

Meeting called to Order by Mark Frandsen, President at 6:03 pm.

Invocation By: Sean Burroughs

Pledge of Allegiance Led By: Nick Pachota

Dignitaries, Officials and Candidates were introduced. Guests were welcomed.

All in Attendance were required to sign in. Members in good standing received lanyards. No Audio or Video recording is allowed.

Mark began the meeting with the following topics:

- Our club was present at the North Port Chamber of Commerce Business to Business Expo. We had several candidates at the table and it was well attended. Mr. Nick Pachota covered our table registration fees. We thank him for the opportunity and his generosity.
 - Mr. Craig Lapaj a candidate for North Port Commissioner District #5 was scheduled to speak this evening. He has withdrawn from the race but is still registered. We will use his time to offer all other non-scheduled candidates present a very short time to speak.
 - Our candidate picnic is on Saturday, July 25th at 11 am. The location will be the Scout House at Dallas White Park. Please join us.
 - The Sarasota County Republican Executive Committee will host the pre-election Pie Rally at the Robard's Arena on Saturday July 18th.
 - At the November Election we did not have a candidate come forward for the office of treasurer. Joe Garren has served as Treasurer pro-Tempore while also holding the elected position of Vice President for the Club. At a previous Board Meeting Robert Sisson was nominated by the Club Board to fill the position of Treasurer. He has agreed to accept the position. Now we need a voice vote on that position. Motions were made and seconded for Robert to be Treasurer. The motion passed by unanimous yes vote of all present.
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Mark then introduced the featured Speaker/Candidate for the evening. He noted that each will be allowed 4 minutes to speak, followed by 4 minutes for questions. All candidates were encouraged to remain after the meeting for any additional questions.

The first speaker of the evening was Mr. Vic Rohe. He is the current board member of the Sarasota Memorial Hospital Board. He is a conservative and president of the East County Republican Club. He has a diverse background with experience in the areas of legal, regulatory, financial, real estate and law enforcement. He is running for the Florida District 22 Senate Seat of Joe Gruters. His opponent is James Buchanan. Mr. Rohe noted that his opponent has raised over \$190,000 from sources outside of the district. He is concerned about outside influence. He opposes a new US Constitutional Convention that has been proposed by some. He is a proponent of Health Freedom and he opposes attempts by the Florida Senate and House to turn over more local control to Tallahassee.

The next speaker was Jennifer Winkler. Jennifer is running for District #74 Florida House of Representatives. She worked her way through college. Started her own insurance business that employs 21 people and has 9000 clients. She has skills in conflict resolution and negotiation.

She is not afraid to make hard decisions. While there are many concerns for residents in our district she noted that Insurance has become a huge burden for homeowners and business. She notes that of 120 Representatives in the Florida House, only 1 has insurance related experience. She would like to lend her skills and experience to solve this and other problems for residents.

The last scheduled speaker of the evening was Mr. Frank DiCiccio. He has recently declared as a candidate for the Sarasota County School Board. That is Robin Marinelli's District 4 seat. He is a 30 year resident of Sarasota County. He has experience in Insurance and sales. He has volunteered as a court mediator. He plans to return schools to the basics. Leave all the agendas behind and focus on career paths, basic skills and trades. He would like to return school board meetings to 6pm and not the 10am time frame. Later meetings allow parents, community members and students to attend and provide input. There should be a code of conduct and attendance for the district. The school board has a \$1.3 Billion budget that is difficult to read and understand how funds are spent. He proposes greater budget transparency. He took questions on Vaping Sensors and budget reductions for school counselors.

With extra time in the agenda due to Mr. Lapaj's withdrawal other candidates present spoke very briefly. They were: Dr. Tara Butler, Hospital Board; Andrew Sias, County Charter Review; Heidi Brandt, School Board; Kelly Ann Walker, District 74 House; Elaine Emrich North Port District #4; Phil Stokes North Port District #5, and Nick Pachota, District 74 House.

Final Announcements

- West Villages Republican Club will have all school board Candidates at their April 13 meeting.
- Ann Bunting is recruiting volunteers to phone Republican Voters.
- August Primary is the 18th with early voting before.
- The REC Statesman dinner will be May 11th. If we can fill a table it will be only \$225 per ticket. All other ticket prices increase from that level.

Meeting concluded at 7:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Marian L. Patricoski, Secretary