

Albany County Redistricting Commission [Minutes: May 16, 2022]

Attendance

ACRC Commissioners	Interns	MMD
Joan Ramsey	Nick Glass (ACRC)	Marie Allen Campbell
Warren E. Hamilton	Nassim Ramdani (MMD)	Constance Graves
Larry Volk		Dona Bulluck
Patricia Sibilgia		Dominie Mazza
Thomas Clingan	Guests:	Adrienne Kisse
Sita Subbaram	Jeffrey Wice	Larry Mauldin
Leif Hartmark	Priya Sankalia	
Julia Reeb	Ashley Tardif	
Mark McCumber	Marissa Zanfardino	
	Russell Cohen	

Chairman Volk convened the meeting at 4:03 PM and called the roll (see above.) The previous Minutes from May 9th were approved (1 abstention).

App Geo went over the details they had on how often the commission's first public draft interactive map has been viewed. There have been 252 viewings, an average of 36 per day.

The commission then discussed public outreach that has been done and further efforts that need to be taken. A commissioner mentioned there might need to be a discussion with Altamont Enterprise about their recent story which included some outdated information. Chairman Volk volunteered to submit a Letter to the Editor with these corrections.

There was discussion about potentially holding a press conference. Some debate was held as to whether a press conference would attract the press without any new information to be announced. There was discussion about what maps were available to view and how transparent the information for the maps was. The commission then discussed its efforts contacting localities to have them add information about redistricting on the municipality's website, including our upcoming hearing. A commissioner suggested buying a full-page advertisement in the Times Union to display the commission's first draft map. Our budget would allow for this, but we need more cost information.

A question was raised about the definition of "minorities" for the purpose of creating the MMD's, which Professor Wice addressed. Members of the MMD subcommittee spoke about the criteria that they are using to create new MMD districts and the trade-off between the number of MMDs and the strength of each MMD. The commission would like to meet with Dr. Handley at the next commission meeting on May 23rd and legal counsel will reach out to see if she is available to speak with us. App Geo's representative spoke about making sure that a map printed in a newspaper would need to be formatted to assure maximum legibility.

The Finance Committee chair then briefed the commission as to the finances for the ACRC and assured the commission that the current level of funding should still be sufficient.

A commissioner asked about our process for communicating with the County Legislature members. Up to now, we have relied on the Clerk of the Legislature to relay our communications. The commission then discussed public outreach focusing on attending community events to really engage the public. Commissioners then volunteered to attend a local farmers market on May 21st to begin these efforts. Comments from a community organization was discussed and the creation of a document outlining the fundamentals of mapping so that the public better understands the commissions mapping limitations. It was suggested that our May 26 public hearing include a synopsis of the mapping process for the first draft countywide map.

It was then discussed that commissioners should check their calendars to see when they will be available for an extra meeting next week to prepare for the public hearing.

The next regular ACRC meeting will be on May 23rd.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 pm.

Meeting notes prepared by Nick Glass, and reviewed by Tom Clingan