



FROM THE DESK OF
Wayne McDaniel
HARDIN COUNTY JUDGE

October 8, 2021

Statement from Judge Wayne McDaniel on Redistricting in Hardin County:

The numbers from the 2020 Census are in! They are much later than expected, like so many other things due to the pandemic. With that said, all Counties are bound by the Texas Constitution to look at redistricting after the Census, just like our State Legislature is doing right now, and Hardin County is beginning this process as well.

The 2020 Census reports Hardin County gained 2.9% in our population since the last accounting in 2020, up from 54,635 to 56,231. We retained the firm Allison, Bass & Magee, L.L.P. to assist us in examining the data and developing a redistricting plan for Hardin County. Texas Law allows a deviation in Commissioners Precincts of up to 10% before we are required to redraw boundaries, and we are up, in total, by 19.11%. If you saw the October 4th Special Meeting of Commissioners Court, you've heard this already through the presentation by Mr. Robert T. "Bob" Bass. If you are interested in the details, I encourage you to watch the recording of that meeting. Like all Commissioners Court meetings, it is available on the County website and my official Facebook page.

Allison, Bass & Magee will also assist us with lawfully redrawing boundaries, which will redistrict some Hardin County citizens into a different Commissioner and/or Voting Precinct than they are currently in so we are following State Law, and providing the best representation to the citizens we serve. Mr. Bass also brought up that it is common practice in the State of Texas to have Justice of the Peace / Constable Precinct boundaries drawn the same as the Commissioner Precinct boundaries in Counties with similar or larger populations (such as Orange County with a current population of 83,572).

Our JP/Constable Precincts are currently not the same as the Commissioner Precincts as we have two more JP/Constable Precincts than Commissioner Precincts. If we match the JP/Constable Precincts to the Commissioners Precincts, two fewer JP/Constable positions and staff will be required. Should this occur through redistricting, any holdover JP or Constable will remain in Office as a JP or Constable At-large through the remainder of his/her Term, and will be eligible to run for re-election in the Precinct where they reside, pursuant to Texas Constitution, Article 5, Section 18.

While I have not made any decision concerning redistricting of the JP/Constable Precincts, I intend to explore the option and weigh the pros and cons of doing so before voting on a redistricting plan in the coming months. As a former Constable myself who worked closely with my JP, the late W.W. "Butch" Cummings, in the busiest JP/Constable Precinct of the County, I know what it takes to handle both jobs, and will keep that in mind as I deliberate my decision as to whether it is feasible to redistrict the JP/Constable Precincts, or not.

Regardless of my decision, I want the citizens of Hardin County to know that I adamantly oppose any movement to "defund the police" and, although some will say that downsizing our JP/Constable staff would equate to such, I disagree - I fully support each and every Law Enforcement Officer in and around Hardin County, and I greatly appreciate the job they do each and every day!