

MULTNOMAH COUNTY
VOTER ASSISTANCE TEAM
(VAT)

MAY 15, 2007

SPECIAL ELECTION

APRIL 16 THROUGH MAY 15, 2007

VAT MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Multnomah County
Voter Assistance Team (VAT) is to make
voting secure, convenient, fast, independent,
private, and accessible to all voters in
Multnomah County.

Report submitted by:
Mary Shultz, Assistant Director of Elections
June 3, 2007

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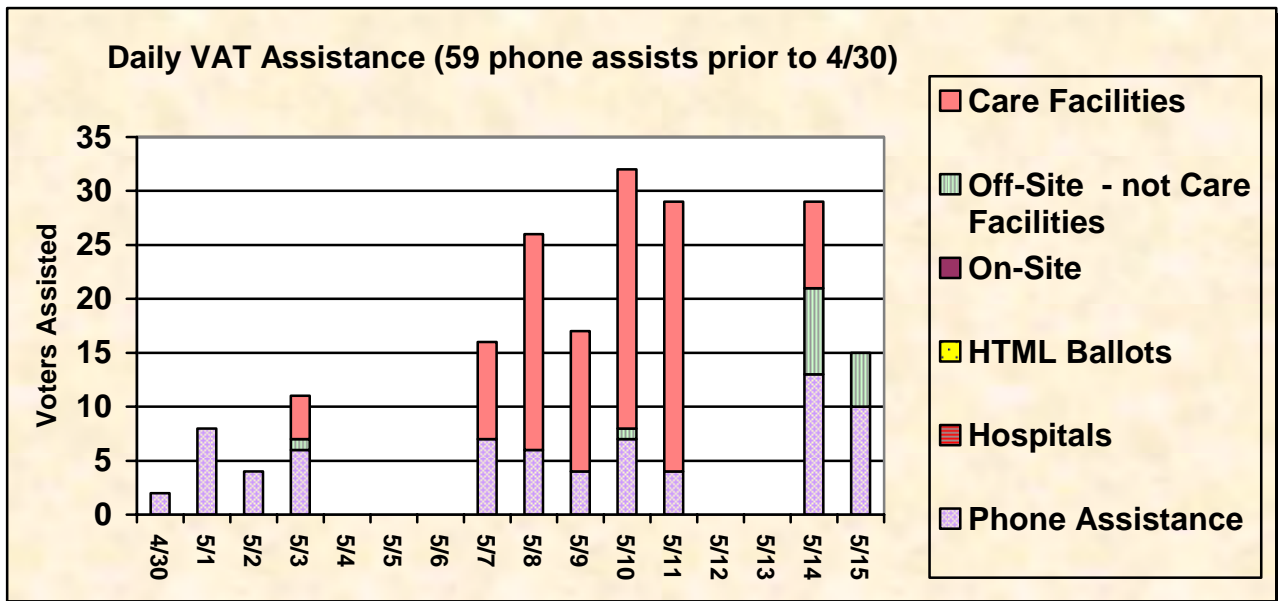
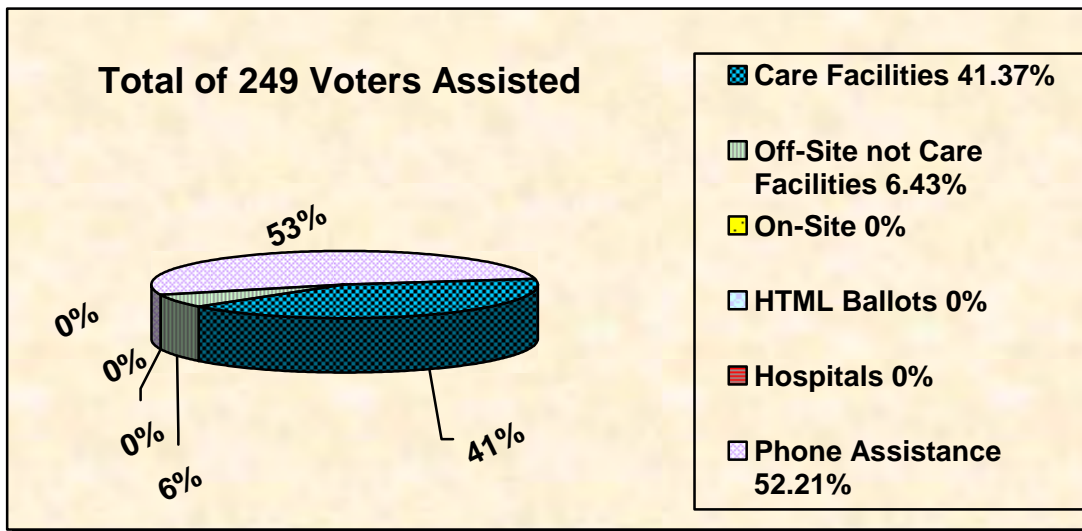
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OPENING STATEMENT

The May 15, 2007 Special Election cost a total of \$447,366.11. With 90,932 citizens voting, the cost per voter was \$4.92. Voter turnout was 24.72%

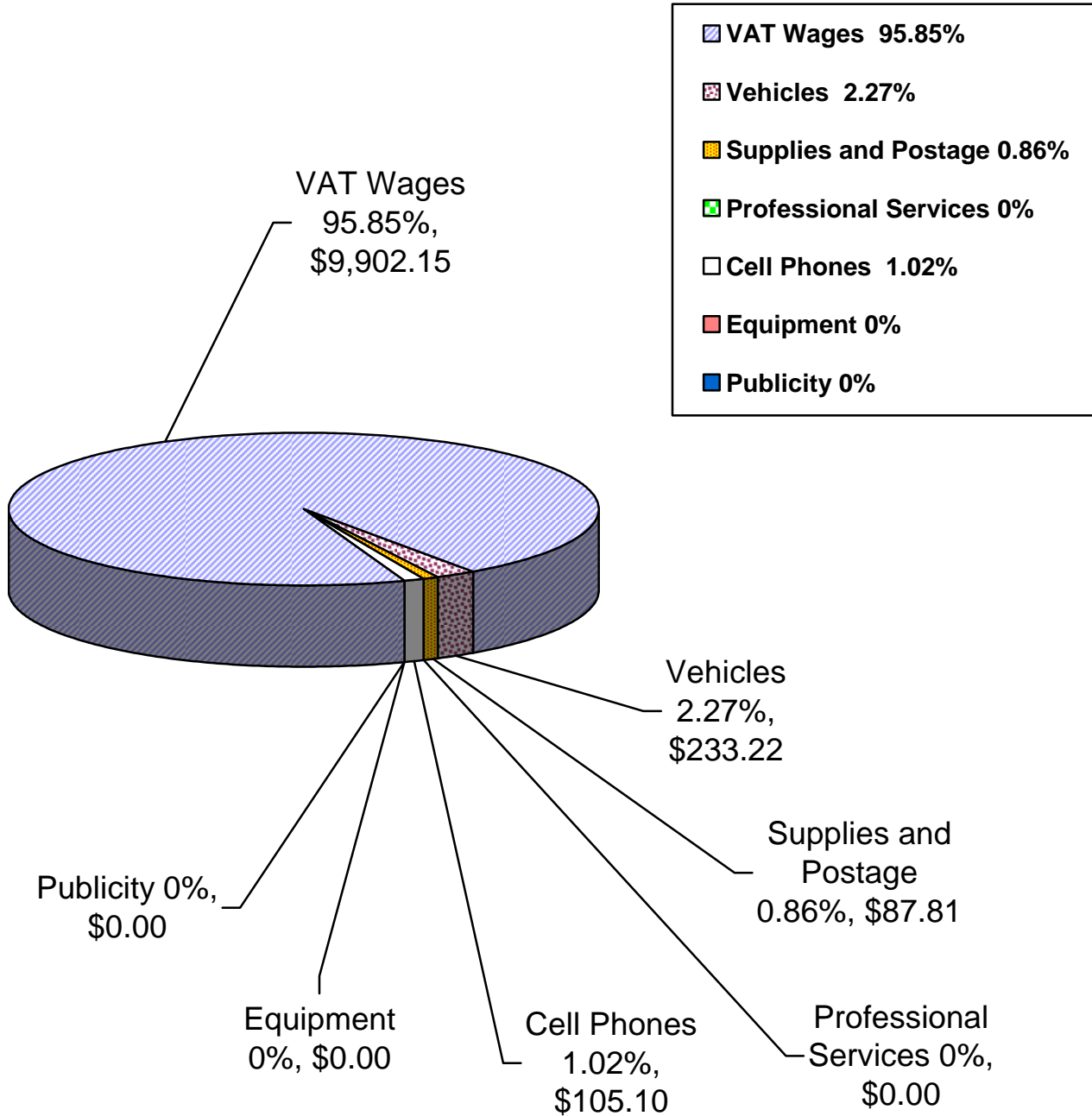
The Voter Assistance Team served 249 voters with disabilities or special needs in the May 15, 2007 Special Election between April 16, 2007 and May 15, 2007. The average cost was \$41.48 per voter assisted.

- 103 voters in 18 care facilities
- 16 off-site voters not in care facilities
- 0 on-site voters
- 0 HTML (not an option this election)
- 0 Hospitals
- 130 voters were assisted by phone



Total cost of VAT in this election was \$10,328.30.

Distribution of VAT Expenses



I. PERSONNEL

Twelve VAT members worked a total of 739.25 hours during this election. Each team member (excluding one) received four to eight hours of training. Runners (11) were also included in the training sessions in an effort to cross train for future elections.

Some VAT members spent time in other election areas such as shelving ballots in the red room; calling “no sigs”*; picking up ballots from the post office after 8 pm; sorting out of county ballots received at the post office; refueling vehicles; picking up and returning vehicles; retrieving election signs after 8 pm; securing the official 24-hour drop sites at 8 pm; assisting with libraries returning ballots to elections office after 8 pm; maintaining security at AGP Industry parking lot after 6 pm.

* In November 2006, calling “no sigs” was included as a VAT expense. It is currently considered a general election expense.

Coordinators: Beginning with input from VAT team members in November 2006, forms and procedures were evaluated and changed as needed. Streamlining of procedure allowed a greatly reduced number of VAT members for this election. Meetings were held with Rob Johnson of OHCA and Mary Palmer regarding pursuing assistance to Adult Foster Home residents. Beginning the second week of April, contact was made with VAT members regarding their willingness to work and with care facilities to arrange for voter assistance visits. In addition to voter assistance time, 140 planning hours and 140 post election evaluation hours were used.

A. Lead Coordinator — Lorene Lamp

B. Support Coordinator — Donna Knutson

C. VAT Members

Terry Chapman
Rebecca Halverson
Tom Hoeft
Samuel Jackson
John Jones
Duane Knutson
Linda Preisendorf
Karen Richards
Bill Scheb
Norman Watanabe

D. Language Assistants

Telelanguage and Speech to Speech were available for this election but not used.

II. TRAINING

Each VAT member received an average of eight hours training beginning Thursday, April 26 from 8:00 AM until 4:30 PM and continuing in broken segments thereafter. The afternoon training was entirely devoted to Defensive Driving. Runners were included in an effort to cross train for future elections.

A. Housekeeping

1. Administer the “*Oath of Office for Vote-By-Mail Temporary Employees*”
2. Payroll documents, including W2 forms
3. Time card explanation
4. Signing in and out of the office
5. Discussed “*Lunch & Breaks for Temps*”

B. Videos

1. “*The Ten Commandments of Communicating with People with Disabilities*”
2. “*Multnomah County Employees’ Field Safety Guide*”
3. “*Vote by Mail*”
4. “*What’s New in Multnomah County Elections*”

C. Written Materials

Jan Carothers’ tips regarding Diversity and Multi-Cultural customers

D. Forms

1. “*VAT Log*” (blue, pink for hospital voter)
2. “*Affidavit of Elector Requesting/Receiving Assistance*” (gray)
3. “*Intake Form for Voter Requesting Assistance*” (white)
(*New format reflecting ballot processing procedures for VAT.*) (5/9/07)
4. “*Voter Registration*” card and green Ballot Request slip and # twelve envelope
5. “*Signature Stamp Attestation Form*” (white)
6. “*VAT Visit Checklist*”(gold)
7. “*Sign Up Sheet*” and “*Flyers*” (facilities)

E. Off-Site Materials Package (*Black Folder Contents*)

1. Voter’s General Information Folder (green)
2. Emergency Procedures Folder (maroon)
3. Forms Folder (blue)
4. Sheet magnifier
5. Set of supplies (pen, pencils, tape, etc)
6. “*QUIET PLEASE – Voting in Progress*” sign
7. Set of official “*Voters’ Pamphlets*”
8. Portable Voting Booth

F. Auxiliary Aids and Services

1. Ask the voter “*How may I assist you?*” and offer options appropriate to the situation
 - a. Reading the ballot
 - b. Marking the ballot as directed by the voter.
 - c. Reading the provided official explanatory materials to the voter when requested
(official “*Voters’ Pamphlet*”)
 - d. Language assistance – Telelanguage and Speech-to-Speech
 - e. Signing for voters with hearing disabilities (only available by prior arrangement)
 - f. Use of magnifying tools for voters with visual impairments
 - g. Telesensory Machine
 - h. Signature template
2. Emphasize the need for tact, neutrality, privacy and confidentiality when assisting the voter.
 - a. All assistance was provided by a “pair” of VAT members of differing parties.
 - b. Do not lead the voter – the VAT member’s role is “to be a pencil”. VAT can not paraphrase, explain or recommend any candidate or measure.
 - c. It is not necessary to vote on every measure or candidate.
 - d. Do not rush the voter. There are no time limits.
 - e. All information received about the voter and how his/her vote was cast must be confidential.
 - f. Protect any documents containing the voter’s signature.
 - g. Whenever possible provide a private and quiet place for the voter to work.
 - h. Caution about wearing clothing or accessories which may be construed as favoring one particular party, measure, or candidate.

- i. The voter may place the completed, sealed ballot envelope into the locked ballot box or hand it to a VAT member and observe as it is dropped into the ballot box.
- j. Alternatively, the voter may choose to keep the completed ballot and mail it directly to Multnomah County Elections.

G. Security and Safety

- 1. How to use the card for entering the building, interior secured areas, and elevators.
- 2. Emphasize security and not allowing members of the general public to pass through doors when an ID card holder enters.

H. Driver Training

- 1. The driver drives the vehicle and is responsible for keeping track of fuel needs.
- 2. The accompanying team member is responsible for tracking mileage for each trip.
- 3. The accompanying team member is also responsible for carrying the cell phone, turning it on at the start of the trip, turning it off at the end of the trip, and returning it to the phone station for recharging.
- 4. Obtain copies of valid driver’s license for each VAT member who will be driving and have them sign the accompanying documentation. Verify that each license is current.
- 5. Provide instruction in parking restrictions and refueling the vehicles.
- 6. Each vehicle contains materials to be used in case of an accident, including a camera to help document the incident.
- 7. While parking at AGP Industry Lot do not back in to the parking spot. Raise and lower handicapped parking signs.
- 8. All drivers must have taken the County’s Defensive Driving course.

I. Cell Phones

- 1. Operation and hands-on practice
- 2. Phone numbers
- 3. Checking in and out

III. SERVICES PROVIDED

A. Locations

- 1. On-site
 - Multnomah County Elections Office
includes telephone assistance, front counter, the Helen Walton Room, and curbside

- 2. Off-site
 - a. Individuals (16)
 - b. Care facilities (18)

Calaroga Terrace	Marquis @ Centennial
Care Center East	Marquis @ Piedmont
Crestview Nursing/Rehab	Marquis @ Mt Tabor
Elder Place in Cully	Robison Jewish
Gateway Care	Rose Schnitzer Manor
Glisan Care Center	Rosemont Court
Harvest Home	Royal Anne
Laurelhurst Village	St Anthony Village
Lyndon Musolf Manor	Westmoreland Union Manor

B. Auxiliary Aids and Services

- 1. Language Assistance
 - a. Telelanguage
 - b. Speech to Speech Relay Service (STS) assistance
- 2. Reading Assistance

3. Reading of ballot and “*Voters’ Pamphlet*” to voter
 - a. Audio transcript of official “*Voters’ Pamphlet*”
 - b. Telesensory (26X) Vision Assistance Machine
4. Replacement and reissue ballot assistance
5. “Signature Stamp Attestation Form” assistance
6. Voter registration card assistance

C. Scheduling

1. On-site

Multnomah County Elections Office
At least one team (minimum) available at all times beginning 2-1/2 weeks prior to the election.
2. Off-site
 - a. Private residences
 - b. Care facilities
 - (i) The greatest amount of time was spent on scheduling our visits at care facilities. Prior arrangements were made with telephone calls to the facility. Sign up sheets and posters were mailed prior to our scheduled visit.
 - (ii) Five facilities faxed the residents’ names allowing us to check their eligibility and voter status resulting in ballot replacements and 43 registrations.
 - (iii) Whenever possible, visits to care facilities or individual locations were coordinated within the same geographic area. Evaluation of current and future sites is ongoing.
 - (iv) Visits began May 3, 2007 and ended May 15, 2007. A few individual voters in care facilities were provided VAT services on Election Tuesday but our primary focus on Election Tuesday was to service voters on-site and those at other locations.
 - c. Hospitals

Hospital visits were by request and none were received.
3. Telephone assistance

Depending on existing circumstances, sometimes the assistance was immediate. Other times, a call back was required.

IV. EXPENSES

Expenses of \$10,328.30 were incurred between April 16 and May 15, 2007

A. Wages - \$9,902.15

Twelve VAT members worked a total of 739.25 hours during this election for a total expense of \$9,902.15 in wages. Each team member received approximately four to eight hours of training.

1. Coordinator(s)
 - a. Total time – 346.75 hours
 - b. Regular time – 323 hours
 - c. Overtime – 23.75 hours
2. VAT Members
 - a. Total time – 392.5 hours
 - b. Regular time – 376 hours
 - c. Overtime – 16.5 hours

A. Professional Services - \$0

B. Vehicles - \$233.22

The two vehicles assigned to VAT were used to transport VAT team members to care facilities and individual assistance calls. Vehicles used were from the county car pool from May 7 to May 16, 2007. VAT vehicles logged 390 miles or an average 3.3 miles per off-site voter assistance call.

C. Supplies and Postage - \$87.81

Office expenses and supplies

D. Equipment - \$0

E. Cell Phones - \$105.10

A total of six cell phones were reserved for VAT use, primarily for teams in the field to communicate with the VAT coordinators and with teams at other sites.

F. Publicity - \$0

G. IT Services - \$0

We were not charged for IT Services who installed a Dymo LabelWriter 400 Turbo.

V. SUMMARY

The VAT goal this election was to do more with less. We succeeded.

While on duty in the Elections Office, VAT members were kept actively busy or were assigned “stand by” status to provide on site assistance if requested by the voter. Scheduling of VAT members was efficient and productive. VAT members worked together in blocks of time during this election with one group working the first half of the election and the other group working the last half. It was a huge benefit to have a group of VAT members work together for a block of time instead of scheduling different members at different dates and times as done in November 2006. Working in a block group allowed members to learn each other’s proficiencies, it maximized their training experience, and it was easier to maintain communication with the VAT Coordinators.

Credit for increased productivity is directly related to use of “*Sign up Sheets*” which were sent to the facility in advance of our visit. The facility signed up those residents who indicated an interest in receiving assistance voting. We provided names of previous residents receiving VAT assistance to the facility and it was appreciated. The “*Sign up Sheet*” was faxed back to the Elections Office several days prior to the scheduled visit. Such early notice provided time for the VAT Coordinators to look up each voter to determine voting status. In this manner, at each facility visit we were prepared for the voter whose registration needed to be up-dated. This eliminated the need for a second visit to the facility. However, it did not completely eliminate such second visits to three facilities where we encountered residents whose names had not been submitted by fax prior to the initial visit. Clearly, those facilities utilizing the “*Sign up Sheets*” had a much higher number of residents assisted. Although this approach was successful, it sometimes took several telephone calls to the facility to produce the faxed document.

What we did not anticipate was the sole interest in receiving assistance in registering to vote. In several instances, the only assistance we provided was voter registration assistance. For this election, these particular voters chose to “sit out” the election but they wanted to be registered and ready for the 2008 General Election. There was a significant interest expressed in receiving assistance in the 2008 General Election. Such assistance in registering had not been promoted by VAT Coordinators in the initial contact with the facilities.

The VAT reputation for providing professional, confidential, secure, and accessible service to facilities was evident by the response we received when initially contacting facilities. Concern was often expressed by facilities thinking VAT would not be available to them in 2008 if they declined VAT services for this election. Those facilities who scheduled us for a visit were deeply appreciative of our services.

We received no on site requests for assistance. Due to the low voter turnout for this election, this was not a surprise and had been considered in our VAT schedule of on site members. It remains, however, one of the more difficult scheduling issues for any election likely to generate a high voter turnout.

During post election evaluation by VAT members, the variety of ballot control procedures at different facilities was noted. Some facilities kept possession of voters' ballots, while residents in other facilities were responsible for physical possession of their own ballots. It is relevant here to state that in each instance, we will be most efficient and productive when we know in advance which voters requesting VAT assistance are in possession of ballots and which residents are not.

VAT members requested additional training in the future on how best to communicate with voters with cognitive disabilities and those with speaking disabilities such as stroke patients and voters with Multiple Sclerosis. They also requested additional training on how best to provide assistance to voters in confined quarters such as within individual rooms of a facility.

This was a very successful election in that VAT goals were met and valuable post election discussions resulted in ideas to utilize in planning for future elections.