

**Help America Vote Act
Idaho State Planning Committee
Minutes, February 9, 2006**

Jim Mairs, HAVA Coordinator, called the meeting to order as Dr. James Weatherby was unable to attend.

Participants at the meeting included:
Ben Ysursa, Secretary of State
Tim Hurst, Chief Deputy Secretary of State
Dave Navarro, Ada County Clerk
Chris Rich, Ada County Elections
Dan English, Kootenai County Clerk
Elinor Chehey, League of Women Voters of Idaho
Emil Dryzayich, Computer Arts
Noel Hales, Canyon County Clerk
Sharon Widner, Washington County Clerk
Barbara Roberts, Democratic Party
Dave Gipson, Caxton Printers
Kelly Buckland, Consortium for Idahoans with Disabilities

2005 Election Training Conference

Jim Mairs reported on the Election Training Conference held November 31 - December 1 in Boise. The conference met requirements of the state plan to provide uniform training for election officials. The Election Training Reference Manual was produced for the conference and distributed to all clerks and their staff. The manual contains complete training for clerks and staff, state best practices, power point presentation from the office of the Secretary of state on election procedures and poll worker training and support materials and also met requirement in the state plan. The manual is also available on-line and on CD. The manual was produced in a loose leaf binder so it may be easily updated.

During the two day conference the following topics were presented:

The AutoMARK accessible voting device and Unity Online ballot generation product were presented by Election Systems and Software.

The office of the Secretary of State presented the following topics:

The Statewide Voter Registration System, legislative updates, poll worker training, protecting election integrity, candidate filing, campaign disclosure, election consolidation, HHS access grants and HAVA compliance, voting system replacement grants, and the accessible voting device, election night reporting, reporting abstracts, election day data survey, state media support for county voter education campaigns, identification verification, absentee procedures.

County presentations of best practices at the polls concluded the conference.

Guest Speakers included Washington Secretary of State Sam Reed and presenters from the Postal Service and the Federal Voter Assistance program.

Dan English commented that it was a good use of HAVA funds to be able to bring their "frontline" election staff to this conference.

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Barbara Roberts asked how many people were there. 138 clerks and election staff were registered. 2 counties did not attend, one because of weather, the other because of illness in the family. All materials were sent to them following the conference.

Tim Hurst commented that by Idaho Statute three training sessions are required for election staff each election year to be provided by the office of the Secretary of State. Trainings have been scheduled in the first week of March in the North, East and in Boise.

Kelly Buckland commented that the Training Conference was very informative, good discussions.

Statewide Voter Registration System

Tim Hurst reported that the Statewide Voter registration System is in place and being used by all 44 counties. January 1, 2006 was the deadline for all counties to begin utilizing the database under HAVA.

The state in cooperation with the counties and Covansys [the contractor] is in the process of revising the functionality of the system, especially for the larger counties following a mock election done by Ada County. Although the functionality was there in the software it proved difficult for the larger counties. Some modules are being re-written, such as the absentee balloting processes. The latest release will be 2-11-06. There will be two more releases before the election.

A polling place locator is also being developed and will be available in April. The hosting for the new statewide will be outside of the voter registration system as a precaution. The new system ties to MapQuest to provide voters with directions.

Dave Navarro asked if a search by a voter could be linked to their ballot. Tim Hurst responded that down the road that will be possible and other enhancements including sample ballot and candidate information.

Total budget with networking and changes to date is \$4.9 million dollars. The state has spent \$3.3 so far. \$70K per year for access to Department of Transportation network (IDNET) and \$1200 per quarter to motor vehicle association for a tie in to the Social Security Administration to validate the driver's license number and/or Social Security number. Connection is also in place with Health and Welfare, Bureau of Vital Statistic (to remove deceased voters from the system), and the Dept. of Corrections to provide the clerks with the names of anyone incarcerated, on probation or parole that are ineligible to vote.

Barbara Roberts asked about communication between counties when a citizen re-registers. Mr. Hurst explained how the system flags new registrations and the clerk's office determines if there is duplication before deleting the old registration and transferring the new registration to a new county. Cards are saved and information is moved on the system to the new county.

Political parties and candidates can purchase a statewide list at the Secretary of State's office for \$20; countywide lists are available from the county clerks. The list is purged of voters who have not participated for four years by the counties.

Dave Navarro clarified pointing out that if Ada County received 2000 same day registrations and that it might take his staff a few days to get them all on the database. Timing is important as the database file is managed daily and Ada would inform parties and candidates that the list was being updated and when they expected it to be complete before they ordered a list.

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Kelly Buckland asked if anyone could purchase the list. Tim Hurst responded yes, anyone may purchase the list for election related purposes and not commercial purposes.

Barbara Roberts asked about the systems ability to handle a large number of people on line at the same time, including clerks printing poll books. Mr. Hurst responded that the system was stress tested by having all 44 county clerks log on and print poll books in the same hour. All but 2 counties participated and there was virtually no slow down in the system.

Dan English commented that we are definitely getting along better than a lot of states. Mr. English expressed appreciation on behalf of the counties for the effort of the Secretary of State for the cooperation here in Idaho, through this process, which has become adversarial in other states.

Accessible Voting Device

Tim Hurst stated that on November 28 the state entered into contract with ES&S to provide at least one voting device, the AutoMARK, to every polling place in the state. 930 units were ordered at a cost of \$6.5 million which includes a 3 year warranty contract on the machines and the on-line version for the software required to run and program the AutoMARK for the next three years.

Jim Mairs reported that delivery has been scheduled in two phases. Phase I delivered 2 AutoMARK to each county in the state, a total of 90 units. Three failed to pass acceptance testing and are being replaced.

In Phase II ES&S will deliver the remaining units before the 24th of February.

Staff training on the device will begin the end of February by ES&S. The state will provide supplemental training for clerks and staff.

Barbara Roberts asked if there was a paper backup for the AutoMARK.

Jim Mairs responded that the AutoMARK used a paper optical scan ballot just like the ballots used currently in Optical Scan counties.

Tim Hurst explained that the AutoMARK is a ballot marking device. It doesn't count votes. The ballot is inserted and the ballot is displayed and/or read to the voter and marks the ballot for the voter and returns the ballot to be deposited in the ballot can to be tabulated later.

Dave Navarro asked about long term costs for county budgeting purchase for their 5 year plan. Mr. Hurst responded that the information was available in the proposal for ES&S. After 3 years the counties will contract the licensing and maintenance agreement with ES&S.

Barbara Roberts asked if any optical scan counties have used the AutoMARK.

Dan England responded no, it is a new machine. But the ballot looks exactly like current optical scan ballots and will not require a count of a second ballot.

Jim Mairs stated the goal was to have Phase II complete by the end of candidate filing on March 17th. Then a second training by ES&S closer to the elections will train staff on how to train poll workers. Additional training will come from the state. Formats will include videotape, on-line, and on paper to support the clerks as they train their poll workers. Training will emphasize that the device only marks a ballot and that it is relatively simple to use, more like a printer than and

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electronic voting machine. Poll workers and voters should be more comfortable with this device than was initially feared with electronic voting machine.

Kelly Buckland asked about developing a method to get feedback from poll workers and voters after the election on this device, more anecdotal information.

Elinor Chehey commented that the machine should be situated so that the screen could not be seen by election workers or other voters.

Jim Mairs commented that at an election in Sacramento in November where the device was used, one of the main recommendations from observers was correctly positioning the device for privacy of the voter. A secrecy screen will come with the machine.

It was asked how many states are buying AutoMark machines? Jim replied that North Dakota, South Dakota, Arkansas with Texas being the largest one. Texas will be having their primary on March 7 with all AutoMark and Unity On-Line. We hope to gain a lot of information from their experience.

Ben Ysursa commented that we all have the same concerns. On time delivery of product that is bug free is the priority. We are a little bit behind on the Dakota's process and they have been exasperated with ES&S, but ES&S has improved. AutoMark is being used extensively in the country for the handicap accessible voting. The big question is "Can they deliver"?

Unity On-Line Ballot Preparation

Jim Mairs explained that Unity On-Line is ballot generating software that allows a county to enter in their election data and generate an optical scan ballot. This is necessary for the AutoMark because it uses the optical ballot. Last week there was training for Unity On-Line with about four hours of instruction on how to enter their county master files. ES&S will put together all the county information and put together PDF's images of what the ballots should look like. The good news is that once the counties have entered information in the master files, the information is there for the next time. The AutoMark is programmed with a chip that comes from ES&S for the individual counties.

Dan English asked how AutoMark flash memory card is made.

Jim Mairs responded that after PDF ballot is approved by the individual counties, ES&S will burn the chips and print ballots.

Tim Hurst said counties that have the full version of Unity have the ability to program their own chip. He is recommending that the first year be done by ES&S. Some counties do all their printing of ballots locally and some have ES&S provide everything.

Dan English said they have issues with the write-in filing deadline and not being able to produce the tabulator chip until the deadline had passed. Will this be subject to the same timing? There have been times when they have gotten the chips and they don't work. Will they be putting in spares?

Tim Hurst said that we have never been involved with this before, so we don't know. The write-in filing deadline is still an issue.

There was discussion about how the AutoMark marks the ballot because some people do not understand how it works.

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It was asked if Counties need to provide working AutoMARKs for absentee voting. Tim Hurst replied that the AutoMARK will be used for absentee voting.

Jim Mairs added that we are talking with ES&S several times a day to work out the problems that arise.

Health and Human Services Grants for Polling Place Access

Jim Mairs reported that last year in 2005 there were HHS grants awarded to 11 counties totaling \$36,466. To date we have reimbursed counties \$97,697 to improve polling places in Idaho. This is only one third of what is available. Many counties have done a lot of work already.

This year there has been a grant approved for Project Vote. **Phase 1** will be to develop seven Idaho regional training teams made up of adults with disabilities to provide voter education to the elderly and people living with disabilities. Support will be provided to each team. Accessible voting in Idaho is not just providing an accessible voting device in the poles, it's about access to all the methods of voting, including absentee voting at the absentee polling place and absentee voting by mail.

Phase 2 will happen after the trainers have been trained. The trainers will go out to the seven regions and do presentations to people all over the state. Each team will conduct a minimum of five training seminars. Idaho is the only state doing this type of program. This will represent \$42,000 of a reimbursement grant, the first one of this year.

Ben Ysursa said he would like to encourage people to coordinate their projects with the election officials in their counties. He is sure that the clerks would like to be in on the planning.

Dan English suggested that the clerks could come in to the trainings and talk about administrative topics. For example, how to file Sunshine reports and take some of the mystery out of reporting.

Voter Education Campaign

This will be very critical this year. We will do two campaigns this year. The first one will be four weeks before the primary and one four weeks before the general. There will be billboards, radio (English and Spanish), video, public service announcements and TV commercials statewide. Idahovotes.gov will be updated and all materials will be available for clerks to download if they wish to help them with voter education.

Ben Ysursa said we will know the first week in July if there will be initiatives on the ballot. If there are, we will have to mail out close to five hundred thousand pamphlets. It will have all information about the initiatives, including arguments for and against the initiatives. There will be additional voter information included in the pamphlet.

The campaign will emphasize two things. Number 1: That all polling places are accessible. Number 2: That there is a ballot marking device available in all polling places. We will be suggesting that if people want more information that they contact their county clerk. "Determined to Vote" will be our campaign slogan and will be connected to all educational outreach materials.

The Democracy Fund

Tim Hurst reported that the Democracy Fund is spending money now. We currently have \$13.8 million in the fund. There are two million dollars set aside for the voter registration system, five

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million dollars for AutoMark payments, and six million dollars for voting system grant program. There is an 80/20 grant program available to the counties to upgrade their voting systems.

Through this grant, Power County met what the Help America Vote Act has envisioned is the ideal voter system, short of having the touch screen. Also approved was a grant for Madison County to upgrade their voting system. Idaho County was approved to purchase PCs for election activities. An application is pending for Bonner County.

Payette County is looking to switch from punch card to optical scan. Ada and Canyon County are planning on upgrading and will probably be asking for grant money.

Concern was expressed about the pricing of ES&S in Idaho as compared to the state of Minnesota.

Tim Hurst responded that there are only two systems approved for use in Idaho, ES&S and Sequoia. Sequoia doesn't want to do business in Idaho, so that only leaves ES&S. It doesn't leave much leverage when we only deal with one vendor. The question came up during the meeting with commissioners and clerks about what is going to happen in five years when the AutoMark needs to be replaced, is the state going to buy it for them? No, the state is not. Hopefully there will be something better and cheaper.

Ben Ysursa remarked that everyone is well aware maintenance and support of these machines becomes an unfunded mandate on the local government if you don't get funding. The federal government is going to have to step up to the plate and continue to fund requirements and mandates of the law.

The meeting was adjourned.