



Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission

PO BOX 201706
Helena, MT 59620-1706
(406) 444-3064
FAX (406) 444-3036

Commission members:

Jim Regnier
Presiding Officer
P O Box 299
Lakeside, MT 59922

Jon Bennion
89 Whitetail
Clancy, MT 59634

Joe Lamson
612 Touchstone Court
Helena, MT 59601

Pat Smith
405 South First West
Missoula, MT 59801

Linda Vaughey
2505 Southridge Drive
Helena, MT 59601

Staff:

Rachel Weiss
Research Analyst
Joe Kolman
Research Analyst
Julianne Burkhardt
Attorney
Dawn Field
Secretary

MINUTES

April 18, 2012

Civic Center City Commission Chamber
Great Falls, Montana

Please note: These minutes provide abbreviated information about committee discussion, public testimony, action taken, and other activities. To the left of each section in these minutes is a time designation indicating the approximate amount of time in hours, minutes, and seconds that has elapsed since the start of the meeting. This time designation may be used to locate the referenced discussion on the audio or video recording of this meeting.

Access to an electronic copy of these minutes and the audio or video recording is provided from the Legislative Branch home page at <http://leg.mt.gov>. On the left-side menu of the home page, select *Committees*, then *Interim*. Once on the page for *Interim Committees*, scroll down to the appropriate committee. The written minutes summary, along with the audio and video recordings, are listed by meeting date on the interim committee's web page. You must have Real Player to listen to the audio recording or to view the video.

Hard copies of the exhibits for this meeting are available upon request. Legislative Council policy requires a charge of 15 cents a page for copies of the document.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Jim Regnier, Presiding Officer
Jon Bennion
Joe Lamson
Pat Smith

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED

Linda Vaughey

STAFF PRESENT

Rachel Weiss, Research Analyst
Joe Kolman, Research Analyst
Julianne Burkhardt, Attorney
Kevin McCue, Secretary

AGENDA AND VISITORS' LIST

Agenda, Attachment #1.
Visitors' list, Attachment #2.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

00:00:13 Commissioner Regnier called the meeting to order and roll was noted (Attachment 3). Commissioner Regnier introduced the committee members and reviewed meeting protocol.

AGENDA

Overview of adopted districting criteria, hearing purpose, and public comment guidelines -- Commissioner Regnier

00:04:37 Commissioner Regnier summarized the criteria established by the commission. and explained the mandatory and discretionary criteria for district adoption.

Public comment

00:12:57 Cynthia Johnson, Pondera County Commissioner, (EXHIBIT 1) likes the Existing Plan because it places her county with the places they have the most in common with.

00:15:04 Cheryl Curry, Pondera County, said she preferred the existing system with minor changes and suggested associating Heart Butte with the Blackfeet Tribe. Ms. Curry suggested changes to the Subdivision Plan.

00:17:55 Rep. Rob Cook, Commissioner, HD 27, expressed support for the Existing Plan and suggested changes to the Urban Rural Plan.

00:19:45 Craig Barringer, superintendent of Conrad schools, expressed support for the Existing Plan.

00:20:45 Sen. Llew Jones, SD 13, expressed support for the Existing Plan.

00:22:47 William L. McCauley, President of the Cut Bank City Council, asked that the new districting not split Cut Bank but put communities with like needs together.

00:23:28 Tom Shock, Cut Bank, said they would like to remain a community of interest with Shelby and Conrad tied together. He suggested the commission use the Existing Map.

00:24:26 Monty Marzettea, President of the Black Eagle Civic Club, expressed opposition to splitting Black Eagle into three districts (EXHIBIT 2).

00:25:13 Doug Embody, Mayor of Cut Bank, asked that communities be kept intact and not to split Cut Bank on Highway 2.

00:26:20 Eric Somerfeld supported the Communities Plan and opposed splitting Teton County.

00:27:44 Rep. Brian Hoven, HD 24, concurred with Mr. Marzettea's comments.

00:28:12 Wendy Judisch, Mayor of Conrad, supported the Existing Plan and spoke of the importance of keeping towns whole.

- 00:29:04 Dave Montgomery, Black Eagle, expressed the concerns of his community, saying it was important that it be kept together in one district.
- 00:30:40 Steve Malicott, Great Falls Chamber of Commerce, explained the Chamber Plan and expressed support for having House districts that represent neighborhoods.
- 00:31:56 Michael Morrison, Great Falls Chamber of Commerce president, said the goal of their map was to keep communities together and suggested a change to the map that would keep Black Eagle intact.
- 00:33:01 Scott Shull, Great Falls Chamber, voiced support for the Chamber Plan.
- 00:34:08 Jim Larson, Belt, endorsed the Great Falls Chamber Map and said he was against the Communities Map.
- 00:35:49 Travis Kavulla, Public Service Commissioner for District 1, addressed HD 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24. Mr. Kavula stated opposition to the Communities Plan and said the current districts do not represent shared community interests.
- 00:38:35 Fred Burow, Great Falls City Commission, expressed support for the Chamber's plan, saying that it keeps neighborhoods together.
- 00:39:27 Carl Donovan, Chair of the Cascade County Democratic Central Committee, asked how the plans fit into the statewide map and said there would be ripple effects if the proposal was added to statewide plans. Mr. Donovan supported the Communities Plan (EXHIBIT 3).
- 00:43:25 Rep. Carly Boland, HD 23, expressed support for the Communities Plan.
- 00:47:22 Joanne Bernard agreed with Ms. Boland and said the Communities Plan brings together those with different needs and views.
- 00:49:50 Carol Juneau, Browning, supported keeping the 2000 Indian majority-districts. Ms. Juneau noted the historic effects of districting. She urged support of the Communities Plan as it keeps the three Indian majority Senate districts and six Indian majority House districts.
- 00:57:01 Rep. Jean Price, HD 21, spoke in favor of the Communities Plan and said she appreciated the diversity of needs she gets to see under it.
- 00:59:30 Gerri Jennings supported the Communities Plan and said that it allows for competition.
- 01:01:27 Susan Colvin, Great Falls, supported the Communities Plan and emphasized its variety.
- 01:02:34 Stanley Juneau, supported the Communities Plan and recalled Indian voting discrimination prior to 1972 (EXHIBIT 4).

(Break)

- 01:22:35 Michael Enk, Cascade County, supported the Communities Plan, saying a diversity of interests decreases polarization within a district.
- 01:23:50 Arnie Goettle, Teton County, supported the Communities Plan.
- 01:24:15 Rep. Bob Mehlhoff, HD 26, spoke in support of the Communities Plan and said it would be very functional in his district.
- 01:27:19 Stuart Leuin, Great Falls, supported the Communities Plan and suggested Native American districts be combined.
- 01:28:39 Sally Macmillan concurred with support for the Communities Plan.
- 01:29:10 Jim Whitaker, Great Falls, recommended consideration of neighborhood council boundaries when drawing legislative districts.
- 01:29:49 Roger Hagan, HD 19 candidate, said the Chamber Map best keeps communities of interest intact, although it could use tweaks in regard to Black Eagle.
- 01:32:16 Rep. Steve Fitzpatrick, HD 20, expressed opposition to the Communities and Existing Plans, saying that they do not represent the voting patterns of this county and use arbitrary and undefined boundaries, which would be confusing for voters and candidates. Rep. Fitzpatrick supported the Urban Rural Plan.
- 01:35:44 Sue Dickenson supported the Communities Plan. Says she represented different districts in different sessions and that the issues raised by Rep. Fitzpatrick could be corrected.
- 01:36:56 Casey Perkins, Choteau, supported the Communities Plan and said HD 18 would be nicely paired with HD 17.
- 01:37:54 Sen. Rick Ripley, SD 9, supported the Existing Map with minor tweaks.
- 01:39:50 Sen. Brad Hamlett, SD 10, supported the Existing Plan.
- 01:41:54 John Wright recalled accusations of gerrymandering after the past two sessions and requested that lines not be drawn based on voting patterns as Montanans split their tickets. He liked the Existing Plan.
- 01:45:14 Mike Vohs, Neighborhood Council 7, said the current map does not meet criteria. Mr. Vohs suggested the Great Falls Chamber map, saying it meets the goals of his Neighborhood Council.
- 01:47:31 Jane Weber, Cascade County, said that the Subdivision Plan's splitting of Black Eagle and Ulm was bad as well as the Urban Rural Plan's splitting of the Sun River Valley.

01:50:19 Carol Haverlandt, Ulm, opposed the Chamber Plan's split of Ulm.

01:51:00 Tom Jacobsen, candidate for HD 25, supported the Communities Plan.

01:53:13 Jerry Rukavina, Great Falls, said he had heard from communities that they do not like being split up and supported a community plan that does not fall into those traps.

01:55:27 George Paul, candidate for HD 22, said redistricting should be for the people and not the candidates or political parties.

02:00:18 Ben Graybill, Great Falls, said that all Montanans share more similar interests than different interests and said he supports the Communities Plan.

02:01:35 Cyndi Baker noted that the Communities Plan is known locally as the "Democrat plan" and that it did not constitute a community of interest.

02:03:15 Casey Schreiner, candidate for HD 22, noted his experience as a teacher and voiced support for the Communities Plan.

02:05:43 Earl Salley voiced support for the Communities Plan.

02:06:46 Nancy Anderson, Vice Chair of the state Democratic Party, voiced support for the Communities Plan, although she said much work remained to be done on it.

02:07:36 Sheila Rice, Great Falls, said Great Falls has a shared sense of communities and interests. Ms. Rice said she supports the Communities Plan.

02:09:46 Sara Converse, Executive Director of Sweetgrass Development, supported the Communities Plan.

02:10:34 Ronda Wiggers, Chamber of Commerce lobbyist, said the point of the Chamber map was to keep communities together and that Black Eagle had been an oversight (EXHIBIT 5).

02:13:49 Tom Glover, Great Falls, said the citizens of Black Eagle were asking why it would be divided under the Chamber Plan and said he supports the Communities Plan.

02:16:05 Bill Strizich, Black Eagle, said the Chamber Plan caught his attention because the Chamber cannot claim to represent Great Falls and Black Eagle. Mr. Strizich said the Communities Plan leaves political competitiveness in Great Falls intact.

02:19:29 Sen. Mitch Tropila, SD 12, endorsed the Communities Plan and gave reasons for his opposition to the Subdivisions Plan, the Rural Urban Plan and the Chamber Plan.

02:27:20 Mickey Witsoe, Great Falls, stressed the importance of identifying as Montanan rather than Republican or Democrat and endorsed the Communities Plan.

- 02:33:17 Commissioner Regnier asked the Commission if they had comments for those in attendance.
- 02:33:26 Mr. Smith thanked everyone for their perspectives.
- 02:34:22 Mr. Bennion said the process would continue and invited further input.
- 02:35:05 Mr. Lamson thanked the community of Great Falls and recounted his experience at the Office of Public Instruction.
- 02:37:39 Commissioner Regnier said Commissioner Vaughey would review the record.

Adjourn

CI0429 2213dfxa.