



For Immediate Release

November 3, 2021

Smith County Commissioners Court Adopts Redistricting Plan

The Smith County Commissioners Court voted unanimously Tuesday, November 2, to adopt the final redistricting plan that establishes new boundaries for the County Commissioners Court Precinct lines based on the 2020 Census data.

After holding two workshops and three public hearings, in which the Commissioners Court discussed several options, the court agreed with the new boundaries that will affect only the Commissioners Court precinct lines. It will not affect the precinct lines for constables or justices of the peace. The court worked with the law firm Bickerstaff Heath Delgado Acosta, LLP, of Austin, to help them through the Constitutionally-mandated redistricting process.

The plan includes changes in Commissioner Precinct boundary lines on the west and east sides of Smith County and leaves the County with an 8.04 percent deviation from the largest populated precinct to the smallest.

By law, the deviation from the most populous precinct to the least populous precinct must be lower than a 10 percent difference to be in compliance with the Fourteenth Amendment so that everyone's vote counts equally. The idea is to have as close to equal population as possible.

The redrawn boundaries give Precinct 4 a "substantial land mass" to Precinct 4 from Precinct 1 on the west side of the County, Smith County Judge Nathaniel Moran said. It also gives some land and population, as well as about 32 miles of road, to Precinct 2 from Precinct 3, on the east side of Smith County, he added.

The redrawn map can be found at: www.smith-county.com/government/elected-officials/commissioners-court/county-seat-coalition/redistricting

The 2020 U.S. Census data shows that Smith County grew from 209,714 people in 2010, to 233,479 people in 2020 – an 11.33 percent increase. Some portions of Smith County have grown more than others, leaving Precinct 1 the largest, with 64,780 residents, and Precinct 4 the smallest, with 52,238 people. That made Precinct 1 overpopulated by 11 percent and Precinct 4 underpopulated by 10.5 percent.

With the approved plan, Precinct 1 will be giving up three voting precincts -- 44, 48 and 65 -- to Precinct 4. These three voting precincts have a combined population of 8,470 people, and spans from Lake Placid Road in Flint to the Tyler Airport on U.S. Highway 64 West. A portion of that territory is not heavily populated so it takes a large piece of property.

Precinct 4 Commissioner JoAnn Hampton said the court did what was necessary to make sure the populations within the precincts met the required standards. “I’m good with it,” she said of the addition to her precinct.

Precinct 1 Commissioner Neal Franklin said the plan made the most sense.

Precinct 3, which currently has 61,259 people, will give some of its territory to Precinct 2, which has a current population of 55,202 people.

Commissioner Precinct 3 will give his voting precinct 22, near Tyler Junior College, as well as part of voting precinct 10 and voting precinct 32, which covers the Chapel Hill area, to Commissioner Precinct 2. The new boundary for Precinct 2 would go north of Chapel Hill to Farm-to-Market Road 850, north of Highway 64.

Precinct 3 Commissioner Terry Phillips and Precinct 2 Commissioner Cary Nix said they were each fine with the plan.

Moran made clear that although the effective date of the new boundaries is not until January 1, 2023, for representation purposes, both candidates and voters will use the newly drawn boundaries for the 2022 Primary and General Elections.