



GRAND DEMOCRATS

granddems.org

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES February 28, 2024

Call to Order: President Bob Walling welcomed members and guests, then opened the meeting with the singing of the National Anthem.

Secretary's Report: Secretary Carole Parnell asked for any corrections to the *Minutes of the January 24, 2024 General Meeting* posted on the website. Hearing none, she moved, Suzi Walling seconded and the members approved a motion to accept the *Minutes*.

[Treasurer's Report: There was no report but the *January-February Income & Expenses* were mailed to members prior to the meeting. Direct any questions to Jim Coffman, Treasurer, at melacatuna@aol.com.

[Committee Reports: There were no reports.]

President's Remarks:

Introductions: Bob introduced and welcomed

Yolanda Bejarano who has served as Chair of the Arizona Democratic party since January 2023

Ylenia Aguilar and Jonathan Hill who are running for two of three open seats on the Arizona Corporation Commission

Eric Stafford who is running for the Arizona Senate from LD29

Newly announced Tom Tzitzura and Tanairi Ochoa-Martinez, who are running for the two open seats for State Representative from District 29.

Claudia Yeager-Smith, a guest from LD28, who has served as election judge, poll worker and poll observer. She is recruiting volunteers to fill these positions in the 2024 election.

Tim Stringham who is running for Maricopa County Recorder.

Earle Greenberg, past president of the Grand CAM Board, who is running for the Surprise City Council from District 2.

Future Meetings. Bob announced that the March 26th General Meeting will highlight elections for Maricopa County offices. The main speakers will be John Ryder, Executive Director, and Patti O'Neill, Chair of the Maricopa County Democratic party. We will also hear from candidates who have filed for the July 30th Primary including Greg Freeman, who is running

for County Assessor, Tyler Kamp, running for County Sheriff, Laura Metcalfe, who is running for County Superintendent of Schools, Tamika Wooten, who is running for County Attorney, and David Sandoval, the County Board of Supervisors candidate. Republican Clint Hickman, who serves on the County Board of Supervisors from our District 4, is retiring and Debbie Lesko, who is retiring from Congress, is running on the Republican side.

The April 17th General Meeting will feature the return of our two leading Congressional District 8 Democratic candidates. At our January 28 Candidate Forum, Greg Whitten and Bernadette Greene Placentia were the top vote getters. They will have their opportunity to present their case to our voters as to why they should be the Candidate to take on the winner of the July 30 primary.

The May 22nd meeting -Nonpartisan Election Night will host Surprise Mayor, City Council, Dysart School Board candidates.

The June 26th General Meeting will be the last before the July 30th primary and open to any candidates who want to make a final appeal. No meetings are held in July and August.

Victory Fund. Bob announced the Victory Fund Awards approved by the Board for County Assessor candidate Gregory Freeman and candidate for County Sheriff Tyler Kamp. Kamp's opponent is Russ Skinner, a longtime Republican, who switched to the Democratic party in order to be appointed successor to retiring Sheriff Paul Penzone.

You can donate to the Victory Fund on the Grand Dems website and all money goes to candidates. Grand Dems is a Political Action Committee (PAC) that can donate to candidates who are not running as Clean Election candidates or who fall short of their needed Clean Election donations. A Clean Elections candidate for the legislature cannot accept PAC contributions but will qualify for up to \$53,000 by getting 200 \$5 donations. A Clean Elections candidate for the Arizona Corporation Commission needs 1500 \$5 contributions to receive about \$237,000 in Clean Funds.

E-QUAL. Bob concluded his remarks with a demonstration of E-QUAL, a program which can be accessed from the Grand Dems website.

- Selecting E-QUAL at the bottom of the home page takes you to the Secretary of State Clean Elections Commission website where you can sign the petitions that each candidate must submit to get on the ballot.
- You will need to enter your name, date of birth, your driver's license [or voter registration, and the last four digits of your social security number].
- You will be taken to a list of Candidates from all parties "we ask that you support Democrats) for each office on the ballot.
- When you select a candidate, you will be taken to the petition. Giving your e-mail address may be required or optional and you may agree to share it with the candidate. You will be asked twice if you agree to sign the petition.
- You can vote for as many candidates as there are openings for that office. Once you vote for that many, the rest will automatically be closed to you.
- Returning to the home page will allow you to select the option to donate \$5 to any of the Clean Election candidates.

- You will need to enter your name, date of birth, your voter registration or driver's license number, and the last four digits of your social security number.
- Select from the list of Clean Elections candidates the one you want to support.
- Complete the form that comes up, There are several options to pay, but you only have to enter your choice/credit card number the first time. You will receive an e-mail confirmation.

That concluded the business part of the meeting.

PROGRAM

Guest Speakers:

- **Yolanda Bejarano, Chair of the Arizona Democratic Party**, sees momentum building in what is a top battleground state of the 2024 election. The road to the U.S. House, the Senate and the White House runs through Arizona. She is determined to flip the Arizona legislature in favor of Democrats. In order to do that, she recruits candidates, raises money and registers voters. In return, she needs us to become informed about the candidates, to share our views face-to-face with other voters and to donate money to keep the process moving forward.
- **Claudia Yeager-Smith** has 25 years of experience in the election process and recruits interested voters to participate as either paid poll workers or volunteer poll observers. Both are needed to insure fair elections. To learn more, she can be reached by e-mail at honeygirlmom@yahoo.com.

Candidates for two seats on the Arizona Corporation Commission which is an elected body that oversees public utility companies, approves securities matters, regulates the incorporation of businesses and organizations and facilitates railroad/pipeline safety. A victory for the three Democratic candidates would give them a majority on the Commission.

- **Ylenia Aguilar** was elected to the Board of Directors of the Central Arizona Project in 2022, a pipeline which provides water to Arizona from the Colorado River. She sees herself as a voice for consumers.
- **Jonathan Hill** has worked 17 years as an engineer and scientist at the ASU Mars Space Flight facility. With degrees in both geological sciences and aerospace engineering, he believes his technical experience will be an asset to the Commission.

Candidate for Maricopa County Recorder

Tim Stringham is an Army and Navy veteran and serves in the Navy JAG Corp in the Navy Reserves. He is running because the greatest threat to democracy isn't a foreign power, it's politicians at home who are willing to peddle lies and conspiracies to get elected, or who try and pick and choose who gets to vote to ensure their own election.

Candidate for the Arizona Senate from LD29

- **Eric Stafford** first became a certified Airplane Mechanic and Machinist, then switched to a career in veterinary medicine. His experiences give him insight into the problems faced by struggling families that he wants to use to make government work for everyone.

At the conclusion of the meeting, 50/50 raffle results were announced. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.