

Santa Cruz County

Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Minutes

In attendance: Gail Pellerin, Jaime Young, Inger Christenson, Lynn Stipes, Peter Heylin, Michael Molesky, Charles Stone, Amy Sheppard.

I. Introductions:

New member; Lynn Stipes, Program Coordinator – Poll Workers

II. Elections:

November 2013: small election went smoothly. No accessibility issues reported.

One equipment issue early in the morning, resolved.

June 2014: reviewed election schedule and polling place needs.

III. Polling Places:

The electronic survey machines that we had hoped to use will not be able to meet our requirements. They are not capable of saving measurements, so we will need to work with paper or find another alternative. Jaime to explore using Ipads or some other similar device and work with ISD. \$30,000 grant for survey equipment may be able to be re-allocated to help cover cost.

We will survey all current and perspective polling places and updating site specific binders. We will need to hire more surveyors for the process. Gail will email the recruitment announcement out to VAAC members when it becomes available. We hope to start training new recruits in January 2014.

Jaime is still working on a Polling Place Recognition Program. Michael suggested we tie it into National Voter Registration Day, or some other advertised pre-established voting day. Gail suggested having the Board of Supervisors do a Proclamation for recognized polling places.

HAVA monies are running out. There could possibly be some monies available from other counties who have not used their allocations.

IV. State VAAC

SOS has produced, with Jaime's input, a very nice video to help with Polling Place surveyor training.

COVR II is being produced to deal with, among other things, the significant accessibility issues. The roll-out date was not currently available.

Survey of voters with disabilities had very few responses (only about 100 statewide). They are looking at doing it again in 2014 hoping to reach more people to get a better response. Some outreach suggestions were given. Michael suggested contacting senior programs and other agencies that help with hidden disabilities.

Peter will attend the Abilities Expo tomorrow in San Jose. He said they showcase lots of great “toys” and equipment. Amy mentioned that a large problem with access equipment is the high expense. Most people can’t afford it.

V. Future of California Elections:

Voter language access: Still waiting on more information from state about exact locations and dialects for new languages. SOS is waiting until all counties supply complete data before releasing more specific requirements to the counties.

Voting Options: Gail mentioned a large VBM research project is part of the focus. There was discussion of an accessible van for use by voters on Election Day. Gail requested more information on the cost and application of this for past elections. Peter will look into the availability of a used accessible van for the county to purchase for this but we need to find out if that is possible under the County’s rules. Inger suggested that we advertise the availability of the van on TV as well as other venues. Michael M. suggested we make a brief presentation about our transportation program to the EDTAC meeting and possibly partnering with them in a 5310 grant, but we would need to contact Karina Pushnik for more information at 460-3210.

VI. New Language Requirements for Santa Cruz

Santa Cruz must add Chinese and Tagalog.

CA has 9 languages required by some jurisdictions: English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Khmer, Thai, Hindi, and Tagalog. Los Angeles also has Bengali and Gujarati and 3 locally required languages.

VII. Voter Registration Updates:

SOS has new voter outreach regulations. Santa Cruz has a plan, and it will be submitted in January. Questions were raised regarding budgeting of plan, Gail said it is included in the budgeted position for voter registration and outreach.

Michael suggested we look into getting voter registration integrated with signing up for utilities. Peter will look into getting a link to voter registration on the Commission on Disabilities web site.

VIII. Future Agenda Items:

Voter transportation options.

Future meetings will be held on the 3rd Thursday of the 2nd month of each quarter.

Dates for 2014 are:

Thursday, February 20, 2014

Thursday, May 15, 2014

Thursday, August 21, 2014

Thursday, November 20, 2014