



Striving to be the Best

**OFFICE OF COUNTY CLERK /RECORDER
REGISTRAR OF VOTERS
ELECTIONS DIVISION**

**LEE LUNDRIGAN
County Clerk /Recorder / Registrar of Voters
Commissioner of Civil Marriage**

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August 3, 2016

The Honorable Marie Sovey Silveira, Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California, Stanislaus County
P.O. Box 3488
Modesto, CA 95353

Re: Comments to Grand Jury Evaluation of County Election Practices Case # 16-18GJ

Dear Judge Silveira,

The County Clerk /Recorder /Registrar of Voters Department is in receipt of the Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury 's letter dated June 8, 2016, including 2015/2016 Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury Evaluation of County Election Practices Case # 16-18GJ. This letter serves as comment from the County Clerk and Recorder pursuant to Penal Code § 933 (c) and 933.05 (f) on the findings and recommendation in said letter which pertain to matters under the control of the County Clerk /Recorder /Registrar of Voters Department.

Findings:

F1. Polling places were easy to find and access.

Comment: The County Clerk /Recorder /Registrar of Voters Office agrees with this finding in its entirety.

F2. In dual polling places, some voters would attempt to place their ballots into the wrong ballot box.

Comment: The County Clerk /Recorder /Registrar of Voters Office partially disagrees with this finding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1. None.

Comment: The County Clerk /Recorder /Registrar of Voters agrees with this recommendation.

R2. In dual polling places, a solid barrier should be put into place so that voters cannot crossover into the wrong precinct when placing their ballot into the ballot box.

Comment: The County Clerk / Recorder / Registrar of Voters agrees as a matter of practice that discernible boundaries are favorable at polling places. To further delineate between dual poll sites, the County Clerk / Recorder / Registrar of Voters will take modifying measures as needed using tape or cones to create a visual barrier.

County Clerk / Recorder / Registrar of Voters conducts elections on behalf of the elective districts within Stanislaus County, locating, surveying and selecting polling sites to accommodate voters and facilitate each election. Dual polling sites are utilized when a polling place cannot be identified within a precinct.

Throughout the year a team of trained elections staff drive to multiple locations in the County seeking potential polling places. In each precinct they seek public and non-public facilities whose owners will agree to volunteer their space for public use as a polling place.

Polling places must meet federal and state standards. A survey to assess each volunteered site is conducted using the California State 38 page "Polling Place Accessibility Checklist" to determine if the site meets requirements. Surveys ensure that polls comply with size, location, Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility, parking which requires at least one van space, lighting, ground slope, width of doorways, hallways and entrances, a clear path of travel, elevators and wheelchair lifts, unobstructed voting area and compliant restrooms.

In precincts where a polling place meeting all the required standards is not located, Elections Code 12327(b) states "If...the elections official cannot make suitable arrangements for a polling place in any precinct in which none has been designated, the elections official may designate a polling place in any contiguous precinct." Two polls can share one compliant building in a contiguous precinct. If the compliant building is available to the County and has two sufficiently sized rooms, one polling place is located in each room and they remain separate. If only one large room is available, two completely separate individual polling places are stationed as far apart as possible within that legally compliant room.

Each polling place includes a precinct board of 5 volunteer poll workers, ballot counting equipment, supplies, signs, voting booths and ballots. Depending on which districts are on the ballot, the number of Stanislaus County precincts can range from 150 - 200 precincts.

It is the practice of the Registrar of Voters to conduct an election with separate polling places. Only when separate polling places are not feasible is a location shared. On Election Day when a solid barrier is not available between the polls, several steps are taken to avoid voter confusion. A poll worker is assigned as a "greeter" to direct voters to their precinct and also maintains the distinction between the two polls.

Please extend my appreciation to this year's Civil Grand Jury for their work and acknowledgement of the efforts and excellence displayed by the County Clerk / Recorder / Registrar of Voters staff and election volunteers. The time devoted to the review of the elections operations is greatly appreciated. Contact information for the County Clerk /Recorder /Registrar of Voters is 525-5211.

Sincerely,



Lee Lundrigan
Stanislaus County Clerk Recorder & Registrar of Voters

cc:

Supervisor Dick Monteith, Chairman, Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors
Edward Halsey, Foreperson, Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury 2015-2016
Stan Risen, Chief Executive Officer, Stanislaus County