

MAJORITY MINORITY SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

April 30, 2022

In Attendance

Commissioners	Interns	Vendors
Campbell, Marie Allen, Chair-P	McCarthy, Justine-P	Mathur, Priti (ARCBridge)-P
Bulluck, Dona-P	Ramdani, Nassim-A	Mathur, Sam (ARCBridge)-P
Graves, Constance-P		Wice, Prof. Jeffrey (Legal Counsel)-P
Kissee, Adrienne-P		Zanfardino, Marissa (Assistant to Prof. Wice)- A
Mauldin, Larry-A		Handley, Dr. Lisa-P
Mazza, Dominic-A		
Owens-Cody, Keshana- P		

Agenda Items

I. Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Campbell at 9:02am. She advised that Commissioner Mazza, and our Intern, Nassim Ramdani contacted her to let her know that were unable to attend today's meeting. Commissioner Bulluck advised that she had a prior commitment but would be in attendance later.

II. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

III. Legal Discussion/Update

- Dr. Lisa Handley is with us today to discuss her voting analysis. She was engaged by the MMD to study and analyze voting patterns in Albany County since this information is critical to the MMD's mission. Her analysis is set forth in a document which she has shared with the MMD which is entitled, "Voting Patterns by Race in Albany, County, New York," Dr. Handley said that she would provide us with a ten-minute overview of her "lengthy, detailed report."
 - In two separate court decisions, it was held that the redistricting maps created in 1999 and 2011 violated the Voting Rights Act ("VRA"). A redistricting map is invalid under the VRA if it results "...in the denial or dilution of minority voting strength," or racially polarized voting.
 - Three conditions must be met to establish the presence of racially polarized voting: (1) the minority group must be sufficiently large and geographically compact to form a majority in a single-member district; (2) the minority group must politically cohesive; and, (3) whites must vote as a bloc to usually defeat the minority-preferred candidates. An analysis of voting patterns between 1999-2011 were analyzed by Dr. Baodong Liu. He determined that voting in Albany County was racially polarized.
 - A third lawsuit, the Pope litigation was decided in March, 2015. The court found in favor of the plaintiffs on the issue of voter dilution, and enjoined Albany County from holding elections under maps developed pursuant to Local Law C.
 - Dr. Handley was engaged to determine whether voting was still polarized in Albany County from 2015 onward.

- Dr. Handley’s analysis found that voting was polarized in Democratic primaries. Thus, race may be considered when drawing districts. While the districts do not have to be majority Black, they must afford minority voters an *opportunity* to elect the candidate of their choice.
- In developing our maps, Dr. Handley advised the MMD that it should;
 - Ensure that the five current districts are maintained and remain *effectiveness*.
 - Explore the possibility of creating other minority districts.
 - Her racial analysis provides data about Black voters only because the data to show how Hispanics and Asians vote is inadequate.
 - A district comprise of Black and Hispanic voters could be pursued. But, in other areas in New York State, Asian voters in general, do not vote cohesively with Blacks and/or Hispanics.
- Professor Wice posed a question to Dr. Handley about the shape of any proposed district and how compact they had to be. She cautioned the committee in terms of shape and compactness.
- Ms. Mathur raised a question about District 7, which is not a NHB majority, but is a mixture of minorities (Black & Hispanic) and white voters which elected a Black candidate. Dr. Handley stated that she looked at this district and indicated that if the shape is good and it is not packed it should be okay. However, we would not be obliged to create this district as such per the VRA.
- Dr. Handley also advised us to look at the effectiveness of the current districts and if they are effective, they should be maintained. This prompted a question about how effectiveness is defined. Dr. Handley said that you would identify minority candidates for statewide or countywide offices and see how they fared to determine effectiveness.

IV. Mapping Discussion/Update

- ARCBridge has shared the plan analysis, the demographic data, and the comparative population analysis with the MMD.

Action Items:

V. Discussion Public Hearings & Community Engagement Forums

- Commissioner Campbell updated the committee on items that need to be completed prior to the Public Hearing next week on May 4th.
- ARCBridge will participate in the May 4th Public Hearing via Zoom.
- Commissioner Owens-Cody updated the committee on upcoming Community Engagement Events: (1) Town Hall with community-based organizations next Thursday. Participants will be able to register in advance for the event: (2) Albany Housing Authority has provided us with dates and locations to conduct Community Engagement Forums; and, (3) Still waiting to hear back from our contact at the Tulip Festival.
- **Action Items**
 - Commissioners Campbell and Owens-Cody are taking the maps to the Easter Egg Hunt following today's meeting.
 - Confirm date for Community Engagement Forum at Green Tech Charter School.

VI. Review Open Action Items

Action Items

VII. Review Work Plan/Commissioners Report Out

N/A

Action Items:

IX. New Business

N/A

X. Meeting Adjourned

- Commissioner Bulluck moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Graves. The motion passed unanimously. Chair Campbell adjourned the meeting at 10:05am.

