
REBECCA SPENCER
Registrar of Voters



ART TINOCO
Assistant Registrar of Voters

REGISTRAR OF VOTERS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC)
Meeting Minutes
August 31, 2017 | 10:00 a.m.

Committee Members:

Julie Caban, Chair
Mario Janesin, Committee Member
Gabe Taylor, Committee Member
Diane Gamache, Committee Member
Rod Ballance, Committee Member

Guests:

Kelly Moran
Suzanne Trotta
Richard Glasson
Foster Tucker
Pam Jones, Teleconference

Registrar of Voters Staff:

Rebecca Spencer, Registrar of Voters
Art Tinoco, Assistant Registrar of Voters
Chris Neubauer, Chief Deputy Registrar of EO & Polls Division
Ken Hayes, Elections Technician II

Meeting Commenced at 10:00 a.m.

I. Welcome/Introductions

Introductions were made of the following staff: Registrar of Voters Rebecca Spencer, Assistant Registrar of Voters Art Tinoco, Chief Deputy of the EO & Polls Division Chris Neubauer and Committee Chair Julie Caban. Following staff introductions, attendees of the meeting made introductions.

II. Approval of April 27, 2017 Minutes

Chris Neubauer asked for a motion to approve the April 27, 2017 VAAC Meeting minutes. Foster Tucker stated that he suggested arranging the next VAAC meeting in the desert and that statement was not reflected in the minutes. Gabe Taylor stated that he would make the correction to the minutes. Mr. Neubauer stated the minutes would

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be sent back out to the group once they have been amended.

III. Discussion on the Election of a VAAC Chair/Co-Chair

Mr. Taylor stated that the topic came up at the April 2017 VAAC meeting regarding allowing VAAC members to have the opportunity to act as the VAAC Chair and Co-Chair. Mario Janesin stated that he prefers to have the County stay involved as Chair and Co-Chair. He doesn't feel any of the members are ready to take on that responsibility and if the County pulls out of the committee he doesn't feel the members could keep it going on their own. Mr. Taylor suggested having co-chairs, one person from the County and another person from the Community working together to run the committee. Mr. Neubauer stated that he is open to any changes that the VAAC members think will be productive in assisting the Elderly and Disabled Communities on Election Day, with increasing registration and all other services that the County provides. The Registrar's Office is committed to continuing the VAAC meetings and wants the Disabled Communities to feel included and provide all the advice and suggestions that they can to improve processes. Mr. Neubauer stated that the Registrar's Office is open to what the members of the VAAC would like to do with the Chair and Co-Chair positions. Mr. Janesin stated that the committee should focus on outreach instead of worrying about who is running the committee. He feels outreach is the key to bringing more people to the VAAC. Mr. Taylor stated that it would be great to have more VAAC members involved and participating in events out in the community. Mr. Neubauer asked for clarification on how the VAAC members would like to proceed with the Chair and Co-Chair positions. Mr. Janesin made a motion to leave the committee as is. Mr. Taylor concurred that the committee should be left as is for now. Mr. Tucker stated that it might be a good idea to come back to the topic after the committee discusses the County's role with the VAAC. Mr. Tucker said leaving the committee as is for now is fine, however, he would like to see that there is a clear plan in place to start accomplishing things. Mr. Neubauer confirmed that the committee will stay the same for now and the topic will be revisited in future meetings.

IV. Location, Date, and Time of Future VAAC Meetings

Mr. Neubauer stated that due to the vast geographical reach of Riverside County, the Registrar's Office is open to having future VAAC meetings in the Coachella Valley and other various locations with the VAAC member's assistance. The meetings have traditionally been held once a quarter, primarily at the Registrar's Office. Mr. Taylor suggested having two meetings at the Registrar's office and one meeting at other various locations throughout the county. He stated that the VAAC members could put together a list of possible meeting locations for the Registrar's Office to contact. Mr. Neubauer stated that it would be very helpful for the VAAC members to send a list of

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various locations with contact information. Rod Ballance stated that it is important for outreach to meet in different locations to gather new members. Mr. Tucker stated that he offered to find an alternative meeting location at the last VAAC meeting. He did the leg work to find a location and sent the information to the VAAC members via email but he did not receive any responses. Mr. Tucker stated that the venue is University of California and he can re-contact them if the VAAC members wish to have a future meeting at that location. Mr. Janesin stated that the problem is not finding a venue but rather having enough people to attend the meetings. He stated the person or people complaining about travel from the Coachella Valley need to be identified because he does not see where this issue is coming from. He stated that there are barely enough members that come to the Registrar's Office to attend the meetings and there are currently not enough members from the Coachella Valley area to warrant having a meeting in that area. He feels it would be better to target those areas with outreach and once the membership grows then have meetings in the desert. Mr. Janesin feels the committee should target the youth with outreach because we are headed into an election year. He stated that he has a list of all the Disabled Student Offices from various colleges and if he had the backing of the County to target these offices he feels the committee could really spark some interest. He feels this should be where the focus should lie over the next 6 months instead of worrying about when the next meeting is and who will attend. Diane Gamache stated that she agrees with Mr. Janesin regarding the need to set up a robust program here instead of trying to spread out in other areas. Ms. Gamache feels if the committee spreads out too soon it will be weak because they will be spread too thin. She also stated that it is important to start at the high school level with the 18 year olds. Mr. Taylor suggested targeting high school students to get participation as poll workers and possibly working with the VAAC. Mr. Neubauer stated that High School Voter Education Weeks are the last two weeks of September and there are about 100 high schools in Riverside County. The Registrar's Office does send out information but there are too many schools to reach everyone. He asked for the VAAC member's assistance in personally reaching out to all the schools and promoting all forms of registration as well as the student poll worker program. One suggestion would be for the VAAC to reach out to the California School for the Deaf – Riverside and talk about pre-registering 16 year olds to vote. Mr. Neubauer stated that an email will be sent out to the VAAC members with more information on High school Voter Education Weeks. National Voter Registration Day is also coming up on September 26th. This holiday began five years ago in 2012 and since then over 1.4 million Americans across the country have registered or updated their registration on National Voter Registration Day. National Disability Voter Registration Week was in July and various VAAC members as well as the Registrar's Office were out promoting that. Mr. Neubauer stated that an email will be going out to the VAAC members asking for assistance in disseminating information at various outreach events in the future. Rebecca Spencer asked for clarification on when the VAAC would like to have the next

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meeting and where it will be held. She suggested having the last meeting for 2017 sometime in October and go back to quarterly for 2018. She asked for the VAAC members to make a motion and agree on where they would like to have the meeting. Mr. Janesin made a motion to hold the next meeting on October 26th. Mr. Taylor agreed with the motion for October 26th and suggested having the meeting in Coachella Valley. The motion was approved. Mr. Tucker asked what the expectation was for any meetings in the Coachella Valley. He is questioning whether or not he needs to work on getting a venue for the meeting. He also stated he agreed with Mr. Janesin's goal but it would be good to make sure everyone has the same expectation. Instead of just having the meeting in the Coachella Valley to say they've had it in a different location, it should be done to be respectful of the fact that the County is very large and there should be a bigger effort to get specific people to those meetings. Mr. Janesin feels that moving the meeting to the Coachella Valley will only move the current people that attend the meeting and will not add any additional participation from people in the Coachella Valley. Ms. Spencer stated that they can keep discussing the issue but she wants to figure out where the VAAC wants to go with the agenda and then figure out what they want to do in the future so that it's not a guessing game for the County on what the VAAC wants. Mr. Janesin stated that his own goal is to make it as easy as possible for the County. He also stated the VAAC members should be here to support the County because the County is supporting them. Mr. Janesin stated that it is not fair for all the County staff and members to have to go out to the Coachella Valley for maybe 2 or 3 people who may or may not attend the meeting. Mr. Taylor stated that he agrees with Mr. Janesin that it might not be worth it at this time to move the meeting to the Coachella Valley. He suggested having the meeting in October at the Registrar's Office and really focus on the outreach events to start becoming a more visible group. Mr. Taylor stated that it is important for the VAAC members to make an effort to participate in as many of the events as possible. The previous motion regarding the next meeting date/location was stricken from the record and a new motion was made by Mr. Janesin to have the next meeting on October 26th at the Registrar's Office at 10am. The motion was approved. Mr. Ballance made a motion to have quarterly meetings in 2018. The motion was approved. Julie Caban stated that the meetings are traditionally held on the last Thursday of the month in January, April, July and September. Mr. Neubauer suggested sending a list to the VAAC members with tentative dates for 2018 meetings and make a decision at the next VAAC meeting.

V. VAAC Member Application Process

Mr. Neubauer asked for comments on the member application process. Mr. Taylor stated that in the past the County received the VAAC applications and it is sent to the members to review. He stated that if the application process is made to be too difficult that will discourage people from joining. He feels it should be a very simple process and if the

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person chooses to join they will be a member for life. Mr. Neubauer asked if meeting attendance will be a factor for membership. Mr. Janesin suggested following up with members who miss meetings to see why they are not attending instead of just disqualifying them from the committee. Ms. Spencer clarified that the VAAC members would like to keep an open ended application process; the group agreed. Mr. Janesin asked for an email with the mailing list for the VAAC members so he can personally call each member to see why they are not attending the meetings. Mr. Neubauer stated that the current application process will stay in place and can be discussed at future meetings if needed.

VI. County's Role with the VAAC

Mr. Neubauer stated that there has been a lot of conversation about the County's role with the VAAC and he asked the committee for feedback on what they feel the County's role should be. Mr. Neubauer feels the County should act as the glue for the VAAC by holding the VAAC together and make sure it is given the opportunity to provide the Registrar's Office with advice and suggestions, as well as providing assistance both ways on outreach events. Mr. Taylor stated because they are still trying to get people to the table the committee needs this level of involvement. He stated that the VAAC would stop functioning without the County. Mr. Taylor shared that at the April 2017 VAAC meeting only 4 members attended and that was a meeting the County did not attend so the members could talk amongst themselves. Mr. Ballance stated that he didn't receive any information regarding the last VAAC meeting in April. Mr. Ballance also asked how many VAAC members there were currently. Ms. Caban and Mr. Neubauer confirmed that there are currently 16 members. Mr. Neubauer asked if the County should keep as much of a role as necessary to keep the meetings going and encourage more turnout; the group agreed. Mr. Neubauer stated that it is important to have the VAAC member's assistance in helping the VAAC grow. Mr. Taylor suggested giving each VAAC member the responsibility to bring one new person to the VAAC meeting in October. The addition on new attendees is crucial in keeping the meetings going. Ms. Spencer clarified that the VAAC members would like the ROV to continue sending the invitations and creating the agenda. Any suggestions for the agenda will be sent to Mr. Taylor, who is acting as the point person for the VAAC members, and the agenda will be emailed out before each meeting so that everyone is prepared. Ms. Spencer stated that ROV will take the minutes for each meeting and once they are transcribed they will be emailed out to the group. The VAAC members agreed to the ROV taking the lead on the administrative tasks for the committee.

VII. Remote Accessible Vote-by-Mail Discussion

Mr. Neubauer stated in Senate Bill 450 – The Voter's Choice Act there is a requirement to have a remote accessible Vote-By-Mail system. Currently, the Secretary of State's Office has not certified a system for use. The remote accessible Vote-By-Mail system is similar to the

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accessible sample ballot product that is offered by Democracy Live. With the new system, voters would be able to submit their selections to the Registrar's office using a remote accessible site instead of on a paper ballot. Ms. Spencer suggested that once there are certified systems that the vendors could come and give a demonstration to the VAAC members so they can provide feedback to the Registrar's office. Mr. Neubauer stated that the product will most likely have to go out to a bid because of the cost. There are two companies that are close to certification and they should be certified later in 2017. Mr. Taylor stated it would be great to have a demonstration and the new product might bring more attendees to the VAAC meeting.

VIII. Voter Integrity Project Report Discussion

Mr. Neubauer stated that a journalist provided the Voter Integrity Project report and it did discuss some issues the group felt they saw with the 2016 Election. Ms. Spencer shared that the Election Integrity Project group observed in 15 counties and created a report of their observations of the 2016 Election. The Registrar's office has reviewed the report and sent it out to the VAAC members for their review. Mr. Neubauer asked if anyone had questions or comments on this item. Mr. Taylor stated that Ruthee Goldkorn requested this item to be on the agenda and it should be tabled until the next meeting so she can share her thoughts. Mr. Neubauer stated that the item will be tabled until the October VAAC meeting.

IX. Discussion of Tracking the Disability Vote

Mr. Taylor stated that the VAAC members brought up the topic of tracking voters with disabilities at the April 2017 meeting. The membership wanted to discuss a way to track these voters without asking them if they have a disability. They are interested in tracking this information to have a better estimate of the number of disabled voters. Mr. Janesin stated that Ms. Goldkorn suggested at the April 2017 meeting to add a box on the registration card that asks "Do you need an accommodation?" Mr. Tucker stated that there was a lot of improvisation at the different polling places where election staff were making up their own way of tracking things. He stated that he asked staff if they had a way of tracking on the existing documents of what they were witnessing. He stated they witnessed many people being assisted and many voters giving up their right to privacy because they required an accommodation of sitting. Mr. Tucker made a recommendation back then to explore table top voting booths to help with privacy. Another item Mr. Tucker stated they saw a variation in was setting up the AVU machines. He stated he wasn't sure if it was a training item but in the field the inspector was not familiar with the paperwork. Mr. Neubauer stated that additional comment sheets have been added to the different binders at the polling place. ROV has also included a section in the Election Officer Training to discuss where to leave comments so everyone is trained how to do that. They are also looking at table top dividers and will bring

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those items to the October 2017 or January 2018 meeting. Mr. Tucker stated that he would like to know what the committee members are interested in tracking because his work around the world has shown people are willing to be registered and list that they need an accommodation. Mr. Taylor stated that procedures for troubleshooting an AVU machine if it goes down at a polling site would be helpful. Mr. Neubauer stated that there is a section of the Election Officer training that covers general troubleshooting of the AVU machine. Ms. Spencer stated that ROV currently tracks how many people used the AVU machine, how many people used the audio portion, how many people requested assistance and number of curbside voters. That information is put into a spreadsheet and sent to the VAAC members. If the VAAC members have any other suggestions it can be discussed to see how ROV could track the requested information and if it's legal to do so. Mr. Neubauer stated that there are legal concerns with ahead of time type tracking. Other countries don't have the laws like the United States so tracking that information may be acceptable whereas here it is very much voluntary information and it's something that can't be asked. Mr. Janesin stated that for the last election only three people used the audio portion of the AVU machine and he doesn't feel people with disabilities know that this option is available to them. He suggested instead of spending so much time training on how to work the machines instead staff should be trained on disability awareness and sensitivity. Mr. Taylor stated that the Election Officer should be asking every voter if they need assistance to help track those voters. Mr. Neubauer stated that anyone who requests assistance must initial the assisted voter roster because California requires an oath that the voter needs the assistance of another individual to vote. The Election Officers are also instructed to ask every voter if they would like to use the AVU. Mr. Tucker asked if a survey has been done to see if people are voting by mail for convenience or because the polling places are inconvenient when an accommodation is needed. Mr. Neubauer stated that he is unaware of any studies that have been done. In Riverside County nearly 70% of voters vote by mail which points to the convenience aspect overall. Ms. Spencer stated that more statistics may be available once the remote accessible systems are certified. The voter will have to sign an oath that they need to use the system because it will only be available to the disabled and military overseas voters. Mr. Neubauer stated they do have data from the Census Bureau which shows the various disabled communities. Larry Smith has brought up adding the self-identification portion to the registration card to the State VAAC. Mr. Neubauer stated that the VAAC members could really assist the ROV with a more streamlined and effective Election Officer Training. Mr. Taylor suggested have VAAC members attending those training to have them assist with that section. Mr. Janesin stated that he spends a lot of time trainings on disability awareness and he is willing to assist with pairing down the training. Mr. Tucker suggested spending more time in the Accessibility Officer training focusing on those sensitivity issues instead of adding more to the Election Officer training. Mr. Taylor shared that another county started their training with an exercise where one poll worker closed their eyes and another was asked to welcome them and lead them to an imaginary voting station to get the experience of what it is like for the voter. He stated other counties have incorporated wheelchairs and low vision goggles in their disability sensitivity training. Mr. Taylor suggested

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replacing a portion of the training with a more hands experience where poll workers could do various exercises and then share their perspectives from the voter's point of view. Mr. Neubauer suggested having a train the trainer session for the November Election as well as working on improving the training for the June 2018 trainings.

X. VAAC's Participation with Future County Outreach Efforts

Mr. Neubauer stated that information on the High School Voter Education Weeks will be sent out to the VAAC members and their assistance sharing the information would be greatly appreciated. He stated that National Voter Registration Day is September 26th. The Registrar's office will also be attending the Youth Fest on October 9th. Ms. Spencer stated that ROV will continue to share upcoming events with the VAAC members. If there are any events that the VAAC members would like the Registrar's office to attend extending a request for partnership would be helpful. Mr. Janesin stated that events during the week are easier for members to attend. He suggested any VAAC member that attends an event should have half of their table designated for voter registration. He stated that the VAAC involvement should be more focused on college students instead of high school students. Mr. Neubauer stated that reaching out to college campuses and educating students on the proper way to register and vote would be helpful because many college students vote provisionally due to lack of knowledge of the voting process. Richard Glasson from the Board of the Model Deaf Community invited the Registrar's office to attend the Deaf Awareness Event on September 23rd.

XI. EAC Best Practices Competition Discussion (Deadline: 10/6/17)

The EAC Best Practices Competition is held annually that outlines a lot of counties best practices. Mr. Taylor stated that Ms. Goldkorn asked for this item to be on the agenda because it is the 15th anniversary of HAVA. Mr. Neubauer stated that the VAAC is working with the ROV to adapt to the 2018 election year and there may be something that could be submitted for the 2018-2019 competition. Mr. Taylor suggested including all of the outreach events in a submission. Mr. Neubauer stated if anyone else from the VAAC has suggestions to call him. He feels it is a great goal for the VAAC to work on a submission for 2018.

XII. Discussion of Possible VAAC Projects:

- A. VAAC's Involvement with SB 450 Developments in Riverside County – According to The Voter's Choice Act, Riverside County would not be able to adopt this model until 2020. At this time, the Registrar's office will be putting together an implementation plan to present to the Board of Supervisors to decide if ROV will move forward. This project will take a lot of information and feedback from the Community. He reported that Sacramento County will be adopting this model in 2018. Adopting this model will take a lot of work and planning for this needs to take

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place well in advance due to the size of Riverside County. Mr. Neubauer stated that the VAAC should and can play a pivotal role in the development of the plan. Mr. Taylor stated that a big portion of the process will be public hearings. He stated that these public hearings will be the best way for the Disability Community to share their thoughts and concerns.

- B. VAAC Production of Updated Accessibility PSA & Training Video – The current training could use an update. Mr. Neubauer asked what the VAAC members would like to do with the current video. Mr. Taylor asked if the County has the funds to do an updated Accessibility PSA. Ms. Spencer stated that the County has dedicated \$50,000 for the VAAC’s projects. Mr. Taylor asked if the use of these funds requires Board approval. Ms. Spencer stated that it does not. Ms. Spencer asked if the VAAC would like to come up with the script and production or would they like ROV to do that and run it past the VAAC once its complete. Mr. Ballance feels that the ROV should spearhead the project and let the VAAC member give feedback at the end. Mr. Taylor suggested featuring the VAAC members in the PSA or training video as a way for them to participate and show visibility. Mr. Neubauer asked if the VAAC would like more of a PSA or a training video. Mr. Janesin stated that he has a training video that he feels would work for the ROV training. He doesn’t feel a PSA would benefit the VAAC based on the topics they want to focus on. Mr. Taylor stated that he can bring a PSA from Los Angeles County that has very good information.
- C. Future VAAC-Sponsored Candidate Forums on Disability Issues – This is an important topic for people running for office and the VAAC may want to focus on this in the future. The Registrar’s office does have to keep some professional distance because they cannot campaign for any one particular candidate. Ms. Spencer asked for more information regarding the VAAC-Sponsored Candidate Forums and who requested to discuss this item. Mr. Taylor stated that Ms. Goldkorn requested the item because she wanted to provide a platform for the candidates to answer questions related to disability issues, their position on certain items and their plans to increase accessibility. Mr. Neubauer stated the ROV would have to consult with County Counsel because as a government agency it’s unclear if the Registrar’s office could sponsor this type of event. Mr. Tucker stated that it is important for VAAC members to attend these types of forums to discuss important issues within the Disability Communities. Diane Gamache suggested submitting questions to candidate forums instead of having to host a forum to have the disability issues discussed. Ms. Spencer stated that ROV does get invited to attend candidate forums as a non-partisan participant and they supply voter registration cards and voter guides. As part of the outreach effort, when those invitations arise they will be forwarded to the VAAC members. Mr. Taylor asked if the County had any big offices going to election in 2018. Mr. Neubauer stated that two Board of Supervisor’s seats will be up for election because those supervisors are retiring. All

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County officers are up for election including the Treasurer, Auditor Controller, Sherriff and District Attorney.

XIII. Questions/Comments

Mr. Glasson asked if the VAAC has a social media presence on Facebook or Twitter. Mr. Neubauer stated that the VAAC individually does not have its own social media account. The Registrar's office does have a social media presence and it is used to disseminate information regarding the VAAC.

Mr. Tucker announced they will be starting an online information sharing process with success stories, case studies and questions concerning the topic of political empowerment for people with disabilities. He invited any aspiring authors who would like worldwide exposure to contact him for more information on submitting an article. He also invited the Registrar's office to participate because about 50% of the individuals they work with are election professionals and they are always interested in how things are done in the United States. Mr. Tucker will be announcing when they are ready to go-live with the project.

Mr. Janesin stated that September is Emergency Preparedness Month. He reflected on the events in Texas and stressed the importance of preparing for a disaster including water and extra medication. If anyone would like more information they can contact Mr. Janesin. Mr. Taylor shared some experiences with power outages and he discussed the possibility of rolling blackouts with the heat and overload on the grid. Mr. Janesin shared that he will be attending the Office of Emergency Management's Emergency Preparedness Expo at the Galleria at Tyler on September 9th.

Ms. Spencer stated that the Registrar's office has been using the Democracy Live system since November 2016 and throughout the 2017 elections. She shared that a Spanish capability has been added to the system and all the election material is now available in Spanish with the screen reader capability.

Meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.