

Good evening,

Fellow board members thank you for honoring my request to have the BOC expansion agenda item moved to tonight. Unfortunately, when doing so I did not realize I would not be able to attend to participate in the discussion, therefore I'm submitting my comments in writing.

I think everyone agrees and believes that a representative form of government is essential to have one's voice heard. We currently do not have a true representative government and a board expansion will not fix it especially if done on an at large basis.

I see no need for a board expansion and the reasons presented to this point do nothing to change my mind.

Of the meetings I've attended, the only reasons given so far were from 2 people who happen to be potential candidates and are engaging others for support of this idea.

Reason stated were:

- 1- "There is an imbalance in the number of people in the districts".

This is a true statement but not really an issue. This is due to some areas growing faster than others since the last redistricting. The districts will be rebalanced when they are redrawn after a census.

- 2- They said "redrawing makes some districts smaller and others larger".

Again, true. However, it is not a big issue because the districts are balanced by population regardless of geographical size.

- 3- One stated "The board has so much to do and more commissioners are needed to get the work done".

We should remember the BOC is a policy making board and more commissioners would not mean less work. The same level of involvement is required by all the commissioners in the process of policy making.

The staff carries out the implementation of the policies. If we are wanting to reduce someone's work load it should be done with staff increases. The only reason for additional commissioners would be to micro manage the daily activities of the staff, which I think would be a huge mistake.

Another point is that true district voting could actually reduce commissioner work load. A commissioner would be expected to be responsible for and focus on the issues of their district rather than the entire county. There would be fewer people to interact with and a smaller area to cover in order to better understand your constituents and their needs.

- 4- The proposal states “two at large seats will give more flexibility to drawing the district lines”.

This isn't correct because the district lines are redrawn based on an effort to keep population in each district as close as possible. Two at large would not change that structure and would result in no flexibility.

Between census years the population in each district gets off and there is no way to avoid it. Two at large will not fix this or affect the district size.

- 5- It was said that “Siler City and Pittsboro would have more of a voice”.

Well what about Goldston? Why are they left out? Each municipality has its own government responsible to the citizens in its jurisdiction.

Actually, Siler City has two commissioners to represent them because it is split by two districts. The problem is, those two seats are or can be controlled by the larger voting block which is outside the district area. If you want true representation we should be looking at district voting rather than at large seats.

I would like the towns to have a voice. Let's look at the facts for support of Siler City, Goldston and Pittsboro:

- 1- 1st Cam site option \$540,000
- 2- 2nd Cam site option \$125,000
- 3- Cam site certification cost \$124,000.00
- 4- Siler City WWTP allocation \$750,000
- 5- Cam site shovel test cost \$50,000
- 6- Airport \$120,000
- 7- A negotiated water deal for Siler City to get 1 million per day of water from Sanford
- 8- County has applied for a \$1.2 million grant for Siler City WWTP improvement
- 9- Business park development \$8,890,000

Additionally

- 1- Water & Sewer Master plan for municipalities \$90,000
- 2- Pittsboro Town Hall \$450,000
- 3- Pittsboro water line \$78,000
- 4- Goldston Sewer project \$5 million
- 5- Funded closing of septic tanks for the town of Goldston \$181,000.00
- 6- Recreation support for towns \$66,000.00/ yr.

This doesn't include funds for other communities like the Moncure mega site.

The towns and county boards work together very well and should continue to do so for good of the citizens. We don't need to let individuals with an agenda for personal gain mess up a working model.

It is inconceivable to believe a district of people can be properly represented with an at large candidate or even a local candidate when confirmed by county wide voting rather than district voting. This is a form of at large already. On those basis the larger voting block of people will always determine the winning candidate of a district, not necessarily the voters of that district.

There have been several cases where a candidate has won his district (the people he is supposed to represent) only to lose the race because of county wide voting.

In fact, I've seen a candidate win the majority of precincts in our county and lose based on one or two precincts because of county wide voting.

If you want true representation, there should be one vote per district by a representative from that district confirmed only by the voters of that district.

I see no need for additional BOC members and I can support nothing other than district voting even if additional members were added.

If you want true representation that gives each area a voice then advocate for true district voting.

Thank you,
Walter Petty
Chatham County Commissioner
District 5