

Immigrant Voting Rights Taskforce

March 11, 5:00-6:30 PM

City Hall, Room 370

Meeting Minutes

Members Present:	Tanya Santiago, Sharon Maeda, Luis Fraga, Alex Miller, Many Uch, Diane Butler, Dorothy Wong, Laura Flores Cantrell
Members Absent:	Abdullahi Jama, Jasmine Marwaha, Hilary Stern, Rich Stolz
OIRA Staff Present:	Aaliyah Gupta, Sahar Fathi, Kristina Logsdon, Claire Carden
Guests:	Toby Guevin, One America
Call to Order:	5:03 pm

Welcome (Co-Chairs)

Luis welcomed everyone and introduced new members Dorothy and Laura.

Guest Presentation (Kristina Logsdon and Claire Carden)-

Kristina is the Chief of Staff for Rod Dembowski and Claire Garden is her policy intern. She spoke to the relationship between council and elections, noting that the Department of Elections has an elected department head.

Currently, the King County Council has asked the Executive to do a report on outreach to LEP populations. There is a proviso on interpretation services. Part of the goal is to expand the work that is under the Voting Rights Act (VRA). Currently, VRA only requires County to provide Chinese and Vietnamese interpretation and translation services. The report is due in the month. Sharon noted that the Taskforce should take the timing into consideration.

The federal government uses the ACS to determine the eligible languages for VRA. Unfortunately, those numbers are self-reported. The County has incorporated other data sources like WIC, to determine prioritized languages. King County Elections has a Citizen Election Oversight Committee – created by Council in 2006. Claire will look into the legislative history. The Chair is Ellen Hansen, the Taskforce members discussed the possibility of a joint meeting.

Luis mentioned that the Taskforce was interested in understanding demographic populations, particularly because of the ability to then understand participation rates. There were discussions around WIN/WIN's and OneAmerica's information from their robocalls. Toby and Alex will follow up.

Claire has been in conversations with San Francisco County and she passed out a summary of her report. California has stringent requirements beyond VRA that mandate that some limited information be available in Tagalog, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, and Russian. They have bilingual coworkers on staff to talk to constituents, as well as ballots in all languages at every poll site. Seventeen types of election materials are available in all of the languages. They work with 500 organizations, as well as all of the schools and health clinics. Claire has been working with the Outreach Manager of SF Elections to figure out the best way to communicate with LEPs. Bus Advertisements have been particularly successful. There is no line item on how much they spent.

Claire will be speaking with Orange County – Luis wanted her to ask them whether San Francisco has presented any of this information at any national meetings for County Elections officers or what the mechanism is for sharing this kind of information. He knows that County Elections officers in California that have annual training sessions in the summer. He also wanted to know about the cost and the percentage of overall budget for interpretation and translation.

Aaliyah suggested that the Taskforce offer to provide a briefing to the Citizen Election Oversight Committee about their work.

Regarding the Council Budget process, departments usually create a budget and put in a request to the Executive’s budget. It is rare that Council will give a department extra money that wasn’t originally requested.

Debrief and Discussion around response from King County Elections (Co-Chairs)

This item was held until the next meeting.

Subcommittee Report: Update from Sharon on Community Engagement and Brainstorm Meetings with Community Groups (Sharon)

The group brainstormed a list of 30 organizations to invite to the roundtable. The Community Roundtable will be from 6-8 on May 8. Dinner will be included, Sahar will work with the Chairs to draft a letter addressing the points of interest for the discussion .

Begin Discussion of Drafting Report (Co-Chairs)

This item was held until the next meeting.

Wrap-Up and Adjourn (Co-Chairs)

6:40 pm.