

Commission on Redistricting

Wednesday June 9, 2021

Start Time: 5:05 pm

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance:

Commission Members

Mariana Cordier (Chair)

Arthur Edmunds (Vice-Chair)

Imad Aldean Ahmad

Laura Ard

Keshia Desir

Valerie Ervin

Bruce Goldensohn

Jason Makstein

Nilmini Rubin

Samuel Statland

David Stein

Council Staff

Pamela Dunn

Jeff Zyontz

Liz Olsson

Planning Staff

Corinne Blackford

Nick Holdzkom

Erik Westbrook

The meeting began at 5:05 pm.

It opened with a greeting to the Commission by Chair Cordier.

Next, the Chair requested approval of the meeting minutes. The May 12 meeting minutes were approved without amendment.

The Chair then asked if any of the Commissioners had any observations or remarks related to using the Redistricting Map Tool presented by Planning staff at the May meeting. Several of the Commissioners remarked that they had either not used the tool or had used it very little. The Commissioners requested two additional training sessions be scheduled, one for beginners and one for those more comfortable with

the tool. Jeff Zyontz on Council staff also offered to provide one-on-one training for Commissioners who need individual assistance.

Commissioner Ervin requested a metric indicating areas of growth within the County over the past 2-3 years. Planning staff replied that residential construction permit data is provided as a measure of growth but would look into including another measure focused on increases in population growth.

Next, Chair Cordier opened the discussion of “ground rules” for creating Council districts, providing the following rules taken from the National Conference of State Legislators as a basis for the discussion:

Proposed Ground Rules

- **Equal Population:** Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment requires that the legislative districts across states be equal in population.
- **Compactness:** Having the minimum distance between all the parts of a constituency (a circle, square or a hexagon is the most compact district).
- **Contiguity:** All parts of a district being connected at some point with the rest of the district.
- **Minority Representation:** consideration of areas of population with majority of minorities.
- **Preservation of counties and other political subdivisions:** This refers to not crossing county, city, or town, boundaries when drawing districts.
- **Preservation of communities of interest:** Geographical areas, such as neighborhoods of a city or regions of a state, where the residents have common political interests that do not necessarily coincide with the boundaries of a political subdivision, such as a city or county.
- **Preservation of cores of prior districts:** This refers to maintaining districts as previously drawn, to the extent possible. This leads to continuity of representation.

Commissioner Rubin suggested the Commission strike the last ground rule, citing concern that following this rule may inhibit the Commission’s ability to create two new districts. The Commissioners agreed with this suggestion. Commissioner Makstein requested the list of ground rules be revised, adding a notation indicating any ground rule that is also a legal requirement. Chair Cordier agree to update the proposed list accordingly.

Following the discussion on ground rules, the Commission discussed strategies for community outreach. The Commissioners agreed to approach as many groups as possible, particularly those whose input is not commonly provided. The Commissioners also agreed that a common powerpoint presentation should be used at each meeting so that the Commission provides a common, consistent message to the community with the primary goal of obtaining input from the community. Providing news release information on meetings etc., in more than English and Spanish was also discussed, with staff to look into translation services.

The Commissioners requested a google document be set up to track all meetings in one location that would be up to date. Commissioner Statland offered to lead the outreach effort and be a central source

for coordinating attendance at various meetings and events. The Commissioners requested staff provide comments from the FaceBook live-stream sessions and set up an online comment tool on the Commissions webpage.

The meeting closed at 6:35 pm.