



MINUTES

**CUYAHOGA COUNTY DISTRICTING COMMISSION MEETING
MONDAY, AUGUST 23, 2021
CUYAHOGA COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE HEADQUARTERS
2079 EAST NINTH STREET
C. ELLEN CONNALLY COUNCIL CHAMBERS – 4TH FLOOR
3:00 PM**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Frost called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Mr. Frost asked Clerk Richardson to call the role. Commission members Frost, Koesel, Lumpkin, Morgan, and Murphy were in attendance and a quorum was determined. Councilmembers Jones, Simon, Baker and Miller were also in attendance.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 17th and AUGUST 19, 2021, MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Koesel, seconded by Ms. Morgan and approved by unanimous vote to approve the minutes as presented from the August 17 and August 19, 2021, meetings.

Mr. Frost asked Jerad Zibritoski, Assistant Law Director, and legal Counsel for the Districting Commission, to provide guidance on the appropriate deviation, standards and guidelines the Commission needs to adhere to when considering different maps moving forward, as it relates to the issue of allowable deviation.

Mr. Zibritoski addressed the Commission and referenced the allowable range and Case Law standards; stated that the Commission should look to the total deviation from the largest to the smallest districts when considering the limits and keep the total range within 10 percent. Discussion ensued.

Commission members asked Mr. Zibritosky to provide a written legal opinion to be incorporated as part of the record to serve as a guide for future districting Commissions going forward.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

The Honorable Pernel Jones, Cuyahoga County Council President addressed the Commission and thanked them for their service and the work they are doing. He also advised that he has reviewed the redistricting maps that will be presented by the Consultant and wanted the Commission to take into consideration the population loss over the last decade and comments from the members of the community before finalizing the district lines. He advised that the lower income areas were most affected by the population decreases over the decade and wanted the Commission to consider stabilizing those districting lines by minimizing the changes made to those Districts.

Peter Petto, League of Women Voters, Bay Village addressed the Commission regarding fair districting and provided the Commission with a copy of what the League of Women Voters would consider to be a draft of what the new Cuyahoga County District map should be and expressed their cause of concern for the new districting map they presented.

The Honorable Nan Baker, Cuyahoga County Councilmember, addressed the Commission regarding the potential districting disruption of potentially 40,000 individuals in District 1 and 3 and expressed her concerns with the districting maps that will be presented by the Consultants.

The Honorable Sunny Simon, Cuyahoga County Council member, addressed the Commission regarding the significant amount of disruption to the map of District 11 that will be presented by the Consultant and gave her suggestion on the criteria that should be focused on when considering the changes to the District 11 map.

Lou addressed the commission and thanked them for the work that they are doing on the Commission. Lou also expressed her concerns and stated that the redrawing of the district maps should be fair and equitable.

5. ITEMS OF CONSIDERATION

- a) Responses to the questions and comments through August 22nd

Mr. Michael Muller, President of Muller Public Strategies, addressed the Commission and provided responses to comments given by County Councilmembers Martin Sweeney and Sunny Simon, and to questions posed by representatives of the League of Women Voters at the August 19th Districting Commission meeting relating to the number of maps being reviewed in the process; minimized disruption; and communities of interest. Mr. Muller stated that he received an email from Representable, a company affiliated with a group located in New Jersey known as the Princeton Gerrymandering Project, who have been working towards fair and representable maps, offered to provide assistance with the Districting process.

b) Presentation and discussion of map proposals

Mr. Matt Cassidy, Lead Strategic Consultant at TargetSmart Communications, addressed the Commission and provided an overview of the initial map proposals that illustrate the principal of how utilizing various ranges of deviation can affect outcomes.

c) Population deviation discussion and recommendations

Mr. Cassidy presented Option 1 utilizing the range of deviation from -4.4% to 3.9% for Districts 1 thru 11.

Commission members asked questions of Mr. Cassidy pertaining to the amount of disruption on the various options; what is the compactness of the current districts compared to the compactness of the options being presented; in terms of the approach what process is being used to determine the map options; are you working from the outside in and creating unintended consequences as you move across the County; have you considered working from the center of the map to identify portions of districts where there are problems; how was the range of deviation decided for all 3 options; and should the Commission be looking less at population deviation and more on continuity.

Mr. Cassidy presented Option 2 utilizing the range of deviation from -3.3% to 6.0% for Districts 1 thru 11.

Commission members asked Mr. Cassidy to provide the total deviation range in addition to the range of deviation utilized going forward; asked if the Commission can take a different look and go for less change rather than more, make fewer changes and keep more continuity of representation as it relates to the net change of Bedford Heights and Orange moving into District 6 and adding 14,500 people between the two communities; asked to respond to assertions made by Councilmembers Jones and Simon as it relates to the impact on the center area of the County and on Jewish Community; and asked if some cities could be moved around. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Cassidy presented Option 3 utilizing the range of deviation from -4.7% to 3.9% for Districts 1 thru 11 which included minority-majority districts and compactness.

Mr. Frost asked would it be a valid comparison to give the Commission an average compactness and is it a legitimate score to consider. Discussion ensued.

d) Communities of interests

Mr. Muller addressed the Commission regarding defining communities of interest; criteria; and various factors to consider.

e) Decision points

Mr. Muller addressed the Commission regarding Deviation +/- 5% after seeing the initial draft map proposals; splitting municipalities other than Cleveland; should Cleveland be split 4 times; and consideration of new decision points due to the direct Commissioner feedback from the map proposals submitted.

Commission members commented that the Commission should minimize the disruption, stay within deviations, consider the points made by Councilmembers, add Communities of interests as an additional criteria and focus on addressing the central issues of the map. Discussion ensued.

6. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

There was no miscellaneous business.

7. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss and on a motion by Ms. Morgan with a second by Ms. Murphy, the meeting was adjourned at 5:29 p.m., without objection.