SAN MATEO COUNTY

LANGUAGE ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (LAAC)

Outreach Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

April 2, 2018, 6:00 P.M. – 7:30 P.M
555 County Center, 3rd Floor Room 311 Redwood City, CA

Members Present
Rosa Uriarte
Wesley Taoka
Charmaine Mesina

Staff Present
Diana Izaguirre, Elections Manager
Michelle Yue, Elections Specialist III
Sara O’Brien, Elections Specialist III
Karla Gallegos, Elections Specialist III
Kenny Lin, Elections Specialist III

Public
Two members from VCA San Mateo Steering Committee
One member from Asian Law Caucus
One member from National Iranian-American Council

I. Introduction of the Elections Division’s current outreach team to LAAC members: Sara, Karla and Kenny. LAAC members were notified of the upcoming responsibility change: Sara will oversee outreach unit, while Karla and Kenny will move their main responsibilities to other areas. The Elections Division will hire at least two seasonal extra help staff to join the outreach unit. Diana stressed that while Karla and Kenny will be working in other units, they will also be partially involved in outreach work because of their experience and language abilities.

II. Kenny and Karla briefed the LAAC members on their recent voter education and outreach experience. They talked about the events they have been to recently, including events targeting minority group and events on high school campuses.

They shared some thoughts on conducting outreach work:

- It is more effective to do face-to-face outreach work to create visible presence in the communities.
- It is effective to conduct outreach work in the audience’s first language. Voters who are not fluent in English are more likely to ask questions and participate.
• Outreach presentation should be more concise and focused on what the voters need to know. For example, information on election costs might not be of interest to voters who just want to find out how to vote. Voters are less likely to listen if they find the information complex and irrelevant.

• Charmaine shared her experience conducting outreach work at high-tech companies. She suggested the team be creative in designing the outreach presentation, making it more interesting and easier to follow.

III. Sara briefed LAAC members on the Voter Education and Outreach Plan in the VCA Election Administration Plan.

• She talked about the different ways for the Elections Division to reach voters, including press releases, public events, postcards, free public service announcements and paid advertising with media, including minority language television, radio and newspapers.

• LAAC members asked for flyers on VCA to be translated in multiple languages, particularly, Spanish, Chinese, Filipino and Korean. Members stressed that these outreach materials do not have to be fancy or flashy in order to save costs.

• Members from the VCA San Mateo Steering Committee mentioned that the County Board of Supervisors highly supports the VCA, and the Elections Division should do the best job possible in terms of outreach work. LAAC members asked about the budget for voter education and outreach work, and they asked whether some of the funds can be used to reimburse community organizations for the VCA-related outreach effort, mainly in the area of covering printing materials.

• Members from the VCA San Mateo Steering Committee mentioned that they have found old terms such as “polling places” on the Elections Division’s new website. Sara will make sure these terms are updated for VCA.

• Rosa suggested that the Election Office utilize Google Docs for all public voter education and outreach events, so all parties interested in VCA-related outreach work can collaborate and coordinate their efforts. She and Sara will work together to create Google Docs.

IV. Bilingual Voter Education Workshop

• Michelle talked to the group about the importance of LAAC’s contribution to the planned bilingual voter education workshops. As required by the VCA, the county elections official shall hold at least one bilingual voter education workshop with each language in which the county is required to provide information and assistance other than English. For San Mateo County, the languages are Spanish, Chinese, Filipino and Korean.
• Diana talked about how LAAC members can help the Election Division with these bilingual workshops, including suggesting date/time, location and format, and directly participating in the workshops. Diana thought the workshops should be an interactive and hands-on experience, where voters can look and touch Vote by Mail envelopes, learn how to vote and ask questions.

• Michelle mentioned that the key to the success of these bilingual workshops is to find the audience who can really attend and benefit from the workshops. LAAC members can really help the Elections Division identify the language minority groups and coordinate these workshops. LAAC members will discuss more about the workshop during future full board meetings.

V. Summarize action items for future meetings
• Rosa and Sara will look into the possibilities of using Google Docs for all outreach events.
• Elections Division will create flyers in Filipino and Korean.
• Update outdated terms on Elections Division’s website
• Brainstorm for ideas for bilingual voter education workshops