

2011 Decennial Supervisorial Redistricting
County of Los Angeles
May 2, 2011 Van Nuys High School
3rd District Community Outreach Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome and Introductions

Self-introductions were made.

- **Mr. Jerry Ramirez, Chief Executive Office (CEO) welcomed all in attendance which included members of the community, Boundary Review Committee Members, and staff from the Chief Executive Office, County Counsel, and Executive Office. Mr. Ramirez reminded members of the public that they will have the opportunity to ask questions or make comments and encouraged members of the public to participate.**

2. Purpose of Meeting

- **Every 10 years after the Census count, the Board of Supervisors oversees a redistricting process to assure as equal representation as possible for all residents within each supervisorial district. This meeting is to inform community members about the redistricting process, why it is important and how redistricting may affect their community.**
- **In addition to providing the community with information about the redistricting process, the Board-appointed Boundary Review Committee also wants to solicit input from the community.**

3. What is Redistricting and Why is it Important?

a. What are the Key Objectives?

Mr. Ramirez reported the following statistics:

- **At the latest Census count, the County of Los Angeles has 9.8 million people, making it the most populous county in the United States.**
- **Its current Budget is \$23.3 Billion dollars.**
- **It has approximately 100,000 employees, making it the largest local employer.**

- There are 88 incorporated Cities within the County of Los Angeles and between 120 and 140 individual unincorporated areas. Municipal services are by-in-large provided by each City, with the County providing certain regional services. However, within the unincorporated areas, the County is both the municipal government as well as its regional government. Well over half of the cities contract with the County for services that can be more conveniently provided by the County.
- The Board is also responsible for public policy and funding decisions that impact the lives of County residents, such as public hospitals and health care centers, law enforcement (Sheriff, District Attorney), restaurant inspections, social services (Children and Family Services), water quality, County roads, parks and libraries, and a host of major cultural resources.
- Every ten years, the United States attempts to count every person in the country through a process called the Decennial Census. It is mandated by Article I, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution. The latest Census was conducted on April 1, 2010, and provides a snapshot of how many people there are and where they live.

Mr. Ramirez discussed the “Total Population Comparison: 2000 to 2010” table:

- The 2001 Benchmark Plan was based on the population count from the 2000 Census indicating the population of the 5 Districts based on the lines that were in affect before they redistricted. The total deviation among the 5 Districts was 6.45%, indicating how the Districts had grown out of balance over the decade.
- The Plan adopted in 2001 brought the deviation down to 1.40% by approving certain boundary adjustments.
- Under the 2011 Benchmark Plan (boundary lines from 2001, but using 2010 Census figures), there is a total deviation of 9.97%. He further explained that, once it is determined how many people there are and where they live in the County of Los Angeles, the County seeks to divide the population as evenly as possible into five supervisorial districts for the County of Los Angeles. Adjusting the boundaries is called “redistricting.”
- Mr. Ramirez referenced the recent State propositions to create an independent Boundary Commission for California redistricting. The California redistricting process is for the State’s Congressional districts, Senate districts, Assembly districts, and the Board of Equalization districts.

b. What are the Legal Aspects of Redistricting?

Ms. Nancy Takade, County Counsel reported the following:

- **“One Person, One Vote” under the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution talks about the equality of representation which for our purposes means making everyone’s vote count. The proposed redistricting plans must comply with requirements of the 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution and with the mandate of the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965. That is the main message for redistricting not only from a legal level but from a policy level as well. These community meetings will be taking place across the County, in each Supervisorial District in an effort to reach out and inform residents about the redistricting process.**
- **In addition to federal law, there are other laws governing redistricting. There is also the California Election Code, which controls the timeline for the redistricting process. Finally, the County Charter, our local constitution, provides that the County of Los Angeles shall have a Board of Supervisors consisting of five members and five districts. Additionally, there are court decisions which interpret these laws. It should be noted that in order to change the number of districts, a vote by the people is required to change the number of supervisorial districts. Furthermore, a 2/3 vote by the Board of Supervisors is required to change the Supervisorial District lines.**
- **Achieving a perfect balance among the five districts may not be possible in reality due the numerous factors involved with redistricting, such as; geography, compactness, respect for political consideration and ethnic backgrounds, city lines, etc...**
- **At the end of the process there will be two public hearings to consider the recommendation of the Boundary Review Committee. This is another opportunity for the public to provide input.**

A member of the public noted that he believed the current districts were gerrymandered and asked where each Supervisor for the County of Los Angeles lived. Ms. Takade replied that the current software program provided by the County allows for a reference layer to be accessed that will reflect where each of the supervisors generally live.

Another member of the public asked if the County was coordinating it's redistricting effort with other cities and the State. Ms. Takade replied that the process undertaken by other cities and at the State level is separate from the County process, given that different boundaries and lines are involved.

4. How Will the Process Unfold?

Mr. Ramirez reported the following:

- **In November of 2010, the Board of Supervisors appointed a Boundary Review Committee to solicit public input and recommend a redistricting plan to the Board. The Committee is made up of two members and two alternates nominated by each Supervisor. The Board adopted a Public Access Plan to ensure wide public participation and dissemination of information. The Plan called for:**
 1. **Developing a Redistricting Website. Mr. Ramirez reported the Website is up and running and is the central hub of all redistricting information. Mr. Ramirez encouraged the public to visit the Website.**
 2. **Holding community outreach meetings. Mr. Ramirez reported that today's meeting is a direct result of the Board's Public Action Plan and is one of 10 that will be conducted throughout the County.**
 3. **Developing a process for the public to develop/submit redistricting plans for Committee consideration. Mr Ramirez informed the public that the County is providing free software on the website that allows the public to develop and submit redistricting plans for Commission consideration.**
 4. **Allowing for public access and review of redistricting plan submissions. Mr. Ramirez stated that all submitted redistricting plans will be placed on the Website, and that the public will have the opportunity to provide public comments on any redistricting plan at Boundary Review Committee and Board meetings.**
- **The Boundary Review Committee and the Board of Supervisors must adhere to two important dates:**
 1. **The Boundary Review committee must submit a recommended plan to the Board by July 31st; and**
 2. **The Board must adjust supervisorial district boundaries by November 1st.**

5. How Can You Get Involved?

Mr. Ramirez reported on the following ways for the public to get involved in the redistricting process:

- Visit the redistricting website at redistricting.lacounty.gov. The public can obtain redistricting information such as meeting schedules, agendas, and minutes. In addition, the public can subscribe to be included on the redistricting e-mail contact list and submit public comments.
- Members of the public are encouraged to attend the Boundary Review Committee meetings as well as the community outreach meetings. Information regarding meeting schedules is located on the County's Redistricting website: www.redistricting.lacounty.gov

The following dates are the scheduled Boundary Review Committee [meetings](#).

- Wednesday, May 4, 2011
 - Conference Room 739 3:00 – 6:00
- Wednesday, May 18, 2011
 - TBD
- Wednesday, June 1, 2011
 - Board of Supervisors Hearing Room 381B, 3:00 to 6:00
- Meetings in June TBD based on need
- Wednesday, July 13, 2011
 - Board of Supervisors Hearing Room 381B, 3:00 to 6:00
- Please note that the Boundary Review Committee may revise its scheduled meetings as needed. The updated Boundary Review Committee meeting schedule can be found at the County's Redistricting Website: www.redistricting.lacounty.gov.
- All meetings are held at the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012.
- The County of Los Angeles is providing free web-based redistricting software to allow the public to develop and submit redistricting plans for consideration by the Boundary Review Committee, or simply use the software to look up data. The software went live on April 22, 2011. The redistricting mapping application can be found at the County's Redistricting Website: www.redistricting.lacounty.gov

- The County arranged four webinar training sessions to assist the public in utilizing the redistricting mapping software to create and submit a redistricting plan. The webinar training sessions were conducted in April, however one training session was recorded and a video is available for viewing on the County's redistricting website www.redistricting.lacounty.gov

Please note: The last day to submit a proposed redistricting plan is Thursday June 2, 2011 at 5:00 p.m.

6. Public Comment

Opportunity for members of the public to address the Committee.

- Doug Arseneault, Legislative Affairs Manager for the Valley Industry and Commerce Association, was representing approximately 60 businesses that generate approximately 100,000 jobs for the City of Los Angeles and its surrounding areas. Mr. Arseneault urged members of the Boundary Review Committee to recognize the San Fernando Valley's economic revival, diverse community and unique needs by keeping the Valley together as a compact and contiguous community. He was concerned that they would be split, and want to be kept together. Since the redistricting process occurs once every ten years, he urged members of the Boundary Review Committee to recognize the Valley's united voice and equal representation.
- Ms. Maritza de Artan, representing Casa Esperanza, a community service agency located in Panorama City, thanked Boundary Review Committee members and County staff for explaining the process to the public. Ms. de Artan stated that the 2001 redistricting effort of the Los Angeles City Council district boundaries was difficult to understand for the community because Council District Six was created from the Westside in Santa Monica, but was representing the Valley. She said it was hard to adjust to the new boundaries. Ms. de Artan appreciated the process and the resources it will bring, and urged the Committee to consider keeping the Third District in the Valley.
- Mr. Jerry Daniels, a Third District constituent, has been very active in preserving the Santa Monica Mountains and does not want the mountains to be fragmented into different Supervisorial districts. He stated that great progress has been made over the last thirty years through the Santa Monica Mountain Conservancy, and wants to ensure that the mountains stay in one district. Also, he stated that if the mountains were affected by boundary shifts, he would like them to remain in Supervisor Yaroslavsky's District.

- **Ms. Rebecca Goldfarb, resident of Topanga Canyon, which is located in the Third District, indicated that she is an estate planning attorney who also volunteers for numerous organizations such as the, Topanga Town Council, Volunteer Sheriff, and Fire Safe Council. Ms. Goldfarb agreed with Mr. Daniels that many people have worked extremely hard to preserve the Santa Monica Mountains and that the Santa Monica Mountains really have no other place to go, and therefore, should remain intact within the Third District. She stated that there is no logical reason to move the mountains to another district and doing so would constitute gerrymandering. Ms. Goldfarb stated the mountains have unique needs with constant threats of natural disasters, and as a result, it's important to keep those resources intact within one district so the community prepares for those dangerous possibilities together. Ms Goldfarb stated Supervisor Yaroslavsky is well aware of these issues, has represented the area for a long time, and urged members of the Boundary Review Committee not to redistrict the Santa Monica Mountains.**
- **Ms. Cyndia Klein has similar concerns to Ms. Goldfarb's and Mr. Daniels' and is in favor of keeping the Santa Monica Mountains in the Third District. Ms. Klein urged members of the Boundary Review Committee to keep the mountains intact.**
- **Mr. Gordon Murley requested that the Boundary Review Committee keep current boundaries as intact as possible. Mr. Murley indicated that the present configuration of the boundary lines is the best it has ever been and it is paramount to keep the Santa Monica Mountains in the Third District. The rim of the Valley and all of the surrounding mountainous areas have worked really well in the Third District. Mr. Murley requested that the Boundary Review Committee make changes only to meet the federal requirements regarding deviation maximums, which can be easily accomplished by making adjustments along the areas where Supervisorial boundaries meet so that the communities are not greatly affected.**
- **Ms. Kathleen Padden does not know who represents the Third District, but she knows he/she is not doing a good job. Ms. Padden was concerned about the changes made to the Van Nuys community and does not want Van Nuys to be put into an area with high poverty. Ms. Padden stated that she does not want to see people's property, schools, and churches being overrun. Ms. Padden expressed concern about Supervisor Yaroslavsky with respect to the Van Nuys community. Ms. Padden urged the Committee not to divide Van Nuys.**

- **Ms. Nina Royal stated the 2000 Census significantly divided the Sunland/Tujunga communities. Los Angeles City Councilmen Paul Kerkorian represents the Sunland/Tujunga area and County Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich also represents Sunland/Tujunga. Ms. Royal requested the committee keep Sunland/Tujunga with its current representatives and not to divide this community.**
- **Mr. Ronald Sharon, resident of Topanga Canyon for thirty years, opposes any redistricting because it would diminish all the hard work the community has done to preserve Topanga Canyon. Mr. Sharon indicated that he is a retired City of Los Angeles Firefighter but continues to be involved with community organizations in Topanga Canyon, which Supervisor Yaroslavsky's office helped create. Mr. Sharon expressed concern regarding the possible redistricting of Topanga Canyon.**
- **Mr. Severyn Aszkenazy, retired City of Los Angeles Firefighter and Third District constituent, stated he could not imagine the Santa Monica Mountains being split up. Additionally, Mr. Aszkenazy stated that the San Fernando community has a lot in common with Los Angeles and parts of the Santa Monica Mountains. Mr. Aszkenazy emphasized that the birthplace of the Valley is the City of San Fernando and urged the committee to keep the Santa Monica Mountains and the City of San Fernando in the Third District. He did not want to see the Santa Monica Mountains split up between two districts.**
- **Mr. Gerald Silver submitted a written letter.**
- **Mr. Glenn Stoddard stated that some have had the pleasure of attending the State of California's Redistricting Meetings process, and have been delighted by the committee selection process. Mr. Stoddard states that the Los Angeles County Boundary Review Committee members were appointed by the Board of Supervisors to redistrict the boundary lines of their respective districts and is less than hopeful of the process because he believes the BRC members cannot be impartial. Mr. Stoddard also stated that if this committee creates the same gerrymandered districts as the last redistricting committee, the voting public will likely strip the Supervisors of this authority, as they did with the State Legislature. He believes the judges don't seem to be interested in the process, but that voters are. Mr. Stoddard stated that it is difficult to determine what the lines of the Supervisorial Districts are, even with a map.**
- **Sister Carmel Somers stated that she works and lives in the Third District. Sister Somers remembers the 1994 Northridge earthquake, and it would be tragic if that part of the district was separated. Sister Somers urged the Boundary Review Committee to keep the Third District intact.**

- **Ms. Monica Alexenko, resident of the Van Nuys area for 20 years, feels that the community has become fragmented, and is often described as a barrio; the term does not make anyone happy, and certainly does not underscore diversity. Ms. Alexenko hoped to see representatives from the City of Los Angeles in attendance at the meeting and believes no one is interested in redistricting Van Nuys. In addition, Ms. Alexenko stated that the Van Nuys community needs politicians that are public servants.**

Commissioner Friedman thanked everyone for attending.

List of Attendees from the County

1st District – Commissioner Louisa Ollague

3rd District – Commissioner Terry Friedman, Kevin Acebo, Fred A. Flores

Chief Executive Office – Frank Cheng and Jerry Ramirez

County Counsel – Nancy Takade and Truc Moore

Executive Office – Narek Artonian, Twila Peoples Kerr, and Garen Khachian