

MINUTES  
SUN CITY WEST REPUBLICAN CLUB  
May 2, 2026

**CALL TO ORDER:** President Bridget Nelke called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. at The Church on the Green, Sun City West, Arizona. Dr Jay Knoles gave the Invocation. President Nelke led the singing of God Bless America and the Pledge to the Flag of the United States of America.

**WELCOME VISITORS** Daniel Bentley, Diane Branson, Don Branson, Judy Brooks, Stephen Dodge, Diane Douglas, Corky Haynes, Tamra Hawkins, Carol Junge, Gaye Martin, Leana Meditz, Gail Ruyle Muller, Carol Sagun, Barry Yurtis and Nugette Yurtis. There were 103 members present, 18 guests and 9 speakers/staff present for a total of 130 in attendance.

President Nelke apologized to the membership for the rushed Bylaws approval process last month. The Bylaws Committee will reconvene in the fall to consider any other matters brought to the Committee. There was a motion and a second to approve the Minutes from April 4, 2026. Motion approved.



Linda Barnes introduced Heather Rooks, a candidate running for LD28 Legislature. Rooks stated she is currently President of the Peoria School Board. She became interested in running for the School Board during Covid when her autistic child was forced to wear a mask at school in 2022. She was able to help flip the School Board to a conservative majority. They have approved policy to keep boys out of girls' restrooms and have purchased new books with no DEI focus. The Board has cut the budget but kept all necessary funded budget items. Her focus in the Legislature would be to fight for our kids.



Beverly Pingerelli, a current Representative for LD 28, gave a Legislative Report. Pingerelli said there were 2000 bills proposed this past session. 109 were approved and sent to the Governor for signature: she signed 64 and vetoed 45. Pingerelli noted there is ballot issue on the ballot-the Freedom to Move Act. This is to charge people on the miles they drive. Do not vote for this Initiative. Representative Pingerelli noted she has been in the Legislature for six years. She was Chair of the Education Committee for 2 years and more recently is on the Science and Technology Committee. Prior to being in the Legislature, she was on the Peoria Governing Board. She is proud of the bill that she worked on to limit cell phone use at school from bell to bell. The governor vetoed the original bill but did sign

the bill this year. Pingerelli said she is a part of the Arizona Freedom Caucus, pro-life and is running with the team of Frank Carroll and David Livingston.



Linda Barnes introduced David Livingston, a current Representative for LD 28. Livingston is Appropriations Chair. He said he supports Heather Rooks for the School Board but that Beverly Pingerelli, Frank Carroll and he are running as a team. Livingston said he is proud of his #1 Arizona Legislator for efficiency according to the U of VA/Vanderbilt national study. Livingston said he focuses on insurance and pension bills because of his prior work history in the private sector. He focuses on fighting to get important bills passed and signed by the Governor. The Governor is currently holding up signing any bills until the budget is passed. The Legislature may adjourn until June 23 to force the Governor to approve a budget before the deadline.

Questions for the three LD 28 candidates:

Livingston- will you pass a law to veto Sharia Law? At this point, the Governor would veto it.

Pingerelli- What can be done about group homes in residential neighborhoods. She said Federal laws permits this but she will check into what can be done about it.

Rooks – What will be done about stricter background checks on teachers? There is State Level protection for the teachers when a crime against a child is committed. Rooks will investigate what can be done to change this.

Livingston – There was a bill to increase Legislator’s salaries. He said Legislators cannot increase their own pay. He said they currently receive \$24,000 per year. Their last increase was in 1998 when the salary went from \$18,000 to \$24,000. He would like to see an inflation raise or a committee to handle wages. He said there is a number of recent college graduates who run for the Legislature; they need to get a real job.

Pingerelli – Are you America First? Pingerelli said she would call herself a conservative and MAGA. Her voting record would show that.

Rook – What bill did Livingston support regarding children cared for at home that prompted you to run for the Legislature. He supported a bill to cut funding for children cared for at home. Livingston response – The funding for this program has increased over \$600 Million and the most vulnerable are not getting the funding they need. Needs regulation to make sure the neediest get funding.



Linda Barnes introduced Danielle Blake, running for Hassayampa Justice of Peace. She won the primary and is running unopposed in the General Election. She is the mother of six and wife of Scott Blake, who is Constable for Hassayampa Precinct. Danielle Blake said this court is a low-level court that handles small claims and arraignments. She has completed the Limited New Judge 96-hour training course for this position and recently passed the 8-hour exam. There are other familial people holding these two positions in other areas and there is procedures and policies plan to address this.



Linda Barnes introduced Noah Rominski, Abe Hamadeh's District Field Representative gave an update. He gave an update on the White House Ballroom. He said the Senate narrowly passed an exemption on F14's and to allow 3 Tomcats to go to museums. Hamadeh sent a letter to Doug Collins of the VA regarding additional charges lenders are adding on Veteran loans and requesting expedited processing for Veterans and more appraisers to help expedite the process.

Two winners were drawn for the 50/50 Raffle.



Linda Barnes introduced Nathan Duell, representing Heritage Action. He is the Arizona State Director. They work with political action on State and Federal elections. He has been with them for 10 years. Their website is [www.heritageaction.com/sentinel](http://www.heritageaction.com/sentinel). There could be 40 Initiatives on the ballot. Currently people are circulating petitions for signatures; these are mostly California supported initiatives. DO NOT SIGN these Petitions. he only ones Conservatives are supporting will be bills proposed on the ballot by the Legislature.

Examples of the Left's Initiative is:

“The Free, Fair and Secure Elections Act” –

- Strict scrutiny would prevent future election integrity reforms
- Create fundamental right to vote by mail
- Restricts the Legislature from reducing the early voting period
- Weakens in-person Voter ID Requirement
- Constitutional change

“The Protect Education Accountability Now Act”

- Kicks students off the ESA Program
- Seize funds from parents who were fiscally responsible
- Drown parents in regulatory paperwork
- Destroy private school freedom
- Do things the law already does

ESA Program - Craig Harris of Channel 12 has been targeting the ESA program. He claims 20% of the funds are misused. The reality is less than 2% of ESA funds were used on unallowed items and 0.3% were spent on egregious or fraudulent transactions. The Department of Education is actively recovering misspent funds.

Legislative bills developed by our representatives to protect our schools:

SCR 1032 & HCR 2007 – School Accountability

- Bureaucratic bloat is growing and more classrooms are empty
- Education spending should prioritize the needs of students
- Would require school districts to spend at least 60% of their operational spending on direct instructional expenses
- These measures provide a reasonable floor for accountability and ensure that school districts are good stewards of our tax dollars

Duell said Arizona Free News is a good source for information. He said if you are approached by a petition signature gathering person that you take out your phone and tape them explaining the petition to you as they gloss over what it actually says Jonah – they use words that make you think this is what you want but it isn't. It's a trick to get initiatives on the ballot that are contrary to what most Arizonans want. Don't ever sign petitions without fully reading the text.



Linda Barnes introduced Kimberly Yee who is running for Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction. Yee is the current State Treasurer. She is a graduate of Pepperdine. Her mother was a teacher for 38 years in the Phoenix School District. She knew back then the Administration had the best equipment and actual schools had non-working copy machines. Empowerment Scholarships allow parents to get their children into schools out of their neighborhood schools that will better suit their needs. She feels students' needs to be taught phonics-based reading and traditional math as the scores of 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders are below average. She said the Basic Tucson North Charter School is ranked #1 in the nation. Yee said colleges are teaching indoctrination to teachers. She said they need to bring back shop/trade-type classes and make schools accountable. Yee said the Department of Education has 600-700 people on staff. We need to be efficient with our tax dollars. Yee said she is good at analyzing budgets and fiscal management. She fixes problems and fires non-performers. She intends to protect the funding of students with disabilities. She said the Channel 12 reporter has filed a lawsuit demanding that she give personal information on students using school funds which is against their right to privacy.

Linda Barnes reported on the September 27 Candidate Forum at Palm Ridge. She will provide flyers for members to share with friends and neighbors to come and hear the candidates. Barnes noted she will have Nathan Duell back to speak again as there was no time for questions. She invited attendees to attend the Sun City Grand Republican meeting on May 16 at The Church on the Green.

There being no further business, President Nelke adjourned the meeting at 10:45 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Loper  
Recording Secretary

