
BILL COWLES
Supervisor of Elections
Orange County, Florida

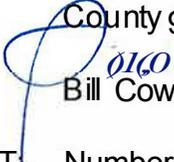


OUR MISSION IS TO:

*Ensure the integrity of the electoral process.
Enhance public confidence.
Encourage citizen participation.*

August 9, 2019

TO: Katie Smith, Orange County Comptroller Deputy Clerk of the Board of
County Commissioners

FROM:  Bill Cowles, Supervisor of Elections

SUBJECT: Number and Composition of County Commission Districts - Cost
Estimates

This memorandum is in response to the 2020 Charter Review Commission's July 26, 2019, request for the fiscal impact to the Supervisor of Elections Office associated with increasing the number of Orange County Board of County Commission Districts and serving as a resource to the Redistricting Advisory Committee.

The first request asked for the cost impact to this office for adding two additional districts. There are two potential responses to this request. If the CRC places a question on the 2020 General Election ballot asking voters to approve an increase in the number of County Commissioners, from single-member districts, the question would include an implementation date. I would expect that the effective date would be starting with the 2022 Election cycle. If that were the case, then the process of creating and notifying the voters of their new County Commission District would follow the normal reapportionment process that happens every ten-years following the Census.

The County Commission would appoint the Orange County Redistricting Advisory Committee and task them with creating new single-member districts. Once that's done, the Board of County Commissioners will adopt the final plan and submit it to our office. Using these new districts, along with the Congressional, State Senate and State Representative districts drawn by the Florida Legislature, we will create new voting precincts. Once done, we will be sending new Voter Information Cards to all voters. The cards will include their new districts, new precinct number, and new polling place information. The funds to complete this mailing will already be included in our Fiscal Year 2021/2022 Budget since the law requires this mandatory mailing following each reapportionment. Our FY 2021/2022 Budget will include an estimated \$271,250 for the mailing of the new cards countywide. Adding two new districts does not impact the cost of the mailing. The first election using the new districts would be the August 11, 2022, Primary Election. Voters would elect the two new County Commissioners. One would receive a 4-year term and the other a 2-year term. We are estimating that the voter

registration numbers will be at or over 875,000 registered voters, (redistricting is based on total population).

The approach, that I do not support, is if the charter question calls for implementation in 2021. This would require an expedited redistricting to create the two new districts followed by a special election to select new Commissioners prior to the 2022 Election cycle. This option would cost the taxpayers upwards of 2 million dollars to implement in 2021 and would complicate the already mandated reapportionment process.

The second request asked for an estimated cost to this office for staff time and resources to support the Redistricting Advisory Committee. There would be no additional cost to our budget. We will continue to provide assistance and support to the county staff assigned to the Committee. In 2012, we hosted one of the public meetings of the Redistricting Advisory Committee in our office. As stated above, our work starts when the Board of County Commissioners adopt the final plan.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions concerning our role in this process.

Cc: Mayor Jerry L Demings
Commissioner Betsy Vanderley, District 1
Commissioner Christine Moore, District 2
Commissioner Mayra Uribe, District 3
Commissioner Maribel Gomez Cordero, District 4
Commissioner Emily Bonilla, District 5
Commissioner Victoria P. Siplin, District 6
Camille Evans, CRC Chair
Jeffrey Newton, County Attorney
Nick Shannin, SOE Legal Counsel
Randy Singh, Deputy County Administrator
Kurt Peterson, Manager, OMB
Eric D. Gassman, Deputy Comptroller