

Alameda County Elections Commission

Approved Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 27, 2026	4:00 PM	1225 Fallon Street, Room G-1 Oakland CA 94612
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1 **Call to Order / Roll Call**

The Elections Commission meeting convened at 4:00 p.m. with President Dieter presiding as chair.

Present

Commissioners Karen Butter, Jim Lindsay, Tiega Varlack, Alexander Ramon, David Wagner, Irene Dieter, Sasha Ritzie-Hernandez, and ex officio Thai Nam Pham participated via teleconference. Judy Belcher and Karl Seabrook arrived late.

Absent

Commissioners Alissa Moore and Allie Whitehurst.

Staff Present

Registrar of Voters: Cynthia Cornejo, Charles Smithline, and Shaheer Siddiqui.

County Counsel: Jason Allen.

2 **Agenda Changes**

There were no changes to the agenda.

3 **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

A motion to approve the July 16, 2026 meeting minutes was made by Commissioner Butter, seconded by Vice President Ramon, and passed 5-0 with two abstentions.

4 **Announcements and Communications on Issues Not on the Agenda**

a. From staff

Interim Registrar Cornejo reported the ROV is conducting two elections simultaneously.

b. From commissioners

President Dieter announced that the approved June 2, 2026 post-election assessment was emailed to the Board of Supervisors, and that the ROV sent to the Secretary of State the commission's recommended changes to the California State Voter Information Guide.

5 Public Comment on Issues Not on the Agenda

There was no public comment on non-agenda items.

6 Monthly Update from Registrar of Voters (ROV) Office

Interim Registrar Cornejo reported that ROV is in the middle of the August 18, 2026 election canvass, posting scheduled updates and will certify the election on September 17, per the Secretary of State's guidelines. The ROV is currently preparing for the November general election, including the voter information guide and ballot information. There are 28 local measures, 14 state propositions, 216 candidate statements for 268 versions of the voter information guide that have to be translated into four languages. She answered questions.

7 Ongoing Agenda Items

7-A Ad Hoc Committee Reports

7-A(1) Voting Participation

video time 14:23

Commissioner Ritzie-Hernandez reported the progress the committee has made with Fuerza. They've asked for demographic statistics throughout Alameda County, including race, ethnicity, eligible voters, registered voters and actual voters, and turnout for the last five general elections. No public comment was made. Discussion ensued.

7-A(2) Youth Participation

24:01

Commissioner Varlack reported that the committee did not meet during the month. The committee requested to continue to receive reports from the ROV and the Oakland and Berkeley school districts regarding youth voting and from the working group that was formed to make sure it is successful. No public comment was made. Discussion ensued. Ms. Cornejo said the results of youth turnout by jurisdiction is on the website and reported on the ROV's efforts to work with the school administrators regarding educating youth about voting in California, and youth volunteering as vote center workers.

7-A(3) Budgeting for Elections

39:15

Commissioner Lindsay reported the committee is trying to meet for the second time with an ROV cost expert before offering advice on clarifying the cost of doing business. The meeting had already been scheduled for September 9. No public comment was made.

7-A(4) Rules and Procedures

41:50

Commissioner Dieter said the commission's edits to the rules were made and that county counsel had reviewed it for compliance with the Brown Act, adding that the county has a handbook for all Boards and Commissions. Jason Allen explained that the commission is not an eligible legislative body that requires additional Brown Act requirements. No public comment was made. Discussion ensued. A motion was made to approve the rules and

procedures with amendments—moving B-12 to B-1, adding in-person and on time barring emergencies after attend all meetings, and adding language clarifying that the county handbook supersedes the commission’s rules in the event of a conflict by Commissioner Lindsay and seconded by Commissioner Varlack. The motion passed unanimously.

8 Regular Agenda Items

8-A Election Services Discussions and Potential Memorandum(s) of Understanding

57:50

Commissioner Lindsay pointed out that the agenda item description needed to be changed from the month of July to June, and officials to clerks. Ms. Cornejo reviewed the processes already in place that impact cities, the recent meeting with the city clerks, and the possibility of conducting a debrief after the election regarding their ballot measures as well. No public comment was made. Discussion ensued. Mr. Allen clarified that the Elections Code already spells out what the ROV’s and the cities’ duties are, so adding a MOU may potentially change the legal dynamic, so the ROV has not promised to enter into a MOU. Commissioner Pham explained that improving communications with the clerks may alleviate the need for MOUs. Ms. Cornejo said the ROV has provided the clerks with updated guidelines and the media toolkit.

8-B Workshop on Election Commission Interests

1:18

President Dieter reminded everyone that commissioners and the public help create the agenda, and asked for possible agenda items. No public comment was made. Discussion ensued. Commissioners and staff offered their ideas for agenda items.

8-C Commission member restrictions

1:57

President Dieter said campaign season had arrived so it is important for the commissioners to know the restrictions, particularly on political activities. No public comment was made. Discussion ensued. Mr. Allen clarified the primary concern is for the commission to maintain an appearance and actual objectivity on oversight of elections.

9 Special Report from the ROV

2:18

Ms. Cornejo reported on the process of screening, testing, hiring, onboarding, training, and deploying around 300 internal temporary workers through the Human Resources department.

10 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:27 p.m.