



VOTER'S CHOICE
Registrar of Voters
Santa Clara County

Santa Clara County Registrar of Voters
Election Administration Plan (EAP)
Hindi Consultation Meeting Minutes

Indian Community Center
525 Los Coches St., Milpitas, CA
Social Room
Monday, July 8th, 2019
7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Attendees Present:

Six members of the public

Staff Present:

Shannon Bushey, Vanessa Hamm, Andrea Solorio, Michael Borja, Magdalena Sta Maria, Priscilla Favela, Janora Davis, Christina Rivas-Louie, Allen Ocampo, Linh Nguyen, Michelle Tran, Mike Davis, Ravi Dhillon, Alfred Gonzales, Eric Kurhi, Rachel Jung, Mike Davis, Smita Shah, Lorenzo Castaneda, Shelby Galaviz, Aaron Wong

Action Items:

- Follow up on suggested Vote Center locations (Ex. Temple, mobile homes, etc.)
- Follow up on suggested magazines and radio stations

I. Introductions

Welcome attendees

II. Voter's Choice Act Overview

With the Voter's Choice Act (VCA), voters will now be able to choose how, when, and where they can vote. Voters can choose to vote by mail, drop off their ballot at a ballot drop-box, or have up to 11 days to vote in person at any Vote Center.

Presentation of VCA overview in Hindi and English was shown.

1. Attendee: Is the Voter's Choice Act (VCA) a California or a Santa Clara practice?
 - a. ROV Staff: It is provided in the California Election's Code and it is an option for counties to move to the Voter's Choice Act. In our state, you are going to find counties using Polling Places and you will have counties using Vote Centers. There were five counties that implemented Vote Centers in 2018 and nine other counties came on board for 2020, making it 14 counties now in the state of California participating in the Voter's Choice Act.
 - b. Attendee: How does this stand with the rest of the country?
 - c. ROV staff: Different states have different rules, so everyone follows their own Elections Code.
2. Attendee: I noticed there were some errors in the VCA Hindi translated materials and I am more than willing to help with that.

- a. ROV Staff: That would be great, thank you. Maybe you could help us review our draft plan when we produce it in Hindi. We have a contactor that is state certified that helps with translation, but we know sometimes it does not always translate the same, but we would appreciate the feedback.
- 3. Attendee: What is the last day to vote? March 3rd?
 - a. ROV Staff: Yes. The mailed ballot must be postmarked by that day and received in our office within three days.
- 4. Attendee: Here is a scenario: You are going to mail the Official Ballot 29 days before the Election Day and I just kept my ballot ready and I know I have 29 more days, but you get really busy and forget, is there some type of reminder to remind me or any other voter to mail in their ballot?
 - a. ROV Staff: We are going to be doing outreach through print and radio, public service announcements, and advertisements, so we can let all of the voters know about the changes in the county's voting model and reminding them to vote. Our Public Communication Specialist does our media and media campaigns in various social media platforms such as *Facebook*, *Twitter*, and *Nextdoor*, and we are going to increase it dramatically to advertise.

III.Goal of the Election Administration Plan

The Election Administration Plan outlines how the Registrar of Voters (ROV) will implement the changes related to VCA and will be developed together with input from the community.

IV.Vote Center/Drop-box Selection

The ROV is seeking public input to assist the County with locating potential sites for Vote Centers and drop-box sites. Vote Centers need to be accessible and have enough space to properly service Santa Clara County voters.

Public Input/Questions:

- 1. Attendee: There will be 120 Vote Centers in Santa Clara County? Is there a comparison with the number of polling booths to Vote Centers?
 - a. ROV Staff: In November 2018, there was approximately 850 Polling Places. It can be farther for those driving to a Vote Center, but the benefits outweigh the driving. That is the negative part, people driving further, but maybe it will not be far for them within those 10 days, depending on what they are doing.
- 2. Attendee: Will there be any Vote Center at places such as public libraries and leave a drop-box?
 - a. ROV Staff: Yes. There are basic requirements such as size, locked facilities, a certain number of days, and more that are explained in the "Vote Center Needed" flyer. These are some of many requirements that we are looking into and are checking with the libraries, schools, churches, different places that we have used before, and new places because we do need a larger room area in order to host the Vote Center with the new voting equipment. Now that we will have to leave the equipment at the facility and lock it up and secure it every night, we have a few more requirements for our Vote Centers than previous Polling Places.
- 3. Attendee: What about a facility such as this one, the Indian Community Center?
 - a. ROV Staff: Yes, we have received a confirmation to come and check out the room to see if it qualifies according to the requirements we have for hosting a Vote Center.
 - b. Attendee: There is a lot of trafficking in this area.
 - c. ROV Staff: Yes, and that is what we want, because then you can just vote while you are out here visiting the Community Center. Those are the exact locations we are looking for and if you know anyone that has connections to any facilities, please let

us know. Sometimes if we call, we get the receptionist or someone answer that may not know the importance of what we are really asking for, so sometimes if someone knows somebody else for a location, it helps.

4. Attendee: I like how a voter can register at the last minute, because so many people miss the registration pack information, and so this is a good point.
 - a. ROV Staff: Yes, it is a benefit. Now they can go to any Vote Center to register and vote in the same day.
5. Attendee: When you say 75% of people are going to vote by mail, do you still mail to all the 100% people?
 - a. ROV Staff: Yes, we will mail it to everyone because now all voters will be vote-by-mail voters.
6. Attendee: What is the purpose of reducing 800 to 120 locations? Between 1 to 11 days, how is this cost-effective with the county? Is it necessary to this because if I am going to work, I will only work one day, not thirty days, so by extending 11 days, how is it cost-effective?
 - a. ROV Staff: It is going to cost the county more money. We never said that this was going to reduce any cost for elections. The main thing is voter convenience; to provide the opportunity and more opportunities for people to vote, more language assistance at the Vote Centers. So instead of that one day to vote, there are some people who may not be able to make it on a certain day of the week, so extending more days means more opportunities for people to go out and vote on their day off or now, on the weekend. It is going to cost several million dollars more to conduct this type of election.
 - b. Attendee: Going farther than what I am driving might be somewhat inconvenient, or I might miss the Vote Center, compared to having my neighborhood, so that might affect less voters to register.
 - c. ROV Staff: It may be possible; I am not sure the number of voters that might not want to drive the extra few miles for a Vote Center nearest them. We are really hoping that by having the Vote Centers out for that many days, that somewhere in those 10 days they will have the opportunity to go to one of the Vote Center's. Instead of one day, they have more options and choices to go. We hope that it will have a much more positive effect than the voters that choose not to go.
7. Attendee: At work, for one day they allow a couple of hours to go vote, but I do not think they are going to allow any day for ten days to go and vote.
 - a. ROV Staff: At least they are allowing people to go for one day, and we will be open on Election Day if they cannot make it to any of the other nine days.
 - b. ROV Staff: We have had early Vote Centers before the election, we were slightly ahead of other counties implementing to make sure that people have more than one day to vote. Considering the circumstances for various voters and demographics and the nature of our county with heavily populated with commuters coming from work and people driving everywhere from far cities, it makes sense to have more than one assigned place to vote in person, should they choose to vote in person, but they will be by default getting vote-by-mail ballots.
8. Attendee: If you compare vote-by-mail that is 75%, then you do not need ten days also, because if more people go vote-by-mail, then you might have fewer days and less than 120 locations.
 - a. I think over time people are going to vote by mail, but we do not have a choice in the number of days. The law sets out the exact number of days, minimum of eight hours a day, so I do not have any discretion at this time in the law. I hope that maybe after a few election cycles, that the State Legislature will take data from all

the counties that are doing this and see that as we predict that voters going to the Vote Centers will reduce, we are hoping that by showing them this data, that they will change something. Whether they change the number of days, or requirements of the Vote Centers, but change something towards what the data is showing.

9. Attendee: Temples in every area, there is a few in Milpitas and some in Sunnyvale. For Indians, at least, the temple visit is a must at least once a week or month, so it could be a temple that could help as a Vote Center, as they are typically large.
10. Attendee: Another option that might work is setting up a Vote Center near or in the offices itself of *Apple*, *Google*, or *Facebook* complexes. It is easier for them just to go and vote.
 - a. ROV Staff: Some facilities we might already be checking, but this is why we are trying to hear ideas from you all, even though some we may be already doing and others not. We have had people recommend some shopping centers.
11. Attendee: There are many mobile homes around in the county, and most of the mobile homes are like houses and are always open to working with the community. You can access different mobile home community centers that can fit hundreds of people.
12. Attendee: Since I worked at the last two elections, you had special requirements and conditions for Polling Places, so are you still looking for same requirements while searching for a Vote Center, such as accessibility?
 - a. ROV Staff: Yes, all the locations will be handicapped, and we have more conditions now because we need to have it for more than one day, which requires setting up a day or two before. We are screening for locations and checking with businesses, colleges, schools, and churches.
13. Attendee: I can think of a nice place that is part of the temple, but there are a couple of limitations, they must take their shoes off. Possibly place a sign outside indicating to remove shoes.
 - a. ROV Staff: Thank you but because it is for all public, I do not think we can use that location.
14. ROV Staff: The GIS Mapping team essentially works on creating boundaries and analyzing some data in assistance with the Precinct Operations Division to help them figure out what areas of the county need to be served with a Vote Center. For these Vote Centers, each 11-day Vote Center needs to serve roughly around 50k registered voters, and this is what this map is showing right now. We have divided the county into 25 areas that each hold 50k voters. For example, Milpitas has its own boundaries as it is a large area, and there will be at least one Vote Center serving the city of Milpitas that will be open 11 days prior to the election. We have also created a survey that contains some of the 14 criteria that is set out by the State and these criteria involve things like public transportation, proximity to high population centers, proximity to low-income communities, and essentially communities where English is not their first language. Filling out this survey is very important to us, as it shows what the community and public feels is more important when trying to figure out where to have a Vote Center location. For example, if there are two locations that are equal in value and standard and meet all of the requirements and one of them is close to a VTA center and the other is a bit further, we use this survey, as well as the information we gather to help the Precinct Operations to narrow down what Vote Center is more preferable in terms of these convenience that we can provide.
 - a. ROV Staff: We will have about 25 Vote Centers that are open for a total of 11 days and that is when voting is slower, as far as people coming out. Therefore, it is a smaller number of Vote Centers available at the beginning, and not all 125 Vote Centers are open. When they did make the law, they knew the first week would be

slower and then it just builds up as you progress. The Saturday before Tuesday, we add on another 100 Vote Centers, making it a total of 125 Vote Centers by Election Day. They saw how it went for Colorado and that there is not high voting at the beginning, so there is a lot of different criteria we follow.

- b. Attendee: So, 25 Vote Centers for 11 days, and you will add 100 towards the end?
 - c. ROV Staff: 125 total Vote Centers for four days.
15. ROV Staff: If you happen to vote by mail in this last 2018 election, you are part of the 75% voters who are already vote-by-mail. If you have not, you will be voting by mail or you will receive a vote-by-mail Official Ballot in 2020. You either vote-by-mail, or not. We will be 100% vote-by-mail. In 2018, we had 50+ drop-box locations and, moving to vote-by-mail, we increased our drop-boxes from 50+ to almost 80. Our targets are based on the maps that were previously shown. It will be one drop-box per every 15k voters. GIS Mapping team has created these maps to show these locations. There will be more options, everyone will be vote-by-mail, the return envelopes are free, there will be close to 80 drop-boxes, and you could also drop off your ballot at any of the 120 Vote Center locations, as there will also be a drop-box there. The voter will have many options and you receive your ballot 29 days before the election. If you are planning to go out for a trip, just notify our office and we will update your information. If you are planning to be out longer, we will have to update that information as well. Just make sure your residence address is under Santa Clara County and your mailing address is wherever you are, so in every election you will receive your ballots there.
- a. Attendee: The drop-boxes will be available in all the 11-14 days?
 - b. ROV Staff: 29 days prior to Election Day, we will start delivering drop-boxes. At the same time, we are dropping our Vote-by-Mail ballots to the Post Office. If we drop them at the Post Office on 29 days, it will take them awhile to start delivering, so by that time, all the drop-boxes will be delivered to their exact locations. The locations are available on our website and will be on the Voter Information Guide pamphlets. Any questions or concerns you may have, visit our website and you will find a lot of information.
 - c. Attendee: The ballot paper is not standard for everyone, it depends where your residence is, correct?
 - d. ROV Staff: Yes. When you go on our website you have to type in your address, date of birth, and it automatically pulls up the ballot type designated to you. You could only see the ballot that is assigned to your residence.
 - e. Attendee: Let's say I am shopping somewhere and do not have my ballot with me, if I go to a Vote Center, do they have the right to print it out for me at the time, or is there a replica at the center?
 - f. ROV Staff: Correct. For example, if you live in Milpitas and you were shopping at the Stanford mall and we have locations of Vote Centers near that mall, you can walk in and they will have E-Pollbooks that have all the data of all registered voters in Santa Clara County. They will find you on the E-pollbook and print you a ballot based on ballot type or precinct you belong to, that is why it is open to all county registered voters.
 - g. Attendee: Will it stop me from voting twice, such as I vote on demand and vote in the ballot I receive from the mail? What stops me from voting twice?
 - h. ROV Staff: Our system has a default that once we receive your ballot, you cannot vote more than once. You can mail it in, but we will not count it if you already voted.
 - i. Attendee: So then, the vote will be like a provisional vote? That is what I get from provisional voting, that I am a Vote-by-Mail and I go to a Vote Center and vote provisionally, that is to stop the duplicate voting.

- j. ROV Staff: Before, with the Polling Places, we did not have a tablet that we could access the voter file and indicate whether the voter returned their ballot. Now at the Vote Center with these new tablets, it will tell you that you have already voted or, if you go to a Vote Center and then you go home and mail return us your ballot, then it comes in and we run it through the machine to verify it and it will tell us that you have already voted at the Vote Center, so the ballot will be voided and not opened.
 - k. Attendee: Will all vote-by-mail still be the same?
 - l. ROV Staff: Vote-by-mail will not change.
16. Attendee: So, does it automatically reject the ballot?
- a. ROV Staff: Yes. Whatever we receive and match the signature to the signature registered and it matches, it will be a valid ballot vote. If we happened to have issued you two ballots and the second one you do not remember that you have mailed it to us already by accident, once we receive it, our system has a default that because you have already voted once, the next ballot will be voided. The system will not allow you to vote twice, so that is a good thing.
 - b. Attendee: If someone makes a mistake on their signature on both ballots that you receive, it will reject it?
 - c. ROV Staff: If your signature does not match or you forgot to sign, the law provides that our office mail you a unsigned ballot statement or signature verification statement, meaning you either forgot to sign the ballot envelope or your signature does not match our database. We mail you a letter notifying the voter to cure their error. On top of that, we have 28 days after the Election to wait for that letter to come back to the office, so we can give the voters enough time.
17. Attendee: Can you talk about the Electronic Voting Machines?
- a. ROV Staff: At the Vote Centers, there are going to be large tablet screens that your ballot will come up on and you can touch the screen and make a selection, and it can then print out a paper ballot. Otherwise, we can print out your ballot at the counter take it to your booth and hand-mark it, so no matter what, there is going to be a paper record of anybody voting. It is not like before, where you vote on the touch screen and cast your ballot and no paper comes out because that was counted on that machine, so now either way, you are going to get paper. You take that paper over to the tabulating machine where it will count your ballot with all the votes and put the ballot into the secure bin. Before, all the ballots had to come to our office to be counted. Because of this, we were always one of the slowest counties in the State on Election Night results and counting until the next day. Now, you can bring back a cartridge or something electronic from each tabulator from each Vote Center and upload it instead of having to scan all the papers at our office. This way, it is going to be faster on Election Night results, but still 30 days for us to verify vote-by-mail.
18. Attendee: When you count these 125 Vote Centers, more people are from vote-by-mail and it is high. The voters who go and vote and insist to exercise their right to vote are the ones who will attend the early Vote Centers during the ten days.
- a. ROV Staff: I think most of the voters will feel that way.
19. Attendee: For Vote Center locations, have you looked at community colleges, like De Anza?
- a. ROV Staff: We are checking with them. We already have a commitment from *San Jose State University*. We are also looking at West Valley.
 - b. Attendee: All schools and colleges are a good idea. Schools have big gyms that can be used. The problem is the 11-day Vote Centers might not work for these venues.

V. Language Accessibility

The ROV is seeking public input to assist the County with various means of providing language accessibility so that all eligible voters can understand the voting process and have equal access to the ballot. Examples include suggestions for historically underserved language communities and bilingual election officer recruitment.

Public Input/Questions: (none)

VI. Voting Accessibility

The ROV is seeking public input to assist the County with various means of providing accessibility for senior voters and voters with disabilities so that all eligible voters can understand the voting process and have equal access to the ballot.

Public Input/Questions:

1. ROV Staff: We have a new voting system at the Vote Centers, with now a minimum of three, if not more, accessible tablets where you can pull up your ballot, mark it on your screen, and it prints out what you selected. We can also print out the paper ballot on demand of any language or any ballot type, and then we put it through a tabulating machine, which those are going to be new also. The machine will tell the voter if they missed voting, if they undervoted, or skipped a contest, so the voter could go back if they change their mind, making it helpful to the voter. The machine will then drop their ballot into a secure bin underneath where it will be secure for us to pick up. We have information on our website if you cannot leave the house and not physically come in called Remote Accessible Vote by Mail system.
 - a. Attendee: With electronic delivery, is there a way where somebody can just go and download the ballot as needed, like maybe from their DMV record or something similar, or you will have to email it to them?
 - b. ROV Staff: The voter must request it. This is only available through electronic voting and for military, overseas voters, or voters with disabilities. For example, if you are in the military, you must be outside the county to be able to apply for it, but if you are just here in Santa Clara County, it is not available. It is linked to a site that is a replica of your Official Ballot. At the end, you must print it because it does not count electronically. Once you print out your ballot, mail it back to the Registrar of Voters' office. It is not as if you are voting on the phone, it still has to be in paper.

VII. Outreach Opportunities

The ROV is seeking public input to identify different venues and methods of outreach so as to best reach the County's voters and educate them on the elections changes that will come with VCA.

Public Input/Questions:

1. ROV Staff: If you would like a friendly reminder, you can subscribe to our *Twitter* feed, our *Facebook* feed, and *Nextdoor*. We have a big task ahead of us and we are going to rack up a hefty campaign to get the word out that voting is changing. We think it is for the better and I think most people will agree that it is, but we are going to be really proactive to get the word out to people on various platforms. In the past, we have advertised in *India West* and *India Post*, but we do not know what people read or if this is a publication that is local or national, so we are fishing for more information about what the best way to reach out to people using the mass media.
 - a. Attendee: There is a national magazine called *India Current* and people receive it by email as well. It is usually in places like the grocery store, temples, and other places. It is a very popular magazine.

- b. Attendee: There were local newspapers from Sunnyvale and Cupertino publishing a health fair booth from ROV and I was surprised, and I think you all are doing much more and are very user friendly.
- c. Attendee: You all should go greener.
- 2. Attendee: There is a magazine called *Siliconial* and a New York based TV program called *Namaste America*. It shows on Saturday's at 9:00; 80-90% of the people watch this show
 - a. ROV Staff: Does *Namaste America* have targeted ads, like for Santa Clara County?
 - b. Attendee: You can contact them, send them your data like something recorded or a video, and they can edit it. They are very good about that.
- 3. Attendee: We did a Poll Worker campaign with the ROV before. We made a case study of the campaign in our media kit because that was the highest response-generating campaign that we had. That was a very good campaign.
 - a. ROV Staff: That's great to know. We've got you on the list for this year's campaign. We look forward to working with you again.
 - b. Attendee: Now we are all digital. We don't have the print additions anymore.
 - c. ROV Staff: It's good to be all digital, but we also do want to have some print materials for voters who prefer that medium.
- 4. ROV Staff: Any other media ideas? Any radio stations?
 - a. Attendee: Radio stations can be FM 92.3, AM 1170 (Radio Zindagi), and AM 1310 (Radio Mirchi).
 - b. Attendee: Radio stations are very popular. You can put them on and everyone listens.
 - c. Attendee: Those three radio stations are very popular. There are a lot of songs, but they also invite people.
 - d. Attendee: There are a lot of sponsored programs.
 - e. Attendee: You can buy 15 minutes from them and have discussions with them.
 - f. ROV Staff: Do they have English language content?
 - g. Attendee: They have mostly Hindi, though they also do English.
 - h. ROV Staff: If you have any more ideas for radio or television stations, just email us at voterschoice@rov.sccgov.org
- 5. ROV Staff: Other opportunities we want to talk to you about are the two committees we have: the Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC) and the Voter Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC). We are definitely looking for volunteers to join our committee to help us review materials, handouts, give us input and feedback on issues. The VAAC is more for the elderly and voters with disabilities. The LAAC is to represent the different language committees. We are looking for a Hindi representative for the LAAC.
 - a. Attendee: How many hours is that?
 - b. ROV Staff: We had decided on meeting once a month, and may go quarterly in the future. There is an email group for the committee for anyone who wishes to further discuss things. The committee will meet monthly at least through the March Election.
- 6. ROV Staff: Another opportunity is the Voter Education and Outreach Coalition (VEOC). This is not required by law but the goal of this coalition is to inform the voters and let them know what is coming. The focus of this group is voter education and is for people who want to spread the word. We can go to the community and do a presentation about VCA. We can also train the trainer, where we train you, then you can go and train other people in your community. We can provide the handouts and presentations needed to get the word out. We need all the assistance we can get to educate the voting population about VCA. The kickoff meeting for the VEOC is August 8th.

- a. ROV Staff: Because our County is very diverse, it is important to personalize the message for each community in their language by the influencers and representatives that they trust. It's great for us to come in and present to you but it is far more effective for you yourselves to let your community know and stress the importance of voting. VEOC will equip you with the resources and toolkits for training so you can do it yourself at your temple, your organization, your work, your home, wherever it maybe. The goal is that communities that have been historically underserved will know exactly when, how, and where to vote when the elections come around. The plan is to have one workshop for each language community so it would be helpful to know where to go and who to contact to organize these workshops. We are very happy to come to where you are at.
- 7. Attendee: Library is a good place for outreach.
 - a. ROV Staff: Yes, libraries have been great partners with us for drop-boxes, Vote Centers, and presentations.
 - b. ROV Staff: Closer to the elections, we will be printing more literature for distribution to libraries, local businesses, city government buildings, hot spots – so people will be more aware.
- 8. ROV Staff: We will be looking for Extra-Help employees to help work at the Vote Centers. A little change from the way it was before. We will still have volunteers who will be paid a stipend to work for a day or two, but we will also be hiring 1500-2000 Extra Help employees. These will be County employees who will have to go through the whole county hiring process and will be asked to work for about 2 weeks. It will be a challenge to find these many people to work the needed number of days, so if you have any questions or connections for people who can work at the Vote Centers, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at voterschoice@rov.sccgov.org.

VIII. Miscellaneous

Public Input/Questions:

- 1. Attendee: What are the differences between provisional voting and conditional voting?
 - a. ROV Staff: Before, to vote provisional was due to being at the wrong Polling Place and having to then vote provisional because you were not on the roster. Usually it was because we could not verify the voter's registration that they were active at that time. Now with Conditional Voter Registration (CVR), which is for voters who are not registered and want to register, they fill out their registration information and then Official Ballot, place it inside an envelope, and when it comes back to our office, we register the voter and lastly, count their ballot.
- 2. Attendee: If the person is out of state during election time, registered in California, and cannot come back to the county, how do they vote?
 - a. ROV Staff: Most voters request a ballot to be mailed wherever they are. For example, the voter is registered with their residence in Santa Clara County, but they want it mailed in New York. They provide us with the mailing address, and we can mail them a ballot.
 - b. Attendee: That must be done in advance, correct?
 - c. ROV Staff: Yes.
- 3. Attendee: What was the percentage of vote-by-mail in the last Presidential Election and what you are expecting? Many people must have registered vote-by-mail, so what are the percentage rates we are expecting?
 - a. ROV Staff: For 2020, it is too hard to predict at this point. Usually as we get closer, we gauge what is going on in the community and what we are hearing, we will come out as the time gets closer with a certain estimate. It is kind of based first off of statistical information in the past, but I do not have that statistical information with

me. A Primary June Election normally has less turnout than in the General Election, so we will look at past elections to make sure we are on target, but we will also adjust that after we mail out those ballots. They can tell by how many ballots are coming back in the mail, how early, and then we start adjusting. Usually we are within 5% of what happens, but we will base it to receive a better estimate after we mail out the ballots to see how the returns are.