



SHIRLEY N. WEBER, Ph.D.

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE

Elections Division | 1500 11th Street, 5th Floor | Sacramento, CA 95814
Tel 916.657.2166 | Fax 916.653.3214 | www.sos.ca.gov

Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC)

Wednesday, September 21, 2022, 1:30 p.m.

Meeting minutes

1. Welcome, Call to Order, Roll Call, and Declaration of Quorum

Meeting called to order at 1:35 pm

VAAC members present:

- Dianne Russell
- Fred Nisen
- Jan Bell
- Maria Coronel
- Mary Helen Gallegos
- Veronica Elsea

Quorum was met.

2. VAAC Members Community Outreach Updates

- Maria Coronel: Yolo County has a series of voter outreach workshops on September 26 – 30th 6-7 pm via zoom. They are working on presentations and getting people registered for their VAAC. Reaching out to others for voting.
- Veronica Elsea: Santa Cruz County holding open EAP for comments. They are going to meet to work on what the tasks are and how people with certain disabilities being able to work on election days. Figuring out districts and elections and people wanting to vote more in vote centers. Difficult with reaching out to people in further areas.
- Fred Nisen: Disability Rights California (DRC) has been doing an outreach series in for resources in independence in the Central Valley.

3. SOS Updates

- Office of Voting Systems Technology Assessment (OVSTA)
 - Team testing ES&S 6.3.0.2 system accessibility testing November 2 – 3 in Sacramento, CA.
- Voter's Choice Act (VCA)
 - Rolling out VCA ambassador program to spread word on more

ways to vote using general election tool kits.

4. VAAC Working Groups

- Resource Tool for Voting Machines
 - Veronica Elsea: Looked at training to first find out what the different counties do and have a universal checklist to make sure everyone understands their responsibilities and good talking points to assist voters with disabilities. Looked at what kind of tutorial can be used to help those who have disabilities use the machines to vote. Some of the videos don't match other vendor videos. How can we add a specific section for counties. Going to be talking about RAVBM. Need a checklist for counties to improve training and hands on experience with voting process.
 - Maria Monte de Rey: Asked if the training videos will be captioned or subtitled?
 - Veronica Elsea said they are trying to add captioned and an interpreter as well as audio training videos.
- Petitions/Signature Verification
 - Petitions: Document featured set of questions. How to create a petition act. Veronica Elsea made a list of questions to for SOS to look over.
- County Local VAACs
 - Getting a list of all the county VAACs to put on the websites. Decided to breakdown list to equal counties and do a large email to everyone or to reach out individually. They are doing research to visit their website. A few were hesitant to give out information for but were supportive after explanation. Hopefully share on their websites and able to find information if they move locations.
 - How are you determining to see who is transitioning to the VCA next? Is that the next group you are reaching out to? Reaching out to all the counties at the time. They want to share with people who want to start VAACs there's a tool kit that can help them. They want to get back to with other information.
- VAAC Toolkit
 - Dianne Russell: Updating and adding new info, need to fix issues for accessibility. Going to redo the whole thing to make it also on the web. Next meeting will try to have a draft.
- Deaf or Hard of Hearing
 - Jan Bell: Committee of 2 now with Mary Helen. Confirmed that they will do ASL videos for the November ballot. Reach out to the political parties to do a more accessible videos for those who are hard of hearing and encouraging candidates to do videos with a ASL interpreter with them so they can speak to all

communities. Realized that a county must provide a language, but they have a lack of ASL available. Hard to understand what specific party to vote for with what is available. They are planning to do the videos of interpreters to help with the community. Wanted to make a toolkit to help with this and educate them on why it's important to do these in ASL. Want to reach out to all the parties to make it fair. Will need to regroup about it and reach out to all the parties.

5. Registering and voting by mail while in the Safe at Home program

- Last meeting one of the people who attended was a blind woman and was having a hard time using the forms. They didn't have anything accessible and couldn't sign up for it.
- Heather Sashington: Had issues because all they had was the physical card and plan to address this.
- Santiago: Ballots are sent to safe at home instead of their home to make it confidential. Issues that they know how to get registered and how to receive and read their ballot to vote.

6. [Senate Bill \(SB\) 1480](#)

- Fred Nisen: This agenda item was requested by a group of people upset about the outcome of SB 1480. It would have assisted voters with print disabilities who have difficulty handling the paper ballot and envelope. The Secretary of State opposed it right before the Assembly Elections Committee hearing that was scheduled. Fred Nisen put in the chat a link to the SOS's opposition letter and DRC's response because, at the last VAAC meeting, members didn't know what this was about.

7. Public Comments and Future Agenda Items

- SB 1480
- Monica: Safe at home accessibility
- Veronica Elsea: Continue to add safe at home accessibility on the next agenda and send out possible dates for working groups and have it scheduled.
- Erric Garris: Provide a list to provide updates on where those measures stand and the process.

8. Adjournment