



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA REQUEST & STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: May 5, 2025

SUBJECT: Forming a Committee to Create Commissioner Districts

BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

Ballot Measure #9-173 passed in November 2024 which expands the County Commissioners to a five seat Board. The two new positions will be elected in 2026, for an initial two-year term which will begin in January 2027 and will be at-large seats. In previous Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) meetings in November 2024 and March 2025, the BOCC indicated interest in creating Commissioner Districts through a Ballot Measure process in place of having 5 at-large Commissioner Positions.

On March 31, 2025, the BOCC voted to move forward to develop a process to draft Commissioner Districts for voter consideration. The BOCC supports forming a committee to draw proposed district maps. The BOCC met on April 16, 2025, to discuss the options for selecting committee members. Staff presented several options including:

1. Local Appointments
2. State Home Rule Charter Committee Appointment Process
3. Civic Assembly/Application Process

During the April 16th discussion the BOCC indicated that they would like additional information on a Civic Assembly like process and specifically requested information on potential costs associated with implementing that option. The BOCC directed staff to provide further information on potential costs of using a Civic Assembly like process to select committee members.

Civic Assembly/Application Process/Hybrid:

Mailing Costs:

I solicited quotes from a local Direct Mail Specialist using three universes. 12,500 is the universe size that was used for the Youth Houselessness Civic Assembly, 84,000 is roughly the universe size of distinct addresses for all registered voters in Deschutes County, and 113,000 is roughly the number of all registered voters in Deschutes County.

The envelope mailing quotes include a postage paid return envelope with an estimate of

1,000 return mailings (I used the same number for all three universe sizes but would expect that number to vary depending on the mailing universe selected).

	Mailing Universe		
	12,500 (sample size of previous Civic Assembly)	84,000 (number of distinct addresses for all registered voters)	113,000 (registered voters in the County)
Envelope Mailing (with returned paid postage)	\$10,650	\$70,056	\$86,106
Postcard Mailing	\$7,396.25	\$43,663.20	\$58,737.40

Additional resources (estimated):

- Material development – 30 hours staff time
- Website development – 40 hours staff time
- Translation services: \$300

Sortition Process/Software:

I have been consulting with the County IT department on using sortition software. There is a free open source option available. IT would recommend conducting a security review before they would be comfortable recommending sortition software for the use of inputting data collected by the County.

There are organizations who provide sortition services, including the software and data input involved in the sortition process, for a professional fee.

Additional resources:

- Data input and processing: 50 hours staff time

Facilitation:

Estimated cost ranges between \$15,000 - \$75,000. The costs will vary depending on a variety of factors. Some options available include:

- Hiring a professional facilitation firm to lead the committee process
- Hiring a professional facilitator firm to support staff in material preparation for committee meetings and to moderate committee meetings
- Hiring a professional facilitator to only moderate committee meetings
- Engage with student trained facilitators who were involved in the Youth Assembly process (if they are available)
- Other

Example:

In 2020-2021 the City of Eugene held a lottery selected panel for a major planning project. The panel met 9 times from November - December 2020 to create the Guiding Principles and reconvened in February and April 2021 to review the City's progress. In total the panel met 15 times over the course of the project. The review panel was a partnership between the City of Eugene and Healthy Democracy and was funded in part by the City of Eugene (\$25,000) and in part by grants (\$35,000) for a total cost of \$65,000.

Other items for BOCC consideration for the committee selection process:

- Commissioner DeBone's proposal for committee nomination:
 - Each Commissioner appoint 3 members to the committee for a 9-member committee board
- Committee Size
 - BOCC has indicated support for a committee size between 11-19
- Engaging students from COCC and/or OSU-Cascades in the committee process?
 - Students were trained in facilitation and moderation for the Civic Assembly
 - OSU-Cascades – A laboratory for the American Conversation
 - COCC – Political Science department
- Timeline for announcing applications/appointments, deadline, and selection process
- Committee meeting facilitation
- Meeting schedule, including when to start
- Charter formation
 - Map drawing criteria
 - BOCC or Committee decision?
 - District map options – how many and who decides
 - BOCC or Committee decision?
 - District Numbering
 - BOCC or Committee decision?
 - 5 Districts or 4 and 1 at-large
- Public Input
 - Timing
 - Type of outreach
 - Public Hearing(s)

BUDGET IMPACTS:

\$12,000 has been budgeted for FY 2026 to complete the process.

ATTENDANCE:

Nick Lelack, County Administrator

Jen Patterson, Strategic Initiatives Manager

Information previously submitted for BOCC discussion and consideration:

Local Appointments Options (combination of any of the following)

- Cities
 - How many appointments?
 - Each city appoints 1 member or a weighted formula is created based on proportional voter population
 - The voting population data by city as of April 1, 2025:

City	Voting Population	Percent of Total Deschutes County Voting Population (163,826)
City of Bend	77,587	47%
City of La Pine	2,317	1%
City of Redmond	26,954	16%
City of Sisters	3,206	2%
Other	53,762	33%

- BOCC
 - How many appointments?
 - 3 = 1 each
 - 4 = 1 each plus 1 selected by majority vote of the BOCC
 - Other options
- State elected officials from Deschutes County
 - How many appointments?
 - 1 each
 - Proportional appointments based on voting population
 - Other
 - The voting population by office as of April 1, 2025:

State Senate				
Elected Official	District	Deschutes County Representation	Voting Population (Deschutes County Only)	Percent of Total Deschutes County Voting Population (163,826)
Senator Broadman	27	All	113,120	69%
Senator Linthicum	28	Partial	29,263	18%
Senator McLane	30	Partial	21443	13%
State House				
Elected Official	District	Deschutes County Representation	Voting Population (Deschutes County Only)	Percent of Total Deschutes County Voting Population (163,826)
Rep. E. Levy	53	All	58746	36%
Rep. Kropf	54	All	54374	33%
Rep. Reschke	55	Partial	29263	18%

Rep. Breese Iverson	59	Partial	21387	13%
Rep. Owens	60	Fraction	56	0%

- At large appointments by citizen applications
 - How many appointments?
- Other
- Recommended Timeline
 - Appointment nominations due by May 30th
 - Appointments confirmed during June 16th BOCC meeting
- Budget Impact
 - If appointment only, no budget impact anticipated
 - If application process, costs involved could include translation services for notices and print advertising costs (potentially)

State Home Rule Charter Committee Appointment Process (9 member committee)

- BOCC Appoints 4 members
 - 4 = 1 each plus 1 selected by majority vote of the BOCC
 - 4 selected by majority vote of the BOCC
 - Other
- State Senators and State Representatives representing the County appoint 4 members
 - Please refer to the chart of listed state elected officials above
 - 1 each by elected officials that have majority representation in the County (Senator Broadman, Rep. Levy, and Rep. Kropf) and 1 combined by the remaining elected who have partial representation in the County (Senator Linthicum, Senator McLane, Rep. Reschke, Rep. Breese Iverson, and Rep. Owens)
 - Other
- BOCC appointees and State Senator/Representatives appointees combined appoint 1 member
 - For state elected officials - weighted nominations based on voting population represented or each puts forth a nomination
 - BOCC – each put forth a nomination or selected by majority vote of the BOCC
 - All parties vote on nominations and top vote gets the nomination
 - Other
- Recommended Timeline
 - Appointment nominations due by May 30th
 - Appointments confirmed during June 16th BOCC meeting
- Budget Impact
 - No budget impact anticipated

Civic Assembly/Application Process/Hybrid

Background: In the Fall of 2024 a Civic Assembly was formed in Deschutes County with the intent of having a group of demographically represented citizens come together and present a large range of recommendations on a complicated issue (Youth Homelessness).

Forming a committee with one set goal (drawing Commissioner district maps) has unique considerations and the process for the formation of the Civic Assembly may not be entirely compatible with forming a district maps committee. However, staff believe that there were some great processes in place for the formation of the Civic Assembly that could potentially be adapted and implemented to form a district maps committee.

- Engage Josh Burgess with Democracy Next in the process?
 - Josh may be available to conduct some light consulting work on the process
- Advertise on social and traditional media platforms to solicit applications
 - Use a QR code for easy access to application process
 - Reverse process of demographic representation?
 - The assembly sent out targeted mailing using software that selected 12,500 registered voters who were demographically represented and invited those selected to apply to participate on the assembly
 - County could cast a wide net of applications and potentially use software to randomly select a demographically represented group for application review and committee selection
- Costs
 - Assembly paid a stipend to participants as well as offered reimbursements for childcare and transportation
 - Stipend for Committee members?
 - A consideration for the BOCC for committee members whether the committee is formed through an assembly, nomination, or application process
 - Total cost of the assembly was \$250,000, currently the County has \$12,000 budgeted for the district map process
- Meeting schedule
 - The assembly met for 5 days for 8 hours a day
 - Staff propose a meeting schedule that takes place over the course of 8-12 weeks, 1-2 times a week, 2-hour meetings each
- Timeline
 - The assembly required at least 6 months of prep work before the meetings began
 - Please refer to the PowerPoint from the March 31, 2025, BOCC meeting for a draft timeline assuming the ballot measure is on the May 2026 election
- If application option is part or all of any option then:
 - Who selects the applicants?
 - Blind (redacted identifying information) application review?
 - Rating system for applications?
 - Commissioners, staff, representatives from cities/communities, and/or others involved in the application review?
 - Other?

- Online application option?