



PATRICIA MORRISSEY  
STATEWIDE ELECTIONS  
ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE  
CHAIR

**STATE OF HAWAII  
STATEWIDE ELECTIONS ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
STATEWIDE ELECTIONS ACCESSIBILITY  
NEEDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**OCTOBER 3, 2023 @ 1:30 PM**

Pursuant to Section 92-3.7, Hawaii Revised Statutes, the Statewide Elections Accessibility Needs Advisory Committee will be meeting remotely using interactive conference technology. Members of the public may have participated in the meeting via Zoom.

Committee Members in Attendance:

Patricia Morrissey, Chair  
James Gashel, Vice Chair  
Kathryn Keim  
Sheryl Nelson

**PROCEEDINGS**

**I. Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Statewide Elections Accessibility Needs Advisory Committee was called to order by Chair Morrissey at 1:30 p.m.

**II. Roll Call**

All members of the Statewide Elections Accessibility Needs Advisory Committee were present at the meeting with the exceptions of Committee Members Anand and Nelson.

**III. Approval of minutes for the September 5, 2023 meeting**

Committee Member Keim made a motion to approve the minutes for the meeting of September 5, 2023, which was seconded by Vice Chair Gashel, and approved by the Committee.

IV. Report on the status of recommendations made to the Office of Elections by the Committee

Ms. Bueno provided a status report on the Committee's recommendations:

- Committee recommended OE to look at ways to streamline the ballot return process: Ms. Bueno reported that OE met with Enhanced Voting to discuss simplifying the delivery and return process for electronic ballots. She outlined the processes for receiving, marking, and returning the electronic ballot. In particular, she highlighted that they are working with the vendor to develop a "single sign on" to consolidate steps. She mentioned that Enhanced Voting is working on creating a demonstration HTML ballot, which OE will use to incorporate into future voter education. Additionally, she shared plans to schedule a demonstration of the process from Enhanced Voting in a future meeting.

Vice Chair Gashel expressed positive feedback on the streamlined process.

Donald Sakamoto, Chair for the City & County of Honolulu Elections Accessibility Needs Advisory Committee, asked about the process for voters to update their signature, mentioning that people with disabilities sometimes have signatures that change. Further, he asked if ballot tracking will be available in the next election.

Ms. Bueno relayed that voters should contact their County Elections Divisions directly for further instruction on how to update their signature, and confirmed that the ballot tracking system, BallotTrax, will be available in the next election.

V. Discussion on effective voting accessibility strategies Marlene Sallo, Executive Director, National Disability Rights Network

Ms. Sallo shared examples of challenges that her organization has identified regarding elections nationwide, these include: the inability to conduct surveys to assess accessibility at polling places due to COVID, curbside voting restrictions in a number of states, placement of ballot drop boxes in locations that are not accessible, access to voting for residents in long term care facilities, access to electronic ballot delivery systems, and ID verification issues.

Chair Morrissey and Vice Chair Gashel asked Ms. Sallo to speak further on electronic ballot delivery systems in Massachusetts, particularly on the

verification process.

Ms. Sallo shared that during COVID, voters emailed back their voted electronic ballots. She was unsure of the current process and will email the Committee more information including the vendor that was used.

Chair Morrissey expressed interest in partnering with organizations like the League of Women Voters to conduct candidate forums focusing on disability issues.

Louis Erteschik, Hawaii Disability Rights Center, expressed to the Committee that their office can assist in advocating for any upcoming legislation, including providing testimony. He added that they currently conduct voter registration drives through their HAVA funds.

Ms. Sallo shared that another concern is reaching voters displaced by the Maui wildfires. She recommended that the Committee should keep an open line of communication with Federal and local agencies to reach these voters.

#### VI. Presentation from the Office of Elections on voter outreach efforts

Ms. Bueno shared the role of the Voter Services section at OE and provided an overview of the office's voter education efforts, which include developing media campaigns, writing press releases, and conducting media interviews. She added that moving forward, OE will work with media to pursue stories to cover election accessibility.

Ms. Bueno continued that OE works with partner organizations to identify community events that the office can participate in. She shared that most recently, OE participated in the Young at Heart Expo and an event hosted by United Self Help. Mr. Akamine added that OE works with the Neighbor Island chapters of the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) and has several voter education presentations scheduled with other community groups this year.

Vice Chair Gashel shared that the Honolulu NFB holds a monthly meeting and recommends that OE attends. Additionally, he asked that OE include their outreach efforts in the monthly report to the Committee.

Chair Morrissey asked whether outreach is done specifically for high school students.

Ms. Bueno responded that OE carries out the futureHlvoter Program, which works with the Department of Education to provide high school students statewide the opportunity to register to vote. She shared that OE also participates in events for young audiences including the SPIN Conferences and Footsteps to Transition Fairs.

Committee member Nelson joined the meeting at 2:30pm.

VII. Discussion relating to mobile voting, electronic ballot delivery, and return process

The Committee had no further discussion for this agenda item.

VIII. General discussion on issues for voters with disabilities

Chair Morrissey said that she will complete the following:

- Reach out to the League of Women Voters to discuss a partnership in conducting disability focused candidate forums via Zoom.
- Draft a letter to the legislature to express that the Committee can help in drafting the language of the ballot questions.
- Reach out to the County Elections Divisions to invite them to the next meeting.

Chair Morrissey also shared that she is interested in starting an e-mail newsletter to let the community know what the Committee is doing. She established that she would be responsible for writing the newsletters.

Committee Member Keim suggested that several government agencies may have a database of individuals with disabilities, such as the Department of Taxation, which could be helpful in generating an email list.

IX. Adjournment

Committee Member Nelson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Vice Chair Gashel, and approved by the Committee.