



# County of Fresno

COUNTY CLERK/REGISTRAR OF VOTERS  
BRANDI L. ORTH

## Fresno County VAAC Meeting Minutes Tuesday, 02/26/2019 11:00 AM

### Location:

Resources for Independence Central Valley Conference Room  
2940 N. Fresno St. Fresno, CA 93703

The Meeting was called to order at 11:00 AM with the following members present: Charity Tokash, Glenna Gammel, Elisia White, Marilu Jimenez, Rosaura Barajas, Brandi Orth, Dennis Jearson, Matthew Lenhart, Paul Spencer, Sarah Harris, Tommie Tahami, Larry Wanger, Mark Oda, Mai Thao, Katie Moua, Chris Anderson, and Douglas Loera

After introductions were made, a review of the minutes from the previous VAAC meeting on October 17, 2018 was completed. A motion was brought forward to accept the minutes by Dennis, seconded by Charity, and accepted by the committee.

### Community Meetings Regarding Fresno Switching to the VCA Model

Brandi began the topics for the day by explaining how we are in the middle of trying to buy new voting equipment, as the machines currently in use are 20 years old. There are difficulties with maintenance on such old machines, such as no longer being able to get new parts to fix the machines.

With trying to get new machines, there is going to be a different order based on whether the County stays in the current Polling Place Model or switches over to the Voter's Choice Act (VCA) Model.

Brandi did a brief overview of the model. All registered voters will receive a ballot in the mail, and then starting 10 days prior to the election there will be Voting Assistance Centers, which act as satellite offices. At 3 days prior to Election Day there would be additional Voting Assistance Centers across Fresno County. With these centers, there would be ballot-on-demand, meaning any voter can go to any of the locations and receive the ballot that they are to vote on.

There were 5 counties that switched to the VCA model in 2018, which increased overall voter turnout, but there were limited usage of the Voting Assistance Centers for the locations 10 days prior to the election. There is going to be a Fresno County Board of Supervisors Meeting on March 12<sup>th</sup> which will include whether the board approves switching to the VCA Model.

This eliminates the need for provisional ballots, of which there were 26,000 in the November 2018 election. Processing these is time consuming for the Elections Office, and some of the voters who do not go to the correct polling place do not receive their correct ballot. When a voter does not receive their correct ballot, they are not allowed the opportunity to vote on all of the races that they are allowed

to vote on, primarily local races (e.g. if a voter who lives in Fresno goes to a Polling Place in Clovis, then all of the races for their address would not be available).

### **Selection of locations for Voting Assistance Centers**

The issue was brought up within the committee regarding the selection of locations to act as Voting Assistance Centers, should Fresno County switch over to the VCA Model. Brandi discussed the criteria set out by the Voter's Choice Act, in which there are 14 criteria by which a county must consider when selecting locations. They must be close to bus routes, close to locations where disabled voters live (which is difficult to assess and may require further VAAC meetings), and locations where there is low vote by mail usage are among the 14 criteria that the county must consider.

This would reduce the number of locations from 268 Polling Places (11/2018) to around 50 Voting Assistance Centers for Fresno County, but expand the services provided by each of the locations.

The question was asked regarding accessibility for the Voting Assistance Centers. Brandi mentioned that we will still be doing Accessibility Surveys for any locations that may be chosen, and that that is also a consideration for selection locations. It was also mentioned that there will be a Community Advisory Committee when the Voting Assistance Centers will need to be selected, and encouraged the other VAAC members in attendance to participate if they are able.

### **Security of Election Equipment**

The question was asked regarding how the election equipment maintains secure voter data. Brandi briefly went over the security of our equipment, how the ballot tabulators are separate from the Voter data, and that our databases are maintained behind a firewall, and that we work in conjunction with various agencies, such as the Department of Homeland Security and the FBI, to ensure the security of our databases.

### **Same Day Voter Registration**

Elisia asked about same day voter registration with the VCA Model. Brandi discussed how currently under the Polling place model there is only Conditional Voter Registration (CVR) at the Kern office, which can get overwhelmed on Election Day during a large election. With the Voting Assistance Centers, they act as satellite offices, and would include Conditional Voter Registration (CVR) that would largely replace the need for Provisional voting. Voters would be able to go to any of the Voting Assistance Centers, register to vote, receive the ballot that they are able to vote on right then and there.

### **March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Election**

There is a Special and Municipal election on March 5<sup>th</sup> for Fresno County Board of Supervisors, District 2, the City of Clovis, and Coalinga Regional Health District. There will be 87 Polling places to serve 121 Voting Precincts. Douglas discussed the mitigation efforts for this election. Of the 87 polling places, 26 of them will receive Red Mitigation Binders to assist voters on Election Day. The example of Cottonwood Grove Apartments was presented, in that a Van Accessible space will need to be created using cones and a Van Accessible sign, sent by our office, for voters.

### **Establishing the chair and vice-chair**

With the change from Polling Places to the VCA Model, pending the March 12<sup>th</sup> Board meeting, there will be an expansion of duties for the Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee. With this, we would like to create a Chair and Vice-chair for the committee. How often the meeting should take place was discussed, in that the Committee meet quarterly or every other month. It was generally agreed that

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we should meet every other month after the March 12<sup>th</sup> Board of Supervisors meeting. A few names were recommended for Chair and Vice Chair, but there was no firm agreement, pending the decision by the Board.

Finally, the next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 11:00 AM.

**Meeting was adjourned at 12:20 PM**