

# PLACER COUNTY ELECTIONS OFFICE

## Placer County Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting

### Dec. 7, 2023 Meeting Minutes

**Date:** 12-07-23

**Time:** 2:00PM – 2:59PM

**Location:** Training Room, Placer County Elections Office, 3715 Atherton Road, Rocklin, CA 95765

#### **Present In-Person:**

- VAAC Member Alexa Gurrero (PEERS)
- Elections Staff Ryan Ronco, Philip Chantri, Tina Belding, Marcus Smith, Oscar Mancilla, Ali Sherazee, Leslie Rostron, Lisa Cramer, Melissa Gee
- CRE Office PIO Stacy Robinson
- IT Staff Aaron Fleming

#### **Present Online:**

- VAAC Members Barbara Smith (Placer County Democratic Party Central Committee), Fred Nisan (Disability Rights California)

### **Minutes**

#### **I. Elections Staff/Attendee Introductions**

- Attendees were welcomed and thanked for their participation.
- VAAC members and Elections staff introduced themselves.

#### **II. Presentations – Mr. Chantri**

##### **Committee Updates**

##### **• Staffing**

- The County has officially opened the portals on the job website for Election Aide and Senior Election Aide positions. Nearly 350 applicants have completed the application to-date.
- The Service Club program is back; currently, 12 clubs are in touch with the Elections Office about working the 2024 Primary.
- All members must pass a background check and go through training.
- So far, 9 four-day vote centers are set to be staffed with service clubs.
- Mr. Nisen asked how much the county pays a service club. Mr. Chantri answered that if the service clubs commit to staffing an entire vote center (10 people) for four days and every member completes the background check and attend training, the amount is \$4,000.
- The Elections Office doesn't currently have any clubs that have volunteered for eleven-day centers.

- **Voter Information Guides and Sample Ballot Pages Drafts**
  - The VIG pages are not ready to be presented at the December meeting but cannot be held until the January meeting, as that will be too late.
  - VAAC members will be sent a PDF packet of the completed draft within the next few days and are asked to provide feedback.
  - The new VIG will be combined for all major parties; there will no longer be VIGs with cover pages specific to political parties.
  - Certain pages are mandatory for all VIGs, but there are filler pages for those that don't have specific measures, candidate statements, etc.
  - Pages included:
    - table of contents
    - message from Ryan Ronco explaining changes
    - Voters Choice Act
    - Explanation regarding "top two primary"
    - all dates, times, and addresses of vote centers and drop boxes
    - candidate statements/arguments/rebuttals
    - list of candidates who agreed to expenditure limits
    - party endorsements page
    - language assistance pages
    - what to do if you damage or make a mistake on your ballot
    - AB626 info
    - accessibility in vote centers and Remote Accessible Vote-By-Mail
    - important dates
    - BallotTrax (i.e., Where's My Ballot?)
    - frequently asked questions
    - links and information
    - how to opt out of receiving a county VIG
    - Elections website
    - how to sign up for Advisory Committees
    - military and overseas ballots
    - Voter Bill of Rights
    - running for office
    - quick reference calendar
    - serving at a vote center for the General Election
    - how we select vote centers
    - an electoral college filler page
    - voters can vote in person at any of the 29 locations
- Mr. Nisen asked by what time the Elections Office wanted feedback; Mr. Chantri answered it was preferred by December 22<sup>nd</sup>.

### **Voter Information Guide Workshops**

- "Placer County Voter Education Week"

- Agenda points briefly gone over
- Voter Education Week: dates and times for each language shared
  - Jan. 22 – 26 (livestreamed and in person)

### **III. Presentation – Mr. Fred Nisen: Voting Rights Under a Conservatorship**

- California uses the term “conservatorship” for what many states call a “guardianship”. A court-appointed conservator manages the affairs of a person, the conservatee, whom the court has declared unable to properly care for their personal needs.
- Unless the court has specifically taken away the right to vote, a conservatee who is otherwise eligible to vote may still register to vote and vote.
- The ACLU sponsored, and Disability Rights California supported, SB 589 clarifies that a person’s right to register to vote is not dependent on their ability to independently fill out a voter registration card.
- Before a court can remove the voting right of a conservatee, it must have clear and convincing evidence that they cannot communicate, with or without reasonable accommodations, a desire to participate in the voting process.
- To see if a court removed a conservatee’s voting rights, look at the court order establishing the conservatorship (Form GC-340).
- A conservatee can wait until the court’s regular review of the conservatorship and make a request to the court investigator that their voting rights be restored. However, these reviews are rarely performed in a timely manner (often 1 to 2 years).
- If someone wants to have their voting rights restored immediately, they may contact the court directly and request a review of their right to vote. The person may contact Disability Rights California for assistance with this.
- Unless the person is found incapable of communicating their desire to vote, with or without reasonable accommodation, the person’s voting rights shall be restored, and the Court shall notify the Secretary of State and the county elections official.
  - Ryan Ronco asked if the court will also notify the county elections official when the conservatee’s right are being taken away, mentioning that in his 30 years in elections, he’s never received such a notification.
  - Mr. Nisan answered that phone lists are sent out, but it’s a rare occurrence. He confirmed that it’s a Superior Court that would be sending those.
  - Mr. Ronco asked if it would be alright for the Elections Office to borrow material from the presentation for their website, and Mr. Nisen agreed.

### **IV. Questions and Answers**

- Mr. Nisen asked what about someone who came to a vote center needing assistance in a language for which Placer County doesn’t provide an interpreter.
  - Mr. Chantri answered that all vote centers have a language line on their county-issued cell phone that provides about 57 languages.
- Fred asked what a similar option for ASL would be.

- Mr. Chantri answered he wasn't sure if the language line had options for that, but that ASL was an option in the office, with use of a tablet, so if smartphones are used in vote centers, that might be an option in vote centers.
- Ms. Guerrero asked what kind of accessibility training was done for election staff, if any.
  - Mr. Chantri answered that training is provided for all election staff, though it was still being finalized and would be brought back to the committee for review.
- Ms. Guerrero said she would be happy to offer her own presentation if it would be helpful; she has one she does for police officers, schools, etc.
  - Mr. Chantri said he would love to get the materials and see the presentation at the next meeting.
- Fred mentioned he would like to train the trainers
  - Mr. Chantri said he was ok with that.

#### **V. Future Agenda Items/Meeting Schedule**

- Mr. Chantri welcomed all members to send ideas to the Elections Office.
- Mr. Nisen said he had been doing research on ASL and had accumulated some materials to learn more about it.
  - Mr. Chantri asked Fred to send them to the Elections Office at least 72 hours before the next meeting.
- Next meeting will be Jan. 4<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Close of Meeting**