

2011 Decennial Supervisorial Redistricting

County of Los Angeles

May 19, 2011 Los Angeles County Lancaster Regional Public Library

Fifth District Community Outreach Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome and Introductions

Self-introductions were made.

- **Gerardo Ramirez, Chief Executive Office (CEO), welcomed all in attendance which included members of the community, a Boundary Review Committee Member, staff from the Chief Executive Office, County Counsel, and the Executive Office. He encouraged input from community members on the redistricting process.**
- **Commissioner Brian Mejia, representing the Fifth District, welcomed all in attendance, and stated that although he represents the Fifth District, he assured the public that each Boundary Review Committee member is very interested in hearing input from community.**

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 the regional government.
- 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” chart, indicating:
 - The 2001 Benchmark Plan was based on the population count from the 2000 Census indicating the population of the five Districts based on the lines that were in affect before they redistricted. The total deviation among the five 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%.
 - 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. Truc Moore, 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.**

4. How Will the Process Unfold?

Mr. Ramirez reported the following:

- **The Board of Supervisors established the Boundary Review Committee in November 2010 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 and approved by the full Board.**
- **A Public Access Plan was established to ensure wide participation by the public for this process.**

- The 2011 redistricting timeline was provided in a handout given to the public.

5. How Can You Get Involved?

Mr. Ramirez reported the following:

- The Board of Supervisors approved a Public Access Plan to promote public participation in the redistricting process and ensure the widest practicable participation and dissemination of pertinent redistricting information.
- Individuals and/or community groups are encouraged to participate in the redistricting process. Meeting schedules, agendas, and minutes are updated on a regular basis on the redistricting website and publicized in media press releases and to those who wish to be added to the mailing list.
- This meeting is the last community meeting that is scheduled. Members of the public may also provide input at the Boundary Review Committee meetings and the public hearings to be held by the Board of Supervisors. Information regarding meeting schedules is located on 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 following dates are the scheduled Boundary Review Committee meetings.
 - ✓ 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
- Mr. Ramirez noted 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: <http://www.redistricting.lacounty.gov/>.
- 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. 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 last day to submit a proposed redistricting plan is Thursday June 2, 2011 at 5:00 p.m.

- The County arranged four webinar training sessions in April to train the public on how to use the redistricting mapping software to create and submit a redistricting plan. One webinar training session was recorded and a video is available for viewing on the County's redistricting website at www.redistricting.lacounty.gov.

6. Public Comment

- Mr. Thomas Lacey, Fifth District constituent, inquired about the number of members on the Boundary Review Committee.

Mr. Ramirez informed Mr. Lacey that the Boundary Review Committee consists of ten voting members and ten alternates. Each Supervisor nominates two voting members and two alternates, which are confirmed by the full Board. A complete list of the members is available at <http://redistricting.lacounty.gov/>.

- Mr. Thomas Lacey also asked if any of the Boundary Review Committee members were locally elected officials.

Commissioner Mejia stated that he was unaware of any of the Boundary Review Committee members being elected officials. In addition, the basic requirement to be appointed to the Boundary Review Committee is to be a resident of Los Angeles County.

- Ms. Vickie Nelson, Fifth District constituent, asked how long the redistricting website would remain operational.

Mr. Ramirez stated that the website would remain operational throughout the redistricting process; however, he is not certain how long it will remain up after the redistricting process is concluded.

- Mr. Robert Vanderstok, Fifth District constituent, inquired about the role of the alternates in the Boundary Review Committee.

Commissioner Mejia stated that each Supervisor nominates two voting members and two alternates to the Boundary Review Committee, which are all confirmed by the full Board. The alternates vote in the absence of a voting member.

- Mr. Robert Vanderstok further commented that attendance for these types of community meetings is largely dependent upon the impact it will have to the individual. Mr. Vanderstok stated that he has attended Caltrans meetings where the attendance has been very high because of the direct impact to the community. Consequently, if there had been more people at this meeting, they would have expected the entire Boundary Review Committee to attend and hear the community's input on redistricting. Additionally, the information provided to the community indicates that although the Fifth District has gained a significant amount of people, the Antelope Valley will most likely not

be affected by redistricting. Mr. Vanderstok stated that people do not want to see the same gerrymandering that has taken place with the State Assembly and Senate and Congressional Districts, which is one of the reasons why Californians voted to remove the authority from the State Legislature in favor of creating the California Citizens' Redistricting Commission. The evidence for such gerrymandering is clear if you look at the various district lines from years past where lines were drawn to favor a candidate. The Antelope Valley has unique interests and is quite separate from Los Angeles.

- Mr. Thomas Lacey asked if the minutes from the public meetings will be published.

Mr. Ramirez stated that all public comments and letters from community meetings will be published and available to the public via the County's redistricting website.

- Ms. Vickie Nelson commented that redistricting will likely not affect the Antelope Valley. Ms. Nelson asked if there will be more money available for services in the Antelope Valley. Ms. Nelson stated that she lives in Antelope Acres, located approximately 15 miles from Lancaster and residents do not have many County services. Ms. Nelson reported that residents submitted complaints to her related to the need for a Fire Station in Antelope Acres and that the volunteer fire department it is not enough. In addition, residents have also complained that their homeowner's insurance rates have increased due to property not being within a five mile radius of a fire department. Ms. Nelson feels that the Antelope Valley contributes a great deal to Los Angeles County and although almost all residents would say that they are very happy under Supervisor Antonovich, more can be done.

Mr. Ramirez stated that the redistricting does not directly impact funding; however, it does impact who represents you on the County Board of Supervisors. Mr. Ramirez stated that it is difficult to determine whether there will be more money available for services in the Antelope Valley.

Mr. Ramirez, Ms. Moore and Commissioner Mejia thanked the community members for attending and providing their input.

List of Attendees from the County

5th District – Commissioner Brian Mejia

Chief Executive Office – Gerardo Ramirez

County Counsel –Truc Moore

Executive Office –George Britton, Rhonda Rangel, and Narek Artonian