
REBECCA SPENCER
Registrar of Voters



ART TINOCO
Assistant Registrar of Voters

REGISTRAR OF VOTERS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC)
Meeting Minutes
January 31, 2019 | 10:00 a.m.

Committee Members:

Julie Caban, Chair
Larry Smith, Co-Chair
Mario Janesin, Committee Member
Gabe Taylor, Committee Member
Feliciano Godoy, Committee Member
Janet Bernabe, Committee Member
Ruthee Goldkorn, Committee Member
Elizabeth Santos, Committee Member

Guests:

Ronak Patel
Meta Berkebile
Pilar Cole

Registrar of Voters Staff:

Rebecca Spencer, Registrar of Voters
Art Tinoco, Assistant Registrar of Voters

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

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II. Approval of September 27, 2018 Minutes

Julie Caban asked the committee members to accept the September 27, 2018 meeting minutes. Ruthee Goldkorn requested contact information for Laura Riley from the University of California at Riverside (UCR) Student Disability Resource Center. Larry Smith will provide Laura Riley's contact information to Ms. Goldkorn. Ms. Goldkorn asked if the Registrar of Voters will be advertising Vote-By-Mail at UCR for those students who live on campus but are registered within the County. Mr. Smith shared rather than providing outreach, the ROV is educating students to use their UCR address as their mailing address so they receive their proper ballot rather than casting a provisional ballot at the polling place. Ms. Goldkorn asked that VAAC members be notified when events take place at the universities so that VAAC members are able to attend. Gabe Taylor shared that he will notify the VAAC members anytime there is a larger scale event for those that are interested in attending. Ms. Goldkorn made a motion to accept the minutes; Mario Janesin seconded. Minutes were accepted.

III. Information on DVD Subtitles: Accessibility Video for Election Officer Training Classes

Art Tinoco shared that the Election Officer Training Class DVD is currently being reviewing to ensure that the DVD is accessible for those who are viewing. Mr. Smith shared a brief clip of the Election Officer Training DVD with the committee. Meta Berkebile explained that Closed Captioning is generally used for broadcasting; it is electronically embedded information that is read and then turned on to be visible on the screen. Subtitles are generally more accepted with DVD's because you can turn them on and off. Ms. Berkebile encouraged the use of subtitles as it allows for the narrator or speaker to be identified but she will leave that to the VAAC committee to decide. Ms. Goldkorn suggested that the ROV contact the Center on Deafness – Inland Empire (CODIE) and Deaf Resource Centre (DRC) to obtain the legal requirements. Ms. Caban shared that the ROV will contact CODIE and Mr. Taylor will contact DRC to inquire what the best practice would be and will update at the next VAAC meeting.

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IV. Recap on November Consolidated General Election (Concerns, Success Stories, Accessibility Issues, etc.)

Ms. Caban shared there was an increase in the use of Accessible Voting Units (AVU) totals for the November 2018 Election. Mr. Taylor asked how the ROV promotes early voting. Ms. Caban shared that the Riverside County Voter Information Guide provides information on early voting. Rebecca Spencer shared that the ROV issues a press release and uses social media and local media to promote early voting and Vote-By-Mail. Mr. Janesin asked if a mailer is sent out to the voters promoting Vote-By-Mail. Ms. Spencer shared that in 2016 a post card was sent out to voters who were not on the permanent Vote-By-Mail list. This increased the total number of absentee voters by 15 percent. Ms. Spencer shared that the ROV will be sending another post card for the 2020 Elections. Ms. Spencer shared that the ROV has issued 750,000 Vote-By-Mail ballots, out of the 1,000,000 registered voters. Feliciano Godoy shared that there were several voters that wanted to drop off their ballots at the Blindness Support Center. Mr. Godoy asked once the early voting sites are completed can the website be updated to avoid this happening for future elections. Ms. Spencer shared that the only way to avoid voters dropping off ballots is to remove the Public Notice from the website. Mr. Janesin suggested Blindness Support Staff allow voters to drop off their ballots and then deliver the ballots to the ROV. Mr. Godoy will speak with Peter Benavidez to see if that could be arranged.

v. Update on State VAAC

Mr. Smith shared that the ROV was unable to attend the State VAAC held on December 5, 2018 due to the certification of the November 2018 Election. Ms. Smith will send the VAAC members the minutes from the State VAAC meeting once they are approved.

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VI. Discussion on Upcoming Elections in 2019

Ms. Caban shared that the first scheduled election in 2019 is the Moreno Valley Unified School District, Trustee Area 5 Special Vacancy Mail Ballot Election. The nomination period began on January 14, 2019 and will continue until February 8, 2019. March 11 - April 3, 2019 is the Write-in candidate filing period. The close of registration for the May 7, 2019 Election is April 22, 2019. The next election is scheduled for June 4, 2019 for the City of Riverside General Municipal Mail Ballot Election and the Palo Verde Community College District Mail Ballot Election. The nomination period begins February 11- March 8, 2019.

VII. Emergency Medical Ballot Procedure Discussion

Mr. Taylor shared that there was an increase in calls from voters that were in medical facilities or convalescent homes that wanted to know how to vote. Mr. Taylor has been working with outside counties to see what their procedures are. Mr. Smith shared the Registrar of Voters receives an updated list of local medical and convalescent facilities that are contacted during each election and sent pamphlets and directions on how to vote and important deadlines. Mr. Smith shared that there has been positive turn outs by doing this. Ms. Spencer stated that 29 days before each election the Registrar of Voters sends local facilities packets with Vote-By-Mail information to be distributed six days before the election. The voters are able to request a ballot that the facility can pick up Monday before the election. The ballot can be dropped off at any polling place. Mr. Taylor shared that he was mainly concerned for voters that were placed in a medical facility unexpectedly days before the election. Mr. Taylor commended the ROV for having contact people at those facilities who are aware of the procedures in order to assist in those situations to help streamline the process.

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VIII. Future of California Elections (FOCE) Conference in Sacramento on April 11, 2019

Ms. Caban shared that the next Future of California Elections (FoCE) Conference will be held on April 11, 2019. Mr. Taylor shared that the schedule will include two panel discussions on issues specific to voters with disabilities. The first panel will cover general outreach and the second panel will cover Medical Emergency Ballot Procedures. Mr. Taylor shared that Rebecca Spencer has agreed to serve on the panel.

IX. Update on the County's Outreach Efforts

Ms. Caban stated that the VAAC members can contact the ROV with any outreach request they would like for us to attend.

X. Discussion on Relevant Legislative Changes to the Disability Community

Ms. Caban discussed three new laws taking effect in 2019. AB-216 will require the ROV to pay postage on all returned ballots. The ROV is currently working on redesigning the ballot envelopes to accommodate this change. AB-1013 covers Remote Accessible Vote-By-Mail which the ROV already utilizes. SB-759 discusses the signature verification process. When the ROV sends out VBM ballots and the ballot is returned without a signature it is then sent back with a statement requesting voter's signature. Mr. Godoy asked if these new laws are for the State of California or just for the County of Riverside. Ms. Caban confirmed that these new laws are for the State of California

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XI. Questions/Comments

The next meeting is scheduled for April 25, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.

XII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.