

HAVA Grant Advisory Board Meeting

July 7, 2009

The Davenport Hotel, Spokane, Washington

Attendees:

Board

Doug Cochran, Chair

Nick Handy

Kris Swanson

Debbie Cook

Thad Duval

Michael Rogers

OSOS

Lori Guerrero

Brigitta Hamilton

Katie Blinn

Shane Hamlin

Sheryl Moss

Audience

Zona Lenhart

Diana Killian

Bill Huennekens

David Lord

Mike Garvison

Lori Augino – phone

Brian Young– phone

Jeanne Youngquist – phone

David Cunningham – phone

Sheilah Crider - phone

Meeting called to order by Chair, Doug Cochran, at 9:14 a.m.

Minutes

Thad moved for the adoption of the February 12, 2009, meeting minutes, Michael seconded. All approved adoption of the minutes.

Financial Update

Uncommitted fund balance is at \$640,000.

Of the appropriated 2008 and 2009 Requirements payments of \$215 million, Washington is entitled to \$4.3 million plus approximately \$220,000 in state match funds. In order to get these addition funds, the state plan must be amended. The amendment process is expected to be complete by August.

Lori estimated the bank balance of HAVA funds is approximately \$15-17 million.

HAVA Report

The board was given the printed HAVA Report that was provided to all the counties and will be mailed to the congressional and state representatives soon. The HAVA Report covers the activities of HAVA in Washington State from 2004 to 2008. It is available online in both PDF and Word as an accessible file.

State Plan modification

Michael inquired if any comments from the public on the State plan were received during the 30 day public comment period. Lori said there were two, one from David Lord and another comment that was claiming Washington wasn't compliant with HAVA. Appropriate edits were made to the state plan based on the recommendations.

Grant Cycle available funds

Doug noted the fact that there is \$250,000 available in this grant cycle and \$300,000 in requests. He asked if the board would want to address the issue now or after a review of the grants. Lori expressed the OSOS HAVA workgroup recommends raising the ceiling for grants as done in previous cycles. Debbie proposed to review the grants and decide later if raising the ceiling was appropriate.

Grant Review

Pierce County

Their request is the same scope of work as the previous grant cycle, but with additional vote centers. Lori Augino from Pierce County addressed the board and shared the county's partnerships with CFI and TACID in setting up two additional voting centers. The county will be hiring staff for the centers from the disability community as well. She noted the additional drop boxes in the request were approved by their Disability Advisor Committee (DAC).

The centers are open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., have provisional ballots available, are connected to the local election management system (EMS) to see if the voter has already voted, and available to anyone registered in the county. If the county makes a switch to vote by mail, it will be the only place a person can get a poll site experience that is fully accessible. The two additional voting centers will be located across the Narrows Bridge in the harbor area and in East Pierce County.

Nick said he wanted to highlight that Pierce is making a strong connection with disabilities in their voting centers and partnering with local groups to both staff and promote them. David Lord expressed that the partners Pierce is working with are very influential within the county. He suggested a report on the outcome of the voting centers. Lori Augino replied that the county already planned on creating a report as a recap in conjunction with the partnering organizations.

Nick asked if Pierce County was prepared to maintain these centers in the future. Lori Augino was affirmative that the county would make every effort to keep the voting center. Thad pointed out that regional centers are a better use of dollars to reach the population than other types of HAVA funded activities.

Nick moved to approve the request as written, Thad seconded. All approved.

Grays Harbor, Kittitas, Stevens.

These three grants are for audio/video voter's guides. The product was approved for several counties during the previous grant cycle, subject to the vendor getting Section 508 certification, which was achieved.

Thad moved to approve the requests as written, Nick second. All approved.

Snohomish, Island 2, Franklin 1, Stevens 2

These four requests are for drop boxes. All are using the accessibility guidelines written by the HAVA board. One county brought up 3" font was too large for all the information provided on a drop box. The main wording is 3" but the additional information is not. This was agreeable to everyone.

Thad pointed out that drop boxes have been deployed a couple of years now and their usage continues to rise. He has found them to be effective for both outreach and voter convenience. The county seat in Douglas is so far from the population base, and boxes make a big difference for them.

David Lord. was affirmed that the guidelines for the ballot boxes also included access from the sidewalk. The issue of certainty that the drop boxes are truly accessible was addressed. It was determined that the board must rely on the county's DAC and reasonable implementation of the guidelines. It was found unreasonable to pre-approve drop box locations prior to awarding grants.

Nick: moved to approve the requests as written, Kris second. All approved except Michael Rogers

Island 1 & Skagit

These requests are for in-house voter guides Island is requesting an audio voters guide and Skagit is requesting an audio/voters guide. The board stressed the standard for Section 508 compliance. Debbie Cook said that she personally did the review on a similar product being

utilized by a few counties and would try to defer Island and Skagit's projects to a colleague to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest.

The counties were asked when everything must be resolved to use their products in the upcoming elections. Debbie explained the expected order would be a review, an opportunity to make changes, a review on changes, and a finished product.

Doug reminded the board that the decision before them was if the projects should be funded and for how long. Thad inquired of Skagit County if the \$11,500 recommendation for funding covered their first year with the additional requirement of Section 508 certification. They said they believed it did.

Nick moved approval of Skagit and Island's in-house voter guide requests subject to Section 508 compliance and only covering Skagit's maintenance for one year less any indirect costs, Thad seconds.

Island County expressed they would need everything certified by the end of August to bring to their commissioners for approval at their September 7th meeting.

Skagit said they plan to start filming in September.

All in favor

Benton

Lori said the county felt the public isn't aware of the accessibility units and would like to do an ad campaign in their local paper. Nick expressed he liked the use of Tri-city Harold's online ads as well.

Michael moved approval of request as written, Thad seconds. All approved.

Kitsap

Withdrew their request since high school elections are not eligible outreach under HAVA.

Thurston

Request expounds on previous grant request to extend their program.

Michael moved approval of request as written, Nick seconds. All approved.

Cowlitz

Kris summarized her grant for the board to include a voter outreach staff with a focus on non-physical disabilities, marketing the AVUs, advertise notices and provide presentations to different groups. The grant would cover the staff's cost of labor, postage, and materials.

Michael moved approval of request as written, Thad seconded.

Kris was informed that postage must be a direct cost to be reimbursed. From other grants, their postage requests have been denied due to indirect billing.

All approved – Kris abstained.

KING

It was pointed out that the DAC came up with the idea. David Lord expressed he felt positive about the proposal.

Nick moved approval of request as written, Thad seconded. All approved.

Franklin

Diana Killian, Franklin County Election Supervisor, and Steven Daniels, representative of Everyone Counts based in San Diego, addressed the board about the grant proposal for a pilot project using the product, eLect Today. This product is to improve accessibility for disabled voters by providing an option to vote at home utilizing their own equipment.

Steven described a process where an individual may access their specific ballot type online, vote the ballot, print it out, and mail it in to the county. The county informed the board that they were returning the grant previously awarded for an audio/video voter's guide that was said to have similar features, to avoid duplication.

Nick outlined that the workgroup's concerns as follows: (1) high cost and (2) lack of outreach. It was noted that the proposed program addressed a few of the issues brought up in legislation session last year concerning internet voting. The product, eLect Today, would also be required to have Section 508 certification.

Diana commented that the organization the county partners with expressed that many of their clients aren't comfortable going to new places and would prefer to vote either at a voting center or in their own home. Outreach for a successful pilot will be done in partnership with the organization. The outreach done with the blind center, DAC, and citizen centers, will include a broader population of individuals.

Nick inquired if Steven felt the company was capable of getting the product up and running by the primary. Steven said they only need about 3 days to program the product specifically for Franklin's election once all the data has been obtained from the county.

Thad inquired about the economy scale the company is willing and able to work with. Steven reported they have done elections from several hundred to the excess of 4 million.

Debbie was concerned that there would not be enough time completed a Section 508 review in time for the primary.

Katie pointed out that the technology is for everyone as well as those with disabilities and the state needs to move forward in this area. Attempts to have internet voting approved by the legislature have not been successful. She expressed this pilot would demonstrate why there is a need for additional options, justifying the cost per voter. Katie clarified that the concept presented is in compliance with law because the voter signs the ballot and mails it back. She noted that electronic ballot delivery is not as controversial as the electronic ballot return.

Mike Garvison, Skamania County, said the voter registration database planning sessions discussed this type of technology and internet voting is a goal of the Auditor's association by 2020. He said if the pilot works in Franklin County, he would be submitting a grant for the same product next year.

Michael moved to approve the request. Thad seconded.
Debbie made a friendly amendment to the motion that the project be subject to Section 508 certification. Michael accepted the friendly amendment.

Steven pointed out that the need for the pilot to cover both the Primary & General is to provide a moment to learn from the first to make changes and implement in the second. He expressed funding for both elections was critical.

All in favor.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be held at WACO the week of Sept 28 – Oct 2 in Blaine, Washington.

Grant Cycle available funds

Thad moved to increase funds available to cover requests, Michael seconded. All approved.

Meeting adjourned at 11:49 by the Chair, Doug Cochran.