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Federal Glover: Help the county draw the supervisors' district boundaries

By Federal Glover
For the Contra Costa Times

Posted: 05/11/2011 02:02:40 PM PDT

Updated: 05/11/2011 02:02:41 PM PDT

Since the population figures were released by the U. S. Census a couple of months ago, everywhere I go I have been getting questions about redistricting and how it would affect the area and constituents I represent in District 5.

The present configuration of District 5 was drawn up in 2001 after the last decennial census. From west to east, my district includes the communities of Bay Point, Pittsburg, Antioch, Oakley and Bethel Island. The idea was to have approximately the same number of people living in each district. That came to about 240,000 in each district.

In the 2001 redistricting process, District 5 lost Brentwood, Byron and Discovery Bay to District 3.

In the not-too-distant past, District 5 stretched from Discovery Bay to Martinez. It was often the largest geographical district in the county because it had the fewest number of residents in the sparsely populated rural communities.

By 2010, the landscape had changed dramatically. Spurred by the housing boom, which provided lots of affordable housing, since 2000, the greatest population growth has occurred in East County, including Brentwood and Discovery Bay in District 3. Antioch is now the county's second largest community. Contra Costa County was one of the fastest-growing counties in the Bay Area. Oakley, the newest city in Contra Costa, was the second-fastest growing community, second only to Brentwood.

What it comes down to is

that to have about the same number of people living in each district, there needs to be about 260,000 in

each district.

According to the 2010 Census and based on the current district lines, District 1, represented by Supervisor John Gioia, must gain 19,652 more people; District 2 represented by Supervisor Gayle Iilkema, must gain 21,467; District 3, represented by Supervisor Mary Piepho, must lose 46,902; District 4 represented by Supervisor Karen Mitchoff, must gain 22,174; and District 5 must lose 16,341.

It would appear to be a simple matter of chopping off 16,341 people from my district, but to whose district would they go? District 3 has 46,902 too many people. Adding 16,000 to that district would mean District 3 would have 73,000 too many people. If that were to happen, where would District 3's extra people go? Neighboring District 4 or District 2, both of which need about 22,000 more people?

District 1, which is currently short about 20,000, must take its new constituents from neighboring District 2. So now, District 2 must gain about 42,000.

As you can see, there is not an easy solution. Making things even more complicated is that the redistricting proposals must keep the current supervisor's residence within his or her district.

County staff presented some options to the Board of Supervisors at the May 2 board meeting and there was a lot of constructive input from the public.

The public will have more chances to weigh in on



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the subject in a series of hearings that will be held throughout the county. Three of the workshops will be held in District 5, and I suspect there will be a lot of input from East County residents.

You can attend any of the following East County workshops:

- Pittsburg-Bay Point: 7 p.m. May 19 at the Ambrose Community Center, 3105 Willow Pass Road, Bay Point
- Antioch: 7 p.m. May 23, Community Center, 4701 Lone Tree Way, Antioch
- Oakley, Bethel Island: 7 p.m. May 25, City Hall, 3231 Main St., Oakley. If you are interested in the topic because it may determine who will represent you in county affairs, I encourage you to attend one of these meetings. If you can't make any of the public meetings but still would like to comment or find out more information, link to: <http://ca-contracostacounty.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=2832> and click on "public input" to have your say. That county-produced website has a wealth of information and the status of the redistricting process. It also has maps of four different scenarios that are being proposed by Leadership Committee made up by County Administrator David Twa, County Counsel Sharon Anderson, Clerk Recorder Steven Weir and Catherine Kutsuris, director of the Department of Conservation and Development. Federal Glover is the county supervisor representing District 5. Reach him at dist5@bos.cccounty.us.



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