

Arizona America250 Commission

Civic Engagement, Education & Community Service Subcommittee

Virtually via Zoom

Meeting Minutes of May 26, 2026

1. Call to order and welcome.

Chair Tighe called the meeting to order at 3:02pm.

Subcommittee Members Present:

Paul Tighe, Chair
Hannah Rude

Dawn Wallace, Vice Chair
Megan Hammond

KaRa Lyn Thrasher

Subcommittee Members Absent:

Tracey Benson
Tim Carter
Christina Spicer
Shawnte Rothschild

Shannon Roberts
Sharon Doyle
Glenn Carson
Tara Bartlett

Troy Campbell
Leah Landrum Taylor
Andy Price
Colleen Coons

2. Discussion and possible action on meeting minutes from April 27, 2026.

Due to the lack of a quorum, the subcommittee did not take action on approval of the April 27, 2026 meeting minutes.

3. Updates, discussion and possible action on projects and initiatives related to civics engagement, education, and community service in honor of the Semiquincentennial.

a. Read250.

Megan Hammond shared that summer reading is starting this week and next in all the libraries. Statistics and usage will be available in August.

b. “Dear America, Love Arizona” postcard campaign.

A press release will be coming soon announcing the locations where *Dear America, Love Arizona* postcards will be displayed, including all State Parks locations, the Arizona State Capitol Museum, and the Arizona Department of Education.

c. Gen Z in AZ: Civic Season at the 250th, June 26th from 12pm-3pm.

KaRa Lyn Thrasher provided an update on Civic Season planning in partnership with Youth250, including development of an event focused on engaging young people. Invitations are expected to be distributed within the next one to two days and will be shared with the Civics Subcommittee. The event will take place at the Arizona State Capitol Museum on June 26th from 12pm-3pm and will include a museum tour, storytelling activations, and opportunities for reflection on the 250th anniversary. The event goal is at least 10 participants, with a room capacity of 48, and will be open to participants ages 16–17 as well. The following day will align with a national initiative, National Youth Day (led by Made By Us), with plans to share social media content to expand reach.

d. America's Potluck and America Gives Week of Service.

An email with further details will be sent to Civics Subcommittee members later this week or early next with details on how to sign up for food box packing events statewide in honor of America's Potluck and a Week of Service for America Gives. There will also be a social media campaign to encourage local neighborhood potlucks on July 5, 2026.

e. Bell rededication ceremony and volunteer recognition.

Members are asked to save the date of October 1, 2026, from 5-7pm for the bell rededication ceremony and volunteer recognition event. There will be a ribbon cutting. Vice Chair Dawn Wallace suggested testing the scissors ahead of time.

f. Fall 2026 essay contest.

Tonia Tunnell shared that A250 AZ Executive Director Laura Terech will be transitioning into the role of Director of External Affairs. The Secretary of State's Office has been providing staffing support for America250 efforts; however, Laura's contract concludes on June 30. As a result, Tonia noted that any initiatives planned after July 4 will require a committee member to take the lead on promotion, with support provided by Laura as needed. Dawn Wallace suggested exploring whether the essay contest could qualify for the Seal of Civics Literacy as an additional incentive, potentially aligning with messaging from the Secretary of State's Office. Hannah Rude with the Arizona Department of Education indicated capacity to partner on this effort, including engaging educators and team members to assist with reviewing submissions. Dawn also offered support with promotion.

g. Share out from subcommittee members on additional events for possible promotion and co-branding.

Carlos Alfaro shared that Arizona Talks is partnering with the Arizona Speech and Debate Association, in collaboration with Clean Elections, to support fundraising

efforts for students' travel, transportation, and professional attire. The event will take place on June 30. Committee members interested in getting involved were encouraged to connect with Carlos.

<https://arizonatalks.org/events/next-generation>

Carlos Alfaro also highlighted upcoming Arizona Talks programming, including a Juneteenth celebration featuring a speaker lineup, choir, band, and participation from municipal leaders.

<https://arizonatalks.org/events/juneteenth>

Dawn Wallace shared information about the TED Democracy initiative through the Philadelphia-based Founding Futures organization. On June 13, democracy-focused TED Talks will be livestreamed to more than 65 libraries nationwide in partnership with the Pew Charitable Trusts and the American Library Association. Two Arizona locations are currently participating: a library in Cochise County and a second site at South Mountain Community College (a shared facility with the City of Phoenix).

4. Discussion, possible action, and report from the Executive Director.

a. Arizona initiatives.

Executive Director Terech shared that there will be a final State Forty Eight collaboration for an Arizona America250 Fourth of July t-shirt, set to launch in June.

b. National initiatives.

Executive Director Terech shared that an Arizona State University student was recently selected as one of the winners of America's Startup.

<https://america250.org/americas-startup/>

5. Discussion and possible action on a future in-person meeting.

The Executive Director will work with the Chair and Vice Chair to set a meeting schedule heading into the fall. The June Civics meeting will be canceled, with any coordination or follow-up taking place via email.

6. Call to the Public.

No public comments were received.

7. Adjournment.

Chair Tighe adjourned the meeting at 3:33pm.