
REBECCA SPENCER
Registrar of Voters



ART TINOCO
Assistant Registrar of Voters

REGISTRAR OF VOTERS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC)
Meeting Minutes
July 28, 2016 | 10:00 a.m.

Committee Members:

Julie Caban, Chair
Larry Smith, Co-Chair
John Kopp, Committee Member
Pauline Gaeta, Committee Member
Mario Janesin, Committee Member
Diane Gamache, Committee Member
Chuck Reutter, Committee Member
Gabe Taylor, Committee Member

Guests:

Ray Kennedy
Foster Tucker
Sally Cernie
Lauren Ferrier
Brian Finney
Ardis Bazyn
Ronak Patel

Registrar of Voters Staff:

Rebecca Spencer, Registrar of Voters
Art Tinoco, Assistant Registrar of Voters
Chris Neubauer, Chief Deputy Registrar of EO & Polls Division
Vanessa Rodriguez, Elections Analyst

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, Committee Chair Julie Caban and Committee Co-Chair Larry Smith. Following staff introductions, attendees of the meeting made introductions.

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II. Democracy Live Presentation

Bryan Finney, President of Democracy Live, discussed LIVE BALLOT which provides accessible, audio enabled sample ballot and voter guide information to all voters, including those with disabilities. Mr. Finney explained that Riverside County pioneered the use of this technology and the system should have been up and running for the June Primary Election. At no fault of Riverside County, the system was not ready to launch in June but it will be ready for the November Election. Mr. Finney apologized to Riverside County and the members of the VAAC meeting for Democracy Live's inability to follow through for the June Primary Election. Mr. Finney introduced Ardis Bazyn, a member of the State VAAC, who Democracy Live contracted to review their product as an advocate of the blind community. Mr. Finney introduced Lauren Ferrier who demonstrated the accessible sample ballot and information pamphlet as it will be available for the November Election. Foster Tucker asked for clarification on data being saved by the system once the voter enters their information. Ms. Ferrier stated that the system does not save any information entered by the voter when looking up their sample ballot. Mr. Tucker stated at the last presentation the committee discussed data analysis and asked if this was included in the contract with Democracy Live. Rebecca Spencer stated that the data will be gathered by a third party Google Analytics. Mr. Tucker asked what type of data will be collected. Ms. Spencer stated that the data points have not been finalized yet and she is open to suggestions. Mr. Tucker asked if the sample ballot will be available in English and Spanish. Ms. Spencer stated that the sample ballot will be available in English for the November Election and then English and Spanish for future elections. Ray Kennedy asked if there will be a labeled box for write-in candidates because it is not showing up correctly in the demonstration. Vanessa Rodriguez stated that the box will be labeled and for those using screen readers, the box will read as write-in. Ms. Bazyn demonstrated using a screen reader on the sample ballot and voter information pamphlet. Mr. Finney stated that this software will also be available on mobile devices in the future. Mr. Tucker asked for a timeline for the deployment of this program for the November Election. Ms. Spencer stated that the dates are not finalized because the number of ballot types has yet to be determined; the final timeline will be sent out to the VAAC members. Mr. Tucker asked what the turnaround time would be once Riverside County gives Democracy Live the information for the sample ballots and information pamphlets. Mr. Finney stated that the timeline depends on the size of the ballot; generally the turnaround time would be 7-10 business days. He stated that Riverside County will also be able to make their edits while proofing the data, which will expedite the proofing process. John Kopp asked what the deadline is for information to be submitted to the County to be placed on ballot. Ms. Spencer stated that the last day of the nomination period is August 12th. After August 12th, the Registrar of Voters (ROV) office will know how many candidates and ballot types they will have and then they can begin working on ballot layout.

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The ballot layout approval takes approximately 3 - 4 weeks; for the November Election that would be the first week of September. Once the paper ballot is finalized, the information is sent to Democracy Live to be formatted for the program. The paper sample ballots will go in the mail on September 29th so ROV would like the electronic version to be up and running around that date if not sooner. Mr. Kopp asked if legislative measures or amendments have disrupted the timeline in the past. Ms. Spencer stated that it has happened in the past where a supplemental voter information guide has been sent out due to submissions to the Secretary of State's office after the deadline but it doesn't happen very often.

III. Sub-Committee Reports

By-laws Sub-Committee – Mr. Taylor reported that the draft by-laws were sent out to the VAAC members by Larry Smith. Ms. Spencer asked for a background on how the draft by-laws were created. Mr. Taylor stated there is a lack of reference material on VAAC by-laws because very few other counties have them in place. The committee reviewed by-laws from Santa Cruz to create the frame work for the draft by-laws. Mario Janesin stated that the by-laws are very important and will assist other counties in California with forming their own committees. Mr. Taylor stated anything the VAAC does needs to have collaboration between the Disability Community and the Registrar's office and that is the most important thing. Mr. Tucker asked what the timeline is for approving the draft by-laws. Mr. Taylor stated that he feels the committee may need more time to review the by-laws and with multiple members not in attendance today he does not feel comfortable approving the by-laws today. Ms. Spencer opened the floor to questions or comments from the committee. Mr. Kopp suggested reviewing the definitions in the by-laws carefully to avoid any confusion on voting members. Ms. Spencer stated that ROV has reviewed the by-laws and they have some legal concerns; she introduced Ronak Patel, Riverside County Deputy County Counsel, to discuss ROV's concerns. Mr. Patel stated that County Counsel has questions and revisions that will be submitted to ROV for review that will be ready within 2 weeks. He stated that he is unable to answer any public questions from VAAC because he is legal representation for ROV but he will have County Counsel's revisions to ROV as quick as possible for review. Ms. Spencer discussed the VAAC application and membership process and asked the committee how they think new applications should be handled. Mr. Janesin stated that members should not be limited. Ms. Spencer stated that ROV will go ahead and process the applications and send the new members their certificates. Once County Counsel submits their revisions to ROV they will set up a meeting with the by-laws Sub-Committee to review questions and revisions.

Mobility Sub-Committee – No report given at this meeting.

Visually Impaired Sub-Committee – No report given at this meeting.

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Deaf/Hard of Hearing Sub-Committee – No report given at this meeting.

IV. State VAAC Update

Mr. Smith reported that the State VAAC met shortly after the June Election and the topics included the crossover voting confusion in the June Election, voters wanting to change party affiliation after the registration deadline and vendor issues. One of the main topics for future agendas will be re-designing the voter registration card. Any suggestions are welcome; please send any suggestions to Mr. Smith.

V. June Election Review

Mr. Neubauer discussed the June Primary Election which had a 2 card ballot due to the 34 candidates for US Senate. He reported that the June 2016 Primary had a 44.31% voter turnout; this turnout is expected to increase for the November General Election. Ms. Spencer provided comparative data; February 2008 Primary had 55% voter turnout and the June 2012 Primary had 27% voter turnout. Mr. Neubauer stated that 4,711 voters used the Accessible Voting Units (AVUs), there were 23 curbside voters in 20 locations and 169 assisted voters at 84 locations; this data will be emailed to the VAAC members. Mr. Janesin suggested that based on the data provided from the June Election, the areas with higher use of AVUs should have additional staff with knowledge of the machines for the November Election. Chuck Reutter asked what happened to the absentee ballots that were dropped off at the polling place without a signature on the envelope. Mr. Neubauer explained that if the signature on the ballot envelope was missing ROV would contact the voter and they would have 8 days to sign their envelope. Mr. Kopp asked if there has been a study done to see how much it would cost for ROV to pay postage on returned vote-by-mail applications. Ms. Spencer stated that a study has been done regarding the cost of return postage on vote-by-mail ballots which would be an estimated \$200,000. Mr. Kopp asked what percentage of the \$200,000 would be of the ROV's budget. Ms. Spencer stated that the budget for ROV is \$10 million; \$200,000 would be 2% of the ROV budget. Pauline Gaeta asked if a voter doesn't sign their ballot envelope does their vote not count. Ms. Spencer stated that ROV contacts the voter by mail asking them to sign the enclosed signature statement and return it within 8 days after Election Day for their ballot to be counted. Mr. Tucker asked if the 4,711 uses of the AVUs is a low number for the County and should the committee have a goal for uses of these machines. Ms. Spencer stated that the number of AVU uses has not been studied before and ROV can contact other counties that use the same AVUs to get comparative data on number of uses versus number of registered voters. Mr. Kopp asked for the percentage of vote-by-mail voters versus voters going to the polls. Mr. Neubauer stated that overall 55-60% of voters in Riverside County are participating in vote-by-mail voting. Ms. Spencer stated for the June Election 276,742

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voters were vote-by-mail and 127,086 voters went to a polling place. Over the last few years ROV has seen a greater turnout by mail than at the polls. Mr. Neubauer reported that the June Election was the first to use an Accessibility Officer, who is specifically trained on accessibility at the polls and was stationed at one polling place for Election Day. This is a change from the November 2015 Election where ROV had Accessibility Inspectors that roved multiple sites throughout Election Day. The program had positive aspects such as having a person with specific knowledge of accessibility at every site but there were difficulties in training that number of people. ROV will continue to evaluate the Accessibility Officer position and they are considering providing the accessibility training to all poll workers so everyone is aware of the need to have accessibility at the polls. Gabe Taylor asked if a debrief meeting has been scheduled with the Accessibility Officers to review notes and get feedback on the position. Mr. Neubauer stated that a debrief meeting was scheduled for the Accessibility Inspectors after the last election and most of the Inspectors chose not to participate. There are notes from every site that are being reviewed for commonalities and there is room for improvement. Mr. Janesin suggested a quick survey for the Accessibility Officers to complete so they can share any issues they experienced at their sites. Mr. Janesin also offered assistance in designing the survey. Ms. Spencer opened the floor to anyone that wished to share their experience on Election Day as a poll worker or Inspector. Mr. Janesin stated that he felt the training in Beaumont was rushed and there should have been more hands on training with the AVUs. He did like the disability sensitivity portion and the use of the Through Our Eyes video. Mr. Taylor stated that additional training on the AVUs is important so more pollworkers can assist with troubleshooting.

VI. November Election Update

Julie Caban discussed the upcoming November 8th Presidential General Election. There are currently 914,000 registered voters. ROV is working on a 2 card ballot; however there are 17 state propositions and 11 local measures so ballot layout may have to change to a 3 card ballot. The candidate nomination period will end August 12th, except for non-incumbents only, who have until 5 p.m. on August 17th. There will be between 560 – 600 polling places with approximately 3,000 election officers. The last day for voter registration is October 24th, 15 days prior to Election Day. The last day to request a vote-by-mail ballot is November 1st, 7 days prior to Election Day. The sample ballots will start to go in the mail on September 29th. Early voting will begin on October 11th at the Registrar's and Early Voting at Galleria at Tyler, Promenade in Temecula and Westfield in Palm Desert at the end of October. The City Clerk's offices will be accepting vote-by-mail ballots before or on Election Day. Mr. Kopp asked if the increase of voter registration in Riverside County is parallel to other counties and if we are expected to reach 1 million registered voters before the November Election. Ms. Spencer stated that ROV is hoping to reach over a million

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registered voters, which would be a first for Riverside County. During a presidential election year all counties see an increase in voter registration, typically right before the Primary and General elections. Riverside County is also seeing a change in demographics by political party.

VII. Questions/ Comments

Mr. Kennedy asked what portion of the budget is used for outreach and voter education. Ms. Spencer stated that she can provide a figure at a later time and send it to Mr. Kennedy. ROV is participating in outreach via the website, Facebook, press releases, and going to all major election events. ROV works with many community organizations and has attended community fairs, voter registration drives, poll worker outreach, town hall events, and different political party's events as a non-partisan speaker. Mr. Foster discussed the International Delegation Study Tour on Saturday, November 5th. The tour will start at LA County ROV to view their new voting system followed by a late lunch at Riverside County and a presentation on the VAAC. Mr. Tucker encouraged all members of the VAAC and advocacy groups to attend the event at Riverside County ROV and a reception at his home in Palm Springs on Saturday evening. On Monday, Mr. Tucker will be holding a series of workshops and meetings at the Tolerance Education Center in Palm Springs and everyone is welcome to attend those as well. Mr. Kopp stated that he will be speaking to the Board of Supervisors to urge Riverside County to increase the ROV budget to include paid postage for voter registration and vote-by-mail applications. Ms. Spencer stated that the ROV Community Room will be made available on November 5th in the afternoon for the delegation group. Mr. Tucker stated he will need the room around 2 p.m. for 1-2 hours and there will be up to 20 people attending. Mr. Tucker will be sending the invitation to ROV to be sent out to the VAAC members.

Meeting adjourned at 11:49 a.m.