

Minutes of the
MAG Management Subcommittee on 2005 Population Options
Monday, February 10, 2003
Cholla Room

Members

George Pettit, Gilbert, Chairman
*Charlie McClendon, Avondale
Prisila Ferreira, Peoria

Norris Nordvold, Phoenix
Jim Huling, Mesa
*Patrick Flynn, Tempe

Others in Attendance

**Harry Wolfe, MAG
**Susan Lavin, Census Bureau, Denver
**Mark Hellfritz, Census Bureau, Denver
**Dennis Johnson, Census Bureau, Denver

**Ron Dopkowski, Census Bureau,
Headquarters
**Dennis Schwanz, Census Bureau
Headquarters
**Richard Ning, Census Bureau,
Headquarters

* Not present nor represented by proxy

** Participated via audioconference

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m. by Jim Huling.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes of January 3, 2003

It was moved by Jim Huling, seconded by Prisila Ferreira and unanimously recommended to approve the meeting minutes of January 3, 2003.

3. Revised Survey Cost Estimate

Ron Dopkowski indicated that the Census Bureau prepared nine draft cost estimates for conducting a Census survey. The cost estimates were for confidence intervals of 95 percent +or-2 95 percent +or-1 and 99 percent +or-2; and each confidence interval was prepared under three different mailback response rates: 50, 60 and 65 percent.

Mr. Dopkowski explained that the cost estimate omitted two components: the sampling operation and the group quarter count.

Richard Ning commented that the cost of advertising may be underestimated based upon

input received from the Census Bureau's Denver regional office.

Susan Lavin said that based upon the response rate in the 2000 decennial census in Maricopa County (a little less than 60 percent) and the response rate for the 2000 American Community Survey (a little less than 50 percent), the response rates identified may be overly optimistic. She suggested assuming a response rate of 40 percent to be safe.

Dennis Schwanz commented that response rate from the 2000 decennial census included the long form; and the American Community Survey was also a long-form, which tend to have a lower response rate than the short form that would be used in the 2005 Census survey. Thus using these response rates as a predictor of the response rate to the 2005 Census survey might not be accurate.

Norris Nordvold asked why the cost of conducting a survey with the 99 percent +or-2 percent, was so much higher than 95 percent +or-1 percent. Dennis Schwanz responded that the 95 percent +or-1% had a lower rate of error (.4 percent) than the 99 percent + or - 1 percent (.8 percent)

Jim Huling asked how soon the Census Bureau could come up with a cost estimate for the sampling operation. Ron Dopkowski responded that the Census Bureau could provide it sometime this week. He said he would wait on the group quarters estimate for further direction from the Subcommittee.

Harry Wolfe noted that it was the desire of the Subcommittee to undertake a complete count of population in group quarters. Ron Dopkowski asked if MAG had a database a group quarters. Harry Wolfe said he would look into the matter.

Susan Lavin asked whether MAG intended to have a homeless count as a part of the group quarter enumeration. Harry Wolfe indicated that he thought there was a separate effort going on with involvement by the MAG human services division to do a homeless count. He said he would look into the matter.

Prisila Ferreira noted that there was a homeless enumeration in both the 1985 and 1995 Special Census, although there were concerns over the accuracy of the count.

Jim Huling asked for the cost of doing the survey assuming 95 percent confidence interval + or - one percent. Ron Dopkowski said that the estimate was 11.2 million. This is in comparison with a \$30 million cost of a Special Census.

Ron Dopkowski pointed out that the cost for conducting a survey was an estimate and could change.

George Pettit asked if the survey cost included the cost of additional questions that would be helpful to FHWA. Harry Wolfe responded that if there were only one question, there probably would not be an additional cost for the survey. Dennis Schwanz added that he assumed that the question was not open ended and had income ranges.

George Pettit asked whether the \$30 million cost estimate for conducting a Special Census was firm. Harry Wolfe explained that the cost estimate had been derived by taking the Census Bureau's 2000 Census costs and inflating them to 2005, assuming increased wage rates. He noted that the Special Census Office of the Census Bureau indicated that they could not provide a more precise estimate than the \$30 million at this time.

Prisila Ferreira asked if the cost was in current dollars. Harry Wolfe responded that the costs were in current dollars; that they were inflated to 2005 dollars using the inflation factor that ADOT uses.

4. Legislation

Norris Nordvold inquired about the language in the proposed state legislation. He noted that it made reference to a survey generating housing stock, persons per household and vacancy rates; and that DES would use these inputs to derive our population count.

Harry Wolfe said that the Census Bureau had indicated that a resident population figure would be supplied through the survey and indicated that he believed modifying the language in the state legislation to require the use of the resident population resulting from the survey would be desirable.

Susan Lavin asked for clarification on the proposed legislation. She said that her reading of the bill did not have any population threshold that would trigger the requirement to conduct a survey. Harry Wolfe responded that the language in the bill was different from the legislation for the 1995 population count. Jim Huling added that the wording in the bill was designed to give all cities the option to do a survey, a Special Census, or use an estimate.

Mr. Wolfe noted that the current legislation also called for a July 1, 2005 population figure, and questioned whether that would require an adjustment to the October 1, 2005 survey result to July 1, 2005. He said that such an adjustment could be made by deducting the number of housing units constructed between July 1, 2005 and September 30, 2005 from the housing stock and then applying an occupancy rate and persons per household to derive a July 1, 2005 population. He noted, however, that in 1995 MAG was able to use the output from the October Special Census for distributing state-shared revenues without any adjustment to July 1, 2005.

Norris Nordvold asked whether the language should be modified to also include or make reference to a homeless count. Jim Huling indicated that inserting such specialized language could create problems for a statewide bill.

Harry Wolfe pointed out two other potential modifications to the proposed legislation: specifying a minimum confidence interval for a survey; and allowing jurisdictions that weren't satisfied with their survey results to use their 2000 population count for distributing state-shared revenue. It was noted that all MAG member agencies would use the same confidence interval, but concern was raised with requiring cities around the state to adhere

to a minimum confidence interval. Jim Huling questioned the likelihood of a MAG member agency finding it advantageous to discard their survey results in favor of the 2000 Decennial Census.

5. Management Committee Briefing

Harry Wolfe noted that George Pettit would be briefing the management committee on Wednesday on the information that the Subcommittee had collected to date on pursuing a survey versus undertaking a Special Census.

Prisila Ferreira commented that the briefing at the last Management Committee meeting was very well received by Peoria's Manager, Terry Ellis.

6. Miscellaneous

Jim Huling noted that the scheduled meeting of the Subcommittee in March coincided with the National League of Cities meeting that he would be attending. He said that since most of the other committee members would not be attending that meeting, it would be preferable to retain the date. He added that Mesa would either send someone to represent him, or he would call in.

The meeting adjourned at 12:08 p.m.