

MINUTES  
SUN CITY WEST REPUBLICAN CLUB  
June 7, 2025

**CALL TO ORDER:** Vice President Linda Barnes called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. at The Church on the Green, Sun City West, Arizona. Marjorie Favia gave the Invocation. Donna Sies led the Pledge to the Flag of the United States of America and led the singing of God Bless America.

**WELCOME VISITORS:** Jeff August, Gary Bedford, Carol Berka, Steve & Lois Bluhm, Tracy Cambrm, Lisa Everett, Mary Ann Faison, Arlan Garland, Lou Grosse, Emily Handlan, Terry Hopsecger, Marty Hopwood, Robert Jacobs, Chris Kapus, John & Jane Kauzlaric, Sharon Kukur, Serena Leopard, Jane Meador, Pam Myrick. Flavia Nomicos, Lind Ru, Dawn Runner, Adrienne Vince, Barbara Wyllie, Barry & Nugette Yurtis. There were 122 members, 28 guests and four speakers present: a total number of 144.

Motion was made to approve the minutes from May. Motioned seconded and approved.



Linda Barnes introduced Lisa Everett, LD 29 Republican Chair, who spoke about the BSNF Railroad expansion plan near Wittman which is scheduled for consideration at the August 20 Board of Supervisor's meeting. Everett noted Wittman is a small community of 600. The major traffic generated by the train switching operations and the multi-big warehouses would generate not only train traffic but many semis transporting the materials delivered by trains. This will also greatly impact traffic at Morrystown and Wickenburg. These are small communities that need support in fighting for their communities. She distributed a letter she would like people to sign if they are opposed to the BNSF proposal. BNSF has already purchased 4300 acres from the State and are now requested zoning change from RU-43 (rural residential) to Industrial. Concerns include infrastructure & traffic overload, public health & safety risks and the environmental impact. There are other concerns that the 90' warehouses and the train & truck traffic will permanently alter Wittman and all the surrounding communities for their quality of life, declining property values and environmental issues. County roads and highways will need much updating.

Another form letter to the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors was also distributed expressing opposition to this project. Websites for further information:

<https://chnng.it/SsRVpNFjrw>

[www.facebook.com/groups/westvalleybnsfraiklhub](http://www.facebook.com/groups/westvalleybnsfraiklhub)

Linda Barnes wished happy birthday to Declan Blake (8 years old) and Peggy Jacobs, Chair of LD28.



Linda Barnes introduced Debbie Lesko, District 4 Board of Supervisor. Supervisor Lesko gave some background information on the BNSF rail project. She said original negotiations were done with Surprise officials as their intent was to annex this area. Apparently there was a snag in the negotiations and BNSF changed to getting zoning variance approvals from Maricopa County. The first hearing was scheduled for March 26. Lesko was successful in getting this issue deferred until August to explore all the issues before the hearing. She asked that constituents email her at [District4@maricopa.gov](mailto:District4@maricopa.gov) and state whether you are for or against this development at Wittman. She asked the responders to list their address on the email as she wants to consider responses from those impacted in this area and not people from outside this area. She stated she wants more facts before making a final decision but her preliminary thoughts are against

the rezoning. Points of concern is the road infrastructure to handle 22,000 vehicles of construction workers, BNSF employees and the heavy use of semis to haul away materials received at this center and to encourage BNSF to reach out to the affected communities about the logistics of the project.

Lesko discussed the Victory Autism Academy set to open in Sun City West and public concern. She said there is legislation to prevent Charter schools in age restricted communities but this school is private and is legally permitted to lease property and operate a school. She reminded the audience we must gear up for the next election. She is endorsing Andy Biggs

Questions: Wouldn't the Litchfield Road be a better area for the BNSF facility as they have the road infrastructure to support a large facility. Currently BNSF owns a large piece of ground by Wittman.

Question: Why the power struggle between the County and Justin Heap? The Board feels they have negotiated in good faith with Heap and gave him all the IT staff he requested. When the agreement was formalized, he had further objections.

Question: Do the Board of Supervisors decide how the Grand/303 intersection is resolved. The Board is not in control of the Roads – Arizona Roads department is. Frank Carroll reported they had tried to get a Litchfield 303 Ramp but that was denied. Planning work is still ongoing.



Linda Barnes introduced Frank Carroll, Senate Majority Whip. Carroll noted Governor Hobbs has record for most vetoes of legislation: 2023-143 vetoes, 2024, 73 vetoes and 2025 138 vetoes so far. She vetoes anything about child predators, China, cybersecurity, illegal immigrants, remnants of Biden Inflation program. He did note that a few of the bills she signed were good. Carroll reported they are working on relief to congestion on roads. They are working with Boeing and FAA to explore the private sector developing “Jetson” type vehicles. A good magazine to read is “Evtol”.

Carroll reported they are working on energy sources for the future: nuclear, coal, natural gas and solar & wind (a sliver of energy source potential). He reported SB1309 provided if we decommission a plant, we need to produce equal volume of energy to replace it – Governor vetoed it. SB1535 noted we are operating under laws of power generation since 1971 which speaks to hydro, nuclear, coal & natural gas (does not reference solar/wind). The bill called to raise 100 megawatts to 200 megawatts to support AI technology – Governor vetoed it. Regarding property right SB1543 related to the Axon expansion in Scottsdale. The bill gave approval of Smart Zoning on 50+ acres, hiring 2000 or more with pay 125% of county medium income approval to build a campus – Governor signed it. SB1310 on title fraud. This bill was making forgery of a title a felony rather than the misdemeanor currently. Governor vetoed it. Eddie Cook, the Recorder, has done extensive training for his staff on title theft. The Recorder office was not getting ID from people filing documents but does now. He said the biggest act of thefts against seniors is family members. He noted that motor homes people live in are now protected in bankruptcy.

Questions: Is the State pursuing new forms of energy? Is there a way around the Governor’s veto? Carroll said one of the energy bills is being re-worked and will be submitted again.

Question? How does the legislature protect our state? Missing \$350M – the House can impeach; Luke Air Force - a land purchase was prevented and a lease for a rented building near there was cancelled; solar farm by Morristown is not yet approved.



Linda Barnes introduced Jerry Sheridan, Maricopa County Sheriff. He thanked all for their support during the election. He is making changes from the prior administration. His staff is to arrest the bad guys and help the citizens. He thanked Debbie Lesko and the other supervisors for the pay raise for his staff (they were in the bottom and now towards the top). When he took over he was 140 deputies short. He is working on recruiting and retaining. He has hired 287 people – has 70 in academy class and 50 ready for another class. He said deputies that left during the last administration are coming back. He said he needs to rebuild the Posse program. He is making sure deputies pay attention to drug trafficking – there are 30,000 fentanyl pills in the Property Room. He said he has brought back the animal cruelty unit and saved horses, ducks & chickens.

Question: Is Maricopa County still under DOJ monitor? He needs help from DC because this was an order of a Federal District Judge.

Question: Do you support ICE and the FBI? He works with two ICE officers on 24/7 detainees on illegals. He said he has a 1500 bed unit for ICE to house people. ICE has access to 47,000 Arizona warrants.

Question: Are deputies subject to violence? It is dangerous in jail. They train deputies well and they have access to tasers and body armor. He needs more deputies.

Question: You said there is one election promise you have not fulfilled-what is that? That is tent city. The previous Sheriff had the prisoners cut up the tents and destroy the frames. Tents are not allowed for housing so he is working on alternative housing for convicted misdemeanors away from the inmates.

Linda Barnes reported Warren Petersen running for Arizona Attorney General will be a guest speaker at the September meeting. Reminder we will not meet in July and August. She also asked all to mark their calendars for Saturday, September 27 from 2:00-5:30 pm for a Congressional Forum including Andy Biggs, Paul Gosar and others. She needs volunteers for the event.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned a 10:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Loper  
Recording Secretary