

County Commissioner Elections

For many months, Citizens For Change, a local, non-partisan, activist organization, has been working to change the way our county commissioners are elected. As it stands now, they are elected county-wide and it costs a small fortune to mount a campaign. Also, for years, the majority of our commissioners have resided in the city which makes our county government run by city residents. On the other hand, city government requires their council members to live in the city, so it seems only fitting that our county government should require the commissioners to live in the county among the people they represent. We believe the only fair way to do this is by districts, not county wide. We elect our US congressional representatives, our state senators and our state representatives by districts and it works.

Citizens For Change proposes that we elect our commissioners by school district boundaries. The number of commissioners would increase from 5 to 7 as there are that many school districts in the counties Erwin, Enka, North Buncombe, Owen, Reynolds, Roberson and Asheville. No one would run county-wide and the elected commissioners would choose the chairman from their ranks. The chairman would serve no more than two years and then a new chairman would be chosen. This would allow fresh, new ideas to always be an option.

Citizens For Change proposes that the school district boundaries be the method to elect the commissioners. The lines are already drawn and would never be changed at the whim of some elected official. Each district would have one representative with the chairman coming from and representing each district over time. At present there are areas in the county that have NEVER been represented by a commissioner.

A candidate would only need to campaign in his/her district, cutting the cost to just a fraction of what it costs to run at this time. There are many good, conservative people in our county, who would make excellent commissioners, but they can't afford the obscene costs of campaigning. Electing by districts would give us better representation and make campaigning affordable.

The commissioners themselves can change the election process or the legislators can do it for them. It is up to us, NO ONE ELSE, to make our wishes known to both branches of our local government. Citizens For Change has a petition asking for the change and we need your help getting signatures. We ask you to attend one of our monthly meetings, held on the first Monday in the month, at Shoney's Restaurant in Enka, 6:00 pm. You will be able to pick up a petition and information there or call 683-3701 or 253-5709 and we will send you one.

*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.
Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.*
Margaret Mead