



CITY OF READING

Redistricting Commission

Wednesday, February 9, 2022

Hybrid Meeting Meeting Summary

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the public is prohibited from physically attending the meetings. The meetings can be viewed LIVE while the meeting is taking place via the Zoom link below, via the dial-in phone number and on Facebook. The recordings of the meeting will also be posted on the City's website after the meeting

Attending: L. Olsen, N. Castro, R. McLendon (virtually) M. Golembiewski, L. Bellman, B. Kell, W. Bealer, T. Shade, P. Cianciosi, and L. Kelleher (in person)

Absent: H. Ruiz

Mr. Golembiewski welcomed everyone and noted that a quorum was present.

Ms. Bellman suggested having additional discussion about who should make the presentation to City Council.

Approval of the Meeting Summary

Mr. Golembiewski inquired if everyone present reviewed the January meeting summary and if any modifications were required.

The Commission approved the meeting summary by acclamation with no changes.

Mapping Proposals

Mr. Golembiewski stated that by the end of the January meeting, the Commission was considering two (2) proposals: 1st was the Kell/Bellman proposal which would move the 5-1 precinct from District 6 to District 1 and 2nd was making no change, retaining the current District boundaries. The group decided to take a month to consider the proposals and to explore the current and proposed boundaries.

Ms. Bellman stated that there is a standard deviation of 542 in the current district configuration and that standard deviation is reduced to 358 if the proposed change is approved. making the districts more population neutral.

However, Mr. Golembiewski noted that the proposed change moves approximately 1,000 people into a new Council District but retention of the current configuration moves no one.

Ms. Bellman read from the Administrative code Section 5-214, noting that Council, after considering the Commission's recommendation has the ability to adopt the proposal or retain the current boundaries.

Mr. Golembiewski agreed, noting that Council's vote on the redistricting occurs after they receive public input after the required public hearing.

Mr. Kell noted that the Federal and State requirements are founded on population parity while the local regulations are more neighborhood based.

§ 5-214. Redistricting process; Redistricting Advisory Commission.

C. The district proposals shall give strong consideration to the combination of neighborhoods that are continuous but that share similar quality-of-life issues. This configuration will support the principle of electing representatives that can easily represent the voice of the community they represent. The Advisory Commission shall also consider the federal redistricting laws.

Mr. Golembiewski stated that both options under consideration are viable.

Mr. Shade agreed that the Federal and State mandates seek population neutrality. He noted that when he drove through the southern area of District 6 and the northern area of District 1 he was surprised to find that these areas were more commercial than residential.

After a lengthy discussion about both pros/cons of each proposal, Mr. Golembiewski took a straw vote resulting in seven (7) who support the Kell/Bellman proposal which moves the 5-1 precinct from District 6 to District 1, reducing the standard deviation to 358 and one (1) who supports making no changes to current District boundaries which retains the 542 standard deviation.

The group noted the absence of the District 1 representative since the Commission began meeting, noting that it would have been beneficial to have District 1 input as the group considers this proposal related to a change in District 1.

After a brief discussion, **Mr. Kell moved, seconded by Ms. Cianciosi, to approve the Kell/Bellman proposal moving precinct 5-1 from District 6 to District 1. The motion was approved unanimously.**

Mr. Golembiewski will prepare the recommendation to send to City Council that will include the precinct data for the proposed change and the map. The recommendation will be circulated to the Commission members for their input prior to Wednesday, February 23rd. Ms. Kelleher stated that the public hearing is tentatively scheduled for March 21st at 5 pm.

Ms. Bellman suggested that as the Commission voted to recommend the Kell/Bellman proposal to City Council, both she and Mr. Kell should attend and speak about the recommendation. She also suggested that as the meeting for guests will likely be virtual that others should attend as well.

Mr. Golembiewski inquired if any of the members have spoken with their Council representative since the deliberations about the District boundaries. A few said they have had limited or no contact. Ms. Kelleher said that City Council wanted to let the Commission do their work without interference.

Ms. Kelleher congratulated the Commission on a job well done. Mr. Golembiewski agreed, thanking the Commission for their diligent work on this project and communication at and between meetings. He stated that the work of the Commission members made his work much easier.

Ms. Bellman thanked Mr. Golembiewski and Ms. Kelleher for the strong staff support they provided to the Commission.

The draft recommendation will be circulated prior to February 23rd. A presentation to Council at their February 28th Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting has been scheduled and the public hearing has been tentatively scheduled for March 21st.

The meeting adjourned at 7:14 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk