

Rhonda Garietz

From: Robert Dickerson [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2017 1:39 PM
To: Rhonda Garietz
Subject: Districting - Pass Along To Demographer -Part 2

Rhonda,

Thank you for being willing to be the conduit between the demographers and myself. Please pass along the following text and attachment. . .

To Whom It May Concern,

I have previously commented via email (March 10, 2016) on agenda item 5 of the March 7, 2016 Santa Maria City Council meeting (elicited input from the public regarding the formation of districts in anticipation of shifting to district-based elections). In addition, I submitted a written communication to the City Council regarding my belief that maintaining the Mayoral seat as an at-large elected position would be best for governance of the City. Please look to that communication for my reasoning in this matter.

Before the report is completed for the upcoming City Council session of April 4, I wanted to add two more comments for your consideration.

First, if you have not been made aware already, the downtown area of Santa Maria has been a matter of concern for revitalization for a number of years. A great deal of community and government time and resources have been spent in those regards. I believe that whatever configuration the districts end up taking are, every district needs to have a foot in the downtown specific area. In this way, all Council members will have a reason for working together to maintain a vital downtown. Should this not be the case, one could easily see a point where this very vital part of our City could fall to parochial district politics.

Lastly, I believe that as part of your report you will be taking into account current incumbent seats on the City Council and how they transition to the new district regime. In those regards, I foresee a potential issue that may arise. Let me give a specific potential scenario . . . Two of our City Council members (Boysen and Moats) live very close to one another and will most likely be in the same newly created district. Boysen's seat ends in 2018. Moats was just elected and his seat expires in 2020. So, with redistricting, Moats could decide to either run again for his newly created district's seat in 2018 (two years earlier than his seat would normally elapse) or term out in 2020 and wait until his district is up for re-election in 2022 and run at that time. Let's say, for the sake of the scenario, that Moats decides to run in 2018 and wins his district's seat. He would then take his district's seat and vacate his current seat - thus leaving a vacancy on the City Council. So, the question is, how will any potential vacancy that arises from this shifting to the district system in this sort of scenario be filled? Will there be a special election (and who would get to vote?) or would there be an appointment by the City Council for the two years remaining for the vacated seat?

I believe that as part of this transition to redistricting a structure for how this scenario would be handled should be decided on as part of the overall package. To not address this very possible scenario may create a very chaotic event shortly after each of the elections in 2018 and 2020 as we shift to the district system.

Sincerely,

Robert Dickerson
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