

**California Secretary of State  
Voter's Choice Task Force**

**Regular Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, April 30, 2026 | 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

1. Welcome, Call to Order: 2:00 p.m.

Roll Call

**Task Force Members Present:** Chair Petrina Branch, Chair Donna Linder, Melvin E. Levey, Matt Moreles, Deanna Kitamura, Carrie Cornwell, Ethan Jones, Gabriel Taylor, Evelyn Mendez, Brittany Stonesifer, Dora Rose, Jesse Salinas  
**Absent:** Ellen Nash, Art Tinoco, Leslie Hernandez, Bob Page, Camila Chavez, Dean Logan

Declaration of Quorum

SOS Josh Robinson declared a quorum was reached.

2. Comments: General Public Items Not on the Agenda

Chair Donna Linder invited public comments. The following comments were made:

No public comments.

3. Discussion and Possible Action: Task Force Meeting Minutes of Apr. 16, 2026

Recommendation for Action: Staff recommend the Task Force adopt the minutes of the meeting of Apr. 16, 2026.

- Ethan Jones noted the need to remove Ethan Jones's & Carrie Cornwell's "aye" votes for the approval of the previous meeting's minutes, as they are non-voting members.

In a motion by Matt Morales, and seconded by Deanna Kitamura, and carried on a 8-0 vote, Task Force members approved the minutes with the correction noted above.

**AYES:** Chair Petrina Branch, Chair Donna Linder, Melvin E. Levey, Matt Moreles, Deanna Kitamura, Evelyn Mendez, Brittany Stonesifer, Dora Rose

**NOES:** None

**ABSTAIN:** Jesse Salinas

**ABSENT for vote:** Ellen Nash, Art Tinoco, Leslie Hernandez, Bob Page, Camila Chavez, Dean Logan

**Gabriel Taylor did not cast a vote.**

#### 4. Review of VoteCal Data Subcommittee

- No notes or comments at this time.

#### 5. Review of the report thus far

- Melvin Levey explained the process for how the consolidated report got to where it is, noting how comments were incorporated and acknowledging that formatting still needs to be finalized.
- Petrina Branch highlighted the last page's note about the Task Force's role in the data report provided to the Legislature; it implies that the Task Force is creating a second report rather than commenting on the data report. This sentence should be reworked for clarity.
- Deanna Kitamura shared that she provided comments for the report that were not incorporated in the version circulated for review for this meeting. SOS staff shared Deanna's comments on screen to review with the Task Force.
  - Page 12: Deanna suggested starting the "Accessibility, Flexibility, and Security" section with the fourth & fifth paragraphs in the section.
  - Pages 14-15: Deanna did not recall the group discussing the listed recommendations collectively.
    - Melvin Levey noted that he pulled together some common threads from Task Force conversations, but this is a springboard for discussion. The 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph was pulled from the "Unusual Nature" part of the report, as he felt it fits well here.
    - Page 14: Deanna asked for clarification about the vote center floor ratios recommendation. Dora Rose explained "floor" here means a minimum standard, not literally a floor in a vote center.
      - Donna Linder suggested it can be called "base" instead of "floor" to reduce confusion.
      - Deanna Kitamura said to change "preserve" to "preserving" to stay grammatically consistent.
  - Page 13: "Fewer vote centers" - it's unclear if that's compared to the polling place model or unique to the Statewide Special Election. Evelyn Mendez affirmed it's the former; that can be clarified in the report.
    - Jesse Salinas also noted that the quick timeline of the Statewide Special also made a unique challenge in hitting the vote center minimums required by VCA, which is where flexibility in VCA was beneficial.

## 6. Public Comment on the report

Chair Donna Linder invited public comments. The following comments were made:

- Rhonda Provost:
  - Page 14's last paragraph "The election produced substantial participation, but turnout alone does not fully answer whether all voters were served equally." This stands out to her, as it shows potentially other goals for VCA besides increasing turnout alone.
  - When an earlier draft of the report was shared in bullet-point form, there was a good deal devoted to language accessibility over voters with disabilities, which would be the perfect candidates for absentee voting if it was more focused on voters with disabilities. Furthermore, she does not see a need for as robust of language offerings, as US citizens should be able to understand English.

## 7. Future Agenda Items and Other Comments: Task Force Members

- Task Force members asked clarification on what the next steps are to get the report finalized on time for the Legislative deadline.
- Matt Morales made a motion to approve the report draft with the changes discussed today and to entrust Melvin Levey to incorporate changes to the report and finalize the formatting. Deanna Kitamura seconded.
  - i. Melvin reviewed the action items discussed in today's meeting that will be incorporated into the report.
  - ii. Chair Donna Linder conducted a verbal call of ayes and nays: all ayes and no opposed. Motion carries.

Next meeting set for May 14, 2026 from 2:00-3:30 p.m.

- Focus: preparing the supplemental report with the VoteCal data. Matt Morales noted that that subcommittee will create a draft to circulate for Task Force review.
- Chair Donna Linder asked for any updates on university data. SOS Josh Robinson noted there is no update at this time.
  - Jesse Salinas noted that if the university data is not available any time soon, there may have to be a second supplemental report to the report. Chair Donna Linder also reminded that we are almost to

the Primary Election, at which time the Task Force will need to prepare another report.

- SOS Josh Robinson noted that SOS will have a better idea about the time frame of the university data by next meeting, as well as a sense of how long the Task Force can submit supplemental reports.
- Jesse Salinas suggested that we should be sensitive to the time intensity of the June Election when scheduling Task Force meetings.
- Public comment from Rhonda Provost: asked for clarification about item 2 on the agenda asking for public comment for items not listed on the agenda. A sentence on the agenda to provide context/examples would be helpful.

## 8. Adjournment

Chair Donna Linder adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.