
REDISTRICTING STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING FORUM 2011

MINUTES OF MEETING

April 27, 2011
7:00 p.m.

Desert Hot Springs, Carl May Bldg.
11777 West Drive
Desert Hot Springs, CA 92240

Members Present:

Larry Ward
Jay Orr
Michelle DeArmond
John Field
Robin Hastings
Dave Stahovich

Chair, Assessor-Clerk Recorder
Co-Chair, Executive Office
4th District
2nd District
5th District
1st District

Members Absent:

Verne Lauritzen

3rd District

Guests Present:

Anthony Cuca
Tina Grande
Andrew Kotyuk
Yvonne Parks
George Raymond

Resident of Desert Hot Springs
County Executive Office
Vice Mayor for the City of San Jacinto
Mayor of Desert Hot Springs
Resident of Palm Springs

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The "Special" Redistricting Steering Committee Forum 2011 was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Co-Chair, Jay Orr, stated that so often the Pledge of Allegiance is taken for granted. Jay mentioned the soldiers serving in Afghanistan and seven of them were murdered today. Jay led the Pledge of Allegiance in honor of those soldiers serving in Afghanistan who gave their lives today. The roll call was conducted by Co-Chair, Jay Orr.

2. INTRODUCTION OF THE MEETING:

As Chairman of the County Redistricting Steering Committee Forum 2011, Chairman Larry Ward welcomed the guests and thanked them for attending the third of the 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 mentioned the redistricting process occurs every 10 years based on the 2010 U.S. Census count. Riverside County is the fastest growing counties in the state, adding more than 644,000 residents from 2000 to 2010. 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 in California, that being San Bernardino and Los Angeles.

Chairman Larry Ward mentioned that David Huff, County Counsel, will present the legal requirements for the Riverside County redistricting process. The Riverside County Executive Office established the Riverside County Redistricting Steering Committee. The first meeting was held in October 2010. The committee members are: 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. The County Executive Office, County Counsel, and the Transportation and Land Management Agency also support the committee. The Chairman thanked the Economic Development Agency for the refreshments in the back.

Chairman Larry Ward mentioned that the timeline for the U.S. Census data was released in the middle of March this year. In April, the first sets of the draft redistricting scenarios were prepared by the Steering Committee. This is the third of three public input outreach meetings. The first meeting was held in downtown Riverside. The second meeting is being held in Menifee and the third meeting is here, in Desert Hot Springs. May 26 is the last day that the public will be allowed to submit a proposal to the Steering Committee for consideration. On June 14 the committee will be submitting a proposal of the redistricting plan(s) to the Riverside Board of Supervisors. June 28 will be the first public hearing with the County Board of Supervisors. July 12 and 26 is the proposed second and third public hearings with the County Board of Supervisors. The

Supervisory Redistricting Plan to be approved by the Board at the conclusion of the last public hearing. In July and August of this year, County Survey will draft a legal description for the boundaries for the new supervisory districts. The introduction and subsequent adoption of the Riverside County Supervisory Redistricting Implementing Ordinance will occur in August and September by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors. David Huff, from County Counsel, will provide an overview of the legal and procedural perspective.

3. LEGAL OVERVIEW OF COUNTY SUPERVISORY REDISTRICTING:

David Huff, from County Counsel, noted that this is a process that involves the Board of Supervisors that comes up every 10 years in connection with the federal decennial census. The primary focus is only on county supervisory districts and adjusting the lines as appropriate to balance the districts based on population. Not to be confused with the redistricting effort with regard to statewide legislative offices, such as the assembly, the senate or congressional districts. That has now been addressed under Proposition 11, and was approved by the voters in November 2008, which created a California Citizens Redistricting Commission. The focus is on the County Supervisor Office borders and their district lines. The governing law in this area is straightforward under the California Elections Code 21500. Reading verbatim from the statutory language it states: "Following each federal decennial census, and using that census as a basis, the Board of Supervisors shall adjust the boundaries of any or all of the supervisory districts of the county so that the districts shall be as nearly and equal in population as may be."

Mr. David Huff mentioned that the Supreme Court has interpreted that requirement. It is essentially, the One Person One Vote Rule. It basically states that the district shall be as nearly equal in population as it may be so there is some degree of variance allowed. The Supreme Court interpretation has indicated that each district can be less than the 10 percent variance from another district. However, the goal and objective is to try and get the population counts as close as possible to one another in each of the districts.

David Huff discussed the second criteria. The process has to comply with the federal Voting Rights Act. There are literally 100s of cases that interpret the Federal Voter Rights Act, which was originally put in place during the 1960s. The Elections Code stated that when establishing the boundaries of the districts, the Board may give consideration to several factors. The first one is topography. Topography can be natural topography such as a ridgeline, a mountain range, or a river. It can also take the form of artificial topography, such as an interstate freeway. Geography is another factor to be considered. When the districts are positioned, how do they layout in comparison to one another.

David Huff described the following four factors, which are closely tied to one another: Cohesiveness, contiguity, integrity and compactness of territory. Contiguity, for example, is an expectation that the district all be connected as part of one, as opposed to having little islands spun off in different areas. Compactness is basically a center of

gravity where there is a defined shape to it that is not terribly elongated. David mentioned a famous case that came out in 1993, Shaw v. Reno, this case 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 continued and noted that there is a consideration for communities of interest of the district. Communities of interest have been interpreted by the Supreme Court of California as well as the U.S. Supreme Court. A provision of the California Constitution focuses on areas that are common to urban areas, rural areas, industrial areas, agricultural areas, and those that are common areas in which people share similar living standards, use the same transportation facilities, have similar work opportunities, have access to the same media of communication relevant to the election process. The city can be a community of interest, which can also include unincorporated recognized communities. For example, El Cerrito, Mead Valley, Mira Loma, and many other areas located within the county. Sometimes it is very difficult to meet this, because the community in question might be too large. A classic example is the City of Riverside, because of its large population at times has been shared between three county supervisors and in the last few years, it has been divided between two supervisorial districts. David noted that they try to keep communities of interest together rather than split them up. These are the standards that the Board of Supervisors has to consider before they adopt the plan.

David Huff discussed the timeline. The last day to present the proposed plan for the Steering Committee consideration is on May 26, 2011. After that date, if additional plans come in, they would go directly to the Board of Supervisors, because by that time the committee's work will have been done. The Board is still free to take other proposals that may come in or may develop at the public hearings. In the Elections Code there is a requirement to hold at least two public hearings before the Board can adopt a redistricting plan. The critical deadline for the Board of Supervisors is that they have to take final action and have the new districting boundaries final and in place prior to November 1. If they do not have them in place by November 1, then the process is taken out of their hands by state law in Elections Code 21502. The process would then shift to a Supervisorial Redistricting Committee, which is composed of the District Attorney, the County Assessor-Clerk and Recorder, and the elected County Superintendent of Schools. It is anticipated that the Board of Supervisors will be able to get the job done prior to November 1. David Huff completed his presentation.

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 on Riverside County. To begin, the county grew at a rate far exceeding any other county in the state. It grew roughly 42 percent between the year 2000 and 2010, adding 644,254 people. Again, to reemphasize, Riverside County grew faster than the next two largest counties

combined. L.A. County added 325,000 people, San Bernardino County added approximately 300,000, and combined for a total of 625,000 people.

Tom Mullen presented several maps and discussed in detail the growth for each district. In looking at the districts in total, the 3rd District grew faster than the other four districts, but there was positive growth throughout the entire county, ranging from 28 percent in the 4th District to 66 percent in the 3rd District. Looking at each district independently, the 1st District grew at approximately 111,000 people at a rate of 35.7 percent. The growth was in the southern part of the district through the cities of Lake Elsinore, the unincorporated areas south of Riverside. The 2nd supervisorial district grew by 97,254 people. The areas of Eastvale and north of Corona grew the fastest rate in the county, with some areas growing at over 1,100 percent. There was a phenomenal amount of growth in a very short amount of time resulting in the new City of Eastvale. The 3rd District has over 517,000 residents. The most growth throughout the district was along both the 215 Freeway up through the unincorporated areas of the cities and communities of Hemet and San Jacinto. In the 4th District, throughout the Coachella Valley, there was growth in many of these areas. In total, the district grew by 87,026 people at a rate of 28.1 percent between 2000 and 2010. In the 5th District there was growth all along the 60/10 Freeway corridor through the pass area with heavy growth in the region east of Moreno Valley down toward Perris, totaling 142,809 people.

Tom Mullen noted that the growth is throughout the entire county with a need to shift the population to balance it out to reach the ideal of One Person One Vote. The ideal target for each district to reach is 437,928 people. The law allows a variance of 10 percent. The committee has self-imposed a five percent target range to work within. As the committee looked at reshaping the county districts, Tom discussed five maps drawn independent of each other. The last map is a culmination overlay of the five districts and their independent efforts. As the maps are redrawn, the goal is to reach the ideal target within the range. The cities have been drawn to be encompassed within a single district with the exception of the City of Riverside, which continues to be split between two supervisorial districts. Under the current set of scenarios, it was proposed to put each city in the county within a single district respecting those city boundaries and communities that they represent.

Tom Mullen emphasized the importance that each district not stand alone and independent, but share common borders. The hatched areas in green represent areas that are yet to be determined. This is only as a result of five independent efforts and this is the first set of scenarios that have been developed. It is anticipated that these areas will be resolved prior to going to the Board of Supervisors for consideration. Ultimately, the goal of the committee was to try and create a balance between the districts and again, recognize the need for the One Person One Vote. Tom Mullen concluded his presentation on the maps.

Chairman Larry Ward reintroduced the Redistricting Steering Committee. Besides Jay Orr and Chairman Larry Ward, the chairman introduced representing Supervisor Buster in the 1st District, Dave Stahovich; representing Supervisor Tavaglione in the 2nd District,

John Field; representing Supervisor Stone in the 3rd District, Verne Lauritzen, who was not present this evening. Representing Supervisor Benoit in the 4th District, Michelle DeArmond; and representing the 5th District, for Supervisor Ashley is Robin Hastings.

Chairman Larry Ward suggested that everyone take a 15-minute break to have an opportunity to review the maps.

Chairman Larry Ward recalled the meeting to order.

5. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Mayor Yvonne Parks, from Desert Hot Springs, indicated that she has been very happy in the 5th District. She noted they have great representation by Supervisor Ashley. She did mention that she is open to whatever changes are necessary. The city is aware that changes are going to happen. She did express concern that within the next five years the city is proposing another annexation from the area of Pierson, west to 62, and south of the I-10 Freeway. If the annexation were to occur before the next census, it would result in two supervisors for Desert Hot Springs. She was very concerned that the City of Desert Hot Springs not be split. She indicated that she had discussed the matter with Robin Hastings and Robin is aware of her concerns. She thanked the committee for their consideration.

Michelle DeArmond noted that they would consider the information stated and would look at the numbers. Michelle indicated, at this point, they are pretty close to where they need to be. Michelle mentioned that they are trying to keep communities of interest together.

Robin Hastings mentioned her discussion with Mayor Parks, and that they would love to keep the 5th District in its current configuration, but that is not the purpose of redistricting. She mentioned in the 5th District there are portions of five different cities, due to growth and annexation since the last census. Robin agreed to look at the numbers again.

Mr. Andrew Kotyuk, Vice Mayor for the City of San Jacinto, wanted to reiterate the city's wishes to keep the San Jacinto Valley intact. He noted an upcoming joint committee meeting with both cities and the county. He is currently making plans economically to develop and work together. He emphasized the importance that both cities stay together. He appreciated the time and energy put into the redistricting processing, and he thanked the committee for taking the time to listen to their comments.

Chairman Larry Ward thanked Vice Mayor Kotyuk for having a representative attend all three meetings.

Mr. George Raymond mentioned that he was new to the process. He questioned who would be representing his district as the district is carved from Palm Springs down to

Palm Desert? He questioned who are the congressional representatives for each district?

Tom Mullen stated that what is proposed for the county districts is to align all of the Coachella Valley cities into the 4th District, which is currently represented by Supervisor John Benoit. This is a 10-year process and it is impossible to say who the representative will be in the future. By district, it is proposed to keep all the cities intact from Desert Hot Springs, Palm Springs and Cathedral City in the 4th District, as proposed in scenario 1. The 5th District will pick up the unincorporated communities and the Banning pass area, which is currently in the 5th District, represented by Supervisor Marion Ashley.

Tom Mullen replied to George Raymond's comments concerning the congressional representatives. Tom indicated that this committee doesn't have any input directly in these processes. Tom mentioned visiting one of the local meetings approximately six weeks ago and the representatives indicated that they would be coming back to Riverside/San Bernardino County in the future. You can share your comments with them either through the website, or directly.

Mr. Anthony Cuca, a Desert Hot Springs resident, supported the comments made by the Mayor Yvonne Parks. He thanked the committee for their hard work.

6. OTHER BUSINESS:

No other business was presented at this time.

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

No other members of the public presented comments.

Chairman Larry Ward thanked everyone for coming out. The input is important to the committee to hear the comments from the people that we serve.

8. ADJOURN:

Adjournment to the regularly scheduled meeting set for May 10, 2011 at 2 p.m., in the Riverside County Administrative Center, 4080 Lemon Street, 4th Floor, Executive Office, Conference Room C.