



(Unapproved and subject to change)
CALIFORNIA FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION
Minutes of Digital Transparency Task Force Meeting
Friday, March 19, 2021
10:00 a.m.

Present: Chair Miadich, Brian Brokaw, Rena Davis, Joshua Heller (for Gale Kaufman), Thad Kousser, Amber Maltbie, Jennifer Waggoner, Abby Wood, Katie Zoglin

Staff Present: Sasha Linker, Commission Assistant

Call to Order

Chair Miadich called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

- 1. Public Comment for items not on the agenda.**
- 2. Approval of February 2021 meeting minutes.**

MOTION: Motion to approve February 2021 minutes. Moved by Commissioner Wood, seconded by Chair Miadich. Motion approved 7-0, with Rena Davis not yet in attendance.

- 3. Center for Civic Design.**

Whitney Quesenbery, Executive Director, Center for Civic Design, gave a presentation on how the Center for Civic Design works to give voters more accessible information. Ms. Quesenbery stated that the Center for Civic Design mostly looks at election materials but also at how people interact with those materials and the government. The Center for Civic Design had found that voting is not a local interaction, as voters in Baltimore were influenced by decisions made in California. A major issue the Center encountered was the civic literacy gaps in the public and how people draw inferences or multifaceted information from print. The Center for Civic Design learned that policy making is dominated by those who gather information from text and that progressive disclosure should be utilized to prevent information overload or make them feel underprepared and disengaged.

Chair Miadich asked if there were any studies that Ms. Quesenbery has conducted specific to campaign ad disclaimers. Ms. Quesenbery stated that they have not because ads are not something they have done, but they have done work on what kinds of information California sends out, and the equivalent in other states, describing the mechanics of how to vote, the ballot measures, and the candidates.

Chair Miadich asked how a campaign ad disclaimer study would look like mechanically. Ms. Quesenbery stated that they would approach the public in various places for their participation and offer monetary compensation. The Center for Civic Design would show examples and ask for feedback after their interaction.

Chair Miadich asked about progressive disclosure and how the public can progress to further information. Ms. Quesenbery described a study that allowed the public to click through to further pages with more information should they desire. The Center for Civic Design observed what each person looked at, how much time was spend on each section, and how much effort each person was willing to engage.

Jennifer Waggoner, Task Force Member, asked Ms. Quesenbery to discuss how legislation is written to accommodate this work and her experiences with that. Ms. Quesenbery stated that the community review must include usability testing with the community. Their work is not quantitative, but they work to understand trends so they can improve the presentation of information in an effort to decrease public confusion.

Chair Miadich asked if The Center has looked into using symbology to convey information.

Ms. Quesenbery stated that they do use symbology and said there is danger with too many symbols but using them to highlight categories or differences is helpful.

Ms. Waggoner requested Ms. Quesenbery discuss the stop sign example. Ms. Quesenbery described a situation where The Center for Civic Design was working on the renewal by mail forms with the Department of Motor Vehicles. Some rights advocates suggested a large stop sign to signal that this

section should not be read or filled out. They tested versions with a stop sign, a triangle with an exclamation point, and a finger point. To their surprise the stop sign worked and it is still on the DMV renewal paperwork.

Commissioner Wood asked about the intersection between voter knowledge and their willingness to seek additional information. Ms. Quesenbery stated that even a small bit of information can spur curiosity to seek more information about what they are otherwise unaware of.

Chair Miadich asked if there were any observations or advice for their digital ad archive design.

Ms. Quesenbery stated that it should be designed for browsing so the public can browse and find information with greater ease.

MOTION: Adjourn the meeting. Moved by Chair Miadich, seconded by Joshua Heller.
Motion approved 8-0.

The meeting adjourned at 10:44 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sasha Linker
Commission Assistant
Approved April 6, 2021

Richard C. Miadich, Chair
Fair Political Practices Commission