

Minutes of the General Meeting of the Greater Phoenix Orienteering Club (GPHXO)

Location: State 48 Lager House, Scottsdale, AZ
Date/Time: Jan 9, 2026 6:30 - 9pm

Agenda

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- Introduction
- Establish Quorum
- Info About The Club
- Election of 2026 Officers
- Old Business:
 - Treasurer's Report / Secretary's Report
 - Permits / Equipment / Maps & Events
- New Business:
 - Upcoming Events / New Event Areas/ Outreach & Club Promotion / Membership
- Q & A
- Summary and Adjournment

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Note: these minutes describe what occurred during the meeting, in approximate but not necessarily exact order of discussion.

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Ron Birks opened the meeting.

A Quorum was established: 3 board members were present (Ron, Forest, Gary). Total number of attendees was 9.

General Info About The Club:

- Ron outlined the Club's Goal, which is to promote map and compass sports in the Phoenix area.
- Ron listed the various types of orienteering events we offer.

Election of Officers for 2026:

- Ron Birks opened the floor for nominations of Board Members and Volunteer positions. There were no nominations.
- The existing board members all volunteered to remain in their posts.
- Gary moved that the existing set of officers be re-elected "by acclamation." This motion was seconded by Forest and Ron.
- The motion was voted for in the affirmative by all present at the meeting.
- The Election was therefore concluded.
- Results: President: Ron Birks, Vice-President: Glenn Haselfeld, Treasurer: Forest Brown, Secretary: Gary Hickey

Volunteer Officer appointees are as follows: Permits and Insurance are handled by Erik Ringnes, while Flagstaff events are handled by Kevin Adams. The Membership, Advertising, Newsletter, Equipment and Volunteer Coordinator positions remain open. Forest has been standing in as Advertising officer. Ron has been standing in as Membership Coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator.

Ron briefly showed a summary of the 2026 Schedule of Events, which he recently posted on our website. We plan to offer 7 Beginner's Clinics and 20 events. Four of the events will include Rogaines and/or Adventure Races, which have become very popular. A brief discussion ensued around what, if anything, we can do to increase attendance at some of our events. Advertising might help in Flagstaff. Increased membership outreach/contact (Newsletter, mainly) might help for Phoenix area events. Gary floated the idea of offering fewer events, which could result in higher attendance and less workload for Ron. This idea was not adopted: it is our charter to increase the sport, hence the preference to offer as many events and clinics as we can.

Old Business:

Forest gave the Treasurer's report. The club has ample funding, with about \$15K in the bank

acct and around \$1K in the PayPal account.

All monies from recent events have been deposited. Forest will send out his accounting report in the near future.

Forest will renew subscriptions to GoDaddy and Meetup soon (about \$400/yr). He will extend our storage facility contract. The only known large upcoming expenditure is the OUSA charter renewal, which will be approximately \$1000.

Gary gave the Secretary's report. Early last year the 2025 meeting minutes were approved, delivered to the Board and published on the website. Ron archived them in the club's web-hosted electronic archive. Gary will send out the present meeting's minutes later this month. Gary did not get around to updating the Club History last year. Neither did he scan the old event maps that Mike Franklin gifted to the club at the 2018 meeting. But he plans to do that this year. Gary again plans to reuse one or more old classic courses from the 1970's or 1980's.

Erik obtained insurance certificates during the past year and will continue to do so in 2026. A new certificate needs to be obtained each year for each area in which we host events.

Erik obtained whatever permits were required for our events from the entities that manage the land we use. Ron and Glenn got some permits, too.

Last year was interesting regarding club equipment. In February 2025 our storage shed was destroyed by fire and all contents were lost except for a few metal spikes and the hammer. Our canopies, tables, shelving, signs, chairs, coolers, t-shirts, coffee mugs were lost. Some old tubs, stands and training materials were lost. Fortunately, much of our most important equipment (bags, compasses, timing tub, starter's tub, stands, etc) was at Ron's house or at other officer's houses. So we did not lose everything. We were able to put on events with no interruption. After the fire, we found another storage facility to rent (just south of the I-17 and Deer Valley Rd intersection). We replaced the canopies, signs, tables, coolers, etc as needed.

Ron updated the club's website during the year, including posting the schedule, results and news. Event registration is supported by links to EventReg.

We discussed the mapping tools we use. Ron does most of our mapping. Glenn does the maps in and around Prescott. Ron creates basemaps using QGIS and other GIS tools to process Lidar, etc data. He has used Karttapullautin too. Our course setters then load the basemap into Purple Pen and create racecourse maps in Purple Pen. Glenn creates maps using OCAD. The club owns OCAD Version 8, which cannot import Lidar data, etc. Newer OCAD versions are quite expensive. We will stick with our current toolset for now.

There were 8 new event sites mapped and used by Ron, Kevin and Glenn in 2025. Some were quite large.

We have beginner's clinic maps for 8 local parks. Ron is working with the Scouts to create another permanent course, at Red Mountain Park in Mesa. Ron set up three of our permanent courses so they can be used with iOrienteering. All these sites and maps can be found on our website.

New Business:

Ron described the larger events we will put on in 2026. We will offer three large events (Adventure Races/Rogaines) in addition to the Petrified Forest Rogaines. He will put out calls for volunteers as those dates get closer. Check the website for details.

There will not be a Southwest Spring Week this year. Instead, the Tucson club will host the North American Nationals during Dec 27, 2026 - Jan 2, 2027.

We need volunteers to man our booth at the AZ Game and Fish Outdoor Expo Mar 28-29, 2026. Two volunteers per day. Gary volunteered. Volunteers should contact Ron.

We need an Advertising Coordinator to create flyers, announcements, etc. And to distribute advertising at hiking/biking shops, other clubs, etc.

It would be nice to have a volunteer assume the Newsletter Editor position. We would like to

send out a newsletter regularly by email and also post it on the website.

We need someone to take over Membership management duties from Ron. This includes maintaining the member database, sending out yearly reminders, and creating reports (such as a list of active members) when needed. It also includes sending the annual report to OUSA (Forest and Ron have been taking care of that). Ron is using tools he set up in 2017. We spoke about some other membership management tools that could be used. Some are cheap, some are expensive. Don Nicholas knows of a free, simple spreadsheet tool that currently works well for another club he is in, a club with over 600 members. He volunteered to fill the Membership position. He would adapt a copy of that tool and accompanying system. Don was voted in unanimously. Ron will coordinate with Don so that the new tool meets the need and meshes with Ron's tools.

We still seek more course setters and meet directors. For most events Ron does both. He'd like to focus on basemap creation and have others set courses and direct meets.

The floor was opened for Questions and Answers.

The question was asked: should we start using electronic scoring equipment (e-Punching) this year? The situation is same as a year ago. We know what equipment we need. Forest knows Tucson's system: that kind of setup would work for us. We have the money to buy it. It connects well with Purple Pen (for courses). It uses finger sticks. The new "air wave" punches are too expensive and drain batteries, so we will not pursue those.

The benefits of ePunching are obvious. Disadvantages include loss of flexibility in hanging bags, and the fact we'll need at least 1 additional volunteer to do an ePunch event. Perhaps with more experience a single person could run a small event using ePunch, but in most cases an extra person will be needed to focus on and operate the ePunch system. We decided we will pursue ePunching this year for our larger events only. Forest will pursue obtaining the same equipment kit Tucson has. We should get as many people trained as possible.

There is live tracking equipment out there that would be very nice to use. One type is satellite-based, such as Spot Tracker, but which costs \$50 per unit. The other type is cell-phone based, which is much cheaper (\$10/unit?) but which suffers from lack of coverage in remote areas. We will probably not pursue live tracking at this time.

The Board thanked everyone for attending and participating. Additional suggestions can be sent to the club or to Board members via email, etc.
The meeting was adjourned.

These Minutes were submitted by Gary Hickey, Secretary, GPHXO, on January 13, 2026 for general comments/corrections. An updated version was submitted on February 2, 2026 for publication and archival.