



**Orange County Registrar of Voters**  
**COMMUNITY ELECTION WORKING GROUP**  
**FEBRUARY 9, 2017**  
**SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA**

CEW Chair Lucinda Williams called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

Present:

CEW Chair, Lucinda Williams, City Clerk, City of Fullerton  
Karen Hamman, Director of Community Relations/City Clerk, City of Mission Viejo  
Theresa Bass for Linda Andal, City Clerk, City of Anaheim  
Molly McLaughlin, City Clerk, City of Irvine  
Deanna Kitamura, Supervising Attorney, Asian Americans Advancing Justice, L.A.  
Tim Cheng, Commissioner, Irvine Community Services  
Charles Kim, President, inter-Community Action Network (iCAN)  
Phong Ly, Union of Vietnamese Student Associations, past President of So. California  
Ofelia Medina, Director of State Civic Engagement Policy, NALEO  
Elizabeth Campbell, Systems Change Advocate, Dayle McIntosh Center  
Debra Marsteller, Executive Director, Project Independence  
Gabriel Taylor, Voting Rights Advocate  
Judith Barnes, Senior Community Representative  
Anna Jimenez Plank, Poll Worker Representative  
Suzanne Narducy, Poll Worker Representative  
Fran Sdao, Chair, Democratic Party of Orange County  
Julian Babbit, Executive Director, Republican Party of Orange County  
Wanda Shaffer, Representative, League of Women Voters of OC  
Alexander Williams, Youth Representative  
Lyle Brakob, Veterans Affairs Representative  
CEW Vice-Chair, Steven W. Spillman, Chairman, Mission Viejo Planning and  
Transportation Commission  
Angie Blas, At-Large Representative  
Justin Berardino, Operations Manager, Registrar of Voters  
Ben Hamatake, Community Outreach Manager, Registrar of Voters  
Imelda Carrillo, Election Services Manager, Registrar of Voters  
CEW Secretary, Marcia Nielsen, Interim Candidate and Voter Services Manager,  
Registrar of Voters  
Neal Kelley, Registrar of Voters

**WELCOME AND APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 22, 2016 CEW MEETING MINUTES /  
ELECTION OF MEMBERS WITH DECEMBER 2016 EXPIRING TERMS / ELECTION  
OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR / OTHER HOUSEKEEPING / REGISTRAR OF VOTERS,  
NEAL KELLEY (CHAIR & VICE CHAIR)**

CEW Chair Lucinda Williams welcomed the group and led the self-introductions. She then called for review and approval of the meeting minutes from our September 22, 2016 meeting. Molly McLaughlin made a MOTION to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Karen Hamman and APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY. She welcomed Phong Ly, past President of Union of Vietnamese Student Associations, Southern California; Angie Blas, an at-large representative; Julian Babbit from the Republican Party; and Alexander Williams, a youth representative, to the group. They will each serve two-year terms. She also welcomed Patti Chikahisa, a visitor from the League of Women Voters. She announced that several members whose terms expired December 31, 2016, have agreed to serve additional two-year terms. These members are: Karen Hamman, Molly McLaughlin, Ofelia Medina, Tim Cheng, Charles Kim, Anna Jimenez Plank, and Debra Marsteller. Molly McLaughlin made a MOTION to approve the renewal of the expired terms, which was seconded by Charles Kim and APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY. These new terms are now set to expire December 31, 2018, and will be updated on our website. Molly McLaughlin nominated Lucinda Williams as Chair; Steven Spillman nominated himself to continue as Vice-Chair. Fran Sdao made a MOTION to approve the nomination of both Chair and Vice-Chair, which was seconded by Wanda Shaffer and APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

### **OVERVIEW OF VOTE CENTER CONCEPT AND DETAILS ON REQUIREMENTS**

Neal Kelley discussed Vote Centers, describing the changes that will take place over the next 18 months. He added that he wants feedback from the group, and that our staff will be following up with CEW members to get their input and address concerns, which is an important part of the process.

Neal Kelley explained that the SB450 Voters Choice Act is a part of a sweeping collection of election reforms designed to improve the voter experience. He noted that in 2002, there were only 22,000 Permanent Vote-by-Mail voters in Orange County. Since legislation has changed to allow any voter to become a Permanent Vote-by-Mail voter, there are now almost one million Permanent Vote-by-Mail voters, representing a 4,500% increase. He added that SB450 significantly reduces the number of polling places required by consolidating sites into Vote Centers. This allows for better access and larger sites for several days - not just one day. Neal Kelley stated Vote Centers will potentially roll out in 14 counties in California in 2018. He emphasized that the voter has options: dropping off a ballot or voting at a Vote Center. He is still working toward the long-term goal of legislation to allow disabled voters to vote independently at home.

Neal Kelley briefly discussed conditional voter registration, which allows voters to register and vote at the same time. This will be possible at our office and possibly one other site. With Vote Centers, Orange County voters can go to any site to cast a ballot. Although we are not automatically moving to Vote Centers, we are in the process of developing a Draft Plan which includes a plan for equipment in addition to a massive plan for outreach. He noted that our current voting system is at the end of life. Currently, there are three voting systems working towards certification for the Vote Center concept. Neal Kelley declared that we may have to use our equipment once more.

Neal Kelley reviewed the dates for Vote Centers, beginning with E-29 which is the drop date for all of the Vote-by-Mail ballots. From E-10 through E-5, there would be a Vote Center for every 50,000 voters, which would be 32 based on current registration figures. From E-4 through Election Day, there would be a Vote Center for every 10,000 voters, which would be 152, based on the same registration figures.

Neal Kelley illustrated the locations of Vote Centers as well as Ballot Drop-off Boxes with a heat map. He discussed the difficulty in obtaining sites for multiple dates, adding that we may utilize "pop up" voting as a mobile solution, which we did at UCI in November. The hours mirror the hours of a polling place, 7:00 am to 8:00 pm in the last four days prior to an election. The requirements for bilingual assistance in each vote center was mentioned. We will make certain that this is covered, whether in person or by phone. It may be only in targeted locations.

Neal Kelley detailed ballot drop box specifics, stating that there would be a secure box for every 15,000 voters. He emphasized that we would like to have motion capture cameras in every drop box, which the boxes in Washington, Colorado, and Oregon do not have. Also, we would like to have the ability to limit the number of ballots dropped off at one time. He noted that AB1961 changed who can drop off ballots. Previously, only family and household members can drop off ballots; now anyone can do so. He added that many of the drop boxes will be permanently located; others will be dropped before an election. There is an increase in the number of ballots dropped off at the polls, indicating that voters prefer handing ballots over with a chain of custody rather than dropping ballots off at the Post Office. The boxes would have a closing locking device and would be wrapped to eliminate maintenance. The ballots would need to be picked up daily but not tallied until 8:00 pm on Election Day. Neal Kelley illustrated the distribution of drop off locations. He stated that there would be a minimum of three accessible devices at each Vote Center.

Security was the next topic discussed by Neal Kelley. He said that a Vote Center is more secure than a regular polling place because of the checks and balances possible with near real-time updates in e-poll books. A poll worker would be able to determine if a voter has already cast a ballot; whereas, this is not possible under our current system. This would significantly decrease the number of provisional ballots.

Neal Kelley stated that we are working on the Draft Plan for Vote Centers. This briefing document will consist of three components: 1) Vote Center placement, 2) Drop box placement, and 3) Outreach plan. The Plan won't be ready until April, as we do not yet have the Secretary of State's regulations. There is also a 14-day public comment period. Neal Kelley added that we will hold public meetings to consider the Draft Plan, indicating that there would be an additional 14 days of public comments if changes are made. The Draft Plan will be submitted to the Secretary of State's office, who must act within 14 days. They have 120 days to make reasonable changes.

Neal Kelley next reviewed the advantages and disadvantages of Vote Centers. The advantages are significant, making voting more convenient for voters, allowing them more time to vote and flexibility in selecting where they would like to vote within the county. Voters will be mailed their vote-by-mail ballots on E-29 but can drop off their

ballots at any secure drop box in the county. There would be significantly fewer polling places, which would be less expensive. Currently, we have approximately 1,150 polling places; with Vote Centers, we would need only 150 sites. The number of workers would also be reduced from 10,000 to between five to seven workers for 150 sites. Another advantage of Vote Centers is the ability to drop off ballots; voters have several convenient locations and would be able to drive through in many areas. Also, the employees would be county workers and would be trained for a week, not a few hours. Another advantage is the reduction in the number of provisional ballots and the time required to process these ballots. With the E-poll book solution, the Vote Center workers would be able to determine if the voter has already cast a ballot. Neal Kelley added that there would be reduced costs with Vote Centers, and that accessibility would be improved, as most homes are not ADA compliant. Lastly, the Vote Centers in Colorado reflected a three percent increase in voter turnout.

Neal Kelley continued by discussing the challenges to Vote Centers. The first challenge is educating voters on this new process and changing voter behavior. Vote Centers would be located in highly visible sites including City Halls, libraries, and empty retail spaces, so the change should not be too difficult. We are using data from OCTA, Caltrans, and the Census, creating a scoring matrix to determine the best locations for the sites and drop boxes. Adjusting for peak demand time and servicing the drop boxes are additional considerations.

### **2016 VOTE CENTER PILOT; DATA FROM PROJECT AND LESSONS LEARNED**

AnnaSophia Servin reported on the Vote Center Pilot Program in 2016. She stated that we implemented SB450 specifics for the November General Election, hitting as many points as possible to establish best practices for future elections. She thanked the City Clerks for their support in providing facilities and staffing, which played a significant role in the success of early in-person voting at Vote Centers. She discussed multiple check-in stations and drive-through options in Mission Viejo and Irvine, which were very popular.

AnnaSophia Servin next reviewed the staffing and extensive customer service training for Vote Center personnel. She provided specifics for the group and explained that staff was prepared to process voters and solve problems. She noted that bilingual language staff went through this training and were tested for language skills. She added that phone language support was available if needed. AnnaSophia Servin stated that we will explore the possibility of having experienced staff work with the Extra Help staff in the future. She described the check-in process with immediate registration verification and real-time access to the database. There were actually less than 100 provisional ballots cast at these sites. She discussed ways to improve the bottlenecks at the initial check-in, including the use of tablets for help with line management. AnnaSophia Servin announced that we received positive feedback from the Vote Center pilot program.

### **DRAFT PLAN “PLANS” FOR 2018 VOTE CENTER IMPLEMENTATION; SELECTION PROCESS FOR VOTE CENTER LOCATIONS; VOTER OUTREACH PLANS**

Imelda Carrillo then discussed the draft planning and issues that we are actively working on, including ballot security, e-poll books, the location selection process, the outreach

plan, lessons learned, and budget concerns. She believes that this experience has given us an edge and experience on what to expect. Imelda Carrillo explained the two public meeting requirements of SB450 and discussed the review periods before the plan is revised if necessary, and the plan is sent to the Secretary of State's office.

She next reviewed the selection process for Vote Center implementations, inclusive of public transportation, population centers, language minority communities, low-income communities, rates of household vehicle ownership, and communities with historically low Vote-by-Mail use, accessibility and traffic patterns. She stated that creating partnerships with the City Halls, libraries, Post Offices, Park and Rides, Police Stations, School District offices, and retail locations will be critical.

Ben Hamatake discussed Vote Center Implementation and outreach. He stated that the active participation in outreach programs, including Surf the Vote, concerts, speaking engagements, multiple day festivals, and over 100 other events in 2016 paved the way Vote Centers. We campaigned with every outreach method, such as paid advertising, public service announcements, print media, social media, speakers' bureaus, and town hall meetings. He added that we are looking forward to partnering with City Clerks. Ben Hamatake stated that we are interested in utilizing electronic message boards at such locations as Anaheim Stadium and the Convention Center, although this has not yet been developed. He discussed the challenges of retaining a site for the entire 10-day time period prior to an election, such as churches or police stations. Neal Kelley said that he is open to the idea of working with transportation services for those that aren't able to make it to a site without assistance.

#### **VOTER DATA AND TRENDS THAT SUPPORT VOTE CENTER CONCEPT; OPERATIONAL COSTS AND SECURITY**

Justin Berardino discussed trends in the increase of Vote-by-Mail voting in General Elections. Conversely, he stated, there has been a decrease in voting at polling places and an increased use of provisional ballots. Justin Berardino displayed historical graphs, noting the increase of voters dropping off their Vote-by-Mail ballots at polling places which grew from 80,000 in the June Presidential Primary to 140,000 in the November General Election. He emphasized that voters valued convenience. There was a discussion on the specifics of e-poll books and security. Neal Kelley appreciated the feedback and added that the Secretary of State's office is currently working on regulations for e-poll books. He said that there will be a gap between the check-in process and the voting process, and stated that the voter data is encrypted.

Neal Kelley next reviewed capital expenses and the differences between the traditional model and the Vote Center model. He explained that the Ballot on Demand system will be significantly less expensive. Unfortunately, there are no funding mechanisms in place to fund a voting system replacement. There is a bill on the Governor's desk, but Neal Kelley said it is not known if he will sign it. If not, the funds will come out of property taxes. There would also be a reduction of Extra Help employees within our office, reducing the staffing required to serve at polling places. He added that we have been anticipating this change, and have been planning for the last five years. He stated that five million dollars have already been set aside for a new voting system.

**DISCUSSION ON NEXT STEPS; VOTING SYSTEM RFP AND TIMELINES**

Neal Kelley next discussed the briefings with the Board of Supervisors and the state delegates. He announced that he will appear before the Board of Supervisors on May 9. An RFP will be ready to go if the Board approves the transition to Vote Centers. If the Board of Supervisors does not approve, we will start over with the traditional model. Neal Kelley believes that California is ready to switch to Vote Centers, as voters' behavior is moving toward this concept on its own. Neal Kelley briefly explained the critical timelines relating to Vote Centers. A discussion on how the CEW group could show support for Vote Centers was productive. He added that our office is mailing out 50,000 surveys for feedback on voters' experience at Vote Centers in November. He then said our office would provide verbiage for signs when the marketing plan is developed. There was also a discussion on double voting and California's role if we joined a multi-state consortium that could determine if voters voted in different states at the same election. He also mentioned remote accessible systems that could allow disabled voters to mark their ballots at home and return the ballots to a Vote Center.

Neal Kelley stated that there is not currently a date for the next meeting, but that he will email the group when this has been determined.

CEW Chair Lucinda Williams made a MOTION to adjourn, which was seconded by Ben Hamatake and APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting concluded at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia Nielsen, Secretary