

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: 2016 Pinellas County Charter Review Commission
FROM: May 2, 2016
SUBJECT: Draft of Ballot and Charter Language for County Redistricting Board Charter Amendment

Pursuant to the Commission's request, this office has prepared for your review draft ballot and charter amendment language relating to the proposed charter amendment creating a County Redistricting Board.

A. Ballot Proposal: The ballot title and summary for Question #4 are as follows:

CREATION OF COUNTY REDISTRICTING BOARD

Shall the Pinellas County Charter be amended to create a County Redistricting Board, appointed by the County Commission every ten years after the Census, to provide advisory recommendations to the County Commission on redrawing county commission districts, and providing parameters for such recommendations, including not favoring political parties or incumbents, not denying racial or language minorities equal opportunity for political participation, and where feasible, consideration of unincorporated areas and municipal boundaries?

_____ Yes
_____ No

B. Text Revisions: Section 3.04 of the Pinellas County Charter is created to read as follows:

Sec. 3.04. - Redistricting.

(a) After each decennial census, no later than thirty (30) days after the U.S. Census provides redistricting data to the State of Florida pursuant to Public Law 94-171 or its successor, there shall be established a county redistricting board composed of eleven (11) members. The members of such board shall be appointed by the board of county commissioners of Pinellas County from the following groups:

- (1) Seven (7) members from the public, each of whom shall be nominated by a commissioner from among the residents of that commissioner's district, and none of whom shall be an elected official;
- (2) Four (4) additional members from the public at large, none of whom shall be an elected official.

Vacancies shall be filled within thirty (30) days in the same manner as the original appointments.

- (b) No later than thirty (30) days after initial appointment, the county redistricting board shall meet for the purposes of organization. The county redistricting board shall elect a chairman and vice-chairman from among its membership. Further meetings of the board shall be held upon the call of chairman or any three (3) members of the board. All meetings shall be open to the public. A majority of the members of the county redistricting board shall constitute a quorum. The board may adopt other rules for its operations and proceedings as it deems desirable. The members of the board shall receive no compensation but shall be reimbursed for necessary expenses pursuant to law.
- (c) Expenses of the county redistricting board shall be verified by a majority vote of the board and forwarded to the board of county commissioners for payment from the general fund of the county. The board of county commissioners shall provide space, secretarial and staff assistance. The board of county commissioners may accept funds, grants, gifts, and services for the county redistricting board from the state, the government of the United States, or other sources, public or private.
- (d) The county redistricting board shall develop one or more proposals for redistricting the four county commission districts and three at-large county commission districts referenced in Section 3.01. In developing the county redistricting board's proposals, no district shall be drawn with the intent to favor or disfavor a political party or an incumbent, districts shall not be drawn with the intent or result of denying or abridging the equal opportunity of racial or language minorities to participate in the political process or to diminish their ability to elect representatives of their choice, and districts shall be contiguous and as nearly equal in population as practicable. Further, in developing its proposals, the county redistricting board shall consider, where feasible, utilizing municipal boundaries and keeping together unincorporated areas of the county.
- (e) No later than one-hundred fifty (150) days after its first meeting, the county redistricting board shall submit a final report containing its redistricting proposals to the board of county commissioners. The proposals of the county redistricting board shall be advisory only, and shall not bind the board of county commissioners. No later than 60 days after submission of the county redistricting board's final report to the board of county commissioners, the board of county commissioners shall adopt a plan for redistricting the four county commission districts and three at-large county commission districts referenced in Section 3.01.