

MINUTES OF THE NEVADA COUNTY ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT Voter Education and Outreach Committee Meeting

9:30 A.M. Tuesday, August 29, 2017
Providence Mine Rooms
Rood Center
250 Maidu Avenue, Nevada City, California

Voter Education and Outreach

AGENDA

A. INTRODUCTIONS / OTHER VOICES

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

Claudia Taylor, Helen Hall, David Briggs, Doug Bianchi, Judy Price, Carroll Kuczora, Bob Branstrom, Hilary Hodge, Camille Hald, Pau Spencer, Janice Bedayn, Fran Freedle, Mary Ann Townsend, Carl Sigmond, Chris Casey, Dora Rose, Bill Wasil, Jo Ann Rebane

Copies of SB 450/VCA flyers 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 Kristin Kopec

Kristin explains what Nevada County Elections (hereinafter referred to as "we") has done in the past and what we will be doing going forward

1. The VCA will make it so every registered voter will be receiving a vote by mail ballot.
2. We will have a much smaller amount of vote centers than we did poll centers. We will have two open ten days before the election. Any voter from any county can vote their ballot or receive a paper ballot. Starting three days before the election we will have five additional locations open during normal business hours and those will be strategically placed in the county. We are trying to figure locations out right now, strategically placed based on elections code.
3. There will be drop off boxes starting 28 days before the election in our county we are required 5 drop off boxes, and have to be open 8 hours a day, one of them will be 24 hours. We have criteria to strategically place them.

4. Wanted to touch on Conditional Voter Registration. Previously, to be eligible you have to be registered or receive the registration 15 days before the election. Now people will be able to registered and be able to receive a conditional voter registration envelope. People will be able to submit their registration and a ballot that will be processed later on.
5. We are required to do an Election Administration Plan to submit to the Secretary of State (“SOS”). It explains how we are going to do this, where our drop off locations are going to be, where our vote centers are going to be, and what we are going to do for education and outreach.
6. We will be having meetings to get input from our committees and community in the future.

C. GOALS FOR VOTER EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Presented by Kristian Hamilton

Kristian explains goals for voter education and outreach

1. It’s important that we are able to distill this bill into a few easily digestible points. So we’ve come up with list of goals for education and outreach.
2. It’s important to frame these points so people can have an easier time understanding the VCA. Thinking of the VCA as a modernization of the voting process is a good starting point.
3. We wanted to establish that every registered voter will be receiving a vote by mail ballot regardless of having signed up for one.
4. Some people are going to get hung up because they want to vote in person but think because they get a VBM ballot they can’t.
5. Another point is to establish that at any vote center you can: vote in person, drop off your ballot, or receive a replacement ballot. A concern might be that some people are afraid of receiving a VBM ballot too early and then losing it, and thinking that they won’t be able to vote anymore.
6. We want to establish that you can vote at any vote center you want 10 days before the election through Election Day.
7. Our next point is to establish that ballots can be returned by mail, at a vote center, or at any official drop-off location.

D. REQUIREMENTS FOR EDUCATION AND OUTREACH BY THE VCA

Presented by Kristian Hamilton

Kristian explains the requirements in the VCA for education and outreach for the purposes of the committee

1. We need to use media to reach the community. These include social media, radio, and periodicals.

2. We are required to have a community presence, that part of what we are doing at this meeting.
3. We are required to provide accessible ballots and reach the disability community. We are required to give at least one workshop to increase accessibility and participation of eligible voters with disabilities. The media outreach we need to do has to be accessible.
4. We are required to have two additional direct contacts to voters via mailings.

E. PUBLIC COMMENT / QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

An attendee had a concern that vote center hours of operations would not be convenient for people who work. Kristin Kopec responded that it is required in code to have those normal business hours of operation, but again they will be open Saturday and Sunday to cover people who work during the work week. There is also early voting in the Nevada County Election's office.

The same attendee was concerned about vote integrity and that the changes increase the margin for error. Kristin explains that we've been using the same processes in our office, and that we know how to ensure that one person votes one ballot.

The same attendee's last question was about the connectivity of counties within California. Greg Diaz explained that in 2016 California instituted VoteCal. VoteCal is a statewide registration database. With the advent of VoteCal, instead of only being able to look at a single county's registered voter we can look at them all. Each vote center will have connectivity to VoteCal. We will know what you did in other counties in near real time.

An attendee asked if the data that is going to the state is transferred immediately and how are we doing that. Greg Diaz explained that it is in near-real-time, it's very quick from VoteCal.

An attendee asked if the vote centers will be accessible from public transportation. Kristin explained that that is one of our criteria and we are taking it into consideration. We are looking at 14 different factors required by code.

An attendee had a concern that when laws are made in Sacramento they do not translate well to our county. Many parts of Nevada County do not have access to public transportation, and was concerned Elections will center everything on public transportation and disenfranchise our most rural community members. They stated how we really need to be concerned about rural community members. Greg Diaz responded we have a pretty good idea of the lay of the land here, we understand the demographics. The EAP is going to take into account Nevada County's unique challenges; everything is going to be presented to the public for feedback.