



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
Inter-Departmental Correspondence
Board of Supervisors



DATE: October 29, 2013
BOARD MEETING DATE: November 5, 2013
SPECIAL NOTICE/HEARING: None
VOTE REQUIRED: Majority

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: Supervisor Adrienne Tissier, Chair of the District Lines Advisory Committee and Supervisor Warren Slocum, Vice Chair

SUBJECT: Supervisorial District Boundary Adjustments

RECOMMENDATION:

Adoption of an ordinance amending Sections 2.02.020, 2.02.030, 2.02.040, 2.02.050 and 2.02.060 of Chapter 2.02, Title 2 of the San Mateo County Ordinance Code establishing the boundaries of the Supervisorial Districts, previously introduced on October 22, 2013, and waiver of reading the ordinance in its entirety.

BACKGROUND:

California Elections Code § 21500 provides, in pertinent part: that following each decennial federal census . . . , the Board of Supervisors shall adjust the boundaries of any or all of the supervisorial districts of the county so that the districts shall be “as nearly equal in population as may be” and that in establishing the boundaries of the districts, the Board may give consideration to the following factors: (a) topography, (b) geography, (c) cohesiveness, contiguity, integrity, and compactness of territory, and (d) community of interests of the districts.

Section 25103 provides, in pertinent part: that **at any time between the decennial adjustments of district boundaries**, board may adjust the boundaries of the supervisorial districts...pursuant to Section 21500.

In November 2012 the voters decided to amend the County Charter to provide for elections by-district rather than at-large. Prior to the Charter Amendment, the voters of the entire County voted on each member of the Board of Supervisors (although each board member resided in one-of-five districts). After the Charter Amendment, only voters of a given district vote on the Board Member residing in their district.

This change did not require the County to revisit the County’s district lines and at the time of the election, changes to the district lines were not necessarily anticipated. However, in April 2013 the Board nevertheless voted to form an advisory committee to take public comment on the current district lines and consider whether to adjust them. It is of note that at the time of the November election there was a lawsuit pending. That

lawsuit did not challenge the County's existing district lines. That lawsuit challenged only whether the then at-large system diluted minority voting strength. But no Court ever evaluated even that claim. The County entered into a written settlement of the lawsuit, which requires the Board to adopt district boundaries by no later than November 5th.

DISCUSSION:

In the memorandum for the October 8, 2013 Board Meeting we briefly described the District Lines Advisory Committee process. The transcripts, video, comments and all of the other materials related to that process are posted to a website found at: <http://www.smcdistrictcommittee.org>, including the maps described below. Additional materials were presented at the October 8, 2013 and October 22, 2013 Board Meetings. All those materials remain available for review by the entire Board and the public.

The Committee recommended that the Board consider adopting one of three maps, listed in the Committee's order of preference: Community Unity 4 ("CU"), Republican AA-Equity ("Equity") and Nakamura 1G, all of which divide the cities of San Mateo and South San Francisco between two different districts (the maps were named by each submitter). At the Board Meeting on October 8, 2013 the County's consultant Douglas Johnson of National Demographics presented the maps to the Board and this Board eliminated Nakamura 1G from active consideration. The "Equity" proponents submitted a newly revised version, asking the Board to consider that version as an alternative and the Board agreed. This Board also directed Douglas Johnson to modify "CU" and new version of "Equity" to reunite San Mateo and to explore a different division of South San Francisco and bring those maps and an additional previously drafted Consultant map back to the Board on October 22nd.

On October 22nd, Douglas Johnson presented the remaining maps and the Board of Supervisors voted to introduce an ordinance based on a version of the Community Unity map (labeled Community Unity B) which re-unites San Mateo and includes a modification to Districts 5 and 1 recommended in the Equity map.

The Board of Supervisors also directed that non-substantive changes that eliminate any remaining mail ballot precincts, to the extent possible, be made to the Ordinance before it is brought back for final adoption. However, after consultation with the San Mateo County Elections Division, it has been determined that no changes are necessary. A copy of the Ordinance is attached hereto. Upon adoption, the Elections Division will adjust voting precincts to reflect the boundary adjustments in advance of the 2014 election for Supervisors.

County Counsel has reviewed the ordinance as to form.

Approval of the ordinance will contribute to the Shared Vision 2025 outcome of a Collaborative Community by establishing the description of the supervisorial districts consistent with applicable statutes and public input.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None.