

First HAVA State Plan Committee Meeting
March 26, 2003
3 – 4:30 p.m.
Teleconference Minutes

Committee Members Present:

Mona Lisa Drexler, Fairbanks North Star Borough Municipal Clerk
Katy Suiter, City of Ketchikan Municipal Clerk
Tom Maher, legislative aide attending on behalf of Senate President Gene Therriault
Rynnieva Moss, legislative aide attending on behalf of Representative John B. Coghill
Representative Mary Kapsner
Sarah Felix, Assistant Attorney General
Doug Pryor, Division of Elections Region II Acting Supervisor
JoAnne Baker, member, League of Women Voters
Mario Lim, representative, Alternative Language Community
Jim Beck, Executive Director, Access Alaska
Capt. Jeff Graviet, attending on behalf of Major Tim Nelson, Elmendorf Installation Voting Officer
Lynne Koral, President, Alaska Independent Blind
Laura Glaiser, Director, Division of Elections

Special Guest Present:

Lt. Governor Loren Leman

Members Absent:

Senator Donny Olson
Tara Sweeney, Special Assistant to the Governor for Rural Affairs
Pam Crowe, Division of Elections Region I Supervisor

Call to Order:

Director of Elections Laura Glaiser called the meeting to order, welcoming those in attendance around the state.

Lt. Governor Leman welcomed the committee and made introductory remarks about HAVA.

Laura then went through a summary of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) prepared by the Division.

Following the summary presentation, initial general discussion took place.

General Discussion:

\$5 million is appropriated for Alaska under title I of the Act for FY04. Under title III, \$4.150 million has been appropriated for FY04.

The preliminary plan will go out for public comment following the State Plan Committee's approval of the draft before them.

Representative Kapsner commented about the possibility of having a toll-free system setup, even if a web-based system is used. Many rural communities do not have Internet access. She also wondered if complaints could be made in languages other than English.

Katy Suiter asked if DREs will be placed in polling places where there are no Accu-Vote units. Laura replied that we will meet federal requirements, so the answer is yes. She noted there are 10 DREs in the FY04 capital budget as a good faith measure.

JoAnne Baker noted there were several typos in the plan and will e-mail them to the Division.

Representative Kapsner asked if there was money to train registrars as changes required by HAVA to the voter registration form seem significant. Laura said there would be money available for all types of training.

Although the Division is not sure when the federal funds will be distributed to the states, Title I monies may be available as soon as the end of April.

Review of Preliminary Plan:

Introduction: No comments

Section 1: Title III Requirements and Other Activities

Rynniva Moss asked about storage of DREs. Communities that use the voting systems for their elections store the equipment at their location and do some required maintenance. Other communities mail the equipment back to regional offices at the end of the election cycle.

Another question: Will there be waivers on placing a unit in a precinct that has no disabled voters assigned to that precinct. Answer, no. Each polling location has to be ready to served a disabled voter at any time.

Katy asked about by-mail elections as they relate to DREs. The Act related is related to elections for federal offices. The State does not conduct statewide by-mail elections for these offices. HAVA requires the use of DREs for ALL federal elections.

Representative Kapsner stated that in some smaller Alaskan communities municipal clerks have difficulty as they assist in the conducting of state and federal elections. She wondered about

recruiting postmasters or postal clerks to assist in this role. Mona Lisa noted that postmasters could experience difficulty, also, and that the answer is to simply train additional people. Laura assured the Committee that the Division will focus both time and money on improving training for election workers and staff.

Section 2. Alaska's Distribution of Requirements Payment

No specific questions noted.

Section 3. Voter Education, Election Official Education and Training, and Poll Worker Training

There was general discussion about holding training closer to an election plus a discussion of hub or one-day training on location.

There was strong general consensus that the production of a training video is an excellent idea and Katy advocated for producing an interactive CD. The group felt that using a video as a follow-up to regular training would be helpful to election boards. Jim asked if there was a disability component in training and the answer is yes but it needs to be better addressed in the plan.

Section 4. Voting System Guidelines and Processes (narrative plus matrix)

General comment: We will have 10 DRES in place by the 2004 statewide elections. Rynniva suggested that the Division place DREs in regional offices first because people know where the offices are. Tom Godkin of the Director's office confirmed that they are designated to go to the four regional offices plus the AVS at Access Alaska in Anchorage and perhaps several additional places in Anchorage such as the Senior Center.

Section 5. Alaska's HAVA Election Fund

We are in compliance with the federal government in our establishment of the fund.

Section 6. The Budget

General discussion. Charts were reviewed.

Section 7. Maintenance of Effort

We will use money for improvements—not enhancements.

Section 8. HAVA Performance Goals and Measures

We will measure how we are progressing under HAVA. Laura is ultimately responsible!

Section 9. State-based Administrative Complaint Procedure

Sarah Felix has drafted regulations for the Division.

Section 10. Effect of Title I Payments

The \$5 million early payment was noted.

Section 11. Alaska's HAVA State Plan Management

No comments noted.

Section 12. Changes to State Plan from Previous Fiscal Year

No comments noted.

Section 13. State Plan Development and Committee

No comments noted.

General Closing Comments:

Mona Lisa noted that she liked the makeup of the committee, she likes seeing legislators working on the plan. She's optimistic. She likes the plan's approach to improving handicapped accessibility. She says improvements are "down the road" for municipal elections. She approves of producing a video for training. She noted there is a difference in the manner in which elections are conducted in rural communities vs. more urban communities. She also noted that Alaska is far along with its elections system already and we will have a good plan at the end.

Rynnieva noted that the State has saved money by writing its own plan. She said we are "covering all our bases."

Laura noted the group will meet again April 10 and in the meantime should be considering recommendations to include in the plan.

