

BOARD MEMBERS: Douglas J. Preisse, Chairman ★ Michael F. Colley, Esq. ★ Zachary E. Manifold ★ Kimberly E. Marinello

DIRECTOR: William A. Anthony, Jr. DEPUTY DIRECTOR: Matthew M. Damschroder

For Immediate Release
June 24, 2010

Board of Elections Consolidates Voting Precincts

(Columbus) The Franklin County Board of Elections has voted to consolidate some of the county's 864 elections precincts, a move that will save tax dollars without changing voting locations.

The approved changes will be made at voting locations with more than one precinct and reduce 123 precincts to 61. The switch will save the county an estimated \$198,250 through 2010, money that would have been used to hire and train poll workers.

"Absentee ballots accounted for more than 45 percent of the votes cast in the May primary and more than 55 percent in the presidential election," said board Director William J. Anthony, Jr. "We don't need as many precincts open on the day of the election because nearly half of our voters are casting ballots weeks earlier by mail or in person at our office."

"Our touch screen voting machines allow us to put the ballot styles for all voters in a location, regardless of precinct, onto the same voting machine so there is no longer a need for ultra small precincts with uniquely assigned voting machines based upon voting districts," added Deputy Director Matt Damschroder. "The election precinct, as it has traditionally been understood, is going the way of the dinosaur because of absentee voting and the efficiency of newer technologies."

The board split on a second proposal to eliminate 59 of 188 other precincts. Republicans advocated for the plan based on the estimated savings of an additional \$236,000 through 2012. Democrats were not opposed to most of the proposed boundary amendments, but wanted time to review them and had grave concerns with moving some voters to new polling locations four months before the general elections in November... The second proposal will be submitted in early July to Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner for a tie breaking vote.

Both consolidation plans are posted for public review at <http://vote.franklincountyohio.gov>

Media Contact:
Ben Piscitelli
Franklin County Board of Elections
(614) 462-5351
bjpiscit@franklincountyohio.gov

