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
- NaKesha 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 12th 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 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

NaKesha 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.
  o 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?
  o This item will be moved to the next VAAC meeting. Counties are not due to respond until May 30th.

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

• Do we have numbers for RAVBM usage?
  o NaKesha 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.
  o 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?
  - NaKesha 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.