

Madera County LAAC/VAAC Official Meeting Minutes

Date: May 5, 2026

Time: 5:30 PM-6:30 PM

Location: Zoom

Attendees:

- Jacquelyn Luna, Assistant County Clerk-Recorder/Registrar of Voters (Chair)
- Daniel Garcia, Elections Manager (Co-Chair)
- Stephen Serrano, Deputy Director of Elections Services
- Rebecca Donabed, Community Organizer, Resources for Independence Central Valley
- Miravel Navarro, Director of Health & Wellness, Madera Unified School District

Agenda Items Discussed:

1. Office updates and current election status
2. Chinese language availability on ballots
3. Ballot layout feedback and gubernatorial ballot size challenges
4. American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter offerings at voting locations
5. Legislative updates (SB 1360, SB 1164, AB 2230)
6. November special election results and turnout analysis
7. Voter registration and outreach challenges
8. Vote Center site selection and accessibility
9. Future meeting schedule and committee membership

Key Discussion Points and Decisions

Election Status Update

Stephen Serrano and Daniel Garcia reported that ballots were sent to 82,000 registered voters with the first in-person voting already occurring. No issues were reported with the current election process.

Ballot Design Challenges

The committee reviewed the challenges posed by the gubernatorial ballot, which expanded from 14 to 18 inches due to over 60 candidates. Concerns were raised about font size legibility, particularly for party information. The committee confirmed that standard proofing processes were followed with the registrar having final approval. The decision was

made not to place the contest on the back of the first page of the ballot due to potential voter confusion.

ASL Interpreter Services

Following guidance from the Secretary of State, the committee discussed implementing ASL interpreter services at voting locations. The decision was made to implement this for the November election rather than June, with plans to explore both remote and in-person interpreter options. Rebecca suggested reaching out to Merced County for guidance on interpreter availability and best practices.

Legislative Monitoring

Stephen briefed the committee on three key bills being monitored: SB 1360 (language access), SB 1164 (Voting Rights Act enforcement), and AB 2230 (intimidation near polling places). Implementation is expected by January 1, 2027 if the bills are passed and signed into law in October. The committee discussed the financial implications of additional language translations beyond the state-provided options, noting a cost \$2.75 per page (MUSD).

Election Result Analysis

The committee reviewed November special election results, which achieved 49.4% turnout (higher than a typical high 30% for special elections). The specific contest results were: 17,706 voted yes; 22,922 voted no; with 27 undervotes. For comparison, June 2022 primary turnout was 34.48% with 71,000 registered voters.

Voter Outreach and Participation

The committee discussed challenges with voter participation, noting that only 40,000 of 82,000 registered voters participated in recent elections. Budget constraints have led to the elimination of a dedicated voting outreach coordinator position. Solutions being explored include providing laptops for online registration at community events and producing PSAs for social media. The committee also agreed to review public transportation access to vote centers, with Rebecca noting a requirement for locations to be within a quarter mile of bus stops.

Future Meeting Schedule

The committee agreed to meet on a quarterly basis going forward. Meeting format will remain virtual (Zoom) as this has shown higher participation than in-person meetings. A post-election debrief meeting will be scheduled after the June election to review outcomes and discuss November election plans. The committee acknowledged the need to recruit

additional community members to reach the recommended committee size of 5 members, with preference for individuals' interest in language access or disability issues.