



**Orange County Registrar of Voters**

**COMMUNITY ELECTION WORKING GROUP  
MARCH 5, 2015  
SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA**

Chair Lucinda Williams called the meeting to order at 9:35 am.

Present:

CEW Chair Lucinda Williams, City Clerk, City of Fullerton  
Karen Hamman, City Clerk, City of Mission Viejo  
Theresa Bass, Assistant City Clerk, City of Anaheim  
Molly McLaughlin, City Clerk, City of Irvine  
Zeke Hernandez  
Debra Marsteller, Executive Director, Project Independence  
Judith Barnes, Senior Community Representative  
Anna Jimenez Plank, Poll Worker Representative  
Suzanne Narducy, Poll Worker Representative  
Henry Vandermeir, Chair, Democratic Party of Orange County  
Jennifer Shawver, Election Integrity Project  
Marina Munoz, Election Integrity Project (Guest)  
Wanda Shaffer, Representative, League of Women Voters of OC  
Victoria Chenevey, Representative, League of Women's Voters of OC (Guest)  
Lyle Brakob, Veterans Affairs Representative  
CEW Vice-Chair, Steven W. Spillman  
Kay Cotton, Candidate and Voter Services Manager  
Ben Hamatake, Community Outreach Manager, Registrar of Voters  
Imelda Carrillo, Election Services Manager, Registrar of Voters  
CEW Secretary, Marcia Nielsen, Candidate and Voter Services Lead, Registrar of Voters  
Neal Kelley, Registrar of Voters

**WELCOME AND APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 18, 2014 CEW MEETING MINUTES /  
OTHER HOUSEKEEPING / CHAIR LUCINDA WILLIAMS**

CEW Chair Lucinda Williams welcomed the group, followed by self-introductions. She called for review and approval of the minutes from our September 18, 2014 meeting. Molly McLaughlin made a MOTION to approve the minutes. The MOTION was seconded by Wanda Shaffer and APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY. Chair Lucinda Williams welcomed guests Victoria Chenevey from the League of Women Voters of OC and Marina Munoz, from the Election Integrity Project, and noted that Theresa Bass, Assistant City Clerk of the City of Anaheim, is sitting in for Linda Andal. She also welcomed Henry Vandermeir, Chair of the Democratic Party of Orange County, and Jennifer Shawver, representative from the Election Integrity Project.

Chair Lucinda Williams stated that there are 11 CEW members whose terms expired in December of 2014. These members were contacted; seven will serve an additional term

(Tim Cheng, Karen Hamman, Molly McLaughlin, Debra Marsteller, Henry Vandermeir, Anna Jimenez Plank, and Zeke Hernandez); one member can no longer serve (Adam Ross) and three have not yet responded (Evan Bacalao, Norm Dickinson and Doyoung Kim). Chair Lucinda Williams called for a vote to accept the extended terms for the above mentioned members; the group approved. Neal Kelley will continue to reach out to those who have not yet responded and inform Chair Lucinda Williams if new members need to be recruited.

Neal Kelley provided an update on the First Supervisorial District Vacancy Election. There are 215,503 registered voters in the district; the turnout was 22.6%, which is higher than most special elections. As there was only a 43 vote differential, a recount was called. There were approximately 6,200 ballots that were recounted; relevant material was also examined. The entire process was transparent. Mr. Correa was gracious with his comments. Neal Kelley stated that we have had 15 recounts in last 11 years. He added that we have automated some of the preparation process and can have ballots ready in 2 days.

### **OVERVIEW OF UPCOMING 37<sup>TH</sup> STATE SENATE DISTRICT ELECTION**

Neal Kelley then discussed the 37<sup>th</sup> State Senate District Special Primary Election. To date, we have received 40,751 ballots, which represents a 15.8% turnout for vote-by-mail voters. If no candidate receives 50% plus one of the vote, there will be a Special General Election on May 19. Neal Kelley continues to work on reimbursement issues for state contests. The election is budgeted at 1.9 million, but he is working to bring a bill forward to the state for reimbursement of election costs.

Ben Hamatake updated the outreach efforts of our office. The website translations, which comprise 850 pages, are up-to-date in all languages. This system is automated; any time a new page is created or

modified, the translators receive an email. There are also additional items, such as online language request forms and a bilingual handbook for poll workers, which will contain standard vocabulary for a uniform message. He mentioned we are following best practices.

Ben Hamatake mentioned proofing materials for the 37<sup>th</sup> State Senate District Special Primary Election and detailed the numbers of bilingual poll workers needed. Tagalog, Japanese and Hindi are needed in addition to Chinese, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese. He stated that we are building a recruitment pool by contacting past workers, and researching birth places. We are identifying people that can assist us in the proofing process for our new languages. Zeke Hernandez recommended that we inquire at St. Pius church in Buena Park for assistance with Tagalog.

He discussed the changes that have been made to poll worker surveys. Surveys have been consolidated and will be done online after attendance in training classes. It is beneficial to receive feedback before, as opposed to after an election. This will reduce survey fatigue while focusing on gathering quality data. Neal Kelley stated that we are producing our report on survey data from November, which he will be sending to the group.

AnnaSophia Servin updated progress on obtaining the 189 polling places and poll workers required for the March 17<sup>th</sup> election. Precincts have been consolidated, as four to five precincts have been combined. She added that recruitment has been challenging because of the date and the condensed timeframe. We need a total of 1,200 poll workers: 950 for the polls; plus A-Team, Coordinators, and Collection Center workers. Neal Kelley stated that we are building two pools: one for English and one for bilingual speakers. He asked for input from the group. AnnaSophia Servin discussed language needs for this election, noting 68% of poll workers must be bilingual. The cities of greatest need are Costa Mesa, Newport Beach, then Irvine and Orange. There was a brief discussion on how voters can be motivated to exercise their right to vote, followed by a dialogue on poll worker staffing, and online training.

#### **ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION: YOUR INPUT ON 2015 SPECIAL ELECTIONS**

Neal Kelley stated that we would be breaking down into small groups for breakout sessions. One of the topics will be the 2015 special elections consolidations. Each group will have a facilitator/scribe. After each 30 minute session, a spokesperson from each group will report the responses.

#### **ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION: YOUR INPUT ON VOTING SYSTEM REPLACEMENT**

Breakout sessions were conducted to obtain feedback on voting system replacement. As above, each group had a facilitator/scribe and appointed a spokesperson to report back to the group.

#### **RECONVENE TO DEBRIEF ON ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS**

Neal Kelley stated that this will be the first step in accumulating responses for these topics, and that a consolidated report will follow shortly to provide the opportunity to add additional feedback. Vice-Chair Steven Spillman facilitated the discussions, asking the scribes to report out. The first group clarified that several precincts were consolidated into one precinct; they were not linked. Consolidating brings more voters; we could probably accommodate more, but statutes limit consolidations to six precincts. The question of how far voters are willing to drive was discussed. Some states, such as Washington, have huge counties with vote centers. There is an increasing trend for voters to vote-by-mail, and for vote-by-mail voters to drop off voted ballots at the polls. The question of how to increase voter turnout was discussed, identifying that a communal approach in reaching out to high schools, colleges, PSAs, roadside billboards, auto center message boards, and other community resources. Social media is also an effective way to reach voters.

The next group discussed the advantages and disadvantages of consolidating precincts. The major disadvantage is that voters are sometimes confused about where to vote. An advantage, however, is that we do not have to recruit as many poll workers. There was discussion on creating an app to find polling places. Generic robot calls to voters reminding them to vote on Election Day and providing our website to find their polling places were discussed as ideas to improve voter awareness and turnout in special elections. Other ideas included outreaching to church groups through Bingo tournaments and community centers that we would volunteer to work. Keeping in touch with City Clerks, e-newsletters, working with different City departments, along with earlier training with earlier deadlines were also discussed. Excusing poll workers that do not complete online

training by a pre-determined date was also discussed. Providing paper and electronic surveys might make it easier for poll workers to access the survey.

The third group discussed the unintended impact consolidations have on voter turnout. The benefits included increasing the number of voters at each site. For larger venues, public safety, better parking with potential cost savings was mentioned. Perhaps more city level involvement would help increase voter turnout in special elections. Addressing legislation around election laws, social media, and corporate involvement could possibly deal with overcoming burnout and voter apathy. Ways to increase youth involvement, possible consumer discounts, rewards or title and increasing recognition for poll workers that have served in several elections was also discussed.

The new voting system breakout groups next reviewed their discussions. The first group reviewed ADA accessibility requirements. They suggested that the equipment should be smaller, more compact and easier to set up and carry. Cost versus quality was also discussed, as many participants felt that cost was more of a factor than functionality. Security requirements like the unique pass code to access the system was important to the group. They liked a touch screen with a larger font and the ability to zoom in and out similar to an iPhone. Fingerprint identification and scanning of California Drivers' License/ Identification Cards were also mentioned. Scanning paper ballots at the polling place was discussed; even though the technology is smaller and lighter, it may create long lines. Many liked the VVPAT because they liked the verification it provides. The primary concern for poll workers was that the new system be more compact in weight. The current lifespan for our system was 10 years, but this only included two elections every two years. The group liked the concept of how of car companies work – 100,000 miles or 10 years. Also, as technology changes, the system needs to have the capacity to be updated. One of the challenges would be the learning curve of an entirely new system.

The next group felt that we have gotten our money's worth from our current system, but that it is time to consider a new system. They felt utilizing outside consultants would be beneficial in guiding this decision, as they understand trends and how statutes would impact elections and terms of investment. With technology as it is today, the new system should be capable of upgrades every three years. This group also liked touch screen technology, as voters want the ease of use and have different technology proficiency levels. There was a suggestion of having an open source option. The group felt that the use of paper at the polls should only be as an ancillary option by request only. The possibility of scanning the paper ballots at the polling place would be helpful to our department. Smaller, lighter equipment would simplify the set-up process for poll workers. This group also liked the idea of an adjustable font size and keeping a paper receipt option.

The next group discussed the comparison of paper versus electronic machines. They felt that using paper would be a step backwards and could mean long lines and user error from scanning the ballots at the polling places. They felt the benefits of an electronic system justified the higher costs. They felt that the lifespan of the new system should be 10 years but acknowledged software upgrades and replaceable technology would allow the system to be "volunteer-friendly", light, easy to use and have less connections. They also discussed the security necessary for the new technology.

The last group discussed ways to improve ADA, such as having a Braille system in place for voters to obtain voting materials prior to an election. They acknowledged that cost is a factor, but recommended considering the top three vendors, not simply the vendor with the lowest cost. They felt that quality outweighed the cost factor. They liked the security of the current access codes because they are unique and expire if not utilized. They also liked a touch screen system and suggested online voting for a one week period. They suggested a countywide roster of voters with easier to use equipment built with shorter legs. They felt that there would be less confusion with paper but acknowledged that voters preferred confirmation. The biggest challenge to a new system would be the learning curve.

Vice-Chair Steven Spillman asked for feedback on this experience. Next time, we will limit the discussion to one round table topic and dedicate 30 minutes for the group discussion. The consensus of the group was positive.

Neal Kelley clarified that consultants will be obtained for the new voting system, noting that many of the concerns discussed today echoed those that were noted in our voting system analysis from the public. He also stated that there have been conversations with Alex Padilla, the Secretary of State, about the creation of voting centers, acknowledging that even with the high propensity of vote-by-mail voters, voters still want polling place options.

Chair Lucinda Williams concluded the meeting by providing the date of our next meeting, June 11, 2015 at 9:30 a.m. Neal Kelley added that he will send the presentation to the group.

The meeting concluded at 11:40 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia Nielsen, Secretary