
MEMORANDUM

TO: Rules Committee Members

FROM: CM Brenda Priestly Jackson, Chair – Rules Committee

SUBJECT: Rules Committee Public Hearings on Redistricting, Questions, Concerns and Recommendations from Thursday, January 27, 2022 at Ed White High School

DATE: February 1, 2022

CC: City Council Members

The following information is being shared on behalf of Council Member Brenda Priestly Jackson, Chair – Rules Committee.

Attached are the questions that were asked by attendees at the first Rules Committee Public Hearing on Redistricting on Thursday, January 27, 2022 at Ed White High School. These questions are being provided for your consideration.

Respectfully,
CM Brenda A. Priestly Jackson
Chair, Rules Committee

BPJ/kh

Speaker #1
Joy Burgess

Questions:

What strategies were used to educate residents about the redistricting process and their role in these second questions?

How were local residents included in the decision making as it pertains to the mapping process?

Are the proposed maps subject to legal challenge based on racial packing in districts 7, 8, 9 & 10?

Concern:

Lack of engagement with the citizens of the community, and how this information and the totality to the process has been made available.

Recommendations:

Utilize district demographical data from the Supervisor of Elections to the data that was used to create the proposed district maps, this is useful in showing how the proposed maps alter the demographics in each voting district.

Process should be consistent with the federal government in applying the definition of race and how so that a consistent definition is applied to the districts.

Create an executive summary to allow all of us to really understand what has happened to us, and the impact that it has on us for the next 10 years.

Create a citizen ad-hoc committee which would allow citizens to be involved in the redistricting process.

Speaker #2
Eric Parker

Concern:

The council favored the incumbents when drawing the maps.

Noted that District 2 crosses the river and request the committee to use natural borders.

Referencing the areas of East Arlington and Arlington having more in common with the Beaches than Oceanway.

Speaker #3
Greg Winters

Concern:

The community of Marietta is divided among three districts 8, 9 and 12. Requesting that the committee not split neighborhoods.

Speaker #4

Sam Cooley

Concerns:

Districts 9 and 10 are not compact and appear to be partisan gerrymandering.

Neighborhoods being unnecessarily split.

Proposed maps appear to maintain existing partisan gerrymandering.

Communities of interests are not being properly represented.

Speaker #5

Cole Gabriel

Concerns:

Lack of information available and relevant to public comment, readable draft maps were not made available during the redistricting committee meetings and meetings were conducted where public comment was not permitted.

Map boundary lines were drawn prioritizing incumbents of both council and school board members living along district boundaries.

Black residents are being unfairly and perhaps illegally packed into minority districts where their voting power is being reduced.

An executive summary is needed detailing the process and methodology of the data collected and what studies were performed and what impact of citizen input from redistricting meeting was considered.

Draft legislation to change the redistricting process to be led and approved by an independent committee.

Speaker #6

Thomas Martin

Concerns:

Map of district 14 including Argyle reaching all the way to Riverside should be reassessed with starting points west to Cecil airport then— along the county boundary to 103rd street to the and then back to the city line to 103rd Street.

Districts need to me more compact according to the legal requirement under the City Charter.

Speaker #7

Daniel Henry

Concerns:

City using the outdated definition of races, therefore creating a dynamic that if someone marked mixed race on the census, they may identify themselves as either Hispanic or Black; the outdated definition overstates the white population creating an unfair representation in certain districts.

What functional analysis was completed to determine the percentage that would be required in certain community of interest in order to allow voters to elect candidates of their choice?

Speaker #8

Nancy Stats

Concern:

Fair representation among all races in the districts.

Question:

What changes can be made to the current maps to improve the voting effectiveness not only in districts 7,8, 9 and 10 but in all districts?

Speaker #9

Jane Kosut

Referred to the Supervisor of Elections District Demographic Profile Report; asked that the committee use the latest report compared to the proposed map data which should show and lessening or strengthening of voting advantage by party's race.

Question

Proposed redistricting maps subject to legal challenge based on racial packing of districts 7,8, and 9?

Speaker #10

Tyra Smude

Concern:

Districts to the west of the river are not logical in shape as they are in districts to the south and east.

Recommendation:

Criteria defined and presented to citizens in a clearer format for understanding.

Speaker #11

Suzanne Barker

Concerns:

Incumbents have an unfair advantage when redistricting maps were drawn. Some parity needs to be there so there could be competition, where it wouldn't be a given one way or another that one would be Republican or Democrat.

Noted that other cities and counties in Florida use an independent panel to handle redistricting.

Speaker #12

Bill Lewis

Concern:

Logical and compact districts are required under the city charter, neither of which were adhered to in this redistricting process.

Speaker #13

Megan Moxhet - Did not speak

Speaker #14

Michael Nelson

Concerns:

Neighborhoods being split and are not logical and compact.

Referenced District 11 and the boundary lines running along San Marco to the south and then to Old St. Augustine Rd., these neighborhoods and communities do not have anything in common.

Speaker #15

Sherie McKenzie

Concerns:

Lack of information available regarding upcoming redistricting meetings.

Salamander or packing appears to happen in some districts; referencing District 9, residents of Sherwood Forest have nothing in common with residents living south of 103rd Street where she resides.

Speaker #16

Michelle Hollie

Concerns:

Voices of the residents are not being heard and maps are being recycled.

Lack of engagement and availability to participate in the redistricting process.

Questions:

What were the guiding principles and input when you created this pass?

Were the proposed maps drawn for partisan gerrymandering?

Was there any attempt to undo the shapes of the districts that had already existed?