday, the anniversary of the overturning of the Roe v. Wade decision. Harris blamed former president Trump who nominated three of the U.S. Supreme Court justices who voted to give the decision of abortion rights back to the states. Harris said to pay attention to whom the abortion bans are affecting. "Forty percent of Latinas in reproductive age live in a state with an abortion ban," Harris said. "Not to mention, if you look at it, a majority of Black women live in the South. Every state in the South except for Virginia has an abortion ban." Harris warned a second Trump presidency would mean threats to more freedoms like contraception and in vitro fertilization (IVF). Harris also addressed President Joe Biden's recent executive order on immigration. The executive order allows

undocumented spouses of U.S. citizens protections from deportation and an expedited path to citizenship if they've lived here for more than 10 years. Harris said the protections apply to their children as well.

All contributions to our **Victory Fund** will be passed on to eligible local candidates including Heather Macre who received a check for \$250 at the meeting. Tom Tzitzura has reached his minimum number of \$5 donors to qualify for Clean Election funding, but he and Tanairi Ochoa-Martinez are still soliciting donations. Donate \$5 to each and take home a Biden/Harris yard sign for \$10. Terry Goddard, running again for the Water Board with Heather, asked that his check be given to other candidates since he does not want to exceed his present funding. With the Victory Fund balance now depleted, we need more donations for a third round of funding after the primary.

The **Elections Committee** is looking for volunteers to write postcards, telephone registered voters and distribute Golden Ticket flyers in the run-up to the November election. You can also sign up to tour the Maricopa Election and Tabulation Center and/or Runbeck Election Services this summer.

Precinct Committeepersons are still needed throughout Grand. See President Bob Walling for details.

Useful **election websites** at GrandDems.org. (bottom of each page):

- Arizona Secretary of State
- Maricopa County Elections
- Active Early Voter List
- Maricopa County Recorder...Elections Department
- Be Ballot Ready
- E-Qual

This concluded the business portion of the meeting.
Our next General Meeting will be August 28, 2024

Tanairi Ochoa-Martinez: She stressed the importance of electing at least one of the two Democrats (her and Tom Tzitzuri) to the Arizona House in order to get a Democratic majority after many years of Republican domination. The good news is that you can and should vote for both of them.

Earle Greenberg: He is running unopposed to represent District 2 on the Surprise City Council. He promises to continue the monthly meetings for constituents with as much transparency as permitted to those conducting city business. He is excited about the new technology from ASU that turns blueprints into virtual tours of proposed installations. It is a way to identify "pain points" before submitting final plans and thus avoid expensive change orders later.

Heather Macre: She has served on the Water Conservation Board for 12 years, encouraging transparency and citizen input before deliberations and promoting educational programs like "Know Your Water" News and "CAP 101". As for the future, she and Terry Goddard want the Board to work with utilities and other agencies in preparing for shortages that will occur due to climate change and the ongoing 24-year drought. Although no additional reductions in CAP water are planned for next year, negotiations are underway to change the Colorado River allotments originally set in 1902 (before Arizona statehood), changes which may have far-reaching effect if they favor the upper Colorado states over the lower. So far, most of the current reductions have been to the agricultural sector, rather than municipalities, industry or Native Americans. Note that the Water Board candidates are non-partisan and come at the bottom of the ballot. Don't miss voting for them.

Cathy Sigmund from **Civic Engagement Beyond Voting** leads a group of volunteers who research candidates for local and state offices and publish their findings in order to empower voters to make informed decisions. They are non-partisan but support progressive values and democratic change. "**Gavel Watch**" is their list of recommendations for judges facing re-election, a long list which is

daunting to many voters. In 1974, Arizona Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor originated the Merit Appointment & Retention System for judges that evaluates candidates before appointment, requires periodic re-election by the voters and has been adopted in 16 other states. After a prominent judge opposed by CEBV was defeated in the last election, opponents of the merit system are putting a measure on the November ballot to do away with the Merit System. For more information, check their website CEBV.us and listen to "In Conversation", talks with authorities on current issues like water, clean energy, unpacking the court, separating immigration from the border, privatization of schools and LGBTQ.

Aly Cline for Mayor of Surprise supports the proposed *General Plan 2024*, managed growth, improved infrastructure, the 'safe city' designation, school resource officers, and increased involvement of students from Rio Salado and OUAZ. Her 32-year career was in finance and personnel training. She has contributed 21,000 hours of volunteer service to the community as well as being the council representative for District 2 and serving on various city and county boards. She is retired, equipped to hit the ground running and will be a full-time mayor.

Ed Cunningham for Mayor of Surprise served in the Army, became a fireman, operated successful Firehouse Subs Restaurants and has been active in advocating for and building bridges among various groups in the city. His decision to run was late in coming and he missed the deadline for being on the ballot but is registered as a write-in candidate. He also supports the *General Plan 2024* knowing that we are limited by decisions made years ago and hoping to make better ones for our future. He believes in transparency, the importance of people and community, and supports our first responders.

Kevin Sartor led soldiers as an Army Engineer for 20 years, earned a Bachelor's degree in Homeland Security, a Master's in Public Administration, and certificates for project management and leadership. He contributed to the City of Surprise's growth plan as part of a fellowship for the City of Surprise, then chaired the Surprise Planning and Zoning Commission.. Currently, as the Safety Coordinator for Dysart Unified School District, he is responsible for maintaining K-12 education's highest safety standards. He supports the *General Plan 2040* as a starting point and an opportunity for all citizens to be heard. He has the skills to negotiate with developers and would be a full-time mayor.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm after the drawings for 50/50 and Wine Snob

Respectfully submitted,
Carole Parnell, Secretary