
ART TINOCO
Registrar of Voters



MATTHEW CEBALLOS
Assistant Registrar of Voters

REGISTRAR OF VOTERS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

**Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC)
Meeting Minutes
September 28, 2023 | 10:00 a.m.**

Members:

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

Guests:

Jacqueline Ruiz, Principal Management Analyst, Riverside County
Executive Office
Stephanie Nelson, Deputy County Counsel, Riverside County
Blanche Ramirez, Desert Sands Unified School District
Laura Riley, Director of the Student Disability Resource Center,
University of California Riverside

Registrar of Voters Staff:

Art Tinoco, Assistant Registrar of Voters
Matthew Ceballos, Chief Deputy Registrar of Voters
Alma Del Carmen, Administrative Services Analyst I
Miguel Borquez, Elections Technician II

Meeting Commenced at 10:00 a.m.

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I. Welcome/Introductions

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

Art Tinoco announced that Registrar of Voters Rebecca Spencer is currently on administrative leave and unable to join in this meeting. The County of Riverside Executive Office is working on an interim solution, or an Interim Registrar, to come in and assist with the election activities. At the moment, Assistant Registrar Art Tinoco and Chief Deputy Matthew Ceballos are continuing to work on the department operations and maintain the high level of services that the Registrar of Voters office has always provided.

II. Approval of July 27, 2023 VAAC Minutes

John Kopp made a motion to accept the July 27, 2023 VAAC minutes; Julie Caban seconded. The July 27, 2023 VAAC minutes were accepted.

III. November 7, 2023 Consolidated General Election

Julie Caban provided an update on the November 7, 2023 Consolidated General Election. The nomination period was from July 17th to August 11th. There were four districts that were in nomination period: De Luz Community Services District with 2 seats, Cabazon County Water District with 2 full and 2 short term seats, Chiriaco Summit County Water District with 2 seats, and Pinyon Pines County Water District with 3 seats. Due to an insufficient number of nominees, the districts will appoint in lieu of election.

The City of Perris filed the paperwork to place a measure on the ballot for the November 7th Election. Since the City of Perris is the only district with an item on the ballot, the November 7th Consolidated General Election is now called the November 7th City of Perris Special Measure Election.

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i. City of Perris Special Measure Election

Ms. Caban shared that the City of Perris Special Measure Election will be for approximately 36,000 registered voters. The Registrar of Voters office has already mailed voter information to the less than 50 military and overseas voters. On September 28th, Riverside County Voter Information Guides will be mailed to voters in the City of Perris. On October 10th, ballots will start being mailed to voters. Operating under the Voter's Choice Act, all registered voters will receive a ballot in the mail. Any person who is not registered by the Close of Registration on October 23rd may go to a Vote Center to complete same-day voter registration and vote a provisional ballot.

For this election, there will be 4 Vote Centers and 3 ballot drop-off locations. The Riverside County Registrar of Voters office will be an additional Vote Center and ballot drop-off location.

Ballot drop-off locations will open on October 10th, the same day Vote-by-Mail ballots are first mailed out to voters. The City of Perris City Clerk's office will be a ballot drop-off location.

One Vote Center will be open for 11-days, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on October 28th through November 6th. Three Vote Centers will be open for 4-days, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on November 4th through November 6th. All Vote Centers will be open from 7a.m. to 8 p.m. on Election Day, November 7th.

The Registrar of Voters office has 28 days to certify the election, up through December 5th. However, the Registrar of Voters office hopes to certify the election before the end of November.

ii. Introduction of the Ballot Scanner

Ms. Caban shared that the Registrar of Voters office will be introducing the Ballot Scanner in the November 7, 2023 City of Perris Special Measure Election. One Ballot Scanner will be at each Vote Center. Instead of the voter

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casting their ballot into a blue ballot box, as is the normal procedure, the voter will insert their ballot into the Ballot Scanner. The Ballot Scanner has a SD Card that records the contests selections of all the ballots cast. Election Officers will return the SD Card to the Registrar of Voters office on Election Night, November 7th.

In preparation for the implementation of the Ballot Scanners, Registrar of Voters staff have been testing the Ballot Scanner by inserting various ballots, each ballot marked differently, to document how ballots are read and accepted by the Ballot Scanner. (*A "Ballot Scanner" video was shared on the screen for all meeting guests to view*) Ms. Caban narrated a video on the Ballot Scanner that captures all the scenarios that can happen when a ballot is inserted, each ballot marked differently:

1. **Good Paper Ballot** – A ballot printed from the Ballot on Demand printer is inserted into the Ballot Scanner. As the ballot is inserted, the Ballot Scanner screen shows "Ballot Review", allowing the voter to review all their selections by scrolling up and down. The voter presses the "Cast" button to cast the ballot.
2. **Undervote** – The "Ballot Review" screen will display a warning message of "Undervote." The voter has the option to scroll up and down the screen and review the contest where there is an undervote. The voter has the option to press the "Return" button, and the Ballot Scanner returns the ballot for the voter to mark another selection before reinserting it into the Ballot Scanner. If the voter does not want to make any changes and chooses to undervote, they can press the "Cast" button and cast their ballot as is.
3. **Upside Down Ballot** – The ballot can be inserted into the Ballot Scanner upside down. The Ballot Scanner will read the ballot and, after the voter presses the "Cast" button, accept it.
4. **Overvote** – The "Ballot Review" screen will display a warning message of "Overvote." The voter has the option to scroll up and down the screen and review the contest where there is an overvote. Election Officers will inform the voter that due to the overvote, none of the selections on that

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contest will be counted as the Registrar of Voters office cannot determine who the voter intended to vote for. The voter has the option to press the “Return” button, and the Ballot Scanner returns the ballot to the voter. The Election Officer will spoil the ballot and give the voter a new ballot to mark correctly to later insert into the Ballot Scanner. If the voter does not want to make any changes and chooses to overvote, they can press the “Cast” button and cast their ballot as is.

5. **Blank Ballot** – When the ballot is a two-card ballot, with the first card having the candidates and offices and the second card having measures and propositions, many voters only vote for the candidates and make no selections for the measures. When a blank ballot is inserted into the Ballot Scanner, the “Ballot Review” screen will display a warning message of “Blank ballot detected.” The voter has the option to press the “Return” button, and the Ballot Scanner returns the ballot for the voter to vote their ballot before reinserting it into the Ballot Scanner. If the voter does not want to make any changes and chooses to cast their blank ballot, they can press the “Cast” button and cast their ballot as is.
6. **Ambiguous Mark** – When a ballot has an ambiguous mark, meaning that the voter placed a mark on the ballot that the Ballot Scanner cannot read, such as an x in the bubble instead of filling in the bubble, the “Ballot Review” screen will display a warning message of “Ambiguous Mark.” The voter has the option to scroll up and down and review the contest where there is an ambiguous mark. The voter must press the “Return” button, and the Ballot Scanner returns the ballot to the voter. The Ballot Scanner will not accept a ballot with an ambiguous mark. The Election Officer will spoil the ballot with an ambiguous mark and give the voter a new ballot to mark correctly to later insert into the Ballot Scanner. The Registrar of Voters office hopes that this will decrease the number of ballots that need to undergo the duplication or adjudication process at the office.
7. **Write-In** – The Ballot Scanner will accept a ballot that has a write-in candidate. An “Overvote” warning message will display if the voter overvoted for that contest.
8. **Red-Ink** – The Ballot Scanner does not recognize a ballot that is marked with red-ink. The “Ballot Review” screen will display a warning message

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of “Blank ballot detected.” The voter has the option to press the “Return” button, and the Ballot Scanner returns the ballot to the voter. The Election Officer will spoil the ballot marked in red-ink and give the voter a new ballot for the voter to duplicate their selections in black ink and later insert into the Ballot Scanner. If the voter chooses to cast their red-inked ballot, then the Ballot Scanner will accept it as a “Blank ballot,” and the Registrar of Voters office will duplicate the red-inked ballot when it arrives in our office.

9. **Good AVU Ballot** - A ballot printed from the Accessible Voting Unit (AVU) is inserted into the Ballot Scanner. The Ballot Scanner will read and accept AVU Ballots. Just like the ballots printed from the Ballot on Demand printer, the Ballot Scanner will display warning messages if it reads any errors on the AVU Ballot. The AVU does not allow for voters to overvote on a contest, so the Ballot Scanner will never display the warning message of “Overvote” for an AVU Ballot.
10. **Could Not Read AVU Ballot** – When an AVU Ballot is inserted into the Ballot Scanner with pen markings on the QR code, the Ballot Scanner “Ballot Review” screen will display a warning message of “The Ballot could not be read” because the Ballot Scanner cannot properly read the QR code. The Ballot Scanner will automatically return a ballot that it cannot read to the voter. The Election Officer will spoil the ballot and reactivate a voting session on the AVU for the voter. The voter can insert a new ballot onto the Ballot Scanner.

After the Ballot Scanner video finished, Ms. Caban asked if anyone had any questions.

John Kopp shared that he now understands that if a voter intentionally undervotes, the voter will have the option to cast their ballot as is. Mr. Kopp was worried that voters would think that they had done something wrong when they see the Ballot Scanner screen display a warning message of “Undervote.” However, an Election Officer will be assigned to the Ballot Scanner to make sure the voter understands that, if their intention is to vote the contest with an undervote, they can ignore the “Undervote” warning

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message and press “Cast” to cast their ballot as is.

Ms. Caban shared that Vote Center Leads and Election Officers will be trained to understand all Ballot Scanner “Ballot Review” messages that are displayed and explain to voters that they can cast their ballot as is, or they can have their ballot returned to make any changes.

Ms. Caban restated that the only ballots that the Ballot Scanner will not accept are ballots with an ambiguous mark or ballots that it cannot read. In the video, these were the ballots where the voter had placed an x in the bubble instead of filling it in or made pen markings on the AVU printed ballot QR code. Those ballots will be returned to the voter and an Election Officer will spoil the unreadable ballot and give the voter a new ballot. The voter will make their selections again and cast their new ballot into the Ballot Scanner.

IV. 2024 Election Administration Plan Update

Ms. Caban shared that a Public Hearing was held on August 29, 2023 for the Draft Election Administration Plan. All feedback received was reviewed by the Registrar of Voters office and changes were incorporated where possible to make the Amended Draft Election Administration Plan.

Ms. Caban listed the changes that were made from the Draft Election Administration Plan to the Amended Draft Election Administration Plan.

1. Title name was updated from Draft to Amended Draft.
2. The curbside voting information was updated to reflect that curbside voting signs are posted at each Vote Center with phone numbers available to call for assistance.
3. The name of the machines that voters insert and cast their ballots was updated from Precinct Scanners to Ballot Scanners.
4. The name of voting sites was updated from precincts and polling places to Vote Centers.
5. The Spanish, Tagalog, and Mandarin voter education workshop dates were updated to better work around the Christmas and New Year

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holidays. All workshop dates can be found on page 30 of the Amended Draft Election Administration Plan.

6. Billboard advertisements were added to the list of resources that the Registrar of Voters office will use to improve community outreach and voter education.
7. The UCR Disability Services Office was added to the list of Disability Community Partners that the Registrar of Voters will work with on Vote Center outreach and education.

The Amended Draft Election Administration Plan was then posted to the Registrar of Voters website and a 14-day public comment period on the Amended Draft was held from September 12, 2023 through September 26, 2023. The Registrar of Voters office is currently reviewing all feedback received during the public comment period to incorporate changes where possible to make the Final Election Administration Plan. The Final Election Administration Plan will be submitted to the California Secretary of State for review and approval. The Final Election Administration Plan will be posted to the Registrar of Voters website for the public to read.

The Registrar of Voters office will hold voter education workshops, one workshop for each required language. Voter education workshops are scheduled to begin in December 2023. The dates for all workshops can be found on page 30 of the Amended Draft Election Administration Plan.

V. Discussion of Current ASL Assistance Options Available at Vote Centers

Ms. Caban shared that the Amended Draft Election Administration Plan refers to the Registrar of Voters office utilizing a video conferencing platform to provide American Sign Language interpretation assistance at all Vote Centers. The Registrar of Voters office is working on the details to provide this service at Vote Centers and will provide an update at the following VAAC meeting.

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VI. Discussion of Possible VAAC “Train-the-Trainer” Presentation Ahead of the March 5, 2024 Presidential Primary Election

Ms. Caban shared that Gabriel Taylor has asked about hosting a “Train-the-Trainer” presentation before the March 2024 Presidential Primary Election. In the past, Mr. Taylor had given the presentation to the Leads that would be supervising the Vote Centers. The Registrar of Voters office confirmed that Mr. Taylor is welcomed to host the same presentation for the March 2024 Presidential Primary Election. The date and time will be coordinated with Mr. Taylor and anyone else interested in being part of “Train-the-Trainer” presentation. This presentation informs the Leads about what can be done to assist voters who have a disability.

VII. March 5, 2024 Presidential Primary Election

Ms. Caban shared important dates for the March 5, 2024 Presidential Primary Election. The period for the signatures in lieu of the filing fee started on September 14th and ends on November 8th. From September 29th through December 8th, the County Central Committee nominees must file their nomination documents for the county central committees. From October 30th through November 8th, judicial candidates must file a Declaration of Intention with the Registrar of Voters office. If no incumbents file for the judicial offices, there will be an extension of the filing period for judicial candidates from November 9th through November 13th. The nomination period for all other candidates going into election for the March 2024 Presidential Primary Election is from November 13th through December 8th. If no incumbents file, there will be an extension of the filing period from December 9th through December 13th. The write-in candidacy period for write-in candidates to submit their nomination papers starts January 8, 2024 and ends February 20, 2024.

There will be approximately 30 Vote Centers open for 11-days, from February 24th through March 5th. There will be approximately 150 Vote Centers open for 4-days, from March 2nd through March 5th. All Vote Centers

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will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. All Vote Centers, including the Registrar of Voters office, will be open on Election Day, March 5th, from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. To staff the Vote Centers, the Registrar of Voters office will hire about 300 Leads to supervise the sites and 800 to 1200 Election Officers to assist the Leads.

There will be approximately 87 ballot drop-off locations, including city clerk offices. To staff the ballot drop-off locations, the Registrar of Voters office will hire about 200 attendants.

John Kopp shared that he had Shirley Weber, California Secretary of State, March 5, 2024 Presidential Primary Election calendar with key dates and deadlines. Mr. Kopp stated that he did not see listed, on the Secretary of State's calendar, that Central Committee applicants' period to file their nomination documents was from September 29th through December 8th, as Ms. Caban had listed when sharing key dates. Mr. Kopp wanted to know if some dates were only listed on the Riverside County election calendar. Ms. Caban confirmed that the central committee filing period dates are listed on the Riverside County election calendar, posted on the Registrar of Voters website, and not on the Secretary of States election calendar because the nominees are applying for the County Central Committee which is county level and not state.

VIII. Additional Discussion and/or Announcements from Committee Members and or Public

Ms. Caban shared that Registrar of Voters staff recently attended several outreach events at college campuses and a town hall meeting for the Highgrove community in celebration of National Voter Registration Day on September 19, 2023. If there are any outreach events that committee members or the public would like the Registrar of Voters to be involved in, please contact Julie Caban or Larry Smith.



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

IX. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 25, 2024.