

**Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes Teleconference
March 26, 2008**

In attendance: Steve Homan, Manager of Elections; Gwen Cornelius, Elections Outreach Specialist; Kellee Keegan, Committee Coordinator; Berl Colley, VAAC Member; Michael Rogers, VAAC member; Patty McDonald, VAAC member; Denise Colley, VAAC member; Steve Peck, VAAC member.

Meeting called to order at 12:10 p.m.

Gwen began by presenting the Help America Vote Act grant proposal. This grant request is divided into three main sections. The first is computer hardware and production equipment for videotaping an American Sign Language interpreter, interpreting a variety of voting information including the registration form, ballots, and our local voters' pamphlets. These videos would be posted to the web, as well as burned to disks upon request. Costs would include hiring an ASL interpreter, production equipment (camera, lighting, etc), and computer hardware to transfer the video online. Hiring an ASL interpreter would be roughly \$50/hr.

Patty McDonald suggested getting other price quotes from VAAC member Steve Peck or DSHS. Berl Colley suggested contacting the Seattle School for the Deaf.

Gwen went on to say that the total moneys asked for this portion of the grant would be \$8,600, unless modifications were required upon receiving additional quotes for interpreting services.

Gwen continued onto the second portion of the grant, Comcast production and air time. All Comcast commercials that Thurston County Elections produces would include an ASL interpreter. The commercials would include information about future and current elections as well as outreach information. Total costs are estimated at \$15,850.

Patty asked how often they would run. Gwen mentioned that commercials relating to *Are You Ready to Vote* would play the two weeks before a cut-off while the commercials pertaining more specifically to accessibility devices and the election would run about two and a half weeks before Election Day.

Michael Rogers asked about getting a discount or complimentary time on air for public service. Gwen answered that Comcast does not have free public air time. It was also asked which channels that these commercials would air on. These channels have yet to be decided on. If the grant is accepted, Elections will meet with Comcast to decide the best strategy to reach Thurston County voters.

Steve Peck suggested hiring an interpreter who is deaf to interpret. Gwen mentioned that she had spoken with the California Secretary of State's office, which has ASL on their website, that they had received comments about how their interpreter was not fluent in ASL. Steve Peck also confirmed that he had connections to interpreters fluent in American Sign Language.

It was suggested to get a copyright on the commercials, once produced, and offer them to other counties for a fee. Steve Homan explained he wasn't certain this would be an option given the monies used would be from a federal grant, but that it is something we could look in to if necessary.

Gwen presented the final part of the grant proposal, the printing costs, to the group. These would include table tents, posters, and Election's business cards in Braille. The purpose of which would be to reach every voter in Thurston County. Table tents, coasters, and posters would include information on the AutoMARK, accessible voting, and elections. They would be set up at restaurants, doctors' offices, community centers, other organizations, etc. The Braille business card would be simple and include basic Elections contact information. The total estimated cost would be \$3,009.

Several members of the committee asked if our office had considered prioritizing these requests, so that if all of them are not possible, at least our highest priority may be met. Steve expressed that the video production equipment is our top priority, then the Comcast commercials, and then the printing costs, and that if necessary, we will make that clear to the HAVA committee.

The total, including video, Comcast production and time, and printing would be around \$28,000.

Gwen opened the floor to vote. A motion to approve the proposal was moved and seconded. The grant proposal was accepted by the VAAC committee unanimously. Michael Rogers abstained from the vote due to a conflict of interest in being on the HAVA Grant Committee.

Meeting adjourned at 12:53 p.m.