



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
Inter-Departmental Correspondence
Board of Supervisors



DATE: October 2, 2013
BOARD MEETING DATE: October 8, 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:

Introduction 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, 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:

The District Lines Advisory Committee held ten public meetings, starting the beginning of June. The Committee held the meetings in each existing district—two in each district. Attendant to the meetings, the County spent a great deal of time and effort on outreach. The meetings were advertised multi-lingually throughout the County in various media and through grass roots efforts. The last meeting was held September 24th.

During those meetings the Committee took public comment. That public comment is recorded in transcripts and on video. The Committee also received a significant amount of written testimony. The transcripts, video, comments and all of the other materials made available to the entire committee were posted to a website created solely for that purpose: <http://www.smcdistrictcommittee.org>. Those materials remain available for review by the entire Board and the public and should be considered part of the record before you in making your decision.

The Committee has recommended that the Board consider adopting one of three maps, listed in the Committee's order of preference: Community Unity 4, Republican AA-Equity and Nakamura 1G. The maps were named by each submitter.

It is of note that thirty-one maps were reviewed (drawn both by the public and the County's consultant Douglas Johnson of National Demographics) during the process, including the three recommended maps (versions of which were submitted shortly before the meeting on September 24th). These maps and every other map considered are also available on the website. Douglas Johnson's report to the Board is attached hereto.

The Board of Supervisors has the option to adopt any one of the recommended three maps, adopt a different map that was submitted, modify and adopt any of the maps, draw and adopt a completely new map, or leave the boundaries as they are. District boundaries are established by ordinance and any adjustment of the current district boundaries require adoption of an ordinance. If boundaries are changed, the San Mateo County Elections division will adjust voting precincts to reflect the boundary adjustments. Draft ordinances for the three recommended maps are attached hereto as Exhibits A (Community Unity 4), B (Republican AA-Equity), and C (Nakamura 1G). County Counsel has reviewed and approved each of the proposed ordinances 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.