



Linn County Temporary Redistricting Commission

Sarah Halbrook, Chair
Ray Dochterman, Vice Chair
Cindy Golding
Dave Machacek
Nate Willems

Jean Oxley Public Service Center
935 Second Street SW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

Minutes

Linn County Temporary Redistricting Commission Friday, September 14, 2017

Call to Order: The Linn County Temporary Redistricting Commission met in the conference room at the Linn County Community Services Building on September 14, 2017. Commission Chair Sarah Halbrook called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Members Present: Ray Dochterman, Cindy Golding, Sarah Halbrook, Dave Machacek and Nate Willems.

Others Present: Joi Alexander, Director of Communications; Darrin Gage, Director of Policy & Administration; James Houser, County Supervisor; Gary Jarvis, Assistant County Attorney; John Harris, County Supervisor; Stacey Law, Deputy Auditor; Joel Miller, County Auditor; Brent Oleson, County Supervisor; Ben Rogers, County Supervisor; Barbara Schmitz, Recording Secretary; Jason Siebrecht, GIS Manager.

Gary Jarvis reviewed the criteria that Commission members may and may not consider when selecting a redistricting plan. The standards include:

- district boundaries should coincide as much as possible with precinct boundaries;
- districts' populations should be as nearly equal as practicable;
- districts should be composed of contiguous territory and should be as compact as practicable;
- cities within districts should not be divided unless required by population.

Commissioners may not consider the following when drawing district boundaries:

- addresses of incumbents;
- political affiliations of voters;
- previous election results;
- demographic information other than population head counts

Public Comment

Joel Miller, a resident of Linn County, indicated that he supports a plan that would keep Hiawatha, Robins and Marion together in one district and noted the commonalities they share. He favors Draft Plan #3, with Draft Plan #4 as his second choice.

Brent Oleson, a resident of Linn County, noted that one of the most important issues facing Marion, Hiawatha and Robins is the economic and transportation development in that area. Draft Plan #2, which places Marion in a different district than Hiawatha and Robins, gives two of the three Supervisors "skin in the game" on those issues. He also appreciates that Draft Plan #2 does not divide Cedar Rapids along river/quadrant lines. He believes rural representation is diluted the most in Draft Plan #3.

Brenda Krause, a resident of Marion, thanked the commissioners for their service. She indicated that she favors Draft Plan #3; she feels it presents a more compact rural district.

Emma Nemecek informed the Commission that she resides in the rural area of the county and feels Draft Plan #3 provides the best representation for rural residents.

Stacey Law, a resident of Walford, indicated that she prefers Draft Plan #3; she believes the districts as drawn in that plan reflect common interests and provide a good mix of rural and urban residents.

John Harris, a resident of Palo, reported that he favors Draft Plan #3. He noted that it shrinks what is currently District 5 with regard to territory, splitting a bit of the rural responsibility. He appreciates that it would mean two Supervisors with responsibility for both urban and rural areas.

Approval of Minutes

Motion from Willems, seconded by Machacek, to approve the minutes of the meeting of September 8, 2017, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Review/Revise/Present Draft Supervisor District Plans

Halbrook noted that the draft district plans were discussed extensively at the last meeting and asked if staff had any further clarification to offer; there was none.

Select a Draft Supervisor District Plan, to Present at a Public Hearing, as the Proposed Supervisor District Plan

Motion from Dochterman, seconded by Willems, to adopt Draft Supervisor District Plan #2.

Golding noted that the two departments representing the greatest expense to the county are Secondary Roads and the Sheriff's Office. Services offered by those two offices are used most by rural residents, and she expressed her belief that the rural area deserves more than one voice. She also remarked that county supervisors are the only representation rural areas receive. Halbrook indicated that the rural areas do have representation at the state level, and she also voiced her belief that the community is one in which all of the supervisors care about all county residents.

Machacek advised that when he first viewed the draft plans he was interested in Draft Plan #2 because of its clean look but now feels it does a disservice to the rural areas of the county. Willems stated that he, too, wants to ensure the rural areas are well represented and noted that Draft Plan #2 reflects essentially equal population figures between Marion and the rural areas. He advised that he feels that the districts in Draft Plan #3 are all dominated by a metropolitan area. He reiterated his dislike for the east/west division of Cedar Rapids in Draft Plan #3. He also noted that in the interest of one person/one vote, Draft Plan #2 has the smallest population variation of the four draft plans presented.

Dochterman indicated his belief that the explosion of development in Marion, Robins and Hiawatha made a district containing all three too much for one supervisor. Halbrook noted that she appreciated the compactness and population variance numbers of Draft Plan #2, in addition to the north/south division of Cedar Rapids in that plan.

Aye: Dochterman, Halbrook, Willems

Nay: Golding, Machacek

Assign a District Numbering Plan to the Draft Supervisor District Plan Selected for Presentation at a Public Hearing as the Proposed Supervisor District Plan

Jarvis noted that the numbering plan could be done at the follow-up meeting of the Temporary Redistricting Commission after the public hearing. All that is needed is to assign a number to each of the three districts. The Supervisor from one of the districts, chosen at random, will serve an initial two-year term, and the other two Supervisors will serve four-year terms.

Set the Date, Time and Location for a Public Hearing on the Proposed Supervisor District Plan

Jarvis advised that the public hearing must take place no sooner than four and no later than 20 days from today's date and noted that a significant amount of work was required from staff in developing a report prior to the date of the public hearing. At the hearing, Draft Plan #2 will be presented, and members of the public will have the opportunity to present alternatives.

Motion from Golding, seconded by Machacek to hold the public hearing on Tuesday, October 3, 2017, at 6:30 p.m. in the formal boardroom at the Jean Oxley Linn County Public Service Center. The motion carried unanimously.

Next Meeting

Discussion was held regarding the next meeting date. It was agreed that the next meeting will be Friday, October 6, at 9:00 a.m. in the informal boardroom at the Jean Oxley Linn County Public Service Center.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:18 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted
Barbara Schmitz, Recording Secretary

Approved
Sarah Halbrook, Chair