

VAAC Meeting
Wednesday, March 5, 2014
Thurston County Courthouse Auditor's Conference Room

In attendance: VAAC members: Denise and Berl Colley, Wesley Shockey and Gary Ernest, with Patty MacDonald via teleconferencing. In attendance from the Auditor's Office were: Mary Hall, Thurston County Auditor; Joyce Turner, Chief Deputy Auditor; Tillie Naputi-Pullar, Elections Manager; Lynnette Thornton, Asst. Manager of Elections; Sandy Baxter, Voter Outreach Coordinator, and Ann Hunter, Elections Specialist.

The meeting started at 3:00 p.m.

Announcements:

The new Auditor and Chief Deputy Auditor, and new Manager of Elections were introduced to the VAAC members.

The article with photo of the AutoMARK™ in the Senior News was shown to the VAAC committee.

Approval of Minutes:

Denise Colley motioned to approve the minutes from the May 2, 2013 VAAC meeting and it passed unanimously.

Old Business:

The 2013 AutoMARK™ usage figures for the Primary, General and the 2014 February Special Elections, were presented to the VAAC members. Both the 2013 Primary and 2014 Special Election had 29 persons use the AutoMARK™. The General Election had 39 users. VAAC members were told about the addition of Boardwalk apartments and of its success with 4 voters using the AutoMARK™. The "exposure" numbers were also fairly high with 245 people given information about the AutoMARK™ during these 3 elections.

Wesley questioned if we went to the transit center and was informed that we no longer go to that venue. He questioned if we did any advertising and was told we did articles about the AutoMARK™ which run in the "Dash" which is an informational newsletter placed on all Intercity buses. He suggested the use of posters for future advertisements. He was told we do press releases on the AutoMARK™ locations and the locations are also part of the printed voters' pamphlet and on the Elections website.

When Panorama numbers were presented, Denise requested that the AutoMARK™ go to more places in Panorama. She is now leading the low vision group and would like the AutoMARK™ at their meetings which are held in the Quinault Building. She will help get the word out to the community in their newsletter, reader board, and on the close circuit television system. She will also get us a mailing list from Danielle at the Braille Library to reach out to the community. Joyce asked if there were any other mailing list we could access. Berl suggested a small general publication about the ballot marking machines to go out statewide to The Washington Council of the Blind, Federal Council of the Blind, and Veterans Council of the Blind. This is a suggestion we will forward to the Secretary of State's Office.

New Business:

Auditor Mary Hall welcomed the VAAC committee and noted her appreciation of the VAAC testing of the Everyone Counts (E1C) link. Mary also explained the Everyone Counts was purchased with a federal grant and that 23 other counties in the state will use E1C. Mary informed the committee that the system has been in use in Pierce County since 2011, that it worked very well, and the company is known and well respected worldwide. She asked the committee what they thought about deploying the AutoMARK™ and the E1C with a laptop and portable printer.

The VAAC members provided their assessment of the E1C:

- All members noted the site was fully accessible.
- Would like to test a larger ballot to determine the ease of transition from multiple measures and races.
- The E1C laptop would need to have special reading software such as JAWS or Zoom Text to enable visually impaired voters to use the program at outreach events. Denise and Gary Ernest noted a visually impaired person at home could use their home software but there are many different software programs and the voter may not be familiar with what is installed on the laptop. Wesley also brought up Mac vs PC users. Denise noted JAWS software could cost \$900. Denise is going look for more reasonably priced software.
- Gary asked if we could use the software that is used for the AutoMARK™. Tillie will talk with E1C to determine what is available.
- Denise also asked if the ballot review could include more information than the measure title. She likes how the AutoMARK™ reads back the ballot title.
- Tillie introduced Ann Hunter and explained she currently works with our military voters who use E1C to vote their ballots. Tillie explained Ann is our E1C expert and she will be checking into some of the questions brought up by the VAAC committee.

The 2014 VAAC plan was presented to the committee. There was general discussion about how to measure the effectiveness of VAAC outreach. After much discussion it was moved by Denise and seconded by Berl to submit the proposed plan to the SOS as our 2014 plan with the modification that the Auditor's staff would include an annual report in the form of a spreadsheet, on the effectiveness of our accessibility outreach in the community. The motion passed unanimously.

Other:

There was discussion about reaching out to the local colleges to assist in getting the word out about the AutoMARK™. Wesley and Sandy explained what they have been doing to achieve this goal and that they have not gotten feedback from the colleges. Berl suggested going to the deans to get them to buy in on the idea.

Tillie explained that the county commissioners get a certain number of TCTV sessions a year and we could request one around election time to do a segment to help advertise the

AutoMARK™. This was very well received and Joyce will be checking with Robin in the Commissioner's Office.

Patty commented that it was unfortunate that we no longer have Steve Peck on the VAAC committee representing the deaf community. She explained that he works at the Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing at DSHS and that he and his staff would provide good representation of the community. Patty said she would talk to him to see if he could be part of the committee once again.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:00 p.m.