

VR User Group Meeting Notes
March 15, 2001

Meeting agenda items are in regular font. Meeting results are in *italics*.

Attendees: Deb Tappe (Waseca County), Diane Teff (Anoka County), Gary Poser (Anoka County), Joan Manthe (Waseca County), Karen Myers (Blue Earth County), Karen Ruehling (Sibley County), Lynn Boraas (Carver County), Maria Gilbertson (Sherburne County), Joyce Peterson (Hennepin County), Patty O'Connor (Blue Earth County), Robin Anthony (OSS Elections Division), Tom Ferber (Washington County), Monica Crocker (The MACRO Group, Inc.)

1. Clarify application setting-3 duplicate setting cycles:

What I meant by dupe check cycles is what fields do they typically search on when they do a dupe check?

Example: First cycle - name, second cycle - birth date, third cycle - address.

On our system a cycle consists a push of the F6 key. At the end of each cycle, it automatically rotates to the next required dupe check field. In other words, push F6 once and it searches for voters with the same name; push it again and it looks for voters with the same birth date; push it again and it looks for voters at the same address.

They have to perform all three checks each time unless they find a match.

The group agreed that this progression of checks was logical and the requirement to perform all three or as many as required until they find a match was also reasonable.

2. Clarify Requirements-obsolete?

“System must provide the ability to remove voter history en masse and change election type and date.”

“System must provide the ability to reload credited rosters.”

The group agreed that these requirements were now obsolete based on their understanding of the way that voter history is credited in the new system, since it no longer correlates with the printed rosters.

They expressed concern, however, about crediting voting history if there is more than one active election. Does the system present a pick list and confirm the user's choice to prevent accidentally crediting hundreds of votes incorrectly? They would also like to know how to undo an erroneously wanded barcode. They also wondered if the process whereby the state “locks” an election would prevent them from editing an individual's voting history for that election. Also, would it prevent them from being able to add Election Day Registrations and associated voter history for that election? They further noted that it would be important for the system to be able to confirm the number of votes credited when they reach the end of a roster (batch processing). Finally, they again asked how absentees would be credited so that the voter's history shows an “A” without slowing down the posting process.

Regarding the format for rosters, the group noted that the ID number should be included in addition to the barcode and that the barcode should be as far away from the signature space as possible to minimize the odds that the voter will mark over it.

Reverse Posting

The group also agreed to dismiss the requirement that the system be able to do reverse posting, as it is inconsistent with the manner in which the system functions. Using barcode wand to post voter history will meet the objective of expediting the process of posting voter history.

Presidential Primary History:

“Voter History from the presidential primary is unique because it is the only election at which we capture data on the political party ballot preference of the voter.”

The group reinforced the understanding that this is no longer required because Minnesota no longer conducts presidential primaries.

3. Define Report #26

“Report to generate certificates of achievement”

The group clarified that this is a new statutory requirement related to tracking training. It will generate certificates of training achievement for the various groups that need training. Therefore, the format of the certificate should be very basic, with optional fields that insert the number of hours, the type/level of training, etc. Robin agreed to develop a list of the specific options that would need to be incorporated into this report.

4. Request

Update Polling Place addresses statewide to assist in integration with on-line mapping. Verify in on-line precinct finder maps.

Robin stated that an e-mail will go out to all VR liaisons that afternoon regarding this request. The group discussed ways to find an address for polling places that are currently listed as “Town Hall,” etc., including using the 911 address listing. They wondered how long it would be until the precinct finder was refreshed so that they could verify that their changes were associated with accurate maps.

5. Project Update

- Functional Requirements Definition completed this week
- Dataset delivery completed this week
- Training plan to be finalized this week
- Hardware to be delivered and installed by mid-March
- Initial software install scheduled for March 20

6. Website Update

Discussion Group function is now live. The group thought this would prove to be most useful AFTER VR production rollout.

7. Interface Requirements

Monica presented questions from election.com for the User Group's input.

On the DPS import, the first and middle names are put together into one field. Are there any rules (such as needing to separate dashed names, etc.) of which we need to be aware, or are do we just take the rightmost characters up to the space as middle name?

The OSS project team will check into having DPS send the first and middle names in separate fields after June 4. This was a limitation of Mapper that does not exist in VEMS.

The optional address can be parsed into its fields and stuck into the optional address fields in our table. Is this what they want? I am putting Unparsed Address into the comments field.

The group agreed that this approach was logical.

I am dropping school district, since our districting logic will cover that.

The group agreed that this approach was logical.

Did I overlook a flag indicating new voter vs. change, or isn't there one?

There isn't one.

On the DOH export, I am putting the Certificate Number into the AgencySourceRecordID field. I am putting City, County, and State of death into the comments. Anything else?

The group agreed that this approach was logical.

The group presented the following question about the DOH interface: Why does the OSS simply delete voters matched to DOH files? The counties don't feel they need to review these before they are inactivated. They could just review a report that lists which records were affected instead and reactivate any they felt were inactivated in error. Since the SSN for the individual is included in the DOH file, if final 4 digits of SSN are added to the VR records, the accuracy of this match would only increase in the future. Monica agreed to present this for discussion at the next VR team meeting.

8. Other

The group had the following additional comments/questions about the system.

Will last names still need to be hyphenated if they are two words? Will VEMS accept a two word last name without a hyphen?

How does VEMS manage Military Voters? The users want to make sure they can get a separate list of these voters for use when processing the ballots. This system will need to incorporate the following information regarding a Military voter:

- *Name*
- *ID number (SSN)*
- *Date of Birth*
- *Last address (may not be in precinct finder)*
- *Mailing address*
- *Precinct number*
- *That they are an absentee voter*
- *That they type of absentee application is military*

These are a type of absentee ballot application, but are different from other absentee ballot applications in several ways. First, the individual may not be a registered voter. Second, they may not have a valid address within their precinct. Third, they will provide a military ID number, which is their SSN on their application.

Status and Reason

The group expressed interest in the Status and Reason code work of the previous group. Discussion about the manner that the VEMS system will present this information followed. In the end, it was agreed that the status and reason should be in one field presented to the user as a list of choices from a drop down menu as follows:

*Active
Active-Challenged-Postal Return
Active-Challenged-Guardianship
Active-Challenged-Felon
Active-Challenged-Other
Active-Permanent Absentee
Active- Court Ordered Protection
Inactive-Deceased
Inactive-Purged
Inactive-Cancelled
Inactive-Not Registered-Absentee
Inactive-Not Registered-Late Registration
Inactive-Not Registered-Other*

This mirrors the manner in which this information is displayed in the most recent user manuals sent by election.com.

9. Training

Robin brought up the topic of the June training and described the approach where each county would send a minimum of two people for 2 half-day sessions for a total of one full day of training. One of the sessions will be VR system training; the other session will be Elections Administration training. She asked for suggestions as to content. The group noted that several functions had been previously discussed as being appropriate for training, such as posting procedures, records retention procedures, precinct finder maintenance and absentee processing.