

Comments regarding Resolution 2020-R3, Supporting Holding an Election to Decide the Matter on the Incorporation of Holiday Island

As noted in the Jan. 27 BOC meeting minutes, I and others question how the Board can endorse support of any incorporation resolution without understanding and discussing how incorporation will benefit, or not benefit, residents, property owners and voters in Holiday Island. Should not the Board maintain a neutral position on incorporation and exercise due diligence to provide factual information to residents before supporting a vote on an issue where there is no information? At least one HISID official has said recently, regarding information on incorporation, "There is none." Does the Board make decisions without information? If this resolution passes today, that indeed is the case.

As I said on Jan. 27, there are huge administrative and cost differences between a "town" and a "city of the second class," both of which are mentioned in today's resolution. Arkansas Municipal Code Section 14-37-103 describes a "town" as having 500 or fewer inhabitants. The code section also says "All cities having 500 inhabitants or more and fewer than 2,500 inhabitants shall be deemed cities of the second class." HISID official records show more than 1,600 water and sewer connections billed monthly, and that fact alone means Holiday Island would be a "city of the second class," not a "town."

As a city, Holiday Island would be represented by elected officials from wards, while as a town, officials would be "at large." If the BOC wishes to convey factual information to residents, please describe whether residents are being asked to vote for a "city" or a "town." The ward concept of a "city" at least allows residents to choose their representatives. Costs for a "city" also would differ from and exceed those of a "town." As I asked on Jan. 27, what exactly is the Board supporting?

And in the exercise of "transparency" and "due diligence," can the Board today, before voting on this resolution, factually describe what are the potential costs to residents for incorporation, how will incorporation be funded, what will be the effects on HISID, will incorporation reduce HISID assessments for property owners, will there be additional fees and taxes for residents, and what exactly are