



Planning for Elections and Engagement Panel

**Monday, February 4, 2019
6:30 – 8:00 pm**

**Clerk-Recorder-Elections Office
555 Escobar Street
Martinez, California
925-335-7805**

MINUTES

Attendees:

Joan Carpenter – Senior District Coordinator, CCC District I	Renee Zeimer – Contra Costa Democrats
Lauri Byers – District Representative, CCC District II	Maria Alegria – Contra Costa Democrats
Dawn Morrow – District Representative, CCC District III	Rebecca Barrett – Contra Costa Young Dems
Colleen Isenberg – District Representative, CCC District IV	Dave Belli – Democrats of Rossmoor
Jenna Elkins – Assemblymember Grayson’s Representative	Landry Wildwind – El Cerrito Progressives
George Escutia – Senator Glazer’s Representative	Helen Dickey – El Cerrito Progressives
Madeline Kronenberg – League of Women Voters WCC	Diddo Clark - Resident
Shawn Gilbert – League of Women Voters DV	Willie Robinson – Richmond NAACP
Suzan Requa – League of Women Voters DV	Consuelo Lara – Concilio Latino
Tammy Moulton – League of Women Voters DV	Rachel Belden – CCC Public Defenders
Carlos Lemus – RYSE Center (Richmond Youth)	Terry Koehne – CCC Office of Education
Margaret Wimberly – City Clerks Association	Veda Florez – Marin County Elections

Staff:

Joe Canciamilla – Registrar of Voters	Eren Mendez – Elections Outreach Coordinator
Scott Konopasek – Assistant Registrar	Paul Burgarino – Civic Engagement Specialist
Sara Brady – Elections Services Manager	Karen Tedford – Civic Engagement Assistant

1) November Election Requested Discussion Points:

- a. **Working with High Schools:** Suzan Requa introduced a plan the Diablo Valley League of Women Voters (LWV) has developed to work with school communities to engage high school students. Paul Burgarino to provide contact information for several stakeholder groups already doing similar work, for networking purposes. He further explained Contra Costa Elections’ efforts with students as poll workers and National Voter Registration Day toolkits for high schools.
- b. **Changing Voter Information:** Maria Alegria asked for clarification on where to make information changes; either cocovote.us or sos.ca.gov has direct links for registration updates.
- c. **Voter Trends:** Sara Brady passed out a statistics from the November election, along with a chart of Vote-by-Mail (VBM) ballot returns. This lead to a robust conversation about how voters continue to return these ballots closer to Election Day.

- d. **District Election:** After a question by Renee Zeimer, Scott Konopasek discussed the turnout for mandatory VBM voters in Martinez, saying that the turnout in those areas was about 4 percent higher than the rest of the city. When asked if there was a list of all the cities and districts who are going to district elections, Scott Konopasek explained that eventually every city and school district would consider it. Suzan Requa reported that the League of Women Voters has been working with cities as to how they establish their planning process.
 - e. **Vote-by-Mail Campaign:** Addressing a question about all-Vote-by-Mail, Joe Canciamilla said that our county is looking into a potential pilot program and developing legislative support. In the meantime, CCC Elections is working on a campaign to boost the number of voters who vote by mail in the county, from 70 to 90%. Joe mentioned that a benefit of the campaign is that there would be less people waiting to vote at polling places on Election Day.
 - f. **Reentry Outreach:** Rachel Belden from the County Public Defender's office mentioned that she has been working with those seeking expungements and wanted to see if there were ways to work on restoring voting rights to those individuals who are ex-felons. Eren Mendez said that the CCC Elections office had been trying to work with the local ACLU on a voter education forum. Joan Carpenter mentioned that the issues in getting those in jail access to the ballots is a political issue. Interested panel members will work on putting together some kind of reentry outreach initiative.
 - g. **Open/Closed Presidential Primary:** Maria Alegria asked a question about No Party Preference ballots, which triggered a conversation on the March Presidential Primary ballot. Scott Konopasek that it's up to the parties regarding whether presidential primaries are open or closed. He said that there will be plenty of other chances during 2019 panel meetings to discuss the crossover process.
 - h. **Mapping:** Tammy Moulton asked if there were maps or data available showing residents who are able to vote in a geographic area. Scott Konopasek said that by looking at Census data and American Community Survey estimates, there are an estimated 730,000 residents of voting age, which means about 85 percent of Contra Costa residents who are eligible are registered voters.
 - i. **Voter Participation at Community Colleges:** Rebecca Barrett asked if the Elections Office has or would consider adding drop-off boxes on community college campuses.
 - j. **Vote-by-Mail Envelopes:** Joan Carpenter asked if the CCC Elections Office would get larger envelopes for the 2020 elections, commenting that some voters said it was difficult to put the ballots cards inside.
- 2) Other Elections Updates:
 - a. **New Legislation for 2019:** Sara Brady reiterated that the biggest law changes for elections in 2019 is that postage for Vote-by-Mail Envelopes will be covered by local elections offices.
 - b. **Photo Contest:** The Elections Division is looking into restructuring its photo contest into an art contest targeted at high school students. That contest would be held starting late summer in tandem with the beginning of the new school year.
 - 3) Scott and Joe thanked the group for a very spirited and productive conversation.

The meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm.

Next meeting: April 8, 2019.