

Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Notes – Tuesday 3/13/2018

In Attendance:

Hillary Brown	Bill Hershon, Disability Rights California
Nicole Bohn, Mayor's Office on Disability	Jonathan Aaberg, Department of Elections
Jan Ferguson Flout, Catholic Charities San Francisco	Elizabeth Ann Dunlap
John Arntz, San Francisco Department of Elections	Aurora Livingston, Department of Elections
Fiona Hinze, Independent Living Resource Center	Iva Maurin, Department of Elections
Fred Nisen, Disability Rights California	Poppaea Dere, Department of Elections
Andy Pastalaniec, Department of Elections	

Meeting Minutes:

1. Nicole informed the group of the next Mayor's Disability Council (MDC), scheduled for Friday, March 16, from 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. at City Hall in Room 400. This meeting is also streamed on [SFGov TV](#). The following items will appear on the agenda:
 - a. Curb ramps, which provide pedestrian access between the sidewalk and the roadway.
 - b. An accessible building ordinance proposed by Supervisor Tang which discusses barrier removal, sidewalk improvement, and appropriate inspections of buildings and entries.
 - c. Vision Zero SF, a road safety policy committed to building better and safer streets, educating the public on traffic safety, and enforcing traffic laws in an effort to eliminate pedestrian fatalities by 2024
2. Nicole updated the group on some agenda items discussed in previous VAAC meetings and indicated that she would like to hear from the community about these issues.
 - a. Senator Hill has drafted preliminary legislation for making Transportation Network Companies (TNC), such as Uber and Lyft, accountable for providing accessible services. For more information, refer to the text of the Senate Bill [SB-1376 Transportation network companies: accessibility plans](#)
 - b. Statewide accessible parking placard reform – Nicole indicated that she is anticipating legislation moving forward to recommend a two-tiered system that takes into account different levels of disability. Some would be exempt from payment while others would be required to pay. If any group members would like to participate in the comment period, please be aware that this period will take place in the near future. For more information, refer to the text of the Senate Bill at: [SB-611 Vehicles](#)
3. John re-emphasized modeling accessible practices within VAAC meetings, such as sending materials for review to the group beforehand, which will remain a standing item on the VAAC agenda. The Department of Elections is always interested in learning about these accessible practices and encourages group members to share information and experiences.

4. The Department of Elections incorporated the group's initial feedback and has redrafted some FAQs related to the Remote Accessible Vote-by-Mail System.
5. The VAAC should consider creating sub-groups that focus on specific areas of focus and provide feedback to the Department of Elections. It will be a group effort to determine what subject matter requires a sub-group. This approach has been utilized in the Language Accessibility Advisory Committee (LAAC). The Department of Elections, Conference Room 48, is a location option for these sub-groups to meet.
6. Remote Accessible Vote-by-Mail System (RAV) Sub-Group
 - a. Interested Members: Bill, Fred, Nicole, Jane, John
 - b. Potential Meeting Time: Tuesdays or Wednesdays at 2 p.m.
 - c. The group briefly discussed the feedback related to the Democracy Live RAV Demo. General comments were related to the language and how the information was presented.
 - d. The Department of Elections is currently working with Democracy Live to make a unique San Francisco ballot. The demo was specific to San Mateo County.
 - e. The group discussed the importance of outreach and how to inform voters about this new voting option.
 - f. Fred or John will reach out to the San Mateo VAAC to see if they can provide any written feedback about their experience with the RAV in 2017.
 - g. Nicole mentioned the importance of collecting feedback from Blind and low vision users of the RAV.
 - h. Fiona indicated that the Independent Living Resource Center, located at 825 Howard St, could potentially serve as a host site for trials and will arrange the details with John and Nicole.
 - i. This would provide a place where users could use screen reading software to test the RAV.
 - i. John explained some of the details related to RAV.
 - i. Eligible voters will include vote-by-mail voters and voters in the military or residing overseas.
 - ii. Ballot content will be displayed in a digital format allowing the voter to mark contests electronically using assistive devices.
 - iii. Once the voter is in the ballot, they are no longer connected to a server or the internet. There is no storing of information.
 - j. Nicole requested additional information about how voter registration information is kept separate and secure. Specifically if a voter indicates that they are eligible to use this system but are not in the military or residing overseas. What does the Department of Elections do with the information?
 - i. It is important to create a unified message about this sensitive topic. Perhaps the group can reach out to San Mateo to see what message they used to address these concerns.

to City Hall for voting to publicly test this system. Fred mentioned this might confuse some voters to have this going on at the same time as the June 5 Primary Election.

- c. This system will include four voting options that will need to be tested:
 - i. Paper Ballot Tabulator (polling place)
 - ii. Accessible Voting Machine
 - iii. Vote-by-Mail
 - iv. Remote Accessible Vote-by-Mail System
 - d. The group considered using a future scheduled VAAC meeting for this assessment and testing. The group is encouraged to invite people from their communities so there is a diversity of testers.
 - e. The group discussed how the testers will provide feedback:
 - i. Written
 - ii. Provide staff who are responsible for facilitating user testing, have them ask questions orally and record the information right after the experience. This information can later be fed into a survey tool to produce data.
10. The group briefly discussed the California Voter's Choice Act. For more information, refer to the text of the Senate Bill [SB-450 Elections: vote by mail voting and mail ballot elections](#).
- a. All registered voters would receive a vote-by-mail ballot but the voter can choose if they want to vote at a Vote Center instead.
 - b. The City is currently not actively planning this however this could be a possibility for San Francisco starting in 2020.
 - c. Vote Centers would replace polling places. Every 10,000 voters requires a Vote Center.
 - d. The Board of Supervisors and the Mayor would likely provide guiding ordinances and be part of this implementation.
 - e. Every county involved must submit a plan to the California Secretary of State, which they must approve. After each election, the county must also provide the State with an action report. [County Administration Plans](#) are available on the California Secretary of State's website.
 - f. The group will consider having a joint VAAC meeting with San Mateo in the future.
11. The last item discussed was the Census Executive Directive. Please review the attached document for more information.
12. The next VAAC meeting is scheduled for May 8, 2018.