Arizona Democratic Party
State Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: April 25, 2026
Location: Apache Junction High School, Apache Junction, Pinal County Arizona

1. Call to Order and Opening Proceedings

Chair Charlene Fernandez called the April State Committee meeting to order at 12:43 PM and welcomed members to Apache Junction in Pinal County. The Pinal County Chair delivered welcome remarks.

Members recited the Pledge of Allegiance. A land acknowledgment was offered, followed by a moment of silence honoring party members and changemakers who had died during the year.

The Chair reviewed Election Buddy voting procedures, including check-in requirements, proxy weighting, instructed proxies, ballot submission, and the availability of the help desk. A technical test vote was conducted.

2. Presentations

- **Pasquale Martinelli, Political Director of the Arizona Education Association, presented on the Protect Education Act petition initiative, including proposed changes to Arizona's ESA voucher program and the ongoing signature-gathering effort.**
- **Maritza Saenz presented on the Protect the Vote citizen initiative and encouraged members to circulate petitions to preserve existing voting methods and early/mail voting access.**
- **Brian Matlock, Democratic candidate for Arizona State Mine Inspector, addressed the body on mine safety, worker protection, rural organizing, and his campaign.**

No formal action was taken on these presentations.

3. Chair's Report

Chair Fernandez reported on statewide outreach, party infrastructure, candidate recruitment, voter registration, fundraising, and voter protection. Highlights included:

- County and legislative district outreach, labor-partner meetings, biweekly voter-registration calls, voter-registration kits, and a new round of county mobilization grants.
- PC recruitment gains in multiple counties and a reported slate of 95 legislative candidates, with at least one Democratic candidate in every legislative district.
- Implementation of Reach for relational organizing, improvements to voter-file/data processes, and participation in the DNC's When We Count program.
- Growth of the Copper State Leadership Council to more than 1,089 recurring donors, with more than 80% reported to be Arizona residents.
- Messaging/storytelling efforts, the Arizona Democrat newsletter, Saddle Up Saturday trainings, the May 8 Giffords Gala, and development of election-day/voter-protection capacity.

4. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Greg Freeman presented the 2026 budget overview, the Financial Oversight Committee structure, and first-quarter financial information.

- The current budget plan was reported as approximately $3.2 million in expected revenue and $3.1 million in expected expenses.
- Rick McGuire was identified as Chair of the Budget Subcommittee, which will assist with future budget creation and monitoring of the current budget.
- Diane McMahan, Mohave County Chair, was identified as Chair of the Audit Subcommittee, which will support an ongoing audit process.
- First-quarter expenditures were reported at approximately $456,000. The primary operating accounts were reported as beginning near $600,000 and ending near $584,000.
- The Treasurer reported that first-quarter revenue and spending were each running at roughly 14.5% of annual expectations and described party finances as more stable than in 2025.

5. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director, Joey Czajkowski, reported on fundraising, voter registration, data, voter protection, communications, and organizing programs.

- Continued growth of the Copper State Leadership Council and preparations for the May 8 gala.
- Distribution of voter-registration toolkits and forms; planned launch of Reach; and emphasis on reversing declines in Democratic voter registration.

- Development of coordinated voter-protection work, including support for ballot-signature issues and recruitment of poll observers and other volunteers.
- Expansion of the Story Lab and a talent/resource bank to identify volunteer skills, spaces, equipment, and other resources.
- Recognition of ADP staff and recent organizing successes, including the SRP election.

6. Credentials Report and Quorum

Rules Chair Steven Jackson presented the credentials report. The total State Committee body was reported as 730 members, with 40% (292 members) required for quorum. There were 289 members present and 162 proxies, for a total representation of 451. Quorum was declared present.

7. Adoption of Rules for Debate and Voting

Parliamentarian Coby King presented proposed meeting rules providing for up to five speakers on each side of a debatable motion, one minute per speaker, alternating pro/con recognition, and credential-card voting for routine matters when the result was overwhelmingly clear, with Election Buddy used when necessary.

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the proposed rules.

An amendment was moved and seconded to increase each speaker's time from one minute to two minutes. After a credential-card indication was inconclusive, the amendment was submitted by Election Buddy. The amendment failed: 170 yes, 251 no, and 1 abstention.

The main motion to adopt the rules as presented was then approved overwhelmingly by credential card vote.

8. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

The January State Committee meeting minutes, previously distributed by email and posted online, were moved for approval and seconded. With no corrections offered, the minutes were approved by voice vote without stated opposition.

9. Rules Committee Report and Bylaw Amendments

Rules Chair Steven Jackson reported that the 15-member Rules Committee had held three meetings, considered six proposed bylaws, conducted a Q&A session, and continued administrative review of submissions. He also reported on the People's Primary ad hoc committee and the Rules Committee's review of existing party policies, including concerns about provisions of an Executive Board transparency policy.

Amendment 1 — Chair Compensation Responsiveness

The Rules Committee recommended adoption. The proposal retained final authority with the State Executive Committee while assigning the Executive Board a defined role in developing a chair-compensation recommendation and requiring compensation arrangements to permit termination on 30 days' notice.

Shanna Leonard moved to add language requiring a "justifiable reason as determined by a vote of the Executive Board" for termination of the Chair's compensation. The motion was seconded. Following debate, the amendment failed by credential-card vote; the nays prevailed.

The main bylaw amendment was submitted through Election Buddy. The announced threshold for passage was 306 affirmative votes. The amendment was adopted: 309 yes, 116 no, and 3 abstentions (72.2% affirmative).

Amendment 2 — Confidentiality Policy

The proposal would direct the Executive Board to establish a confidentiality policy, including treatment of protected/confidential information. Following debate, a credential-card vote was taken. The amendment did not receive the required approval and was declared not adopted.

Amendment 3 — Standing Committees

The proposal addressed standing-committee member terms, attendance, removal by a committee chair, and an appeal process for a removed committee member.

An amendment was moved to change the threshold for a standing committee to overturn a chair's removal decision from a two-thirds vote of the body to a simple majority vote of the body. That amendment passed by credential-card vote.

The Standing Committees bylaw amendment, as amended, was then voted on by credential card and failed.

A subsequent point of clarification established that credential-card votes themselves are not weighted to reflect proxies.

Amendment 4 — Standing Committee Reporting and Formation

The proposal required each standing committee, unless otherwise specified in the bylaws, to provide a written report at least ten days before each State Committee meeting. It also required a proposed new standing committee to operate as a special committee for at least 12 consecutive months and to have provided reports before becoming a standing committee.

The amendment was approved by credential-card vote.

10. Resolutions Committee Report

Resolutions Chair Jeanne Lunn described the role of resolutions as statements of the Party's collective public-policy position and recognized members of the Resolutions Committee.

Resolution 1 — Condemn Unauthorized Military Action and Support Arizona Military Families

The resolution had been retitled that morning. The Resolutions Committee recommended adoption, describing the measure as addressing congressional war powers and the effects of military action on Arizona service members and military families.

Following debate and points of clarification, the resolution was adopted by credential-card vote.

Resolution 2 — Right to Dissent

The resolution addressed constitutional protections for political speech and boycotts. The Resolutions Committee did not recommend adoption. The question before the body was adoption of the resolution: a yes vote favored adoption and a no vote favored the committee's recommendation not to adopt.

After debate, an Election Buddy vote was conducted. The motion to adopt failed: 161 yes, 224 no, and 19 abstentions.

11. New Business

Proposed $300,000 for Rural Regional Coordinators

Carol Casey (LD19), a State Committee and State Executive Committee member, stated a motion to add $300,000 to the ADP 2026 budget for the purpose of hiring and supporting not fewer than three rural regional coordinators.

The Chair, with advice from the Parliamentarian, ruled the motion out of order on two stated grounds: (1) the matter had not been agendized in advance, and the Committee's longstanding practice was not to take action on unagendized New Business; and (2) the annual budget was described as being expressly delegated by the bylaws to the State Executive Committee.

Secretary Jeff Tucker challenged that interpretation, citing Article I, Section 1, and argued that the State Committee retained authority to act. Chair Fernandez stated that the matter would be taken into committee for the next State Committee meeting. Secretary Tucker then appealed the ruling of the Chair. A member stated a second to the appeal. The appeal was not submitted to the body for a vote; the Chair proceeded to the next speaker.

Later during New Business, Parliamentarian King reiterated that, under the procedure he had consistently applied, matters requiring a vote must have prior notice and be agendized. He described New Business as an opportunity to propose subjects for a future agenda rather than to take immediate action, and stated that inclusion on a later agenda remained within the Chair's agenda-setting discretion.

Other New Business Raised

- A request that resolutions scheduled for State Committee consideration be distributed to members sufficiently in advance to allow review and research.
- Information regarding the statewide Democratic voter-guide project and recruitment of additional legislative district leaders to its advisory board.
- A question regarding approximately $2,300 in first-quarter lodging expenses reported for a Sheraton hotel in White Plains, New York.
- A legislative update from Senator Mitzi Epstein and calls for members to oppose the anticipated Republican state budget.
- A proposal that the Rules Committee develop standing rules addressing matters including proxy treatment in credential-card votes and procedures for New Business.
- Requests concerning the removal of Betts Putnam-Hidalgo from the Resolutions Committee, including a request for reinstatement and for a defined removal/appeal process.
- Requests for greater financial support and stipends for youth/young-adult organizing.
- Additional questions regarding how members may place matters on a future agenda and whether/how rulings of the Chair may be appealed.
- Further support for increased rural organizing resources and funding.

No additional formal action was taken during New Business.

12. Closing and Adjournment

Chair Fernandez recognized the SRP clean-energy candidates and volunteers, ADP staff, volunteers during National Volunteer Recognition Week, unions, and Democratic candidates. Members were advised that the location of the next State Committee meeting would be announced.

There being no further business before the body, Chair Fernandez adjourned the meeting at 4:06 PM.

13. Certification

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Tucker
Secretary, Arizona Democratic Party