



## OFFICE OF THE COCONINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

### SPECIAL SESSION MINUTES

**Wednesday, March 23, 2022, 6:00 PM**

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

**Absent/Excused:** Supervisor Lena Fowler

**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, GIS Analyst Nate Renn, and Clerk of the Board Lindsay Daley were present virtually via Zoom meeting technology.

Chair Patrice Horstman called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

The Supervisors introduced themselves. Chair Horstman explained that the redistricting process occurs every ten years. She also spoke about the five map scenarios being on the county website for review and comment by the public. She explained that staff will go over the scenarios being considered and that the Board is present to listen. Chair Horstman went over the guidelines used by the Board to create the scenarios. Chair Horstman introduced County Manager Steve Peru.

County Manager Steve Peru presented a powerpoint and went over the agenda for the meeting and topics that will be discussed. He 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. County Manager Peru also explained that all of the information is on the website at: [coconino.az.gov/redistricting](http://coconino.az.gov/redistricting) and comments can be emailed in. 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 the chronology of the redistricting process. He spoke about the delay in the process due to the delay in the census. He also explained that the Board will take action to approve a map scenario on April 12.

County Manager Peru went over the background of the redistricting process. He 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 the Laws that have been and 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. 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 and these include:

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.

County Manager Peru went over the protocol for providing public comment during the meeting. He stated that they would take comments and called on Leonard Gorman to speak.

Mr. Leonard Gorman stated his Office of Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission has delegated the responsibility to participate in redistricting activities on behalf of the Navajo Nation and Navajo voters. He explained that with the limited time, his office submitted a map today and shape files have been submitted as well as comments accompanying the shape files

and the data also and a pdf form of the map. He also stated that regarding the mapping activities there are some places where the census blocks are different than the application that he has. He also stated that he asked for the shape files for all of the different plans on the County redistricting website and was offered what he thinks is a compilation of the combined one shape file for all the plans and that it doesn't work for him that way.

County Manager Peru stated that he jumped ahead and should not have gone to public comment just yet as they want to go through the five proposed scenarios first before public comment and apologized for the mistake.

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.

Deputy County Manager Sue Brown also showed the County's redistricting website dashboard for where the public can view the demographics and scenarios for redistricting.

At 6:50 p.m. County Manager Peru then explained they would take comments.

Leonard Gorman from the Office of Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission thanked the Manager, Chair, Supervisors and staff for the presentation. He stated that a point for the mapping activities is that it looks like there are some new precinct boundaries that had been instituted by Coconino County, which is not a part of the software that his office uses and that his office uses Maptitude. He explained that there are some places where they can't bridge some of the districts at all because of the changes that may have occurred. He requested a copy of the new precinct boundaries via shape files and stated it would be helpful for his office. He also explained that as he submitted the map and as community of interest is one of the concerns of the County, and since the County wishes to satisfy particularly on the Navajo Nation, that there has always been, since the state has been instituted, that the counties do not respect the Navajo Nation Chapter boundaries. He explained that these are political subdivisions that are the same as various others, like the counties across the nation. He stated that these chapters are boundaries drawn from which people vote, so the result of these voting activities is that Navajo voters are often disenfranchised across the Navajo Nation and not just in Arizona but also in Utah and New Mexico. He explained that New Mexico made the decision to require counties to assess the new precinct boundaries and assess the possibilities in which to align those boundaries with the chapter boundaries and that they have been successful with one county that affiliated their precinct boundaries with chapter boundaries. He requested that same respect and gratitude be extended from Coconino County and explained that they are requesting Navajo County and Apache County do the same as well. He explained that there is a tremendous amount of disenfranchisement that occurs when voting activities occur because of the non-alignment of the

precinct boundaries. He also requested an opportunity to visit with County staff tomorrow to go over why these changes are proposed, particularly in Districts 5 and 4 and the rationale behind these changes that have been made. He explained that the map that his office submitted is carefully designed to ensure the community of interest is a part of the scenario and also makes the effort to meet the Voting Rights Act Section 2, and address the issues and concerns about the ability for Native Americans to elect the candidate of their choice and the aspects of the land that belong to the Navajo people are part of the proposed district 5 as it extends further westward. He stated that none of the scenarios presented represent those kinds of concerns the Navajo people and Navajo government have. He explained that District 4 is making the effort to maintain the thirty percentile Native American voting age population by increasing it to thirty-two or thirty-three percent Native American voting age population. He stated that those are some of the remedial concerns that his office has and that the Navajo Nation has.

Clarinda Vale introduced herself and stated that her address is 120 Shimmy Lane, Tusayan, Arizona 86023. She stated that she is speaking as a citizen of Coconino County and as the proud Mayor of Tusayan. She stated that the Board will be receiving a letter from the Town Manager Charlie Hendrix and herself but didn't want to miss the opportunity to speak at the public hearing as it is a vital concern to their community. She explained that regarding the new proposed Coconino County Supervisor districts, they oppose any map that separates the Grand Canyon South Rim Village and Havasupai Tribal lands from the Town of Tusayan. She stated that it has long been understood that they are one community and that they should have the same Supervisor representative. She stated Coconino County, Grand Canyon Unified School District, Kaibab National Forest, Grand Canyon National Park, the Town of Tusayan, Tusayan Fire District, Tusayan Sanitary District, Coconino County Board of Supervisors and more, have all formally, in various ways, recognized this long-standing community relationship between Grand Canyon Village, Tusayan, Valle and Havasupai Tribal lands. She explained that in the legal guidelines for redistricting it says you must preserve communities of interest, maintain traditional and geographical political boundaries, and base the new plan on existing districts to the extent possible. She explained that to meet those three requirements Grand Canyon Village must be kept in the same district as Tusayan. She further explained that Grand Canyon Village and Tusayan are longstanding communities of interest and are actually one community. She explained that Tusayan has the same zip code and phone prefix as Grand Canyon Village and that those items alone show that they are one community. She stated that many from Tusayan, including herself, have their personal and business PO boxes, and all mail delivery in the Village, because as Tusayan residents, they are considered Grand Canyon residents. She explained that they also share a unified school district, law enforcement services, emergency services and that many Havasupai Tribal members consider Grand Canyon Village and Tusayan areas as their home on top of the Canyon. She stated that if Tusayan is split from Grand Canyon Village, it would not maintain traditional, geographical and political boundaries or existing district boundaries. She explained that the school district boundary, which has been the same for many years, includes Tusayan and Havasupai camp lands. Lastly, she stated that they strongly support map scenario F, as they feel it does not violate those requirements that the Board must meet. She thanked the Board for considering her comments and thanked them for their service to Coconino County.

County Manager Peru called on Charlie Hendrix to speak. Charlie Hendrix spoke and stated that she supports Mayor Vale's comments and stated she would add that there has been a lot of study as to what defines a community of interest. She stated there are two additional points she wanted to bring out, in addition to what Mayor Vale said. She explained that one of the things talked a lot about is that communities of interest are usually defined on the local level, by what those local communities define, and that if you look to them as local people, they define themselves as one community. She stated that their theme for their fourth of July parade last year was "one community." She explained that they look at themselves as one community and that they are inseparable. She also stated that part of the reason for that is that one of the second parameters in defining communities of interest is where they look in times of disaster and where they get support from in times of disaster. She explained that when COVID hit, the Grand Canyon Village, the Town of Tusayan and the community of Valle all had to depend on each other because there were no other facilities and no other sources to look for support geographically or right nearby. She stated that they are each other's support and to segregate them from each other would be very difficult. She stated that they are a community of interest and felt compelled to share that with the Board today.

County Manager Peru called on John Vale to speak. John Vale introduced himself and stated he lives at 120 Shimmy Lane in Tusayan, Arizona and stated that he is the Vice Chair of the Tusayan Sanitary District and the Chairman of the Tusayan Fire District. He stated that he is not in support of any scenario where Tusayan and Grand Canyon and Havasupai camp are not in the same district. He explained that they are contiguous and are one community and that separating them from the same district will have a long-term negative effect and so would like the Board to consider his comments.

County Manager Peru explained that there are no other people who wish to comment and stated that he appreciates those who shared their thoughts and that citizens can also attend the next session. He explained that this is the process undergoes every ten years.

Chair Horstman thanked the Manager and staff and explained that as a Board they will make a decision on their redistricting map and thanked those who attended the meeting and who shared their time and commitment to Coconino County to ensure all residents are considered. She also explained that there is one more public meeting but that the website is open until April 12 for comments and encouraged citizens to submit their written comments.

Chair Horstman adjourned the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

## COCONINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

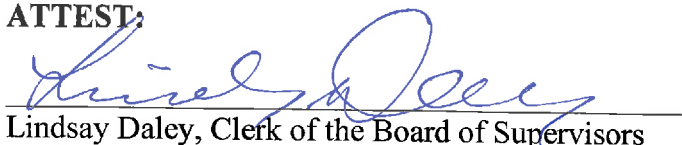
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Patrice Horstman, Chair

ATTEST:

  
Lindsay Daley, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

