
REDISTRICTING STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING FORUM 2011

MINUTES OF MEETING

April 21, 2011
7:00 p.m.

Kay Cenicerros Senior Center – Palm Room
29995 Evans Road
Menifee (Sun City), CA 92586

Members Present:

Larry Ward
Jay Orr
Michelle DeArmond
Robin Hastings
Dave Stahovich

Chair, Assessor-Clerk Recorder
Co-Chair, Executive Office
4th District
5th District
1st District

Members Absent:

John Field
Verne Lauritzen

2nd District
3rd District

Guests Present:

Mary Craton
Wallace Edgerton
Mike Emberton
Eric Gosch
Tina Grande
Nancy Horton
Louis Mazier
Barry Talbot

Council Member from Canyon Lake
Mayor of the City of Menifee
Mayor of the City of San Jacinto
President, Hemet-San Jacinto Action Group
County Executive Office
Council Member from Canyon Lake
Resident
Mayor of the City of Canyon Lake

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Larry Ward called the "Special" Redistricting Steering Committee Forum 2011 to order at 7:00 p.m. Co-Chair, Jay Orr, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. INTRODUCTION OF THE MEETING:

Chairman, Larry Ward, of the Riverside County Redistricting Steering Committee 2011, welcomed the guests and thanked them for attending the second of three community meetings. The goal of these meetings is to provide information on the redistricting process, both from a legal, and a procedural perspective, provide an update of what has been completed so far and, most importantly, to provide Riverside County residents with an opportunity to provide input on the process.

Chairman Larry Ward reported that redistricting occurs every 10 years based on the 2010 U.S. Census count. Riverside County is the fastest growing county in the state, adding more than 644,000 residents in the past 10 years. To put that number in perspective, this was about 20,000 more people than the combined total of the second and third fastest growing counties, that being San Bernardino and Los Angeles. The Riverside County Redistricting Steering Committee was established by the County Executive Office, and the first meeting was held in October of last year. The Committee membership includes: Chairman Larry Ward, the County Assessor-Clerk and Recorder, the Co-Chair is Jay Orr, the Assistant County Executive Officer, all five supervisorial Chiefs of Staff, including Dave Stahovich, 1st District; John Field, 2nd District; Verne Lauritzen, 3rd District; Michelle DeArmond, 4th District, and Robin Hastings from the 5th District. Also supporting this endeavor is the Executive Office, County Counsel and the Transportation and Land Management Agency.

Chairman Larry Ward discussed the redistricting timeline. The process must be completed by November 1 of this year. The Steering Committee was formed during the fall of 2010. In March, the U.S. Census data was released. In April of this year, the first set of drafts and redistricting scenario maps were prepared by the Steering Committee. The maps were displayed in the lobby for the public to review. This month, public input and outreach is now occurring. The next public meeting will be held in Desert Hot Springs next week. The last day to present the proposed plan for the Steering Committee consideration is on May 26, 2011. On June 14, the proposed presentation of the County Redistricting plan(s) will be presented to the Riverside County Board of Supervisors. He emphasized plan or plans. More than one plan may be submitted to the Board of Supervisors. On June 28, the first proposed public hearing will be held with the Riverside County Board of Supervisors. On July 12 and July 26, are the proposed second and third public hearings with the Riverside County Board of Supervisors. The supervisorial redistricting plans to be approved by the Board at the conclusion of the last public hearing. At each of these public hearings, the public is encouraged to attend and provide their input. In July and August of 2011, County Survey will draft a legal description for the boundaries of the new supervisorial districts.

The introduction and subsequent adoption of the Riverside County Supervisorial Redistricting Implementing Ordinance will occur in August and September by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors.

Robin Hastings, representing the 5th District, arrived at the meeting.

Chairman Larry Ward introduced David Huff, County Counsel. David Huff will provide the overview of the legal requirements, both on the state and federal level.

3. LEGAL OVERVIEW OF COUNTY SUPERVISORIAL REDISTRICTING:

David Huff, from County Counsel, noted that redistricting involves a process that the Board of Supervisors has to go through every 10 years when the decennial census data is released from the Federal Census Bureau. The primary focus is only on county supervisorial districts and adjusting the lines as appropriate to balance the districts based on population. Not to be confused with the redistricting effort that is underway with regard to statewide legislative districts, such as assembly, senate or for congressional districts. That is within the jurisdictions of the newly created California Citizens Redistricting Commission, which was established via Proposition 11. Proposition 11 was approved by the voters in November 2008. The governing law in this area is straightforward under the California Elections Code Section 21500. It provides the following: "Following each federal decennial census, and using that census as a basis, the Board shall adjust the boundaries of any or all of the supervisorial districts of the county so that the districts shall be as nearly and equal in population as may be."

David Huff mentioned that the Supreme Court has interpreted that requirement. It is essentially, the One Person One Vote Rule. The Supreme Court interpretation has indicated that each district can be less than the 10 percent variance from another district. It is always prudent to try to get the population counts as close as possible to one another in each of the districts.

David Huff mentioned another requirement that redistricting must comply with are applicable provisions of the Federal Voting Rights Act. The Federal Voting Rights Act was originally put in place in the mid 1960s. The Federal Voting Rights Act has been amended several times. The committee must be in compliance with the federal requirements.

David Huff discussed the Elections Code. In establishing the boundaries for each of the districts, the Board will give consideration to the following factors: The first one is topography. Topography can show up in a variety of ways, but typically, it divides between an artificial topographical feature, such as a freeway and a natural topographical feature, such as a river or mountain ranges. There can also be artificial topography, such as a freeway or an interstate. This can be used as a dividing point between the districts. Another factor is geography. How the district lays out in the overall scheme of the agency's jurisdiction.

David Huff described the following four factors, which are closely tied together: Cohesiveness, contiguity, integrity, and compactness of territory. Essentially, what these do is consider the shape of the district. Something that has a uniform or close to uniform shape is preferred to something that looks very convoluted. David mentioned a famous case that came out in 1993, Shaw v. Reno, this is a case that involved a congressional district boundary effort in North Carolina and it was challenged by the U.S. Department of Justice, because the state tried to formulate a district that used 160 miles of interstate freeway featuring tentacles reaching out in different directions. David indicated that shape does matter in the eyes of the courts.

David Huff pointed out that compactness, integrity, contiguity, and cohesiveness are very important factors. The last factor is community of interests of the districts. The California Supreme Court, as well as the Constitution, indicate that examples of such interest include commonalities to an urban area, a rural area, an industrial area, agricultural areas, and those areas in which people share similar living standards, such as the same transportation facilities, similar work opportunities, or have access to the same media of communications relevant to the election process. This also includes the cities. The city can be a community of interest, which can also include unincorporated recognized communities. For example, El Cerrito, Mira Loma, Mead Valley, Meadowbrook, and many other areas located within the county. In the past, the City of Riverside was so large that it had to be divided between three supervisors. For example, the City of L.A. was too large to be included within one supervisorial district. Those factors would need to be reviewed using the Elections Code as a guideline.

David Huff clarified that before the Board of Supervisors could adopt the redistricting plan, there is a requirement to hold at least two public hearings, which are forecast for the end of June and first of July. The Redistricting Plan must be approved and in place prior to November 1 of this year. If for some reason the Board of Supervisors is not able to accomplish the task before November 1, then there is a provision in state law Section 21502 of the Elections Code that provides that there be a Supervisorial Redistricting Commission composed of the District Attorney, the County Assessor, and the elected County Superintendent of Schools. This group would carry out the task that the Board of Supervisors attempted to accomplish. David Huff concluded the overview for the county supervisorial process.

4. POPULATION NUMBERS AND MAP PRESENTATION:

Tom Mullen, Deputy Director of Transportation and Land Management, shared with the group the impacts of the United States Census 2010 in Riverside County and the redistricting process. There has been an impressive amount of growth in relationship to the rest of the nation in the state as a whole. The map presented represents the population growth as a percentage throughout the various census tracts in Riverside. The county grew at a rate of 644,254 people in the past 10 years. Riverside County is just shy of 41.7 percent. Riverside County grew faster than San Bernardino County and Los Angeles County. Combined they grew 625,000 people.

Tom Mullen discussed the growth within each individual district. The 1st District grew by approximately 111,000 people. There has been significant growth in this part of the county as well as along the southern border of the City of Corona, along the 15 Freeway between Corona and Lake Elsinore with growth in the 1st District of 35.5 percent. In the 2nd District, Eastvale grew faster than any other area in the county. This area grew over 600 percent. Overall, the district grew by 97,000 people with 31.4 percent. The 3rd District, saw the greatest amount of growth in any single district. The district grew by 206,000 people. In the 4th District, there is growth throughout the Coachella Valley with the district increasing overall by 87,000. There has been double digit growth throughout the entire county. In the 5th Supervisorial District, there is strong growth between the cities of Moreno Valley, Calimesa, Banning and Beaumont. Strong growth occurred between the 215 Freeway through Perris and Moreno Valley, along the 60 corridor and through the pass. The district grew by 142,000 people or 47.2 percent.

There has been tremendous growth led by the 3rd District as of the 2010 U.S. Census. The smallest district is the 4th District at 386,579 people. Tom explained that the maps are culminated individual maps, which have been put together into a single map, to show areas where there is commonality. The areas, which are hatched, are areas that are not common between their individual efforts. This is the culmination of the individual efforts and is the first scenario in a draft format. These maps have been posted for the public to review. Tom indicated that he would be available during the break to answer any questions.

Chairman Larry Ward suggested everyone take a 15-minute break to look at the maps.

Chairman Larry Ward recalled the meeting to order.

5. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Chairman Larry Ward introduced Ms. Nancy Horton.

Ms. Nancy Horton, Councilwoman from Canyon Lake, thanked the committee for holding the event. She mentioned she has been very happy in the 3rd District. She is aware that Supervisor Stone will have to lose some territory and population, and other supervisors will have to gain. Speaking as a citizen and as the Mayor Pro-Tem for the City of Canyon Lake, Nancy mentioned six cities that formed a coalition, called the Southwest Riverside Coalition, which includes the cities of Temecula, Canyon Lake, Murrieta, Wildomar, Lake Elsinore, and Menifee. She mentioned they have mutual concerns from Highway 15 and 215 corridors. She mentioned the hospitals in her area and economic concerns that are shared between Canyon Lake and Lake Elsinore. They currently share educational institutions. Most significantly, they share a recently opened animal shelter. As part of the City Council, Nancy is the Director of LESJWA. Canyon Lake is connected and contributes water to the City of Lake Elsinore. She mentioned she would be attending a water summit to take place in Lake Elsinore to share the history of Lake Elsinore from the Clean Water Act of 2000 to the present. Nancy mentioned if Canyon Lake were placed in any other district, they would have little in

common in the 5th District. Nancy requested that Canyon Lake be put in the 1st District, if they are moved from the 3rd District.

Mary Craton, Councilmember from Canyon Lake, stated that Nancy worded it extremely well. Mary wanted to emphasize commonality of interests. There is no commonality in the 5th District. Mary requested that they be placed in the 1st District.

Mr. Wallace Edgerton, Mayor of the City of Menifee, thanked the committee for their great job. Mr. Edgerton is a Professor of Political Science where he started teaching back in the 1960s. Nancy and Mary nailed it from the standpoint of community interest to the degree that there is a legal nexus. He strongly agreed with Nancy and Mary's comments. When Menifee was brought into incorporation, there was an agreement that Perris thought that they had with Menifee. He mentioned a couple of legal considerations with the City of Perris he is trying to resolve. He requested that Menifee stay in the 3rd District.

Mr. Eric Gosch, President of the Hemet-San Jacinto Action Group, was formed in the early 1980s. Eric thanked the committee for their hard work. Eric agreed that the maps of the communities are logical and that they keep communities of interest together. Hemet and San Jacinto Councils are the only two in the county to have passed resolutions stating their desire to remain together in one district. Eric appreciated the comments of the committee at their previous meetings. The primary focus is to stay in the same district.

Mr. Barry Talbot, Mayor of the City of Canyon Lake, spoke as the Mayor and resident of Canyon Lake. He indicated that Canyon Lake is a small city. They have worked very hard to establish a relationship with southwest Riverside cities and, as a small city, that effort has been extremely important to achieving the type of success that they have to make their community healthier and better for all of their citizens. If moved to the 5th District it would put them in a distinct disadvantage on any kind of negotiations that may come up in the future. Mayor Talbot emphasized that Canyon Lake remain in the 3rd District.

Mike Emberton, Mayor of the City of San Jacinto, echoed Mr. Gosch's comments. They are excited to stay together as they are sister cities and both are jointly working on many of the same efforts within the valley. He requested that the committee consider keeping the two cities together. He thanked the committee.

Mr. Louis Mazei, a resident of Menifee, concurred with Mayor Edgerton and the representatives from Canyon Lake. As a Menifee resident, he indicated that the City of Menifee would have more in common with Canyon Lake, Murrieta, and Temecula. He felt that San Jacinto and Hemet would want to be in the 5th District, because they share the Ramona Corridor with Perris and it connects to I-15. He recommended that Menifee stay in the 3rd District.

Robin Hastings indicated that his comments were considered and the population of San Jacinto, Hemet, and Soboba, who are all part of that resolution, was not a number that could be absorbed into the 5th District. The population is too large, and the 3rd District is the one that needs to lose the most population. Moving 100,000 people into the 5th District would mean it would not be balanced.

6. OTHER BUSINESS:

Dave Stahovich addressed the audience and noted how represented they were for a small city. Dave indicated that the comments that were raised will be given careful consideration. Dave thanked the group for coming out and thanked them for their comments.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT LISTED ON THE AGENDA:

No other members of the public presented comments.

8. ADJOURN:

The meeting was adjourned to the "Special" Meeting set for April 27, 2011, at 7:00 p.m., at the Desert Hot Springs, Carl May Bldg., 11777 West Drive., Desert Hot Springs, CA 92204.