



## County Clerk-Recorder and Registrar of Voters

200 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Madera CA 93637  
Clerk (559)675-7721; Recorder (559)675-7724; Elections (559)675-7720  
Toll Free 1-800-435-0509; Fax (559)675-7870

**Rebecca Martinez, County Clerk-Recorder**

---

### MINUTES

#### VOTING ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (VAAC)

Wednesday, January 31, 2018

Madera County Government Center

200 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Room 2005

Madera, California

Meeting called to order at 6:11 p.m.

Introductions by Rebecca Martinez, County Clerk-Recorder and Registrar of Voters

Staff: Justin White, Chief Assistant County Clerk-Recorder; Stephanie Sibley, Elections Division Manager; Pearl Carlotto, Senior Deputy Clerk-Recorder

Everyone in attendance was provided with a copy of the Agenda, Draft Election Administration Plan and the Future of Voting Handout.

Ms. Martinez advised that the purpose of the VAAC meeting was to discuss accessibility at Vote Centers and the voting process in general.

She added that voting equipment was on hand for post meeting demonstrations. All attendees were invited to stay and vote on the new voting machines.

Justin White began the presentation and advised of the Draft EAP, discussed the improvements to the process and advised of the public comment period for site suggestions or suggestions in general. He advised all in attendance that information was also available at [www.votemadera.com/vca](http://www.votemadera.com/vca).

Mr. White described the locations on the map where we have proposed Ballot Drop Boxes and Vote Centers. Question from Santos Garcia: ballot drop box sites, will they be staffed? Answer: Outdoor drop box will not be staffed but are equipped with safety features and will be under camera surveillance; however, the ballot drop boxes that are located inside a facility will have staff from the site available and will also be under camera surveillance.

Question Sarah Harris: Would it be possible for groups to call in to the meetings as not all members can get to Madera to make the meetings? Answer: We will definitely look into that.

Mr. Garcia asked a question as to whether we are looking to put vote centers in areas of low voter turnout? Mr. White informed him to stay tuned. We will be covering that very issue shortly.

Mr. White continued with the overview of why vote centers are being used and provided description of an 11 day vote center and a 4 day vote center. Two vote centers will be open for 11 days prior to election day. Those locations as of now are the County Government Center and the State Center Community College Oakhurst Center.

He continued that the 4 day vote centers are proposed in the following areas and invited comments and/or other suggested locations:

- Madera – Pan American or Millview Community Center. Pan Am not available in June. Will use Millview Center; plan is to move to Pan Am for November 2018 and all future elections.
- Chowchilla – City Hall – graciously offered by the City of Chowchilla for NO CHARGE.
- Ranchos – Liberty High School Theater – great location; previous polling site; well known in the community; ADA accessible. Will be used for June 2018 and all future elections.
- Coarsegold - In talks with Coarsegold Community Center; not much progress, looking at 2<sup>nd</sup> location; Coarsegold Senior Living Center.

Attendees mentioned locations in Coarsegold such as YLP and Library, however YLP is off the main path of travel (Highway 41) and approximately 7-8 miles into the Homeowners association. Santos Garcia would like to retain continuity to reduce voter confusion. Ms. Martinez agreed and advised that it has been our mission to place Vote Centers in existing polling place locations as voters are already familiar with them and that it is not her preference to move the site between elections, but unfortunately, this June may be the exception. From November 2018 forward, it is our intention to have the vote centers remain static just as was our practice with polling place locations.

We also received suggestions for East Madera for sites such as the National Guard Armory and the John Wells Community Center. Staff indicated that the John Wells CC is not available and that they would make contact with the Armory, however, due to the age of the building, it may not meet the ADA requirements necessary for a vote center.

Johanna Torres suggested MLK elementary school and Trinity Lutheran Church. The Registrar advised that it is not our preference to use schools in an interest to protect students. Trinity Church not ideal as vote centers must to be open on Sundays.

Additional questions were received about vote center locations in rural areas such as Ripperdan and Firebaugh. Ms. Martinez responded and advised that we had a polling place in Ripperdan, they have extraordinary low turnout as most voters already vote by mail and there is a limited amount of facilities to meet the requirements of VCA.

To make the process easier to understand and put together as a whole, Mr. White reiterated what the VCA is and stressed the fact that all voters will receive a ballot by mail first, then, if they so choose, the voter can take their ballot to a drop box, a vote center or can return it by mail.

Cynthia Ortegon asked the question “how are drop boxes safe”? Mr. White provided her with a description of the requirements of a ballot drop box, the design, deployment and security features.

Mr. White moved on to item 3 of the agenda. He asked those in attendance what they believed to be the most beneficial method of telephonic access. The options are:

- TTY (text via telephone)  
RTT (real time text)  
VRS (video relay service)

The deaf community advised that TTY is not their first choice, the technology is becoming obsolete. Advised that they will discuss this question with staff and provide us with feedback.

Ms. Martinez advised that the TTY option has some improvements that are quite expensive.

Mr. White advised that the RTT option requires an application that users must have on their computer or smart device to send a text to our office. Verizon advised our office that they do not yet offer RTT.

Mr. White went on to further explain that VRS option may limit the numbers of persons who can sign on to an event. This will be examined further.

Item 4 on the agenda, Mr. White directed the attendees to look at the flyer “the future of voting in Madera County”. He invited ideas and suggestions to improve the flyer where necessary. Mr. White asked the attendees to let us know about their upcoming events so that we can continue to target the disability community. Santos Garcia suggested a joint meeting however the duties of the LAAC and VAAC differ. Mr. Garcia is a member of several organizations and requested that we make a presentation to any that we have not already been in contact with. Sarah Harris suggested the following for outreach:

- Senior Centers
- Convalescent Hospitals
- CVRC
- ARC Madera
- Star Center
- RICV
- Valley Center for the Blind
- Furman Adult Education

Ms. Harris further advised that it would be most helpful for those with disabilities to have the option to call in to meetings – conduct webinars using a product such as ZOOM. Cynthia Ortegon also suggested the use of Telephone Town Hall Meetings.

Ms. Martinez asked the attendees if most of these organizations have newsletters as we would like to provide more information for distribution of more material on VCA to as many people as possible. Mr. White reiterated our intent to provide continuous Outreach and Education on the VCA and invited calls or emails with additional suggestions.

Item 5 of the Agenda – Mr. White reminded all those in attendance that applications to become members of the VAAC are available on our website and asked for assistance in spreading the word to anyone who may be interested.

The next VAAC meeting has been scheduled for March 27, 2018 at 6pm. The meeting will be held at the County Government Center in a room to be determined. Notice will be sent out prior to the meeting date and will be posted on [www.votemadera.com](http://www.votemadera.com).

One last call for questions or comments; seeing and hearing none, the meeting was adjourned at 7:12 pm.

Demonstrations of the new voting system were offered to all in attendance and several participated.