

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS SPECIAL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2011 at 11:00 A.M.
IN THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE ROOM
LOCATED AT 1415 MELODY LANE, BUILDING G, BISBEE ARIZONA**

Chairman Call called the Special Meeting of the Board of Supervisors to order at 11:02 a.m. All three supervisors were present: Pat Call, Chairman; Ann English, Vice-Chairman; Richard Searle, Supervisor (he left before the meeting ended). Also attending were Mike Ortega, County Administrator; Britt Hanson, Chief Civil Deputy County Attorney; Jody Klein, Consultant; Walter Domann, GIS Coordinator; Lara Beach, Recorder's Office; Pat Viverto, Elections Department; Juanita Simmons, Elections Director; Katie Howard, Clerk of the Board; Christine Rhodes, County Recorder; and Mike Jackson.

Chairman Call announced the agenda items and asked for introductions.

ACTION

Board of Supervisors

ITEM 1

Discussion of redistricting process, including current voter trends and implications for establishing precincts, guiding principles for establishing precinct boundaries, Justice of the Peace districts, Cochise College districts and Supervisorial districts; obtain general direction from the Board.

ITEM 2

Presentation of DRAFT Congressional and Legislative district maps formed by the Independent Redistricting Commission (IRC) and discussion of the impact on precinct lines within Cochise County; staff recommendation for Board position on the proposed maps to the IRC.

ITEM 3

Discussion of next steps in redistricting process, including:

- Timeline for presenting suggested scenarios of the precinct lines and Board of Supervisors' districts
- Schedule of public input meetings
- Proposed date for Board of Supervisors Public Hearing and adoption of preferred scenario

Mr. Ortega introduced the new Elections Director, Juanita Simmons and explained Jody Klein's role during this transition period.

Mr. Klein introduced the team working on precinct lines and explained that, on or before December 1st, the Board has to adopt new precincts, new Justice of the Peace districts, new Cochise College districts, and new Supervisorial districts. These precincts cannot be finalized until we know final Congressional and Legislative district lines. That will not be done until November 5th so we need to anticipate possible results and be prepared with options.

Mr. Klein then reviewed the future of Cochise County voters and explained that most voters will be voting by mail (or online) based on how many permanent early voters we currently have. He described 3 methods

currently used for registration. In the 2010 election, 45% of voters in Cochise County voted by mail. In March, 65% of voters and May 72% of voters were by mail, that trend is upward. Sixty-four precincts we have now will be significantly reduced. Precincts are designed to segregate communities of voters into convenient areas for voting. In the past when there was no vote by mail, the effort was to accommodate voters to avoid significant driving distances.

Mr. Klein continued stating, traditional precincts will change—instead will have a voting supercenter; probably at the Regional Service Centers. In a voting supercenter, voters can vote anywhere in the county—does not need to be a designated precinct with ballots on demand. Yavapai and Yuma Counties will be doing electronic polling, a much more efficient process next year; important context for determining how many precincts we need.

Mr. Klein went on to the 3 main criteria for establishing new precincts, there are absolutes—you cannot split Congressional, Legislative, College, Supervisorial or JP districts. You can split special and school districts and city boundaries with polling places within the precinct or adjacent precinct, and you cannot set up to discriminate against minority voters.

Mr. Klein presented the Board with facts for discussion. Do you want to eliminate precincts, and if so, how aggressively? Also, if there is a small precinct, but it is isolated and consolidating would result in driving long distances, might want to keep precinct. Would consolidating/combining result in driving a long way? In the past, if a precinct had 1,000 voters, we looked to create a new precinct.

Chairman Call asked about the distribution of Permanent Early Voter List (PEVL) voters throughout the County. Ms. Beach said Tombstone is lowest, Willcox is getting higher and Douglas, Bisbee and Sierra Vista are high.

Mr. Klein explained the layout of the handout regarding voter habits: early voters, turnout at polls; asking for input on combining precincts.

Mr. Searle said Bowie and San Simon could be combined. Cochise may want to consider dividing and combining with neighboring precincts but Mr. Klein pointed out issues against and asked how aggressive does the Board want us to be in combining precincts. Mr. Klein said cutting down the number of poll workers will be a great benefit but we need to be prepared with trained poll workers, especially if combined, to ensure long lines do not develop at the polls. He suggested that the number of precincts could be reduced to 3 in Bisbee, instead of 6-7. Douglas had 7 precincts; considered scenario with 4 or 5 precincts, and get closer toward lines to reduce confusion. The Board discussed having the team bring back scenarios for combining precincts without increasing lines at the poll.

Mr. Klein said the second big issue is precinct parts—explained that a precinct part is a unique area. There are 14 precinct parts in Tombstone. He described the various combinations of precinct parts and why it is challenging for the poll workers—there were 24 different ballots for Tombstone in the last election. It makes sense to eliminate precinct parts and said that this will reduce confusion and also save on cost of printing ballots. He provided examples of precinct parts in Cochise with school districts in Benson where you need to consider impact on voters and not just make automatic switches to eliminate precinct parts. Mr. Klein described the plus/minus 5% leeway for Congressional districts and that this means approximately 35,000 voters' differential would be within that percentage. In the 1980s, requirement was for visible boundary lines. This is

the first time we have looked at this level of detail for precinct part lines because technology and equipment is now available.

Mr. Klein stated if the Board has an articulate purpose for Supervisorial redistricting, for example, if Ft. Huachuca should logically be a part of Sierra Vista precincts, then you can accomplish that by moving or splitting precincts.

Mr. Klein moved on to College Redistricting and explained district populations currently and the mean; new districts must be between 41,593 and 45,971 for Justice Department requirements. District 2 is a majority/minority district and redistricting needs to preserve minority at or above 50%. When changing, avoid dividing existing communities; he described core communities and discussed adherence to the visible geographic boundaries.

As we present scenarios, we need Board direction on:

- Maintaining core areas is important
 - Currently Ft. Huachuca is entirely in District 3; should a portion of Ft. Huachuca be in District 1 (may happen with legislative district lines anyway)
- Maintain that San Pedro River should be in all 3 districts and Chairman Call is interesting in maintaining a portion of the border.

Mr. Klein moved on to College districts: described boundaries, current population and mean and said some shifting is needed but can accomplish without a lot of change. He has touched base with the College Board preliminarily and will work within the College's meeting schedule.

Next Mr. Klein discussed JP Districts which needs new lines set. We may need to shift slightly due to changes in precinct lines. Each JP gets paid on productivity credits. He will sit down with the courts to discuss—may have some adjustments to make due to workflow.

On Congressional Districts: Mr. Klein described breakdown of districts including Portal, and other rural areas and explained that the Independent Redistricting Commission (IRC) wanted 3 Arizona districts that touch the border. He explained this area is considered a competitive district; would require redrawing 20 of 64 precincts to match the IRC proposed lines and discussed the example.

Mr. Klein stated that Mr. Ortega has asked him to put together some input to the IRC to discuss the impact of the Congressional District lines and he is prepared to do that after today's discussion and direction from the Board. After a short discussion Mr. Klein and his team will put together a response to the IRC along with examples that clearly define the impact of the IRC's proposed Congressional Districts.

Finally, Mr. Klein described Legislative District lines—current population, mean and effect of new proposed legislative lines.

Chairman Call and Vice-Chairman English agreed that they did not like the County being split into 2 legislative districts, with one of those being in with southeast Tucson.

Vice-Chairman English moved that the County Administrator contact the IRC and make them aware of all the problems that they are creating for Cochise County relative to Congressional and Legislative district lines. The motion was seconded by Chairman Call and passed 2-0-1 (Searle absent).

Mr. Ortega said he would get back to the Board on October 25th to present scenarios for Precinct lines, Supervisorial lines and College lines. After that meeting and direction from the Board there will need to be a round of public meetings throughout the County to inform citizens.

Mr. Klein stated that cities of Douglas, Tombstone and Bisbee all have ward lines that need to be adjusted. He suggested that his team meet preliminarily with them to discuss alignment.

Mr. Ortega concurred as long as it does not slow the process.

The Board, administration and staff discussed the logistics of the public meetings throughout the County.

Mr. Klein stated that the sole meeting of the IRC will be in Sierra Vista on October 25th. The Board and administration agreed that they need to attend.

Chairman Call commended Mr. Klein and his team on all their work on the redistricting process.

There being no further business before the Board, Chairman Call adjourned the meeting at 1:03 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
Patrick G. Call, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Katie A. Howard, Clerk of the Board