



OFFICE OF THE COCONINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

SPECIAL SESSION MINUTES

Saturday, March 12, 2022, 10:00 AM

Present: Chair Patrice Horstman, Vice Chair Jeronimo Vasquez, Supervisor Judy Begay, and Supervisor Lena Fowler were present virtually via Zoom meeting technology.

Absent/Excused: Supervisor Matt Ryan

Also Present: County Manager Steve Peru, Deputy County Manager Sue Brown, Public Affairs Director Trey Williams, Management Analyst Claire Harper, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Manager Margo Neff and GIS Analyst Nate Renn were present virtually via Zoom meeting technology.

There were some technical difficulties with the zoom meeting software prior to the meeting starting so the start time was delayed.

Chair Patrice Horstman called the meeting to order at approximately 10:17 a.m.

Chair Horstman provided some welcome comments explaining that this is the first outreach meeting the County is having for redistricting. She introduced the other Supervisors present and explained that Supervisor Ryan is not able to attend. She explained that there are five map scenarios that are on the county website for review and comment by the public. She spoke about the redistricting process being required and about the guidelines the County must follow to consider scenarios. She explained that the current precinct boundaries have not been divided in any of the proposed scenarios.

Chair Horstman explained that the County and Board is requesting feedback from the public and that staff will present the five scenarios and answer questions and she also encouraged attendees to let others know about the maps on the website.

Chair Horstman went over the guidelines used by the Board to create the scenarios:

1. Draw districts, of equal population, based on census data, to ensure “one person-one vote.” A deviation from that standard by 5% is permitted, but less deviation is better.

2. Do not dilute the voting strength of racial and language minority groups. Preserve the ability of majority-minority districts to elect representatives of their choice. When considering the ability of districts to elect minority representatives, the voting age population should be considered rather than just census population numbers.
3. Preserve communities of interest.
4. Districts must be compact and contiguous. Use census block boundaries as district boundaries and do not split voting precincts.
5. Maintain traditional geographic and political boundaries.
6. Do not create a substantial, long-term negative effect on a specific political party. Political parties should have a fair chance to influence the political process.
7. Base the new plan on existing district, to the extent possible.
8. When drawing district boundaries, take into account current incumbents.

Chair Horstman introduced County Manager Steve Peru.

County Manager Steve Peru explained that the redistricting process occurs every ten years and that the Board of Supervisors is responsible for creating supervisory districts following guidelines established by state and federal law. He also explained that the Coconino Community College and the Board of Supervisors share the same five districts. He stated that the 2020 population of Coconino County is 145,101 and that with the redistricting process that each district will need populations of 29,020 with a 5% plus (30,471) or minus (27,569) range. All of the information is on the website at: coconino.az.gov/redistricting comments can be emailed to an email address provided. He explained that they will capture the information provided today and that it is important to use that email to capture all comments.

County Manager Peru explained that Census data is used by states to create legislative, congressional districts and that counties also utilize county-level data to create redistricting plans that comply with constitutional and federal mandates.

County Manager Peru went over some of the Laws that are part of the redistricting process, including Arizona Revised Statute 212 that states that the Board of Supervisors shall meet at the county seat on or before December 1 following the release of the U.S. Census data to conduct the redistricting process and define the boundaries of each district. He explained that this year the process was delayed due to COVID so they have been provided time into mid-summer to get the process done, however, the County is working on this sooner than later to get the information out to the public and get feedback. Manager Peru also spoke about the Equal Protection Clause ensuring one person one vote and how it ensures balance in terms of population and representation. He further explained that the County is no longer required to submit changes to the Department of Justice as previously required under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act; however, section 2 of the Voting Rights Act does apply to the County, which states, "No voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure shall be imposed or applied by any State or political subdivision to deny or abridge the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race or color."

County Manager Peru explained that the County adopted its guidelines for redistricting back in 2011 that Chair Horstman went over at the beginning of the meeting. He also spoke about the

additional public input meetings that will occur and that the public is encouraged to provide input upon reviewing the scenarios. County Manager Peru also went over the protocol for providing public comment during the meeting with the raise hand function for zoom.

Deputy County Manager Sue Brown narrated the five scenarios while GIS Analyst Nate Renn showed the map scenarios on the screen. She explained that the demographics are shown next to the map of each scenario, which detailed the populations for each of the five supervisor districts within each scenario. She began with presenting Scenario C and went through the changes that occurred to create scenario C and also went over the demographic information of the five supervisor districts within Scenario C. Deputy County Manager Brown then went through the rest of the scenarios, D1, D2, E and F and for each scenario described the changes that occurred among the precincts to create each map scenario and went over the demographics of each Supervisor district within each scenario.

Management Analyst Claire Harper explained that those in attendance who would like to provide a comment can use the raise hand icon and requested that they state their name and address and that three minutes each would be provided for comment.

County Manager Steve Peru read a written question in the chat from Janet Cowan. She asked if he could please define "community of interest." County Manager Peru explained that community of interest is a group of people with common interests that may be social, cultural, racial, ethnic and also the economic interest of the population of that area.

Marilyn Clemmons Ruggles stated that her address is 11731 N. Copeland Lane in Flagstaff. She stated that she is disappointed that her Fernwood Precinct 52 is not staying with Flagstaff but that she understands the restraints. She stated that her preference would be for Scenario E because of community of interest and stated that they have a community of interest with Doney Park and are presently working on a revision to the Doney Park, Timberline, Fernwood Area Plan and that they share the Summit Fire and Medical district, which is a big community of interest especially as they may lose a fire station. She stated she thinks scenario E also equalizes out the physical distances of the five districts better than the other scenarios. She stated C does that as well, but that Scenario C puts them in District 5 and she would prefer to be in District 4 because of the community of interest.

There were no other verbal comments provided.

County Manager Peru reviewed again how people can look at the website to see the scenarios and offer feedback. He stated they will continue to receive public input and that the Board is scheduled to take action on April 12.

County Manager Peru read a written comment from in the chat from Karen Malis-Clark which stated that she appreciates the analysis of multiple options by balancing population, voter registration, geography and so much balancing.

Deputy County Manager Sue Brown showed the attendees the redistricting website again and showed them where on the website they can find supplemental information.

County Manager Peru provided information on the next virtual public outreach meeting and again encouraged attendees to share the information. He also explained that the Supervisors will be attending the meetings with the intent to listen.

County Manager Steve Peru read a written question in the chat from someone named Marilyn that asked when the districts go into effect. County Manager Peru answered that because of the delay in the census it has created some questions regarding when the changes go into effect. He explained that the changes will be in place for the 2024 election cycle. He also stated that the current maps in place now are being used for the 2022 election cycle.

County Manager Peru thanked Evelyn for her comment and asked her to come back and invite her friends. He also read a written comment from Karen in the chat that stated thank you for your detailed work required to consider all of the criteria in redistricting, I plan to review the various maps to understand the impact. County Manager Peru thanked Karen for attending.

Chair Horstman thanked staff and explained that it has been challenging and difficult, but that staff has done a great job and appreciates their thoughtfulness and consideration in the process. She stated that she looks forward to hearing from the public and thanked the attendees for coming and for their comments. She also provided information on where to submit comments and thanked everyone for their time.

Chair Horstman adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:12 a.m.

COCONINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

(Seal)



Patrice Horstman

Patrice Horstman, Chair

ATTEST:

Lindsay Daley

Lindsay Daley, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors