



Inajo Davis Chappell
Chairwoman

Jeff Hastings
Member

Eben O. (Sandy) McNair, IV
Member

Robert S. Frost
Member

Pat McDonald
Director

Anthony W. Perlatti
Deputy Director

Spanish- Language Advisory Board Minutes

September 16, 2013

5:30 PM

Cuyahoga County Board of Elections Board Room, fourth floor
2925 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, 44115

Bilingual Coordinator: Ivelisse Roig

Meeting facilitator: Pablo Castro III - Co Chair

Attendance:

Maria Anderson- Member

Ron Berger- Member

Glenda Bermudez- Member

Pablo Castro III- Co Chair

Gerardo Colón- Member

Robert Frost- Board of Elections Board Member

Pat McDonald- Director

Lorna McLain- Member

Eben O. (Sandy) McNair, IV- Board of Elections Board Member

Marilyn Peña- Member

Tony Perlatti- Deputy Director

Pablo Santiago- Member

Sheilla Vazquez- Member

Mike West- Media and Voter Education Specialist

Agenda Item 1: Welcome

- A. Approval of Minutes from June 3, 2013 Board meeting; the motion was moved by Pablo Castro and seconded by Ron Berger.
- B. Board members Robert S. Frost and Eben O. (Sandy) McNair, IV were in attendance to present the idea of having two separate ballots instead of a bilingual ballot. The Board of Elections initially thought it should be a bilingual ballot. Rob Frost pointed out the complaints received from voters and how in the beginning they had time pressure to move forward with the bilingual ballot. He commented that many voters have expressed that the ballot is very confusing. One thought to alleviate this problem is to have an English only ballot and a separate Spanish only ballot. Both Board members would like to hear opinions; this would not be an end of the obligation but to continue to work together. Board members would like to know what would encourage Spanish speaking voters' participation and to increase voter registration, as well as to find the direction and effective leadership moving forward.

Bilingual Ballot Feedback and Concerns from the Spanish Language Advisory Board Members:

- They pointed out that like any other item that comes with instructions in different languages; if you know

Bilingual Program

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Spanish then you will read Spanish and if you read English you will read English. You will read your own/prefer/native language.

- It would create segregation, (for example / it could be use to track how many voters utilized Spanish ballots, and the information could be used to minimize the need for Spanish ballots)
- Voters should be educated on how to read the ballot
- Concerns that in the long run the Spanish Language ballot would not be needed if few voters request a Spanish ballot
- How to predict how many Spanish ballots are needed if few voters request a Spanish ballot
- Complaints have decreased; this may indicate acceptance of the Bilingual Ballot
- Intimidation; Spanish speaking voters may be too embarrassed to ask for a Spanish Ballot
- Isolation; which can create voter segregation
- Education services are needed rather than outreach events
- Separate ballots sound like a step backwards for our community

Spanish Language Advisory Board member's comments about outreaching the community:

- To have outreach money for new programs
- No money was available when they first started the Board (2011-2012)
- Is there is some money to focus more on voter education?
- Tracking the Spanish ballot- how do you track current Spanish speaking voters?
- Not taking it away, but to improve and clarify the current ballot format
- Marilyn Bagley mentioned that she was at a school community meeting and thought of what a great opportunity would be for the Board of Elections to get in front of the audience and talk about Voter Registration; Director Pat McDonald said that this is a great idea to incorporate in future outreach events

Advisory Board Resolutions:

The Advisory Board strongly suggested having a few community forums rather than a survey.

To allocate Money to create voter education curriculums instead of trying to find something wrong with the ballot and create new education programs for the Spanish Speaking Community.

Agenda Item 2: Old Businesses

- A. The expiration of the Consent Decree: Chair Castro talked about the importance of having a plan after the consent decree expires on March 2014. He stated that moving forward the Advisory Board's goal is to continue its mission and maintain a good relationship with the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections.

Agenda Item 3: New Business

- A. Appointment of new Advisory Board Members: New Chair Nominations: Pablo would like to draft some job descriptions with terms.
- B. Creating rules and procedures for Spanish Language Advisory Board Members to form a subcommittee for regulations. Maria Anderson has a bylaws sample draft for organization's rules and regulations; a meeting for this matter was suggested to be held. The meeting will be schedule by the Bilingual Coordinator.
- C. Bilingual Coordinator Outreach Report: This item was tabled until the next advisory board meeting.

Agenda Item 4: Miscellaneous News & Open Floor for Closing Remark

- A. Attendees were thanked and the meeting adjourned.