

County can afford change that comes with ballot measures

That only three commissioners would govern Jackson County was decided in 1853 when the territorial census counted only 1,506 humans (ignoring Native Americans) and 930 white male voters.

The County Administrator's overstatement of the cost to increase the board to five needs critical analysis and context. For example, the county is building a \$62 million multi-use pandemic response center which will be completed a year before the five commissioners take their seats. Design that facility to accommodate the two days of Budget Committee hearings per year and you don't need to blow \$30,000 on remodeling the auditorium.

New commissioners are likely to be younger and more tech-savvy, thus more self-sufficient and efficient. The County Administrator's support staff plan may be unnecessary. He explained that he took the FY24-25 budget currently being compiled (which the public has not yet seen), described as approaching three-quarters of a billion dollars — that's \$750,000,000 — and adjusted it to reflect five commissioners. His base case of \$200,000 is a mere 0.027% of that number.

His higher-priced scenarios only ratify the need to pass all three measures to restructure the board. In November he reported \$126,393,951 unreserved in the general fund. According to the current budget, three commissioners cost \$983,530 /year, \$327,843 per commissioner.

According to the county administrator, with passage of the measures, we get five commissioners for only \$236,706 each. We should take advantage of those economies of scale.

We really can afford better government by passing the Jackson County For All measures.

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