

VEMS User Group Meeting Minutes



i) June 6, 2002

a. Board Room - 60 Empire Drive, St. Paul

Chairperson: Kathy Sibel - Project Manager (OSS)

Attendees:

Bill Batcher (OSS)	Michele DesJardin (Hennepin Co.)
Morli McNally (Dakota Co.)	Tom Ferber (Washington Co.)
Marie Clare (Dakota Co.)	Judy Wertheimer (Washington Co.)
Laurie Braun (Rice Co.)	Cindy Kerr (Dakota Co.)
Deb Tappe (Waseca Co.)	Gary Poser (Anoka Co.)
Joan Manthe (Waseca Co.)	Linda Becker (OSS)
Joe Mansky (Ramsey Co.)	Kim Carlson (OSS)
Renee Coffey (Ramsey Co.)	Irene Meier (Anoka Co.)
Patty Hansen (Hennepin Co.)	Jim Myhre (Ottertail Co.)
Mary Kay Kes (Scott Co.)	Diane Teff (Anoka Co.)
Marge Christianson (MACO)	Patty O'Connor (Blue Earth Co.)

Other Presenters:

Joann Swanberg (OSS)
Michele McNulty (OSS)
Scott Simmons (OSS)

1. Introductions and Agenda Review (Kathy Sibel)

Refer to the attendee list above and to the meeting agenda.

2. Meeting Structure (Kathy Sibel)

Reviewed the tools that are used at each meeting:

- Ground Rules = Standards for each meeting
- Action Items = Assignments recorded during the meeting, which are recorded in the minutes and followed up on.
- Parking Lot = Items that need further discussion, and will be address via a task force, or added to the efficiency list, etc.

The group elected not to have a timekeeper at this meeting. Each participant was responsible for staying on course.

3. Follow-up Tasks from May 2 Meeting (Kathy Sibel)

All Action Items from the previous meeting were reviewed.

1. Name Standardization -VEMS does not find a duplicate last name with spaces. The OSS suggested entering in names, such as "Becker □ Paulson", but when the file is in progress, add the *. Scott

contacted the DPS for a recommendation, but they do not have authority to enter a hyphen between names. Scott is waiting for a response from DPS.

The User Group wants standards for those who do not have a first name. The OSS will submit suggestions regarding the first name to a task force. Linda Becker will head the sub-group with Judy Wertheimer (Washington County) and Cindy Kerr (Dakota County) as sub-group members.

Patty O'Connor (Blue Earth Co.) will call DPS for more information.

4. Redistricting & PVC Printing Update (Kim Carlson)

As of May 24, PVCs are being processed via the MN State Dept of Administration InterTechnologies Group (InterTech). This is a calendar of the upcoming regular PVC and Redistricting Notification Cards (RNCs):

June 3	First full batch of PVCs was processed and mailed.
June 12	Last day for counties to queue regular PVC printing
June 14	InterTech will begin printing RNCs for Redistricting
June 24	Last day for counties to queue PVC to get the guaranteed 24-cent rate. After this all cards will be priced the July 1 rate of 30 cents
July 31	Last day for counties to queue RNCs. Then regular PVC printing will begin.
Aug. 5	All RNCs must be mailed.

5. Redistricting Update (Kim Carlson)

Nine counties have completed redistricting and two more may be done by Friday, June 7. Four counties are using the Redistricting Utility, one is undecided, and the others are using the Group Voter Change feature in VEMS.

6a. DOH (Department of Health) (Linda Becker)

Issue – The DOH file arrives, but a voter already cancelled due to classification. It was decided that the voter would remain as cancelled-purged, instead of changing to cancelled – death notification.

The DOH has changed their file layout format, and the files will be sent on a more regular basis. There is a project with election.com to change and test the new format. OSS has new DOH files of January through April. Kathy Sibbel will find out from DOH how frequently files will be sent from the DOH to be updated in VEMS.

6b. VEMS User Group Web Page (Linda Becker)

Some suggestions for the Election Division Homepage were to:

- Hyperlink member names to their email address.
- Separate the sort options – by county and by name
- Correct name spelling
- Remove Bob Bruns (Nicollet Co.) Renee Coffey (Ramsey Co.)

It was suggested that the User Group Communications section be used to list the current Action Items, Parking Lot items and any reminders.

7. VEMS User Group Task Forces Update (Linda Becker)

- a) Absentee Ballot. The group met three times last month to define their requirements, prioritize them, assign a contact person to each requirement, and investigate if a statute is related to the requirement. Items on the Efficiency List that relate to Absentee Balloting were included in the requirements. The requirements were sent to election.com and they are analyzing them.
- b) Duplicate Voter. The group decided not to put effort into cleaning up the current duplicate records, due to the volume of records. Instead, the group will focus on working with election.com as they design their new "Duplicate Voter Record Wizard" feature. Kathy Sibbel will get the design specifications from election.com when they are available.

8. 7 a.m. and June 1st Totals (Michele McNulty)

- June 1 numbers have been captured in VEMS.
- Numbers will be extracted into the Election Night Reporting (ENR) system.

9. Computer Services Support (Bill Batcher and Joann Swanberg)

- a) VEMS Stress Test –
Planning Stress Test to be performed during the last part of July or early August. (Note that during the last week of July, many county members will be at a conference.) There are 4 items involved:
- a. Your PC's - shouldn't be an issue
 - b. Network - LAN (printing job can use a large amount of CPU)
 - c. Thin Client
 - d. SQL Serve - database level

Test scripts will be developed. The goal is to perform a reasonable range of activities during the test. Production VEMS and Production Profile are on separate servers. VEMS and Profile share a Practice and QA (test) environments.

- b) Citrix Upgrade
Will not happen until after the November election. This affects all VEMS users, OSS, and Profile users
- c) QA Environment available to the Big 6 counties.
QA is the internal test environment, and can be refreshed or taken down at anytime. Profile is on this server also. The VEMS User Group Task Force members would benefit by having this environment to test the Redistricting Utility and Absentee Module and VEMS upgrades.
- d) Printing Reports at County Level
- Printing rosters—ASCII output for rosters "master list" will work with counties. Need to coordinate what file format is needed for them.
 - Bar code is an issue because of the font printer. Must have a scannable printer.
 - Many additional users—Label, roster, unless outside
 - Printing Abstracts through ENR. No bandwidth. Dakota is willing to test the PDF. July is an approximate time to start this project.
- e) Label Printer
Testing old Dymo LabelWriter EL60. Have ordered a new model Turbo330 to test and will test printing the labels on it to determine if new printers are needed.

A survey will be developed and sent to the counties to understand what model printers and how many each county currently has. Label printers are part of the requirements and election.com will retest them.

- f) System Support (Joann Swanberg)

- Reviewed the revised HD web site: soshelpdesk.sos.state.mn.us
- You will be able to submit your own trouble tickets by the mid to later summer.
- Other pertinent information:
 - HD hours are 7:00 AM to 5:00PM, Monday – Friday
 - Phone: 651-297-4848
 - email: sos.helpdesk@state.mn.us
 - Provide feedback and suggestions to Joann.Swanberg@state.mn.us

10. Candidate Filing (Michele McNulty)

- Handouts included a list of Local Offices, a County User's Manual from last year and some updated screens for entering the Affidavit of Candidacy, selecting County Office codes, etc.
- Arran Technologies is updating the Election Night Reporting system to incorporate Candidate Filing. Regular development meetings are being held on Mondays and Wednesdays for 2-3 weeks including Arran, ES&S, Global (both Balloting vendors) and Diane Teff (Anoka Co.).
- Double Entry of candidates may be required to enter in both the election equipment and ENR.
- A pilot test will be conducted on Thursday, June 20, and a test with all counties on June 24.
- Candidate codes will be applied at the end of the filing period. The number will be generalized according to the proper logic.
- 2000 Randomizer - Michele will do more research.

11. ENR Web Screens (Bill Batcher)

- Candidate Filing – Asked for assistance with the designs for ENR on elected officials. Produce Blue Book based on data flowing out of ENR.
- Polling Place Finder – A task force will review the navigation of these web pages. The group includes Diane Teff (Anoka Co.), Marge Christenson (MACO) and Annette Peters (Rice Co.), Michele McNulty, Bill Batcher and Kathy Sibbel.

12. SLA # 13 Master List & SLA 10A2 Non-Registered Voter Roster Pages (Linda Becker)

- a) 13A – Master List. Reviewed the requirement for adding voting districts, school districts, and sub districts with the ability to sort by sub district and/or school district.

On the master list, remove all active codes, leave inactive and on-hold voters (on-hold only if they are formatted into the report).

- b) 10A2 – Non-registered Voter Roster Pages. Decided to have 2 pages for non-registered voters per roster. Linda will refer to Alberto Quintela and Scott Simmons regarding:
- Wording on the Roster certification. Should it state, “that I reside at the address..”, or “that I maintain residence at the address...?”
 - If the numbering on the blank pages can be consecutive (i.e., 1 through 12), instead of only consecutive per page (i.e., page 1 has 1 through 6, page 2 has 1through 6)

13. SLA List, Efficiency List and VEMS Progress Tracking Report (Kathy Sibbel)

- a) Service Level Agreement (SLA) with election.com. Reviewed the list that contains outstanding work items for the VEMS application that were not completed at the implementation date in 2001.

b) Efficiency List –Reviewed and updated the list. It contains change requests to the VEMS application. These items have been documented and will be addressed either with appropriate SLAs or when the new version of VEMS is released.

c) VEMS Progress Tracking Report. Gave a status of all tasks and projects that the counties had listed.

Note: Hennepin Co. found voters that were purged that should not have been. Michelle DesJardin (Hennepin Co.) will send them to Linda. _____

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14a. Parking Lot

Suggestion from MACO on the Wrong Polling Place Letter.

14b. Action Items

- Scott Simmons –
 - Set up CrimNet meeting with Patty O'Connor, Irene Meier, Judy Wertheimer and Marge Christianson.
 - Determine PVC billing inquires (in-progress)
 - Set up Wrong Polling Place Letter meeting with Patty O'Connor and Gary Poser.
 - Optical scanner. Ballots sample will be put on a PDF and emailed, followed up with a hardcopy mailed to counties
- Kathy Sibbel–
 - Find out from DOH how frequently files will be sent from the DOH to be updated in VEMS
 - Talk to Michelle DesJardin (Hennepin Co.) about past involvement with Absentee Balloting.
- Linda Becker –
 - Add Cindy Kerr (Dakota Co.) to Dup. Voter Task Force and remove Renee Coffey (Ramsey Co.)
 - Ask Alberto Quintele if the wording on the Roster certification needs to be changed from. “reside” to “maintain residence.” (Same as VR card)
- Michele McNulty –
 - ENR Training
 - How will candidate information be entered? Entered twice →ENR→Ballot system?
 - Incorporate seat number and Judge’s name in the Blue Book
 - Send screen prints to Linda Becker on Polling Place usage. Linda to add to Efficiency List.
 - Research 2000 Randomizer.
- Patty O'Connor -
 - Call DPS for more information on how they handle standardized names.
- Michelle DesJardin -
 - Send list of purged voters to Linda Becker.
- Randall Cutting -
 - Develop and email instructions on renumbering precincts.
- Bill Batcher -
 - Test printing with counties
 - Work with election.com regarding specifications on roster and Master List.
 - Work with election.com, or run query (Efficiency List 5.08) Edit Block Range – Street name spaces.
 - Explain how rosters would be FTP’ed.
 - Is there a limit of the number of users on VEMS? Add this question to the survey.
 - Instructions on how to uninstall MNET and Mapper.

- Bill Batcher & Michele McNulty -
- Merge Precinct Finder Screen Change task group with Candidate Filing task group (Diane Teff, Annette Peters, Marge Christainson)
- Linda Becker & Kim Carlson -
- Contact a county (i.e.: Marshall) regarding EF 9.05 in Master List SLA 13A.
- Linda Becker & Kathy Sibbel -
- Discuss Duplicate Voter - voting in same election (versus same name)
- All -
- Send previous VUG agendas to Linda for Web page.
- Provide feedback to Joann Swanberg on new Help Desk Web page. Use Web address to get back to her.
- Contact Michele McNulty if you are interested in being involved in “pilot” of Candidate Filing.
- OSS -
- Develop a schedule on printing of Master lists
- When sending an e-mail to a large distribution list, blind copy (BC) the list, but add a note in the text indicating who the e-mail was send to.

Task Forces:

1. Name Standardization task force includes Cindy Kerr (Dakota Co.), Judy Wertheimer (Washington Co.), Kathy Sibbel and Linda Becker.
2. ENR Web Screen tasks force includes Diane Teff (Anoka Co.), Marge Christenson (MACO), Annette Peters (Rice Co.), Michele McNulty, Bill Batcher and Kathy Sibbel.

Survey Responsibilities:

- OSS-
- Collect label printer information from counties: how many and what style?
- Bill-
- Has a survey already been conducted to collect printer information from counties? If so, was the data tallied and distributed? Otherwise, a new survey is required.
- Ask - Which counties want to print their own rosters?
- Ask - How many users do you currently have on VEMS, and how many do you plan to have?

15a. Meeting Evaluation

Friday, June 28, 2002
60 Empire Drive – Board Room on first floor

15b. Agenda Items for next meeting:

- Candidate Filing
- Absentee Ballot
- Roster Print Schedule
- SLA List and Progress Report

16. Meeting Evaluation

1. What did you like about the meeting and want to continue doing?

- No timekeeper
- Representation from OSS. Bill was in the meeting the entire time and addressed questions.
- Having coffee and cookies :-)
- Having lunch catered in
- Sending the first draft of the agenda, and allowing people to give feedback before it is finalized.

2. What didn't you like and want to discontinue doing?

- Web page information presentation. Want to focus on the “meat” or VEMS topics. When there are web site changes, let the group know about it, and they can look at it when they have time.

3. What would you like to change for the next meeting?

- Action Items portion of the meeting should be shorter. Collect status of action items before the meeting and send out an update.

When asked about election.com's presence:

- The group is comfortable that Robin Anthony will attend when possible. Otherwise, Kathy Sibbel will “bundle” questions, and call Clayton Taylor at a designed time to answer any questions that arise.