

GRAND DEMOCRATS



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GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

January 24, 2024

Call to Order: President Bob Walling called the meeting to order and welcomed the members of Northwest Valley Democrats, co-hosts for the Candidate Forum that will follow the business meeting.

Introductions:

The 2024 officers and committee chairs of Grand Dems in attendance were: Treasurer Jim Coffran, Secretary Carole Parnell, Members-at-Large Kevin Boivin, Fundraising Committee, and Ken Kessler, Community Outreach Committee, Larry Sawatzki and Kay Sawatzki. Tech Committee, Carol Karsten, Membership Committee, Lynne Leonard, Elections Committee.

Guests were Eric Stafford, a Clean Election candidate who is running for the Arizona Senate in LD29 and Tanairi Ochoa-Martinez, recently announced candidate running to represent Legislative District 29 in the Arizona House. Quacy Smith, running for the 9th District US Congressional seat, also had a representative. Introduction of the four Legislative District 8 candidates was deferred to the forum that followed the business meeting.

Cheri Tomlinson, Chair of Legislative District 28 (LD2), which includes The Grand for U.S. Congressional races, gave an update on their *Get Out The Vote* efforts. President Walling presented her a check on behalf of the Grand Dems to help finance their efforts.

Sarah Tyree, chair of LD29, asked for volunteers to call registered Arizona democrats who are not on the early mailing list to see if they would like to get a mail-in ballot. President Walling presented her with a check on behalf of the Grand Dems to support their work.

President's Remarks:

Referring to the abrupt resignation of Jeff DeWitt, Chair of the Arizona Republican Party, Bob predicted that the Republicans would destroy themselves, but our job is to get Democrats elected.

Democratic candidates and issues need our support. Bob urged members to

- Go online at the granddems.org secure website to donate to the Victory Fund. The Fund raised \$2000 last year to be distributed to local party organizations and candidates.
- Use our website link to the e-equal system where you can sign candidate petitions or donate to their Clean Election campaigns.
- See Elections Committee Chair Lynn Leonard and volunteer for activities to get out the vote.
- Visit the tables around the room to sign candidate petitions that will get them on the ballot.
- Learn about and sign the petitions to put issues on the November ballot: abortion access, Arizona minimum wage increase, opening the presidential preference election to independents and repeal of the Right-to-Work amendment in the Arizona Constitution.
- Look for voter guides and do not neglect to vote for important down-ballot offices including judges.

Minutes of November 16, 2023, General Meeting:

Secretary Carole Parnell asked for any corrections to the Minutes posted on our website. Hearing none, the Minutes were approved by acclamation.

Treasurer's Report:

Jim Coffran e-mailed the *Income and Expenses Statement* for January to all 2024 members. Use his contact information on the website to send in any questions.

The Victory Fund has been distributed as follows:

- Arizona Democratic Party
- Maricopa Democratic Party
- LD 28
- LD29 Laura Metcalfe, who is running unopposed for Maricopa County Superintendent of Schools
- Ted Stringham, who is running for Maricopa County Recorder

Jim thanked Past President Suzi Walling and her team for organizing the evening's Forum.

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 to be followed by the Candidate Forum.

U.S. Congressional District 8 (CD8) Democratic Candidate Forum

The Forum, hosted by Grand Dems and Northwest Valley Democrats, began at 7pm. Four aspiring Candidates for the one open seat were present and participated.

Moderators for the Forum were:

- Maria Bears, President of the Northwest Valley Democrat
- C. Wayne Dawson, Grand Dems Program Committee

The Moderators introduced the four Candidates. Those Candidates were:

- Marc Lewis
- Bernadette Greene Placentia
- Steven Sawdy
- Gregory Whitten

The candidates took turns answering each of six questions posed by the Moderators and gave a final statement promoting their candidacy.

Audience members were given a ballot on which to choose either their preferred candidate or “undecided”. The results will be sent to members of the host groups.

The Forum ended at 8 pm.

Submitted by:

Carole Parnell, Secretary