

Santa Cruz County
Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee

Thursday, December 22, 2016 – 10:30 a.m.
701 Ocean St. 3rd Floor Elections

MINUTES

In attendance: Gail Pellerin, Veronica Elsea, Jim Davies, Helen Ruiz-Thomas

November 2016 Election Review– Veronica reports phone bank was a bit over staffed. Glad she went to training and is happy she did it. She answered phones and then had someone access the information on the computer. The network did a good job keeping up with access to information. Most calls she answered came from UCSC students regarding their dorm room and people confused about provisional voters.

Overall Veronica thinks a lot of things went right having as few phone calls that came into hotline. The publicity on access to the polls and people being able to get a ride to the polls was successful.

In relation to Veronica's poll site, she was not offered the audio equipment and was given a hard copy ballot. The poll workers wanted to call the elections office but she guided them through the set up.

Feedback regarding casting her vote Veronica shared that for example when there was a "vote no more than four", at the end of voting it didn't register the first time and she had to re-vote it in order to move forward on the ballot. If you didn't at the end of the fourth vote it wouldn't let you continue to the next thing on the ballot.

We can improve on signage at the inside of polling places that have multiple precincts. This would help with direction on where to go next. We are doing our best to have someone on the board that is clear on all aspects of the process and instructions.

March 7 Special Election- Gail reports that there is a Special Election for the Lakeside School District. It is cross jurisdiction with Santa Clara County and they are the lead. All Santa Cruz County voters will receive a vote by mail ballot and we received confirmation from Las Cumbres to be a poll site.

State VAAC- The State VAAC is sending an Election Day accessibility survey around. November State VAAC meeting was cancelled so Gail has no updates.

SB 450- Gail reports the bill becomes law effective January 1st. It talks about vote center model to conduct elections. There are 14 county's identified to implement the model first. Santa Cruz County is not one of the first to try this model. There are things that still need to be addressed such as technology, accessibility, money and security. In addition, there is currently no "accessible" vote by mail ballot available. Gail anticipates this model will be moved into our county by 2020. Our voter statistics show that Santa Cruz County voters are clearly interested in vote by mail ballots.

Veronica has spoken with other visually impaired voters in Oregon and they receive their ballots by email. Gail suggests that maybe they are handled the same as FPAC. We have a long way to go before a streamlined process is complete.

Outreach opportunities in 2017- Members talk and brainstorm ideas on ways to outreach for membership. Ideas include re-connecting with the county Disabilities Commission, attending Disability Awareness Day and low vision expo events and the San Andreas Regional Center.

VAAC Membership- Gail would like to expand and include language accessibility. Members agree to change the name from Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee to Voting and Language Accessibility Committee. Members suggest that we reach out to current members to talk about if they plan to continue attending. There is a suggestion to place an advertisement for recruitment. Helen reports she was busy with the election and will follow up with Hope Services in January.

Meeting Schedule For 2017

Thursday, March 16 at 10:30am

Thursday, June 15 at 10:30am

Thursday, September 14 at 10:30am