



**ALEX PADILLA** | SECRETARY OF STATE | STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
ELECTIONS DIVISION

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July 1, 2020

**Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee  
(VAAC)**

May 20, 2020, Meeting Minutes

**1. The meeting was called to order at 1:36 p.m.**

Roll was called no quorum was declared due to the meeting being available only by teleconference. The following participants were marked as present:

Committee Members

- Tim McNamara
- Larry Smith
- Courtney Bailey
- Jacob Lesner-Buxton
- Fred Nisen
- Lindsie Verma

Secretary of State Staff

- Adam Quintana  
Election Services Manager
- Steven Carda  
Voter Services Manager
- NaKeshia Robinson  
Senior Election Technology Analyst
- Reina Miller  
Voter Accessibility Coordinator
- Christi Van Eyken  
Elections Analyst

Members of the Public and County Elections Office Staff

- Brittany (ACLU)
- Solano County
- Stanislaus County
- Tulare County
- Fresno County
- Veronica Elsea

**2. VAAC Members Election Updates**

Tim (Los Angeles County)

- Los Angeles have conducted a number of elections since March.
  - Their biggest election was Congressional District 25 which took place on May 12, 2020, currently still wrapping up those results.
- They have lessons learned related to in person voting and COVID-19. More information will be shared during the next VAAC meeting.
- Another election is scheduled in June in 2 jurisdictions, a recall and a ballot measure.
- Their next local VAAC is scheduled for next week.

Larry (Riverside County)

- Had several elections since March, their last one was on May 12, 2020 for a special vacancy.
  - Riverside did all vote by mail for the May 12<sup>th</sup> election.
  - During the May election they had 5 in person centers and 8 drop box locations.
  - More in-depth information will be provided to the Secretary of State's Office.
- They are waiting for mandates from the Governor and the Secretary of State in order to plan for November.

Courtney (Sacramento County)

- Update on American Sign Language (ASL):
  - The Green Party of California has completed their Statement of Purpose in ASL and is posted on their website.
  - The Republican Party is currently working on their Statement of Purpose video.
  - Other parties have not yet responded.
  - Several parties have linked to [signvote.org](http://signvote.org) which is a nonpartisan access point for voters who are deaf and hard of hearing.
- They have met with the California Council of the Blind:
  - They learned that they need to improve their vote-by-mail envelope instructions.
  - Sacramento county is currently working on restructuring the envelope with more clear instructions.

Gail (Santa Cruz County)

- Planning on how to improve their RAVBM outreach. Will be working closely with her local VAAC members to improve awareness of RAVBM.

Jacob

- No updates.

Fred

- There was a fair amount of emergency sample ballots.
- Overall a good primary election.

Lindsie

- No updates.

### **3. Secretary of State Updates**

## **OVSTA**

NaKasha Robinson

- Currently, there are two voting systems in the queue:
  - Los Angeles County VSAP 2.1, which is an update to the current 2.0 version
  - Dominion Democracy 5.10 modification.

- The SOS usually has volunteers participate in testing but due to COVID that is not available at this time.
- There will be testing available for RAVBM mid-summer. Reina will be sending out an invitation.

## **National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) ASL Videos**

### Adam Quintana

- NVRA also known as the Motor Voter Act, plays an important role in elections.
- The SOS is currently working updating all training materials and translating the materials into the 9 Voter Registration Act (VRA) languages. This information will be found on the SOS NVRA webpage.
- The SOS is also filming an ASL video for this training materials.
  - Reina to share the link on where to find this information once posted on the SOS webpage.
- The goal of SOS is to conduct training to all agencies who are part of NVRA but due to COVID-19, the training may need to happen remotely.

## **4. November 2020 Preparations Update**

### Fred Nisen

- What are counties plans for the November 2020 Election after the Governor's Executive Order/Legislation in regard to accessibility?
  - This item will be moved to the next VAAC meeting. Counties are not due to respond until May 30<sup>th</sup>.

## **5. Remote Accessible Vote by Mail (RAVBM) Usage in March**

- Do we have numbers for RAVBM usage?
  - NaKasha responded: Counties are still submitting their numbers. As of today, there were 415 users based on approximately 10 counties. An update will be given during the next meeting.
- Gail shared that Santa Cruz had very few due to not having RAVBM up and running but are working to increase participation in November.
- Numbers have increased since the 2018 election.
- November being all vote by mail will allow RAVBM users to use the envelope included with their ballot.
  - This will assist since many RAVBM users use their own envelopes which therefore requires them to pay for postage.

## 6. County Elections Offices' Websites About RAVBM

### Fred Nisen

- Found that many county election websites are not accessible, and information is unclear.
  - Difficult to differentiate between military and overseas voters and voters with disabilities.
- Would like website to improve for the upcoming November election.
  - Gail commented that in Santa Cruz's County website they have two different webpages.
    - One is [Accessible Voting at Home](#) which explains the RAVBM process
    - The other is under Military or Overseas they refer to RAVBM as [Remote Voting in the Military or Overseas](#).
    - This makes it clearer since they have different rules for submitting.
    - Santa Cruz is welcoming any feedback for their website.
  - Larry commented that Riverside has a [link](#) that they worked with their local VAAC and is also open to feedback.
  - Tim is also open to feedback for their Los Angeles RAVBM [website](#).
  - Gail commented that some counties require a form to be completed versus other counties which allow calling in to request. They may be transitioning to a form for November.

## 7. Public Comments and Future Agenda Items

### Future Agenda Items

- November 2020 Preparations Continued
- Tour of County RAVBM Websites
- 3 Issues Elections Should Keep in Mind Related to Accessibility and COVID

### Public Comments

#### Veronica

- Wants to remind counties that the blind community is having trouble with RAVBM and the county websites.
  - Issues such as having extra windows opened at a time with two ballots or printing extra pages.
  - Many do not have assistance when using the webpage.
  - Counties should keep in mind the ancillary stuff when updating their webpage.
- Will the voting machines being tested in the summer be available in November?
  - NaKasha answered yes and emphasized the importance of having volunteers test out the system and provide their honest feedback.
- Has compiled a long list of things that the blind community is facing with respect to social distancing.
  - Things such as putting circles and arrows on the floor are an issue since they are unable to see where they are.

- Blind dogs are having trouble since dogs have not been taught the social distancing things such as the lines at the doors when people's temperature are being taken.
  - Poll worker training will be needed to assist the blind who cannot comply with social distancing requirements.
  - Next meeting is Wednesday, July 15, 2020 at 1:30 p.m.
- 8. The meeting was adjourned at 2:22 p.m.**