

Districting Commission

June 12, 2012

Meeting Minutes

Members in Attendance:

Nora Cofresi

Arreda Cotten

Janet Gianopoulos

Chris Knasiak

Thomas J. Murphy

Jason Nordlund

Members Absent:

Tamie Hollins

Staff:

Corporation Counsel Michelle Kelson

GIS Analyst Lawrence Fleischer

Administrative Assistant Ann Kuzmik

Agenda Items:

Corporation Counsel Michelle Kelson called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

MOTION 1:

A motion to approve the minutes of the 5/22/12 meeting was made by Chris Knasiak and seconded by Arreda Cotten. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Kelson noted that Tamie Hollins submitted her resignation from the Commission. The Council person who appointed her will need to select someone else from the list of

eligible candidates. She also noted that Mr. Murphy would be at the meeting but was running late.

MOTION 2:

A motion was made by Janet Gianopoulos and seconded by Chris Knasiak that the Commission should wait until Mr. Murphy arrived to discuss selection of a Chair and Co-Chair. The motion was approved unanimously.

The group began the redistricting process with each member drawing suggested boundaries, each with a different color marker; on two large maps of City streets prepared by GIS Analyst Lawrence Fleischer. From this map, Lawrence will be able to prepare a color-coded map based on the members' suggested boundaries. Mr. Murphy arrived during this activity.

MOTION 3:

Janet Gianopoulos moved that the maps for the next meeting from the compilation of data from the activity show just population data of the proposed wards. Jason Nordlund seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Michelle Kelson gave the members a handout on re-districting from the Brennan Center for Justice with a basis step-by-step approach to drawing ward lines, so as to be as equal and contiguous as possible. New York State allows a 10% standard population deviation between the largest and smallest wards. She suggested the Commission may want to move lines so as to not break up communities.

Following discussion on who is considered a resident (for example, transient military personnel, students), Jason Nordlund asked that Michelle Kelson clarify the 10% population deviation for the next meeting. Arreda Cotten asked for case law regarding the age of majority. Further discussion followed on the definition of "protected" classes and the Voting Rights Act and avoiding exclusion of certain ethnic groups when drawing borders.

The Commission then discussed future meeting dates, start times and end times for future meetings, and occasional absences from meetings. The Commission found it would be difficult to find dates and times to accommodate each member's schedule; it would be ok if one member had a conflict with a particular meeting night or time and were unable to attend. Ms. Cotten left the meeting but returned shortly before adjournment.

There was further discussion of the compromises members have made or are willing to make to attend regular Commission meetings (i.e., attending meetings beginning at 7 p.m. despite child care concerns and/or having to leave work early),

MOTION 4:

Chris Knasiak made a motion that the next meeting dates would be July 10 and July 24 and August 14 and August 28 at 7 p.m. Jason Nordlund seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION 5:

Chris Knasiak made a motion seconded by Jason Nordlund that meetings will end no later than 8:30 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION 6:

Chris Knasiak moved and Nora Cofresi seconded that the commission wait until July 10 to select a chair and co-chair. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.