

VAAC Meeting
Tuesday, April 3, 2012
Thurston County Courthouse Room 152

In attendance: VAAC members Denise and Berl Colley; Kim Wyman, Thurston County Auditor; Ken Raske, Deputy Auditor; Lynnette Thornton, Asst. Manager of Elections; and Sandy Baxter, Voter Outreach Coordinator. Conference call equipment was set up in preparation for Michael Rogers who had indicated he would call in; however, no call was received.

The meeting started at 5:35 p.m.

Announcements:

Sandy noted Matthew Annal and his mother, Janet, had moved to Oregon and she would forward their address to the committee members.

Matthew & Janet Annal
5585 Woodside Dr SE Apt. 69
Salem, OR 97306
(503) 581-8362

Kim gave information about the BOCC meeting in February, 2012, where a certificate of appreciation from the Auditor's Office and a Proclamation from the Board of County Commissioners were presented to Matthew for his work on behalf of Thurston County citizens with disabilities.

Sandy also reported on making a presentation to the CYS (Community Youth Services) all staff meeting on March 8 with Tom Allman from the Secretary of State's Office. She noted VAAC applications were given to some of the staff persons, in hopes of recruiting new members to the VAAC committee. This sparked some discussion about the difficulty in recruiting new VAAC members.

Minutes:

Since the March 8, 2011 minutes had already been approved no action was taken on them. Denise noted it was helpful to review them to bring her up to date for the meeting. Denise remarked that she had heard positive feedback from voters who had used Kitsap County's new accessibility devices. Kitsap is using Democracy Live which has a ballot that voters can vote from their computers, print, and mail back to the county. Berl spoke about a pilot (possibly in New Mexico) that allowed visually impaired persons to vote via telephone. Kim noted she had decided on the AutoMARK™ because of the paper trail it provided.

Old Business:

Lynnette provided an update of our 2012 HAVA funds. She reminded the committee that we had requested \$24,900 in 2011, but were only awarded \$600. Last week Lori Guerrero, with SOS, sent notice to the counties of additional HAVA training funds that had become available. Ken Raske explained that the SOS would be automatically dispersing these funds to the counties and that the funds were for training purposes only.

Lynnette reported on the HAVA budget:

- 2011 - \$5,000 was spent for the ASL version of the Primary and General Election pamphlet which zeroed out this budget line. Our office was able to secure money from the general fund budget to produce the ASL pamphlet for 2012.

- VAAC had directed the Auditor's Office to not air the PSA's in 2011 but to save the budget for use during the 2012 Presidential Election year.
- \$6,500 is available for PSA's in 2012.
- \$8,500 was spent airing the PSA's with Comcast for the 2010 Primary and General Elections.
- \$63.00 is available for supplies in 2012.

Berl asked about the availability of obtaining additional funds from different grants other than HAVA to increase the budget to \$8,500 – \$10,000. Auditor Wyman suggested the Auditor's office look into the general budget and the 1090 fund to see if there is money available to increase the PSA budget.

Kim Wyman suggested we not only use Comcast for airtime on television but to look at having them assist us with having the PSA's on the internet. You-tube was also mentioned as a source for airing the PSA's. Another suggestion for exposure was to contact Panorama and see if they would air the PSA's on their in-house television station. Veronica will be contacted by Sandy. It was decided to have the PSA's run 2-3 weeks before each election to take advantage of when voters have their ballots. Auditor's staff will do research on the possibility of additional funds to reach the \$8500-\$10,000 goal and report to the VAAC via email.

Sandy reported on the CD Burner software that will allow staff to burn audio CD's for voters who need a disk that can play on a stereo CD player rather than an ipod or computer.

The AutoMARK usage figures for the Primary and General Elections were reviewed. Even though the numbers were better than in the past, Lynnette was concerned about the low turnout for the Intercity Transit Center and discussion followed. Denise suggested we contact Emily Bergkamp at Intercity Transit about spreading information about the AutoMARK to persons who use the Dial-A-Lift program. Denise noted Emily coordinates this program and this is a program much used by the disabled community.

As part of the discussion about use of the AutoMARK, the Colleys' suggested the Council of the Blind meetings on Saturday, July 21 and October 20, be advertised to the public for use of the AutoMARK from 11:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Denise will check with Ramblin Jacks about the possibility of more members of the public attending. LT and SB noted we would include the Council dates in the Primary and General Election Voters' Pamphlet and in press releases about the AutoMARK.

New Business:

The 2011 VAAC plan was presented to the committee and after general discussion it was decided to submit the plan to the SOS as our 2012 plan since our activities have remained basically unchanged. Denise moved that this be a motion, it was seconded by Berl and passed by the Committee.

Other:

The remainder of the meeting was spent brainstorming about ways to increase the membership on the VAAC committee. There was general concern about trying to get younger members and persons with hearing impairments involved in the committee.

- Contact the Diversity Coordinator at the 3 local schools, in particular St. Martins since SPSCC and Evergreen have been unresponsive to requests from SB and Tom Allman.

- Contact Billy Seago to see if he knows of anyone interested in joining.
- It was noted Sam Reed would be going to visit colleges throughout the state and that perhaps Auditor Wyman might wish to accompany him when he goes to Thurston County colleges in an attempt to recruit VAAC members and do outreach to young people with disabilities. [Sam Reed is scheduled to be at Evergreen on Monday, April 9 at 6:00 pm and SPSCC on May 3 at 10:00 am according to the SOS website].
- Ken Raske mentioned contacting TACID (Tacoma Area Coalition of Individuals with Disabilities) to inquire about their outreach efforts in Thurston and recruitment efforts.
- Tom Allman was suggested as a contact for the hearing impaired community in Thurston County.
- Check with City Councils and City chambers for possible members.
- The Colleys will contact Jeff Peterson to see if he may be interested in being part of the committee

As part of the difficulty in VAAC recruitment, the Colleys noted it was difficult for persons with disabilities to reach the Courthouse by public transportation since the bus stop does not have a crosswalk with signs and audio signals. Discussion ended with other possible locations for the VAAC meeting: the new Intercity Transit Conference Rooms, new Olympia City hall, an open house at a future location.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:10 p.m.