



Registrar Bob Page called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

ATTENDEES:

CEW Chair Adria M. Jimenez, City Clerk, City of Buena Park
CEW Vice-Chair, Theresa Bass, City Clerk, City of Anaheim
Jennifer Hall, City Clerk, City of Santa Ana
Lucinda Williams, City Clerk, City of Fullerton
Mike Chen, Asian Community
Tim Cheng, Asian Community
Alba Ramiro, Latino Community
Eddie Marquez, Latino Community
Sergio Contreras Jr., Latino Community
Gracie Duran, Disabled Community (replacing Gabriel Taylor)
Lisa Tarlton, Vote Center CSRs
Jeffrey Cardenas, Organizing Director, Democratic Party of Orange County
Randall Avila, Republican Party
Jan Urban, League of Women Voters
Lyle Brakob, Veterans Affairs
Russia Chavis Cardenas , At Large
Bob Page, Registrar of Voters
Jose Macedo, IT Services Manager, Registrar of Voters
Adrian Gabriel, Community Program Specialist, Election Services, Registrar of Voters
Enequina Chhim, Community Outreach Manager, Registrar of Voters
Heather McDaniel, Community Program Specialist, Community Outreach, Registrar of Voters
Imelda Carrillo, Election Services Manager, Registrar of Voters
Justin Berardino, Deputy Director, Operations, Registrar of Voters
Kim Hostler, Deputy Director, Administration, Registrar of Voters
Kristy Chen, Community Program Specialist, Community Outreach, Registrar of Voters
Lora El Amatory, Staff Specialist, Administration, Registrar of Voters
Thu-Mai Tran, Community Program Specialist, Election Services, Registrar of Voters
Marianna Guerrero, Community Program Specialist, Election Services, Registrar of Voters
Marcia Nielsen, Candidate and Voter Services Manager, Registrar of Voters
Matthew Craven, Community Program Specialist, Election Services, Registrar of Voters
Min Hong, Community Program Specialist, Community Outreach, Registrar of Voters
Roxana Castro, Community Program Specialist, Election Services, Registrar of Voters
Rosa Vizcarra, Community Program Specialist, Community Outreach, Registrar of Voters
Stephen Barteau, Technology Services Manager, Registrar of Voters
Tonya Pearce, Training and Special Projects Manager, Registrar of Voters
David Goulding, Warehouse Manager, Registrar of Voters

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:

Registrar Page welcomed and went over meeting rules. Registrar Page reminded the group that ROV Admin Staff Specialist, Lora El Amatory, will be taking notes since we cannot record as per the County's Information Technology Usage Policy.

The members of the ROV team introduced themselves. Registrar Page turned the meeting to CEW Chair, Adria Jimenez.

CEW Chair Adria Jimenez requested a meeting roll call.

ROLL CALL:

ROV Admin Staff Specialist, Lora El Amatory, confirmed the attendees for the meeting and that a quorum was present.

APPROVE 09/04/24 MINUTES:

CEW Chair Adria Jimenez requested a motion to approve the minutes from September 4, 2024.

Approval of September 4, 2024, minutes moved by CEW Vice Chair Theresa Bass and seconded by CEW Member Eddie Marquez.

RECOGNIZE RENEWING MEMBERS:

Election Services Manager, Imelda Carrillo, thanked members and recognized continuing/renewing members and not renewing members. Confirming that outreach is in process to fill the upcoming vacancies. One of the vacancies in the Disability Community, which expires on December 31, 2025, will be addressed by reaching out to previous CEW Member Beck Levin.

ELECTION OF CEW CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR.

Chair Jimenez nominates Theresa Bass for Chair. Theresa Bass accepts nomination with no objections.

Vice Chair Hall nominates Lucinda Williams as Vice Chair. Lucinda Williams accepts nomination with no objection.

OPEN FORUM:

Registrar Page asked members if there are any issues or urgent matters to bring up that were not on the agenda.

CEW Member Jeffrey Cardenas expressed his concern regarding the impacted vote centers in Irvine for the General November 2024 Election.

Registrar Page explained that it is an agenda item and will discuss the long lines in more details later.

2024 PRESIDENTIAL GENERAL ELECTION REVIEW:

Turnout was 76.1% with is a slight increase to in-person voting. Still not same level of overall turnout as prior Presidential Elections.

Registrar Page expressed that the November 2024 Election had more provisional ballots than any Voter's Choice Act election due to same day registration, with UCI having the highest provisional ballots with 2:1 of regular ballots.

Registrar Page explained how ROV handled the long lines at UCI and requested Training and Special Projects Manager, Tonya Pearce provide a summary of how voters were taken care of in a timely manner.

Training and Special Projects Manager, Tonya Pearce explained ROV deployed additional staff and equipment including the mobile voting unit to UCI. The additional staff assisted CSRs that were at the UCI vote center and worked the line. When the mobile unit arrived and was set up, it operated as an additional vote center at the location.

Registrar Page added that ROV works with UCI to confirm which facility on campus can be used as a Vote Center.

Community Outreach Manager, Enedina Chhim, added that the Community Engagement Team work on avoiding same day registration. Before the voting period, ROV's Community Engagement Team went to the UCI campus specifically 4-5 times in October.

Registrar Page: It was noticed throughout the nation that there were long lines on college campuses. In addition, there were 105 rejections for provisional ballots because voters did not reside in county.

CEW Member Jeffery Cardenas: What time did the mobile unit arrive on campus?

Registrar Page confirmed first team arrived at 4:15 p.m. and mobile voter unit between 5 – 6 p.m. Before Tonya's team arrived, additional staff were sent out to help. Challenge with mobile unit is to get it out the door and set up. As for UCI and future large elections, evaluating whether to add a second vote center on campus and do our best to educate students.

Deputy Director, Operations, Justin Berardino, added that he co-chairs a committee which is working on a project to improve the process and reduce large amount of same day registration, which was noticed statewide. The committee is comprised of a selection of counties, Secretary of State and Election System vendors.

SPEED THE COUNT:

Registrar Page stated how the count did not take longer, it was within the normal timeline. Every election is different and the County has invested in more equipment to expand capacity to process Vote-By-Mail ballots received on or after Election Day.

Registrar Page expressed that due to the Urgency Bill AB 3184 to give voters more time to cure, ROV was prohibited from certifying before December 3. ROV had completed audits day before the Thanksgiving Holiday, pending cure ballots.

CEW Vice Chair, Lucinda Williams added that noticed statewide other counties were also ready early and had to wait until December 3 to certify. It was noticed some counties were going slow with canvass.

HIGH OBSERVATION INTEREST:

Community Outreach Manager, Enedina Chhim explained that observation of election operation is available for anyone to come and observe, there are ambassadors who are available to answer questions.

During the November 2024 Presidential Election, high interest in observation was recorded which led ROV to limit the number of observers during each two-hour ballot processing period starting November 9th.

Deputy Director, Operations, Justin Berardino expressed that setting the observer limit made a big difference when implemented because it gave everyone a fair chance. It was success all around.

CEW Member Jeffery Cardenas: Was the high observation because of the weekend?

Registrar Page: It was because of various calls in the community asking members to show up and observe, it went viral.

EMAILED BOMB THREAT/MISINFORMATION:

Registrar Page provided a summary of a bomb threat emailed to ROV on November 8, 2024, and the misinformation that followed.

Registrar Page: A reporter posted on X about the evacuation of ROV and questioned whether unmarked trucks that arrived were delivering fake ballots. More observers showed up the following day. The reporter and another came at the end of the day on November 9. We provided them with a tour and answered their questions. However, another contributor to The Gateway Pundit did not give up on the conspiracy about fake ballots, alleging a month later than more ballots were counted than the number of ballots returned. Then in January as a result of a Public Records Act request for ROV security camera footage from November 8, this writer posted a video of one of our extra help staff member showing her scanning a batch of ballots three times. We posted proof that the ballots were only saved once, but the misinformation spread fast and went to many people.

CEW Member, Alba Ramiro: The level of transparency is appreciated, and it is unfortunate that it is not reaching different sources. Did we ever track who is doctoring the information? Was it because of what you provided them?

Registrar Page: Yes; but I wouldn't use the word "doctored," they added arrows to the video. The gentleman is the brother of founder of The Gateway Pundit. He uses our responses to keep his allegations in the news.

CEW Member, Alba Ramiro: Good faith of transparency, some use it as a tool to confuse the community.

CEW Vice Chair, Lucinda Williams: Why did they run the ballots three times?

Registrar Page: Based on the logs, ballots were rejected by the scanner, she opened the scanner and cleaned it. Each scanner scans more than 100,000 double sided sheets. Must be regularly cleaned and make sure it is working properly.

Deputy Director, Operations, Justin Berardino: This is an employee doing their job the way they are supposed to do their job.

GRAND JURY REPORT:

Registrar Page: Good news received first of the year. We spent a lot of time with 3-4 Grand Jury members, asking questions and for documents. Their report was published on January 7, and it found no proof to support allegations of election fraud. The report confirmed that voting is secure and transparent in Orange County.

2025 SPECIAL ELECTIONS:

Registrar Page: Currently working on two special Elections: 2025 Senate State District 36 Special Primary Election and 2025 City of Irvine Special Municipal Election, City Council District 5. The next slides will go over some key points on both elections.

2025 Senate State District 36 Special Primary Election:

Registrar Page: There will be 20 vote centers; 10 of which will be 11-day vote centers, open 2/15/2025 and 10 one-day vote centers open 2/25/2025.

In addition, there will be total of 40 drop off locations, 36 ballot drop boxes and 4 staffed ballot drop-off locations.

Secretary of State set certification date for 3/6/2025. The challenge will be we cannot give voters 8 days to cure if ballot is received 3/4/2025.

2025 City of Irvine Special Municipal Election, City Council District 5:

In-person voting period from April 5 – April 15, which will include two vote centers (one 11-day and one 4-day) and two ballot drop boxes.

Mailing ballots begin 3/17/25 and certification deadline is the fourth Friday after election day, which is 5/9/2025.

PENDING 2025 SPECIAL ELECTIONS:

Senate State District 36 Special General Election: April 29, top two candidates from Special Primary Election if no one candidate receives majority of votes.

City of Huntington Beach Municipal Election: February 18, City Council action expected.

If Council orders a special Election, it will be scheduled for May 20.

If Council order consolidated election, it will be scheduled for November 3, 2026.

SB 1450 IMPLEMENTATION & BYLAWS AMENDMENTS:

Registrar Page summarized the new law SB 1450, which re-established VCA taskforce led by Secretary of State. It will have representation from elections officials, disability and language communities.

SB 1450 also required large counties to have an advisory committee that focuses on voter education. Registrar proposes an amendment to CEW Bylaws to designate the CEW as the County's voter education and outreach advisory committee.

The proposed changes to the CEW bylaws were presented.

The CEW bylaws were written before VAAC and LAAC:

- Recommended to remove language "of the disabled population"
- Adding new language part to clarify the roles of the CEW, VAAC and LAAC, which will avoid overlap in working groups.
- Adding more about education of outreach program and calling out new section of Election Code section 4005(a)(9)(c).
- Providing some history to make the role of the three committees going forward clear.
- Ensuring that VAAC and LAAC are recognized as separate bodies.
- Changing "poll workers" to Vote Center Workers
- Some Grammatical errors

Registrar Page questioned if there are any inquiries regarding and language changes.

No questions from members. Requesting motion from CEW Chair.

CEW Chair, Theresa Bass, motion to proceed. CEW Members Jennifer Hall and Alba Romero second the motion.

There were no objections, clear to move forward with recommendations as proposed and motioned.

2025 ELECTION ADMINISTRATION PLAN REVIEW:

Election Services Manager, Imelda Carrillo provided an overview of the Election Administration Plan update. Since the transition to Vote Venter, last EAP was in 2019, current plan is from 2021-2025. We are starting to prepare to update the plan and engage the community and receive feedback.

It is a collaborative effort between Orange County ROV and communities.

A draft 2025 EAP timeline was shared. The early stages and dates may change. The first step is an Advisory Group Visioning Discussion, which will be scheduled in March 2025 and will be a joint discussion/training including our CEW and subcommittees. Location to be confirmed.

The main goal of the visioning discussion will be to identify the priority areas of the EAP that we should be considering for an update.

Registrar Page added that ROV is working with Secretary of State staff who oversee VCA to confirm their expectations for an EAP update.

Developing a plan to ensure we reach a variety of elements of the community and not just the voters who regularly attend Board of Supervisors meetings to request a return to the polling place election model.

In preparation for the visioning discussion, members are advised to read the EAP, and the link will be sent after the meeting. Note anything of interest and will be a discussion with feedback.

Save the date for March 20 will be sent after the meeting.

COUNTY BUDGET IMPACT:

Registrar Page shared recent budget messaging by County's Interim CEO.

Registrar Page explained that the County has implemented a freeze on hiring to fill vacant positions and discretionary spending. Once an EAP update plan is created, it will be presented to CEO and CFO to obtain approval before proceeding.

INSTITUTE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT:

Election Services Manager, Imelda Carrillo shared that there will be training for ROV Management Team and Public Outreach and Engagement teams. The training will be on February 4. The objectives include strategies to effectively engage populations typically underrepresented or under-engaged, tools for designing and facilitating public workshops and practicing facilitating and listening techniques.

CEW Member, Alba Ramiro asked if training is for Staff only and will CEW members be invited as well.

Registrar Page: Training is for ROV staff, the institute will be present during the March 2025 Visioning Discussion. When an agenda is developed, tools will be shared with all members.

THE COMMUNITY ACADEMY AT STANFORD:

Registrar Page provided overview of Stanford Community Training program that was attended in September 2024. Attendees included Registrar Page, Sheriff Barnes and 6 members of the CEW (Randall Avila, Jeffrey Cardenas, Adria Jimenez, Marisol Ramirez, Gabriel Taylor and Mike Chen). Duration of three days, two full days of sessions which included combined instruction, simulation exercise brainstorming and program improvement. The group focused on voter accessibility, outreach to faith and community partners, and building trust.

Registrar Page said ROV outreach to the community has primarily pushed out information. EAP will be a good opportunity to rethink our approach on engagement instead of just informing the communities.

CEW Member, Jeffrey Cardenas added that he appreciated the time and opportunity especially constantly staying ahead and being proactive.

CEW member Adria Jimenez added that one thing stood out were the facilitators and how they dealt with emotional events such as school shootings. It was nice to hear their stories. It was reassurance that we can get public's trust.

Registrar Page: The EAP program will include follow-up and will have a larger discussion with the CEW, VAAC and LAAC members.

CEW Member, Randall Avila thanked Registrar Page and expressed that the CEW has a good opportunity to expand what was learned at the academy.

PARTNERSHIP WITH CALTECH:

Deputy Director, Operations, Justin Berardino, shared that in partnership with CalTech, a survey was distributed last week, this will provide data point for the EAP review.

Registrar Page, the survey was emailed to scientific sample of voters. ROV is evaluating whether to put the survey on the website so feedback is not just from selected voters. Challenge is being able to prevent duplicate responses. Asked the CEW if there is a value to put on our website and push through social media.

CEW Vice Chair, Lucinda Williams, if there is a way to separate the scientific and website, it would be good to gather more input. If same answers are submitted several times, good chance it will be from same person.

CEW Chair, Theresa Bass, how much feedback can we get? And what is the criteria CalTech is using?

Deputy Director, Operations, Justin Berardino: Random but ensuring that they are not heavy in one demographic area to provide good sampling without any bias/diverse sampling. It uses "stratified sampling" to attempt to obtain representative data from different strata (demographics).

CEW VAAC and CEW LAAC UPDATES:

VAAC MEETING UPDATE:

Election Services Manager, Imelda Carrillo: last Wednesday was a very engaging and productive meeting. There were two new members, and the goal is to expand membership, new organizations to expand outreach with the disability community. Received great feedback on voter accessibility education video, exciting to share and celebrate accomplishments.

LAAC MEETING UPDATE:

Outreach Manager, Enedina Chhim: Had good attendance of 18 total. In the news page there were a collection of news articles. CEW member Tim Cheng shared idea to publicize and highlight opportunities to publicize as resources where our members are aware of what is happening in Orange County.

Discussed the success of High School Voter Education weeks in September 2024.

Discussed seeking new opportunities in the communities to be part of and get out there. With budget we are taking into consideration the cost fee.

CEW Member Tim Cheng thanked Outreach Manager for the previous meeting and added that there are good news articles to report. Expressed appreciation for federal languages on the website. Agreed with Registrar Page's approach of working group to enhance community outreach.

CEW Member Alba Romero shared that she took on a new position and will have more availability than before to be more active. Her current position she is looking for more opportunities for outreach and

events catered to Vietnamese and Hispanic communities in addition to young adults. She will start working on some outreach possibilities and will present it to the team.

CEW Member Jeffrey Cardenas requested to observe the VAAC and LAAC meetings.

Registrar Page confirmed that they are open to the public.

Outreach Manager Enedina Chhim added she will connect and him to the distribution list
Registrar Page clarified that they are run the same way as the CEW meeting.

FUTURE BUSINESS ITEMS:

Registrar Page: In September, we discussed adding members to CEW since we have seats to fill. We also discussed on working with staff to expand membership and have different communities such as LGBTQ, MENA and law enforcement. Preparation for March is trying to get more members in the mentioned categories. Wrap up with City Clerks with a meeting on how we can improve and do better.

Laws link has been added to the chat.

Summary of future items: Potential events as per Tim's recommendation to get information out to the communities, City Clerk Meeting, updating legislative proposals we want CEW members to be informed of.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

CEW meeting is set for June 11, 2025, which was approved by majority, it will be a zoom meeting in the afternoon.

VAAC, LAAC meetings are scheduled after March 2025, May 7 and September 10th.

Registrar Page thanked the members for all their engagement and feedback.

Meeting adjourned by CEW Chair Theresa Bass at 3:54 PM.