

CLAY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS - WORKGROUP

1:00 P.M., TUESDAY, APRIL 5, 2022

Rooms A/B, 3rd Floor, Courthouse

MINUTES

The Clay County Board of Commissioners met in a workgroup session with the following Commissioners present: Jenna Kahly, Frank Gross, Jenny Mongeau, Kevin Campbell, and David Ebinger. County staff present: Stephen Larson, Brian Melton, Mark Sloan, Lori J. Johnson, Darren Brooke, and Colleen Eck.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

There were no citizens present.

REDISTRICTING INFORMATION

Mark Sloan addressed the Board with options for Commissioner redistricting at last work group meeting. Following some suggestions, he worked to find a third that would work with the percentages. The public hearing for redistricting is at the Board Meeting next week. The current districts were found to be out of balance since the census numbers came out. Handouts were provided that include three options and maps identifying the districts with each option.

The statutory requirements include:

1. Each county is divided into as many districts as there are members of the Board of Commissioners.
2. Districts are bounded by precinct lines (which may also correspond with town, municipal, and ward boundaries).
3. Commissioner districts are composed of contiguous territory.
4. Commissioner districts are to be as regular and compact in form as practicable.
5. District populations cannot vary more than ten percent from the average.

The total 2020 County population is 65,318. The target population of a district is 13,064 with a minimum of 11,758 and maximum of 14,370. The City of Moorhead has balanced their wards and set their new precinct boundaries on March 28th. A map was provided to show those boundaries.

The following options were presented for discussion:

Option A has the least number of changes. Kragnes Township would move from District 4 to District 2 (255 people); Moorhead City Ward 2 Precinct 4 would move from Districts 1 to District 4 (2,630 people); and Moorhead City Ward 4 Precinct 13 would move from District 3 to District 1 (3,659 people). There would be no change to District 5. The only commissioner who must run for re-election out of cycle would be Commissioner Kahly in District 1. District four is higher and expected to be a slower growth area.

Dist. 1	12,840
Dist. 2	12,712
Dist. 3	12,548
Dist. 4	14,300
Dist. 5	12,918

Option B: Kragnes Township would move from District 4 to District 2 (255 people); Moorhead City Ward 2 Precinct 4 would move from District 1 to District 4 (2,630 people); Moorhead City Ward 3 Precinct 8 would move from District 5 to District 1 (4,017 people); and Moorhead City Ward 4 Precinct 13 would move from District 3 to District 5 (3,659 people). The most growth would happen in District 5. Two Commissioners – Ebinger and Kahly – would need to run for their seats out-of-cycle.

Dist. 1	13,198
Dist. 2	12,712
Dist. 3	12,548
Dist. 4	14,300
Dist. 5	12,560

Option C: has more drastic changes and is completely contiguous, but the numbers in each district work out.

Egdon Township moves from District 3 to District 2 (708 people)
Hawley Township moves from District 3 to District 2. (491 people)
Parke Township moves from District 3 to District 2. (526 people)
Tansem Township moves from District 3 to District 2. (269 people)
Cromwell Township moves from District 3 to District 4. (388 people)
Felton City moves from District 3 to District 4. (179 people)
Felton Township moves from District 3 to District 4. (81 people)
Flowing Township moves from District 3 to District 4. (89 people)
Georgetown City moves from District 3 to District 4. (86 people)
Georgetown Township moves from District 3 to District 4. (135 people)
Hagen Township moves from District 3 to District 4. (128 people)
Keene Township moves from District 3 to District 4. (153 people)
Moland Township moves from District 3 to District 4. (252 people)
Morken Township moves from District 3 to District 4. (151 people)
Spring Prairie Township moves from District 3 to District 4. (506 people)
Viding Township moves from District 3 to District 4. (98 people)

Dist. 1	11,811
Dist. 2	12,205
Dist. 3	14,213
Dist. 4	14,171
Dist. 5	12,198

Commissioner Campbell noted that north Moorhead never had to compete with another ward for a seat on the commission. He advised that Commissioners may have a different impact depending on what ward they are from. Commissioner Gross added that issues that come up within the City of Moorhead are solved by the City Council.

Commissioner Ebinger relayed that with Option B, his district would be drastically impacted, and the option does not seem real practical with an elongated patchwork of area. Also, the districts would likely need changing again in 10 years with Option C.

Commissioner Mongeau stated what she likes about Options A and B is having someone who resides in the city and also represent the airport area because of aquifer concerns, etc.

Ms. Johnson noted the City's ability to make their ward changes was even more restrictive than the County. Commissioner Campbell mentioned the 10-year growth plan with the potential for more growth opportunities within the center of Moorhead, too. Moorhead's Ward 4 has been split between two Commissioners. He represented Ward 1 while he lived in Oakport Township and has always spoke up for north Moorhead.

Commissioner Gross stated that townships would touch in Option C but there is no block of townships, and they are spread out over many, many miles.

Commissioner Kahly noted she would not have to run again with Option C, but she struggles with that option because her district does not change. In the end, she would like to distribute the voting population in the best way possible.

The group discussed the process for voting at the April 12th Board meeting. All the information and mapping options will be on the website and available in packets for that public hearing.

The meeting adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

Jenny Mongeau, Chair
County Board of Commissioners

Stephen Larson, County Administrator