



Staff Report

Subject: Aldermanic Wards – Newly Annexed Areas

Department/Program: Administration

Explanation:

The City is currently in the process of annexing two subdivisions south of Big Bend – Cascades and Charleston Oaks. As we move forward in the annexation process, the City needs to determine which of our four Aldermanic wards the new subdivisions will be placed in.

The Cascades is located at the southeast corner of Ries and Big Bend. The northeast corner of Ries and Big Bend is located in Ward 1, making that the most likely ward for the Cascades based on geography. Charleston Oaks is located at the southwest corner of Ries and Big Bend. The northwest corner of Ries and Big Bend is located in Ward 4, making that the most likely ward for Charleston Oaks based on geography.

While geographic continuity is the primary factor in ward placement, there is case law dictating that there cannot be too large of a population discrepancy between wards. Specifically, the combined percentage of deviation of the most populous district and the percentage of deviation of the least populous district from the ideal district population may not exceed 10% and all other district populations must fall within that narrow range.

Therefore, we must also consider current and future ward populations to make a recommendation on placement of these subdivisions.

The current ward breakdown by population is as follows:

Ward 1: 7,762

Ward 2: 7,908

Ward 3: 8,007

Ward 4: 7,505

Using the above methodology, the “ideal” ward would consist of 7,795 residents. This is calculated by taking the City’s total population and dividing it by the number of wards. Our current least populous ward is Ward 4, which is 3.7% less populous than the “ideal” ward. Our current most populous ward is Ward 3, which is 2.7% more populous than the “ideal” ward. This gives us a total deviation of 6.4%, which is well within the 10% guideline established by the courts.

Now let's look at the ward breakdown if Cascades and Charleston Oaks were placed into Ward 1 and Ward 4, respectively. The current population of Cascades is 250 residents and Charleston Oaks is 271 residents. That would make the new ward breakdown as follows:

Ward 1: 8,012

Ward 2: 7,908

Ward 3: 8,007

Ward 4: 7,776

Under this proposal the new "ideal" ward would consist of 7,925 residents. Ward 4 would remain the least populous ward, however, would now be only 1.8% less populous than the "ideal" ward. Conversely, Ward 1 would become the most populous ward, which would be only 1% more populous than the "ideal" ward. The total deviation would become 2.8%, which would be an improvement over our current deviation and well under the 10% guideline established by the courts.

Lastly, if the City were to do future annexations south of Big Bend, it would make sense to continue to use Ries Road as the dividing line between the wards to prevent the ward deviation from becoming too large.

A copy of the proposed new map is enclosed for your review.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends the Board make a motion to include the Cascades subdivision in Ward 1 and the Charleston Oaks subdivision in Ward 4.

Submitted By: Eric Sterman

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