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**REBECCA SPENCER**  
Registrar of Voters



**ART TINOCO**  
Assistant Registrar of Voters

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**REGISTRAR OF VOTERS**  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

**Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC)**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**April 27, 2023 | 10:00 a.m.**

***Members:***

Julie Caban, Chair  
Larry Smith, Vice Chair  
Gabriel Taylor, Committee Member  
John Kopp, Committee Member

***Guests:***

Stephanie Nelson, Deputy County Counsel, Riverside County  
Ryann Flores, Clerk of the Board, Beaumont-Cherry Valley Recreation  
and Park District  
Terry Toles, Guest  
Gail Paulsen, Guest

***Registrar of Voters Staff:***

Rebecca Spencer, Registrar of Voters  
Art Tinoco, Assistant Registrar of Voters  
Matthew Ceballos, Chief Deputy Registrar of Voters  
Alma Del Carmen, Administrative Services Analyst I  
Patrick Munar, Senior Public Information Specialist

***Meeting Commenced at 10:00 a.m.***

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***I. Welcome/Introductions***

Introductions were made of the following staff: Registrar of Voters Rebecca Spencer, Assistant Registrar Art Tinoco, and Committee Chair Julie Caban. Following staff introductions, attendees of the meeting made introductions.

***II. Approval of September 29, 2022 and January 26, 2023  
VAAC Minutes***

John Kopp made a motion to accept the September 29, 2022 VAAC minutes; Gabriel Taylor seconded. The September 29, 2022 VAAC minutes were accepted.

John Kopp made a motion to accept the January 26, 2023 VAAC minutes; Gabriel Taylor seconded. The January 26, 2023 VAAC minutes were accepted.

***III. Recap of the November 2022 Consolidated General Election:***

Ms. Caban shared that Riverside County had a total of approximately 1.3 million registered voters that were mailed out an official ballot under the Voter's Choice Act. There were state and local election contests on the ballot. The ballot was a 2-card ballot for most of the county. However, the City of Palm Desert City Council District 2 chose to conduct their election using Ranked Choice Voting, resulting in a 3-card ballot.

Ms. Caban shared that there was a total of 145 Vote Center locations based on the Voter's Choice Act. All 145 Vote Centers were open for 4 days and, of those 145 Vote Centers, 26 Vote Centers were open for 11 days. For these sites, the Registrar of Voters office has primarily been using government buildings, such as county libraries and community centers. Approximately 350 temporary employees were hired a month before the 145 sites opened to attend a Lead Academy where they were trained on the procedures and equipment. These temporary employees were introduced to Ballot on Demand and instructed on how to print out a ballot for voters who requested

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a paper ballot.

In addition, the Registrar of Voters office hired approximately 1500 community paid volunteers to work at the 145 Vote Centers with the Leads. Two Leads and approximately 8 community paid volunteers were assigned to each Vote Center to work as poll workers. The Registrar of Voters office also hired bilingual community paid volunteers to meet language assistance requirements mandated by the state for Vote Centers. The state mandates the Registrar of Voters office, in certain parts of the county where there is three percent or more voters registered for a specific language, to hire bilingual volunteers to assist in those languages. As such, the Registrar of Voters office hired bilingual community volunteers: 336 Spanish, 38 Tagalog, 12 Vietnamese, 14 Korean, and 14 Chinese Mandarin/Cantonese.

Ms. Caban shared that there were 87 vote-by-mail drop off locations throughout Riverside County, 28 of which were at city clerk locations. The remaining vote-by-mail drop off locations were at non-city clerk facilities, mainly government facilities. All vote-by-mail drop off locations opened 29 days before the November 8<sup>th</sup> election to allow voters to drop off their ballot early.

The voter turnout was approximately 604 thousand voters which is about 46% voter turnout. The Registrar of Voters finished the canvas period and certified the election on December 1, 2022.

***A. Vote Center Accessibility – Comments from Committee Members***

Ms. Caban shared that Remote Accessible Vote-by-Mail Ballots (RAVBM) was available for this election and 152 voters used the RAVBM process. Only 1 voter requested an Emergency Medical Ballot.

At the Vote Centers, 24 voters requested curbside assistance and 184 voters were assisted voters. Ms. Caban confirmed that all Vote Centers had curbside doorbells with a receiver alerting the poll workers inside the Vote Center that a voter needs assistance outside. There is also a sign on each

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doorbell with a phone number. Voters needing curbside assistance could call the phone number on the sign and notify the Registrar of Voters office that they need assistance. The office will then notify the poll workers at that Vote Center that there is a voter outside needing assistance.

Mr. Taylor shared that he appreciated the multiple options that voters have in alerting poll workers that they need curbside assistance.

Mr. Kopp shared that he went to different Vote Centers in the city of Eastvale on Election Day. Eleanor Roosevelt High School and Harada Neighborhood Center had large parking lots and spaces for accessible parking next to the buildings. Eastvale City Hall, which has the most congested parking since it is in the middle of a shopping center, had no problems as well. However, the Eastvale Community Center seemed to have a problem with its accessible parking. The accessible parking spaces were far from the entrance to the building and were difficult to locate. Mr. Kopp requested that the Registrar of Voters office review the accessible parking at the Eastvale Community Center.

Ms. Caban shared that, in preparation for the November 7, 2023 election and 2024 elections, the Registrar of Voters office is currently conducting surveys of facilities that have been or may be Vote Center and ballot drop off sites. Surveys of facilities in the desert area are being done first and the inland areas will be next.

Ms. Caban shared, from last VAAC meeting comments, that Disability Rights California did not receive any calls on their hotline regarding accessibility issues from voters in Riverside County.

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***B. Ballot Marking Device (BMD) – Related Issues from Voters with Disabilities – Comments from Committee Members***

Ms. Caban confirmed that there were 184 assisted voters at the Vote Center locations. From her experience, most voters need assistance with the touchscreen of the Accessible Voting Unit (AVU). However, the Registrar of Voters office does not track what kind of assistance they need while they are at the Vote Centers.

***C. Success Stories***

Ms. Caban shared that Ballot on Demand was successfully introduced in the November 2022 Consolidated General Election. Instead of poll workers carrying boxes of ballots to the Vote Centers, poll workers were able to print a ballot for a voter if the voter requested a paper ballot. Voters could take their paper ballot home with them and bring it back on or before Election Day or vote their paper ballot immediately at the Vote Center.

Ms. Caban shared that the Registrar of Voters office will be introducing a ballot scanner. The ballot scanner scans the ballot and gives the voter options. If the voter overvotes or missed a contest, the voter can retrieve their ballot and complete it again with any corrections. The voter can also cast their ballot as is without making any corrections. The ballot scanner will assist the Registrar of Voters office in posting the results of the election sooner.

Ms. Caban shared that another one of the Registrar of Voters success stories of 2022 would be the successful implementation of Ranked Choice Voting for Palm Desert City Council District 2. The City of Palm Desert did facilitate the training and voter education on Ranked Choice Voting for the voters in District 2. Going forward, there may be more cities that select Ranked Choice Voting for their contest.

Mr. Kopp asked, with regards to Ranked Choice Voting, how long it takes for each iteration to finish and conclude a winning candidate. Rebecca Spencer

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shared that Ranked Choice Voting is an algorithm in the certified voting system and it is done relatively quickly as it goes through each round of ranking.

Mr. Kopp shared that he understands that when the Registrar of Voters office receives a ballot with a signature that does not match what is in the system, the Registrar of Voters office contacts the voter to give them a chance to verify their signature. However, as people get older and develop disabilities, their current signature may not match the signature the voter initially provided when they first registered. Mr. Kopp asked, when a person is at a Vote Center, if they receive immediate notification that their signature does not match, is there a way to remedy the situation at the Vote Center.

Ms. Spencer shared that at the Vote Centers the poll workers are trained to check the voter's signature from the Sign-In Roster against what is in the voter registration system. If it does not match, then the poll workers are instructed to have the person vote provisionally and fill out a new voter registration card. The process is done in real time at the Vote Center. Once received at the office, the registration card is input into the voter registration system, updating the voter's signature. The provisional envelope goes through the signature verification process based on the new registration card. If the Registrar of Voters receives a provisional envelope that does not have a signature or the signature does not match, the Registrar of Voters is required to go through the notification process again, sending a signature verification letter to the voter.

***IV. SB 1480 Survey Feedback Report***

Ms. Caban shared, based on information provided by Mr. Taylor at the previous VAAC meeting, that Senate Bill 1480 (SB 1480) was proposed by Disability Rights California to initiate an electronic ballot return option, via a secure website. We currently have Remote Accessible Vote-by-Mail Ballot (RAVBM) where the voter can print their ballot and return it in a signed envelope so that the Registrar of Voters office can verify the voter's signature. Some voters may not have printing abilities or may have difficulty

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returning their ballot. SB 1480 was submitted and approved by the State Senate. A few days before being heard by the Assembly side, Secretary of State Weber submitted a letter voicing her concerns, hesitations, and reservations on the legislation. Senate Bill 1480 was suspended on the Assembly side. Disability Rights California has regrouped and assembled a survey to get feedback from the disability communities on struggles that they encounter in the voting process. After receiving and compiling the feedback, Disability Rights California will resubmit it to the legislation.

Mr. Taylor shared that they are still in the process of receiving and compiling information from the survey responses received from the disability communities. Helpful feedback has been received on how their disabilities have impacted their voting process. Therefore, Disability Rights California can justify that SB 1480 is a helpful option and a necessary one for particular voters.

***V. 2023 County Election Schedule***

Ms. Caban shared that the first scheduled election is the August 29, 2023 General District Uniform Election (UDEL) with three landowner districts that may potentially be going. The Registrar of Voters office is waiting for the nomination period to open on May 8<sup>th</sup> and finish on June 2<sup>nd</sup> to confirm if there are any candidates that will be on the ballot. However, if there are not enough candidates that file during the nomination period for any of these districts, then the districts will most likely appoint in lieu of election.

There is also a November 7, 2023 Consolidated UDEL Election, covering community service districts and county water districts. Ms. Caban stated that all contests for the November 7<sup>th</sup> election depend on the nomination period from July 17<sup>th</sup> to August 11<sup>th</sup>. If there are not enough candidates that file for these offices, then the districts will most likely appoint in lieu of election.

As such, there are not many elections on calendar for 2023. The Registrar of Voters office is preparing for the 2024 primary and general elections.

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***VI. Additional Discussion and/or Announcements from Committee Members***

No additional discussion, announcements, or comments were made from committee members or the public.

***VII. Adjournment***

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 27, 2023.