

Albany County Redistricting Commission: September 19, 2022 minutes

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 Sibia		Dominie Mazza
Thomas Clingan	Guests:	Adrienne Kisse
Sita Subbaram	Jeffrey Wice	Larry Mauldin
Leif Hartmark	Priya Sankalia	
Julia Reeb	Ashley Tardif	Guests:
Mark McCumber	Marissa Zanfardino	Priti Mathur
	Lisa Handley	Sam Mathur

Chairman Volk convened the meeting at 7:32 PM at the Guilderland Public Library and called the roll (see above). All above ACRC members were present in person. The minutes from September 5th were moved, seconded, and approved. The posting of the entire report of the Commission and the Subcommittee on the website was also discussed and approved.

The County Legislature’s public hearing on Local Law N (as our redistricting proposal has been formally named) is scheduled for 7:15 pm on Tuesday September 27 in the Legislature Chamber at the County Court House. Patricia agreed to speak, and other members of the Commission and Subcommittee were encouraged to do so as well. Professor Wice voiced his concern that if the County Legislature rejects the plan and its carefully crafted MMDs, such a rejection could invite another lawsuit.

The Commission then discussed whether the return to in-person meetings (now that the Governor’s emergency order has expired) exacerbates the issue faced in two previous ACRC meetings where a majority of five members was present but our agreed-upon quorum of six members was not (forcing cancellation of both meetings.) The Open Meetings law includes requirements to be followed when a “majority” of members is present. After discussion, it was moved and seconded to change our quorum from six to five, in order to better align with the Open Meetings law, as well as to accommodate ACRC members who may only be able to attend virtually (though they will no longer count towards a quorum nor be able to vote.) The motion received unanimous approval.

The Commission next discussed progress in writing the “observations/lessons learned” document. The advantages and disadvantages of the Commission and the Subcommittee having separate mappers and counsel were examined, as was the cost of providing software for the public to use in creating maps. Professor Wice pointed out that many redistricting commissions are using open-source software to avoid this expense.

The timetable of the 2030 Census was reviewed; federal law requires the Census to provide finished census block data no later than April 1 of the year after the census (e.g. April 1, 2031.) This falls after the start of petitioning for election to the County Legislature and could mean that the 2031 election will have to be for the same districts established for the 2023 and 2027 elections.

Until the County Legislature acts to formally approve or reject our proposed local law, the only other task is the “observations” document, which cannot be finished until the process is complete. Members discussed waiting

several weeks until the next meeting. After due consideration, agreement was reached that the next ACRC meeting would be held on Monday, October 17 at 7:30pm, again at the Guilderland Public Library.

Marie reported that the staff of the Legislative Black Caucus had asked the Subcommittee for more information about two publicly submitted maps, and that this information had been sent to the LBC.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to adjourn the meeting at 8:44 pm.

Draft minutes prepared by Tom Clingan