



Minutes

Lakewood City Council

Adjourned Regular Meeting held
October 22, 2019

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 6:27 p.m. by Mayor Rogers in the Executive Board Room at the Civic Center, 5000 Clark Avenue, Lakewood, California.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Mayor Todd Rogers
Vice Mayor Jeff Wood
Council Member Steve Croft
Council Member Diane DuBois
Council Member Ron Piazza

VOTING SOLUTIONS FOR ALL PEOPLE - LOS ANGELES COUNTY'S NEW VOTING EXPERIENCE

City Manager Thaddeus McCormack introduced Aaron Nevarez, Public Affairs Manager, Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk, who displayed slides and a video, and made a presentation regarding Voting Solutions for All People (VSAP), the new voting experience in Los Angeles County to be used for the election in March 2020. He described the key features of the vote center, the electronic pollbook, interactive sample ballot and ballot marking device, such as the ability to vote anywhere in the County and over a number of days, provided accessible and convenient locations and allowed for same day registration. He emphasized the importance of the County's messaging to voters informing of the convenience of vote centers, the ease of the voting equipment; the paper-based voting system and the ability to vote early and over an eleven day period. He identified the outreach efforts which included demonstration centers, community presentations and media partnerships.

In response to Mayor Rogers' inquiry regarding the change from polling locations to vote centers, Mr. Nevarez explained that the Voter's Choice Act, had been intended to increase voter participation by providing voters with flexibility on when and where was most convenient for them to vote. He stated that the County had held public meetings to receive input on the Election Administration Plan, which was submitted to the Secretary of State for approval prior to the March Primary Election.

Responding to Council Member Croft's question pertaining to the selection of vote centers, Mr. Nevarez replied that the County had conducted community meetings and utilized focus groups to identify the most suitable locations for vote centers and that online assessments and input from various agencies provided the information for potential facilities to be considered. He added that participants in the surveys discussed types of facilities in which people would prefer to vote and preferences for locations in relation to where they lived, worked and performed other activities. He also stated that site visits were conducted to determine adequate room size, ADA accessibility, electrical capacity and network connectivity, programming and willingness to participate. He further noted that County staff had collaborated with city clerks who reviewed facilities and helped coordinate facility access.

VSAP - LOS ANGELES COUNTY'S NEW VOTING EXPERIENCE - Continued

Mr. Nevarez reported that over two thousand viable vote centers had been identified and that additional analysis was being conducted to select the most appropriate facilities.

Council Member DuBois expressed concerns regarding seniors with limited or no vehicular access, who were accustomed to voting at a nearby polling place, being prevented from voting. Mr. Nevarez stated that a target of approximately 1,000 conveniently located vote centers would be sited near homes, workplaces and schools and might be found in a variety of facilities, including public buildings, workplaces, places of worship and shopping centers at which such voters might visit.

Mr. Nevarez responded to questions from Council Member Croft by stating that voters who automatically received vote by mail ballots (VBM) in the past would continue to do so and that VBMs could be requested by application. He stated that VBM materials had been redesigned to make them easier to read and complete with clearer instructions. He added that vote by mail ballots would include postage and could be dropped off via U.S. mail or at one of the 250 drop-off locations throughout the County.

Confirming for Council Member Croft and Mayor Rogers that the ballot marking device would have no network connection, Mr. Nevarez clarified that the electronic pollbook would be the only apparatus connected to the internet and would replace the paper roster allowing for updates to the voter database in real time.

Replying to Mayor Rogers' and Vice Mayor Wood's questions pertaining to election results, Mr. Nevarez explained that on election night, ballots from all vote centers would be brought by Sheriff's deputies to the Registrar's Tally Operation Center in Downey for tabulation. He stated that prior to tabulation, all ballots would be checked in, removed from boxes, inspected and prepared for counting. He added that after election night, there would be thousands of ballots that would need to be counted, including VBM ballots received on election day, provisional ballots, write-in ballots, and damaged ballots, which would be counted during the canvass period and by State law, required the Registrar to complete and certify the results within thirty days.

Mr. Nevarez confirmed for Council Member Croft that statements of votes cast would provide a breakdown of voters by community for their selections on candidates and measures.

In response to Council Member Piazza's concerns regarding duplicate voters and voter fraud, Mr. Nevarez explained that allegations of fraudulent activity was taken seriously by Registrar staff; however, there were very few verified cases that existed. He added that the integrity of the voting system was of paramount importance and any potential impropriety would be taken to the appropriate agency.

Vice Mayor Wood inquired whether there would be any messaging regarding undervoting. Mr. Nevarez responded that signage would be strategically placed reminding voters to "Use the MORE button to review all choices when making your selections."

VSAP - LOS ANGELES COUNTY'S NEW VOTING EXPERIENCE - Continued

Responding to Council Member Croft's inquiry, Mr. Nevarez stated that demo centers would be available throughout the County to help voters become familiar with the new voting experience and to try the new ballot marking device and preview the electronic pollbook.

Mr. Nevarez assured Vice Mayor Wood that "I Voted" stickers would be available at the vote centers.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be brought before the City Council, Mayor Rogers adjourned the meeting at 7:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Mayberry, CMC
City Clerk