

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

Certified Copy of Portion of Proceedings, Meeting of Tuesday, March 21, 2006

**SUBJECT: REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE ELECTIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SUPERVISOR WOOLLEY)**

**ACTION:** Authorized the County Clerk-Recorder, in consultation with the County Administrative Office, to develop a report, for consideration at a future Board of Supervisors meeting, containing recommendations for use of a *VotePad* system and a *mail-in ballot tracker system*.

Adopted on motion by Supervisor Smith, second by Supervisor Geist, and the following vote:

AYES: Supervisors Smith, Rodoni, Woolley, Neely, and Geist  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: None  
ABSTAIN: None

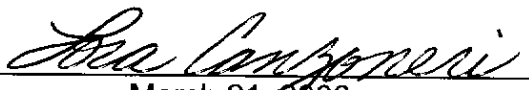
STATE OF CALIFORNIA )  
County of Humboldt ) s.s.

I, LORA CANZONERI, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, County of Humboldt, State of California, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a full, true, and correct copy of the original made in the above-entitled matter by said Board of Supervisors at a meeting held in Eureka, California as the same now appears of record in my Office.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Seal of said Board of Supervisors.

LORA CANZONERI

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Humboldt, State of California

  
March 21, 2006

**Progress Report of the  
Humboldt County Elections Advisory Committee  
March 21, 2006**

This committee has met the first Thursday of each month since January 2006 and has been attended by 10 to 16 citizens.

Our first meeting focused identifying topics that would be studied by the committee for possible recommendation to your board for implementation. Some of the topics identified are of an immediate nature and some are more of a "long range planning" nature and some focus on some very basic concerns.

Topics of concern to the committee that could be identified as immediate concerns were:

- ξ Verifiability of vote
- ξ Accessibility (HAVA)
- ξ Expanding the percentage of ballots hand-counted in the official canvass

Some of the topics for consideration that could be described as strategic planning are:

- ξ Preferential voting
- ξ Open source code for electronic elections systems
- ξ Reform of initiative process
- ξ Reform of campaign finance

(It should be noted here that the recommendation of the committee would be of an advisory nature only. The committee does not discuss our personal political beliefs.)

The highest largest number of topics suggested for discussion focused on committee members concerns for the election system in general. We will have accomplished a great deal if we can answer some of the following questions the committee has brought forward:

- ξ How can voter participation be increased?
- ξ How can we instill confidence in the system?
- ξ How can we engage citizens in the election process?
- ξ Can we improve our process to a point that Humboldt County Elections can set an example for other local, state and federal elections systems?
- ξ Can we protect the gains we have made?

As a "starting point" the second meeting of our committee focused on a presentation that explained the process of developing each ballot type and the Logic and Accuracy testing that is conducted before every election. At t his

meeting we also discussed some of the options available to help us meet the HAVA requirements for accessibility.

Our most recent meeting included a demonstration of the VotePad system. This is a "low-tech" solution to the accessibility system. Attached you will find a complete report on that demonstration prepared by Election Manager Lindsey McWilliams.

The next meeting of the committee will focus on Security before, during and after an election. Future meetings will address ranked choice voting and the development of verification systems and open source code systems.

I would like to emphasize to your Board that this is a committee made up of very dedicated citizens from each of your districts. They have volunteered their time to make a positive improvement that will benefit all of our community. We have engaged in constructive conversations in a respectful manner even when opinions have differed. Some members of the committee have traveled from the far reaches of our County to participate. I personally wish to thank each member of the committee and encourage them to keep up the great work.

Carolyn Crnich,  
Recorder, County Clerk & Registrar of Voters

Recommendation:

That the Board of Supervisors approve the purchase of the VotePad system for use in each polling place by disabled voters.

That the Board of Supervisors approve the transfer of \$199,515 from reserve for contingencies to department 140 for the purchase of the VotePad system. These funds may be reimbursed by HAVA funds as they are directly related to the accessibility issues addressed by HAVA.

Additionally, I would recommend that the department be directed to negotiate with Vote Here regarding the implementation of their "Mail-In Ballot Tracker" system as a pilot project for the tracking of Absentee ballots from the verification that the correct ballot was mailed to the voter to it's receipt back in the Elections Department, verification of absentee voter's signature and the final status of the ballot (was it counted or rejected and if rejected, for what reason). The cost of funding this project is approximately \$20,000 but may be less considering the status as a "pilot project". If it is the decision of the committee that this system should be implemented, I will return to you with more a more detailed proposal from the vendor.