

A voice vote was taken.

Motion carried.

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE -- BOARD MEMBER JACOBS --REPORTING

31. Board Member Jacobs moved to waive the reading and approve the resolution for a proposed referendum question for the April 9, 2013 Consolidated General Election that asks "Shall the County of Rock Island maintain single member districts?" This is to provide additional direction to the Board as well as to help alleviate misinformation and confusion on the existing question on the ballot regarding possible reduction in board members. Board Member Banaszek seconded.

Rock Island County Board
Resolution

Re: Placement of the Question of Single Member Districts
Before the Voters of Rock Island County

WHEREAS, Rock Island County is a non-home rule County; and

WHEREAS, every ten years during reapportionment, Counties have the opportunity to determine if County Board Members shall be elected to single member or multi-member districts; and

WHEREAS, Rock Island County has historically chosen single member districts to ensure that all citizens have representation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the County Board of the County of Rock island, Illinois that the following public question be submitted to the voters of the County of Rock Island at the consolidated general election to be held on April 9, 2013, or the next available election should the ballot be full:

Shall the County of Rock Island maintain
Single member districts?

Yes
 No

Adopted this 16th day of October, 2012.

Board Member Johnston was recognized.

Mr. Johnston stated, "The citizens have a resolution on the November ballot and I think we should see how this comes out. I personally, would like to see a smaller Board, but shouldn't we wait to see what happens with this one first? This one isn't until April. In my view, I think we should wait for the proper time to put this on."

Board Member Johnston stated, "If they went to a single district, there would be a little over 10,000 people in each district and very little representation for either end of the County."

Mr. Johnston stated, "Like I said, I disagree with the 3 districts...I can see a smaller Board, but you know the way it is...if we go the way we are pretty soon the State of Illinois will have 10,000 districts. City Councils are smaller, County Boards are smaller, the State Representatives have larger areas and so do US Senators. It's not the numbers of people, it's how it's being lined up to be. That's my view."

Board Meersman was recognized.

Mr. Meersman stated, "My feelings about this are twofold, the federal government on down with the exception of our US Senators, are delegated to districts and are elected by the people in their districts. Our cities are Aldermanic, our school districts are elected "At Large" and that can relate to having all the membership from that one geographic area making decisions for the majority of the populous. I think the community would rather have one Board Member per district; whether it be 25 districts or 15 districts, it should be one per district. I think that is what people deserve and that's what we should follow."

Mr. Jacobs stated, "See if you take Cordova to Hampton 1, that would move 6,000 people but would never elect one of those if you don't live in that district. If you take Muscatine to Milan, that's 14, 000 people. Coal Valley has over 4,000 people. How would they ever have representation if you don't have the single districts? It's advisory anyway."

Board Member McColl was recognized.

Mr. McColl stated, "I have two things here. The first thing that comes to mind is sizes that people represent. I hate to use Cook County as an example, but each person represents 300,000 people. So where is the representation in that? That's my first point. My second point is...there is no area specific for votes. We keep talking about representation but everything we vote on is for everyone in Rock Island County. We have 10 Board Members from the City of Moline. Ten of the 25, so is Moline getting more representation than the outlying districts? Say a person leaves for a couple of months and they are not available. They have a list of people they have to call to get the questions answered they need."

Mr. Jacobs replied, "You can't take Cook County, its way different in size."

Mr. McColl stated, "Yes, but that's 300,000 people per person. Where is the representation for that?"

Board Member Rockwell was recognized.

Mr. Rockwell stated, "The point is we vote on issues for all of Rock Island County is true, but the implementation of those decisions is what you are missing. Normally, we use Scott County, IA as an example. They have 5 Commissioners over there and all live within one mile from each other and all live in the City of Davenport and just like us, they vote for all of Scott County. The decisions might be the same, but there is no representation for any of the rural outer areas of Scott County. I think the diversity and the input from those areas in Rock Island County is important so that we can reach a decision that we can all live with even though we vote the same way. I drive a County road to work every day. You probably don't drive a County road at all...and if I don't speak up about my position regarding County roads and those I represent that drive on County roads, then I don't know how we can fully represent all of Rock Island County if we go into a system where minority areas are not represented with these types of issues."

Board Member Freeman was recognized.

Mr. Freeman stated, "I am going to vote in favor of this resolution because the representatives can advise us...it's advisory."

Mr. Jacobs stated, "Everyone should take into consideration that Rock Island County is 459 square miles. The cities of Silvis, Moline, East Moline and Rock Island make up 57 square miles. All the rest is County Government."

Mr. Meersman stated, "We just moments ago, we approved spending close to \$1,000,000 dollars to repair our County roads...if we are elected at large, representation could be jeopardized. I live in the City of Moline, the school board has 7 members and their budget is almost \$50 million more than Rock Island County and yet not one person could name a school board member's name. They have trusted this money to 7 people that the rest of us can't even name. So if an elected at large system works so well, I fail to see it in this situation."

Board Member Langdon was recognized.

Mr. Langdon stated, "I asked people that signed that petition if they knew about the County Board reduction question and that it was going to be 3 districts with 5 members. So I explained it to them and they were upset about it. They didn't explain it to the people signing the petition what this means."

Mr. Johnston stated, "I just have one quick point to make, this doesn't make any sense it is just confusing. I am for keeping single districts but it's the timing of doing this resolution at this time. That's my feeling."

Mr. McColl stated, "Mr. Meersman stated earlier that he was knocking on doors asking people if they knew the names of their school board members...I have been knocking on doors too and most people have no idea who their County Board Members are except for in my case, some have recognized my picture from being in the paper a few times. Honestly, people really do not know what the County Board does, what the Budget is or where the money goes. And I tried to explain that to the folks in Rock Island County."

Board Member Banaszek was recognized.

Mr. Banaszek stated, "You can take that and apply it to the city alderman, township officials it doesn't matter. There are many people that don't know who their elected officials are or what they do. The Rock Island County Farm Bureau found it important enough to come against this Referendum because they know they will be short-changed if it passes."

Board Member Westpfahl was recognized.

Mr. Westpfahl stated, "You are talking about my district. I am their link to the County. My people don't want to lose their representation...they just don't want to do it. The roads, we have more county roads than anyone else. We have the Forest Preserve out there. In Drury Township, the Sheriff's Department is the only link to the outside world."

Chairman Bohnsack asked, "Do they know who you are?"

Mr. Westpfahl replied, "Oh YEAH, they know who I am!"

A voice vote was taken.

Mr. McColl votes No.

Mr. Johnston & Mr. Langdon Abstained.

Motion carried.

32. Board Member Jacobs moved to approve the Governmental Affairs Committee Report. Board Member Westpfahl seconded. (Record)

A voice vote was taken.

Motion carried.