

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Lake Ashton Democratic Club

HFC Community Room

December 4, 2025, 6:30 PM



Attendance of Board of Directors

Ron McKie, President
Deanna Mayne, Vice-President
Carolyn Ritz, Treasurer
Howard Mayne, Secretary
Board Member Phyllis Brushaber
Board Member Paul Ritz
Board Member Charles Roland
Board Member Howard Kay

Attendance

31 Members and 1 Guest.

Call to Order 6:30 pm by Ron McKie, President.

Pledge of Allegiance

Introduction of New Members/Attendees/Birthdays acknowledged

Minutes

The minutes of the November 6, 2025, General Meeting distributed in advance to the membership were approved by acclamation.

Treasurer's Report

The current balance is \$1459.06. Dues collected had increased the balance to \$1659.06. The Club paid \$200 for tickets to enable members to attend the October Freedom Gala.

Members were reminded that membership for 2025 is now due.

Ron McKie asked that members look at the LADC website, and give feedback – particularly if upgrades are needed.

City Commission Election and the Need to Vote

It was announced that Matthew Crowley (whom we had strongly supported) had not been elected in the runoff for Winter Haven City Commissioner. Further, he had lost by only 217 votes (out of 3218 cast). Turnout for the runoff election was even lower than it was for the initial election (10% compared with 17%). Dee Mayne pointed out that with such poor turnout, strong voting in a community such as Lake Ashton could have a significant impact.

New homes are planned in the area. By late 2027, there could be as many as 3000 new homes nearby. This is a large potential voting population. Democrats should consider ways of tapping in to this potential voting population.

LADC Board Elections

Phyllis Brushaber is chairing the Nominations Committee. She announced the other committee members as: Lynn Judd; Barbara Harrison; David Harrison; and Colette McKie. She solicited nominations for the positions of Vice President, Treasurer, and 2-3 board members. Ron McKie asked that the committee clarify the responsibilities of each position, and identify possible candidates.

Speaker

There was no outside speaker. Charles Roland took over as Master of Ceremonies.

Charles gave a brief overview of his goals for the evening. In particular, he focused on strategies for discussing political matters with those who have opposing (often strongly-held) opinions. He emphasized being positive in such interactions, not surrendering to hate, and being well-informed before undertaking arguments. He used the acronym HAIL (Honesty, Authenticity, Integrity, Love) to describe his philosophy. He stressed the need to “open doors” rather than to close them.

Following this overview, Charles handed out two slips of paper to each table. Each slip contained a (potentially divisive) topic for the table to discuss. (Examples included: LGBTQ+ rights; Abortion; Health Care; Voting Rights; Veterans’ Rights; Climate Change.) Each table chose a topic to discuss. Following discussions, a spokesperson for each table reported back to the group. The level of interest and participation was high.

Closing

Hurriedly, gag gifts and treats were handed out for best costume, ugliest sweater, best snack, and just about anything else.

After all that...

The meeting was **adjourned** at 7:45 pm.