

MINUTES OF THE NEVADA COUNTY ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT

Voter Accessibility Committee

2:00 P.M. Tuesday, August 29, 2017
Providence Mine Rooms
Rood Center
250 Maidu Avenue, Nevada City, California

Voter Accessibility

AGENDA

A. INTRODUCTIONS / OTHER VOICES

Staff: Greg Diaz, Teal Caddy, Janice Gosalvez, Kristin Kopec, Kristian Hamilton

James Schwab, David Briggs, Carl Sigmond, Dora Rose, Mary Ann Townsend, Jana Lean, Jo Ann Rebane, Camille Hald, Bob Branstrom

Copies of SB450/VCA flyer and agendas were provided to attendees.

Due to the circumstances of the meeting we were not able to identify all of the attendees who spoke at the meeting; therefore, all speakers will be identified as "attendee" hereinafter.

B. VOTER'S CHOICE ACT OVERVIEW

Presented by Teal Caddy

Teal goes over what the Voter's Choice Act (VCA) is:

1. The California Voter's Choice Act, SB450, is designed to help people vote more easily and is dependent upon public input.
2. Every voter receives a vote-by-mail ballot
 - a. The ballot can be mailed
 - b. The ballot can be put in drop boxes around Nevada County
 - c. The ballot can be exchanged for a ballot than be voted at a vote center
 - d. Voters can sign up for a facsimile ballot that they can fill out via their computer at home, through Democracy Live and mail or fax to the Elections Office.
3. Two committees are to be developed with participation from the public. The Voter Accessibility Committee (VAC) and the Language Accessibility Committee (LAC). The

voices that will be heard in the committee will help the Elections Department create a plan that allows the VCA to reach all eligible voters with voters who have accessibility issues, need voter information, or voter information in another language.

C. REQUIREMENTS OF THE VCA REGARDING THE VAC

Presented by Teal Caddy

Teal goes over the accessibility requirements of the VCA in Elections Code 4005.

In addition:

1. A Voter Education and Outreach plan submitted to the Secretary of State will include direction from the VAC.
2. The administration plan will be posted on the internet in a format that is accessible to persons with disabilities.

D. HOW THE ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT IT PREPARED TO MEET THE VCA REQUIREMENTS

Presented by Teal Caddy

Vote Centers

1. If a voter is unable to vote the vote by mail ballot that will arrive in the mail, the voter has the ability to vote at a vote center (any voter may vote in person at a vote center) during the vote center's open hours.
2. Each vote center will have 3 voter accessible machines (Hart Intercivic eSlate) that are equipped with audio and can take input from jelly switches or a sip-and-puff device.

Voting Accessibility

1. If a voter has a disability preventing them from filling out a paper ballot, or using an accessible voting machine at a vote center, the voter has the ability to complete a ballot using Democracy Live.
2. The ballot is put into the envelope that was sent with their vote by mail ballot or can even be faxed or emailed into the Elections Office.

Drop Box

1. Vote centers and ballot dropoff locations will be placed using a map (that will be created by the County of Nevada General and Information Services Department).
2. The map will be specifically created to touch on the 14 requirements of the VCA.

Mobile vote center

1. Mobile vote centers allow Election Staff to reach more voters by having a voting location close by.
2. The voting equipment will be brought to various locations to reach voters, who might not have been able to vote.
3. Possible locations: accessibility organizations, senior centers, college campuses, or geographically isolated areas.

E. PUBLIC COMMENT / QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

An attendee asked if the county will have a truck that goes around as a mobile vote center. Teal said the Nevada County Elections Department (hereinafter referred to as “we”) doesn’t know exactly what it will look like but it will function the same way. It may just be a truck full of voting equipment that we set up briefly in a room at the destination. Teal wanted it to be accessible, and if it’s in a truck it might not be accessible. Greg Diaz said that we have done them in the past, and it was a good thing they did, so he wants to segue on that experience.

An attendee was asked to test it the Democracy Live software. It worked well but his biggest concern was that it was clear that it was designed for the ballot to be printed and mailed. Teal said that it can also be faxed. Their feedback is that it would be good to develop a digital way of submitting it. James Schwab, Secretary of State’s office, said that it is an ongoing debate and that a lot of the people in the cybersecurity world are afraid of the dangers of sending a voted ballot (digitally), even absent of nefarious intent, that something may get lost in transmission. In the case of states where you can send it your ballot by email, like Alaska, you have sign away on it saying you know that your ballot may be lost in transmission. There are people working on the best way to do it though, because email is the most convenient way.

An attendee commented on how great looking and functional Nevada County’s website is. It would be really helpful though if there was a dedicated voters with disabilities page, just to promote general accessibility accommodations we make that other people may not know about.

The same attendee said that the people in the room are really going to come into play for siting voting locations and drop off locations because we don’t necessarily have great data on where voters with disabilities are.

The same attendee said in relation to public transportation, that yes we can find out where public transportation routes are, but we should ask people what their experience is using it. For example, someone can get a ride to a vote center but there is a two hour lag time before they can get picked up again. So in that case it would be very inconvenient but not immediately obvious.