

RESOLUTION NO. 16181

A RESOLUTION of the Thurston County Board of Commissioners for the submission to the voters of Thurston County at the November 8, 2022, general election, a proposition authorizing the increase of the Board of County Commissioners from three commissioners to five commissioners, setting forth the ballot proposition and directing the Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners to transmit to the Thurston County Auditor a certified copy of this Resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of County Commissioners of Thurston County, State of Washington, does resolve as follows:

Section 1. Findings and Determinations. The following recitals are hereby adopted as legislative findings and determinations made by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC):

a. Pursuant to RCW 36.32.055(1) the board of commissioners of a non-charter county with a population of three hundred thousand or more, and less than four hundred thousand, may cause a ballot proposition to be submitted at a general election to the voters of the county authorizing the board of commissioners to be increased to five members.

b. On June 30, 2022, the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OGM) released updated population numbers confirming that Thurston County has a population of three hundred thousand or more, and less than four hundred thousand.

c. The BOCC believes it is in the best interest of the citizens to submit a ballot proposition to the voters to decide whether or not to expand the BOCC from three to five members.

d. If the ballot proposition receives majority voter approval, RCW 36.32.055(1) authorizes that the size of the BOCC shall be increased to five members as follows:

(1) The two newly created positions, position four and position five, shall be filled at elections to be held in the next year, 2023.

(2) The County shall be divided into five commissioner districts, so that each district shall comprise, as nearly as possible, one-fifth of the population of the County. No two members of the existing BOCC may, at the time of the designation of such districts, permanently reside in one of the five districts.

e. The division of the County into five districts shall be accomplished as follows:

(1) The BOCC shall, by no later than March 13, 2023, adopt a resolution creating the districts.

(2) If, by March 13, 2023, the BOCC has failed to create the districts, the prosecuting attorney of the County shall petition the Thurston County Superior

Court to appoint a referee to designate the five commissioner districts. The referee shall designate such districts no later than June 1st of the year following the election. The two commissioner districts within which no existing member of the BOCC permanently resides shall be designated as districts four and five.

Section 2. Authorization of a Ballot Title to Increase the Number of County Commissioners from Three to Five. The BOCC directs the submission of a proposition to the voters of the County substantially as set forth in this Resolution, to authorize the County to increase the BOCC from three to five members and divide the County into five Commissioner Districts pursuant to RCW 36.32.055.

Section 3. Calling of Election. The BOCC requests the Thurston County Auditor, as ex officio supervisor of elections in Thurston County, Washington, to call and conduct a general election in the County, in the manner provided by law, to be held therein on November 8, 2022, for the purpose of submitting to the voters of the County, for their approval or rejection, the question of whether the members of the BOCC shall be increased from three to five Commissioners. If such proposition is approved by the requisite number of voters, the County shall be authorized to increase the number of Commissioners from three to five, divide the County into five Commissioner Districts, and call for a subsequent election to elect two additional Commissioners as authorized by this Resolution.

Section 4. Ballot Proposition.

a. The Clerk of the BOCC is authorized and directed to certify, no later than July 29, 2022, to the Thurston County Auditor, as ex officio supervisor of elections in Thurston County, a copy of this Resolution and the proposition to be submitted at that election in the form of a ballot title prepared by the Prosecuting Attorney substantially in the form as set forth below, as required by RCW 29A.36.071, as follows:

PROPOSITION NO. 1
THURSTON COUNTY BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

The Thurston County Board of Commissioners passed Resolution No. 16181 concerning a proposition to increase the number of Thurston County Board of Commissioners. This proposition would increase the number of commissioners of the Board of County Commissioners from three (3) commissioners to five (5) commissioners who will serve in five separate newly created districts. Should this proposition be approved?

Yes
No

b. For purposes of receiving notice of any matters related to the ballot title, as provided in RCW 29A.36.080, the BOCC hereby designates its County Manager as the person to whom such notice shall be provided.

Section 5. Qualified Voters. The persons entitled to vote on the above-mentioned

proposition shall be those registered voters within the boundaries of Thurston County.

Section 6. Required Affirmative Vote for Passage. If the aforementioned proposition receives majority voter approval, the size of the County Commissioners shall be increased to five members.

Section 7. General Authorization. The proper County officials are authorized to perform such duties as are necessary or required by law to put the question of whether or not the increase of the number of Board Commissioners shall be submitted to the voters. Should the voters approve this ballot proposition, and a similar ballot proposition put forth by the Port of Olympia, the BOCC shall work collaboratively with the Port of Olympia Commission, per Joint Resolution No. 2021-11, to draw the new Commissioners boundaries by forming a three-member redistricting committee, including the Chair of the County Commission, Chair of the Port Commission and the County Auditor. Each time the three-member redistricting committee meets, a special meeting notice shall be posted in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act (OMPA). Each the BOCC and the Port Commission shall take separate legislative actions to approve the newly created districts. If the Port of Olympia ballot proposition does not pass, the redistricting committee may recommend the Port Commission to abstain from approving the newly created districts.

Section 8. Authorization for Publication and Distribution of Local Voters' Pamphlet. In accord with RCW 29A.32.210, the BOCC authorizes the publication and distribution by the Thurston County Auditor of a Local Voters' Pamphlet for the foregoing ballot proposition at a general election to be conducted on November 8, 2022.

Section 9. Should the voters in Thurston County approve this Proposition, the County Manager is directed to bring forward to the BOCC, an ordinance establishing the five new county commissioner districts in consultation with the Prosecutors Office within three-months after November 8, 2022.

Section 10. Severability. If any provision of this Resolution is declared by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, then such provision shall be null and void and shall be severable from the remaining provisions of this Resolution and shall in no way affect the validity of the other provisions of this Resolution.

Section 11. Effective Date. This Resolution shall take effect and be in full force immediately upon passage and publication as provided by law.

ADOPTED this ___ day of _____, 2022.

ATTEST:

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
Thurston County, Washington

Clerk of the Board

Carolina Mejia, Chair

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

JON TUNHEIM
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

Tye Menser, Vice Chair

By: *Elizabeth Petrich*
Elizabeth Petrich
Chief Civil Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

Gary Edwards, Member