



Onondaga County Legislature

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Chairman

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REAPPORTIONMENT COMMISSION MINUTES – OCTOBER 19, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Hulslander, Chairman Knapp, Ms. Sardo, Mr. Czarny, Mr. Rainone, Ms. Moran

ALSO ATTENDING: Ms. Kuhn; see also attending

Chairman Hulslander called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

1. Review of Census Data by the Syracuse/Onondaga County Planning Agency

Census Data is on file with the Clerk

Mr. Jordan:

- Briefly describe data sent - trying to provide commission with data that would make the efforts easier
- Provide same as 2010; use 2020 census data to produce population estimate for each election district in county
- Database spreadsheet of election districts sorted by town then election district (ED) – in table is population estimate, housing unit estimate, race fields as provided in 2020 redistricting data
- Goal to have data the commission can see to determine population for each election district
- Process internally was to download Census Bureau's 2020 Census Block Boundary Data - used that to produce the local database of census blocks with local geography
- Once created, downloaded Census Bureau's redistricting data when it was released and tied to blocks, then overlaid county districts to come up with population estimate within each district
- Most blocks fit wholly within an election district - 100% of block population goes into that ED
- There are cases where election districts split census blocks; in those cases, used housing unit data to determine percentage to allocate for each district for that block; not extensive problem, but had to resolve

Chairman Hulslander asked Mr. Jordan to explain more. Mr. Jordan:

- By enlarge, blocks are smaller geography than election districts, so they will fit wholly within an ED
- There are cases where an ED boundary is not following census geography - ED will split through block
- Will look at block and find out how many housing units in each part, then allocate population by percentage of housing units in each piece

Mr. Czarny:

- If drawing districts close to the population of 28,000 (average needed for 17 districts in the county) and use election district lines provided by SOCPA, then they will be within 5% play
- Unless there is a large deviation from the top to bottom district; regardless of election boundary
- Talking about a couple dozen population as opposed to hundreds or thousands

Mr. Jordan responded yes; there are not many instances where this happens. It is a small number of blocks that are split, and a small percentage of population affected. It will be a pretty good estimate; going in and looking at the housing units. Chairman Hulslander asked if Mr. Jordan is comfortable with that estimate, and Mr. Jordan said yes. Mr. Jordan agreed with Chairman Hulslander that the deviation would be very small either way. Chairman Hulslander stated that he does not think there would be any disagreement. Mr. Jordan said this is a similar process used in 2010. Chairman Hulslander said they agreed, and Mr. Czarny said he knows.

Ms. Moran asked if Mr. Jordan would draw maps for all the members of the commission. Mr. Jordan responded yes; if the commission wants to provide SOCPA with data in the form of lists of ED numbers (in data provided) and the proposed district the ED will be assigned to, then SOCPA can produce maps.

Mr. Czarny said in 2011, Mr. Jordan was part of the process, and Mr. Jordan agreed. Mr. Czarny said there was a Plan A republican map and Plan B democratic map. He asked if they provide the data (list of EDs) for a map they want to propose, then SOCPA would create the map for all sides (even individual commissioners) if the data is provided in an accurate and complete manner. Mr. Jordan said correct. However the commission decides they want to provide information to SOCPA, they can use that to produce maps to show what the configuration is. Mr. Czarny asked if it would be best to provide the EDs they want in each proposed district. Mr. Jordan responded that it would work best. Spatially they can tie the data back into their data and simplify the mapping. If they had a database of ED ID number, and the proposed legislative district, then that is all the data they need.

Chairman Hulslander said any member could submit a proposed map based on data provided, and SOCPA can draw the lines based on that data. Mr. Jordan said yes. Chairman Hulslander said if he wanted a map, or Mr. Czarny wanted a map, or Mr. Rainone wanted a map, then they can ask SOCPA to draw the lines how they want. Mr. Jordan said it is how the committee wants to do that, they are happy to produce it. Mr. Czarny said that he and Chairman Hulslander agree and asked if individual commission members wanted to reach out to SOCPA with draft maps, then they will provide the maps back; they do not need the committee as a whole to provide the maps, they can do it for individual members. Mr. Czarny said Mr. Jordan's memo stated they envision working with the commission as a whole, so he is trying to get clarification. Mr. Czarny believes the members are all in agreement.

Chairman Hulslander:

- An individual commission member can have a map drawn and submit it
- Yesterday he was asked whether the public would have access to the maps - yes they will; any proposed map by any committee member will be published on the legislative website, so the public can look at it
- All members can use Mr. Jordan as a tool

Mr. Czarny:

- Thanked Mr. Jordan; reviewed data over weekend and way presented was what he was hoping for
- Propose this data be allowed to be shared with the public on the Onondaga County Legislature website; if not there, can put on Board of Elections (BOE) website
- For public hearings, public can have data as well

Chairman Hulslander stated they could do that. It is public information, and it will be up on the website. Mr. Czarny prefers it be on the legislative website and asked that it be up by the end of the day. Chairman Hulslander said ok; it makes total sense.

Chairman Knapp asked if there are any big trends or significant thoughts. It looks like a couple towns grew, a couple districts grew, a couple shrunk, and a couple grew substantially. Mr. Jordan answered:

- As a whole the county population increased
- Table data shows 2010 to 2020 population within the legislative districts as currently configured
- Municipal breakdown to see the larger trends in the population shifts in the county
- Included with data were digital maps in PDF; created printed version in large scale print, which may be helpful; larger scale and more detail; may facilitate work
- Other thing included is spatial data - election district data in GIS format; could be used with GIS software; that is how they will get information back

Chairman Hulslander stated the total population in the county increased just over 2%, the city increased 2.4%, and Mr. Jordan itemized the increase or decrease in population of various towns in the county (some

up or down 7-10%). Chairman Hulslander asked if that was generally it, and Mr. Jordan relied yes. He would have to look at the sheet for the exact numbers, but that was the thinking in producing it; to see the lines and trends. Chairman Hulslander asked if the data was based on the census and that Mr. Jordan has no discretion with respect to the data; straight up numbers from the census. Mr. Jordan answered yes, they downloaded the Census Bureau's redistricting data when it was available and tied that to census drawn boundaries. Chairman Hulslander said it sounds like the only time they needed to extrapolate was with respect to the housing unit mentioned previously, but other than that they were able to establish an almost exact amount in trends of increases and decreases. Mr. Jordan agreed. That was SOCPA's goal, so the commission could see total population by each election district. The election districts total the county population. Chairman Hulslander stated they put the data together and reported it with no opinion (running numbers), and Mr. Jordan said yes. This is the service SOCPA hopes to provide to be useful for the commission's efforts. Mr. Jordan commented that they have the experience working with census data and the spatial data to do it. It has worked for years in regards to maintaining the BOE geography of the election districts and the legislative districts (every district that exists). SOCPA has the tools to put them in a position to be able to put this together. Mr. Czarny commented that Mr. Jordan does a great job for the Board of Elections.

Mr. Czarny said, to Chairman Hulslander's point, they have seen a moderate increase in population overall and moderate increase in the city. Most of the suburban towns surrounding the city have seen large increases, and the rural towns have seen moderate to large decreases in population (exception of Lysander). Chairman Hulslander said Lysander and Van Buren. Mr. Czarny considers Van Buren a suburban town. The more suburban towns increased, rural towns decreased and the city increased with the county population. Chairman Hulslander said it is right around 2%, which is refreshing. It is nice to see people are coming to the county and city.

Chairman Knapp said based on the basic guidelines, every district will be around 28,000 people with districts within 5% (up or down), and the towns under 10,000 people cannot be split. Mr. Czarny agreed, but the law passed by the state legislature amplifies the guidelines for the redistricting process (S5160):

- Counties comply with NYS redistricting guidelines; guidelines say districts have to be as compact as possible
- Cities and villages should refrain from being divided if possible
- Allows for towns that have over 40% of (i.e.) 28,000 to be split; towns under that should be kept together
- More guidelines than 2011

Chairman Hulslander commented that it sounds straightforward, these are guidelines, and there is discretion, which is why they will have different maps. He does not think there will be much disagreement, and Mr. Czarny said there might be some. Chairman Hulslander stated the numbers are the numbers. Mr. Czarny believes there will be disagreement concerning the shape of the districts, as well as whether the 2011 metro experiment was the right choice for Onondaga County. Commission members have said several times that there will only be small changes, but Mr. Czarny thoroughly disagrees with that. He thinks many people in the community will too, which they will hear about at the public hearings.

Chairman Hulslander thanked Mr. Jordan for his time and the outstanding work, and he said the commission would not be able to do what they do without Mr. Jordan.

2. Layout of the Process for Future Meetings

Chairman Hulslander:

- Everyone notified of public hearings; they have been established; know that Mr. Jordan will be at most
- Will be at the 27th; any commission members can attend public hearings

Mr. Czarny:

- First disagreement; voice objection to timing of public hearings; at last meeting, laid out general time frame

- Added specific public hearing; all 3 public hearings next week are during early voting - balloting
- Both night time hearings are the nights for early voting; Friday at 10 a.m. is when voting starts
- Objection to doing this process before election day

Mr. Czarny made a motion to delay all hearings by a total of two weeks.

- Not asking to delay to end of year, but reasonable compromise to get beyond election and allow Election Commissioners to do duties worry free to get election done
- Still have enough time to put maps together and get to Legislature before end of year
- Morally believe they should be waiting until after first of year; attempting to compromise to show public they will work together
- Asking in form of motion to delay all public hearings and meetings by total of 2 weeks; next hearings will be after Election Day and allow for BOE to do work; not have to choose between these

Ms. Moran seconded the motion.

Chairman Hulslander:

- Hearings are scheduled and should go forward; hearings are going forward in counties all across the state and hearings going forward next week in other counties
- Plenty of public hearings for the public to attend; they are scheduled all across county and in Syracuse
- Public is a very important piece to this; they will consider what everyone says
- There will be court reporters/stenographers taking down everything
- Each committee member will be get everything said and transcribed; will take into account before next meeting
- Understand position

Ms. Moran stated that there are Reapportionment Commissions like this across the country that go along regularly, and none takes place in a matter of days (take weeks or months). They have serious technical input, professional support, and public participation. Ms. Moran is not seeing any of that right now and is very frustrated.

Chairman Hulslander:

- There has not been public participation yet, because they have not had any public hearings; they are scheduled, and the public is on notice
- Will provide public with data to evaluate and will hear from public in every way
- With due respect, Ms. Moran is wrong in what other counties have done here - Google what is going on in Erie County, Niagara County, Monroe County
- Census reported, following month are hearings, committees meet, have public hearings, and there is a vote
- Doing what has traditionally happened here; want to hear from public and they will be armed with this data
- As soon as commission members develop a map, it will go up on the legislative website, so the public can see it, ask questions, and comment

Mr. Czarny said the public needs to know the importance of what Chairman Hulslander is talking about. Erie County is doing all of their work before Election Day. They are getting it done this week and proposing maps this week, but they are not holding public hearings during the early voting period. Chairman Hulslander interjected that this is what this commission is doing and said Erie County has a public hearing scheduled next week (October 27th). Mr. Czarny Continued:

- Erie, Niagara, Monroe - none of their Election Commissioners are chartered members of the Reapportionment Commission; Niagara had partisan agreement to go forward
- This Legislature did not have the same agreement; vote on October 3rd was bipartisan
- In all cases there was give and take for scheduling of hearings; here it is being dictated, which is the reason for the motion and second
- Found it odd that the only two hearings in the evenings happen to coincide with early voting nighttime hearings
- Coincidence? Could the BOE website have been checked

Chairman Hulslander said they could evaluate that.

Chairman Knapp:

- Great staff at BOE; third time with early voting; have deputies; all commission members are busy people
- It will be fine; if there is an emergency, then there is an emergency
- BOE does a great job and it is their third time around; sure it will go smoothly

Mr. Czarny:

- For court orders, the commissioners have to sign them
- On date of vote, Chairman Knapp was recorded on tape with WAER stating that he envisions the process to go well into November and majority of work would happen after Election Day

Chairman Knapp replied to Mr. Czarny that the commission has a lot of work to do, and some will happen now. Election Day is two weeks from today. Mr. Czarny interjected that that is not what he said. Chairman Knapp said Mr. Czarny is parsing some words, and he did not have a calendar in front of him. Mr. Czarny stated that he quoted exactly. Chairman Knapp said he is not the Chairman of the commission, and he put out what he envisioned. Mr. Czarny indicated that Chairman Knapp could vote to delay this for two weeks. Chairman Knapp commented that the members are all very busy people, and they can figure it out.

Ms. Sardo stated they will get their job done, and she knows Mr. Czarny has his opinions, but as Election Commissioners, they will get their job done. This is what they do, and they will ensure it is done professionally and accurately. Elections will run as smoothly as they always have.

Ms. Moran stated that she was never consulted about the meeting times; it was top down and announced with no questions asked. No corroboration or input asked. It does not seem like a commission that is moving independently and not bipartisan.

Chairman Hulslander:

- All know the job, which is to take into account this data and listen to public; which has been scheduled
- Not a hurried process; Mr. Czarny is worried about his time as Election Commissioner; know on Republican side, Ms. Sardo can get the job done
- See it as most is protectual argument; understand where Mr. Czarny is coming from; applaud efforts
- Truth of the matter - established hearing dates at different times and available at different locations across the county; will take into account everything public wants with respect to the presentation
- Will have commission member at each public hearing; they will be transcribed
- Will take into account every single thing the public said is concerning to them
- Will take into account data, draw maps, and discuss reapportionment
- Can tell Mr. Czarny already has a good grip on data; not taking time away from his important duties; all are busy; understand he has an election to run

Mr. Czarny:

- Never not been in the office when ballots were in the field; ever in his time as Elections Commissioner
- Have incredible staff and hopefully will not have an emergency
- Requiring that without offering a reasonable compromise; believe public will see it as reasonable compromise
- Believe not doing it, which means not having collaborative working arrangement in this commission that does not need to get work done until February 2023

Chairman Hulslander stated that is not true and clarified that it is 3 months from October 6th; that is what the charter says. Mr. Czarny stated that is not what the charter says. Chairman Hulslander said Mr. Czarny read the wrong section talking about six months, and that is wrong. Mr. Czarny said it is six months, and Chairman Hulslander interrupted saying that once this commission is formed, they have three months. That is what the charter says, and Mr. Czarny said no. Mr. Czarny started to say that once maps are

released to the Legislature, but then stopped his thought, and said he would read the charter. Chairman Knapp commented that they would agree to disagree. Chairman Hulslander exclaimed that Mr. Czarny read the wrong section last time and would read it.

Ms. Moran stated that no one asked what her work schedule was (she is teaching), and they held the first meeting during a consult with her surgeon. She is not expecting everything to be delayed for her, but she would appreciate the Chairman asking what the member's schedules are when they schedule a meeting. Chairman Hulslander responded that he was not notified of the date of the meeting, he was not Chairman at the time, and he had to cancel things to make himself available. It goes both ways.

Chairman Hulslander stated that at the end of the day, the charter says specifically three months. Chairman Hulslander read from the charter, "The commission shall study the population data and within three months after apportionment make recommendations, if necessary, in the form of a proposed local law as to changes in the boundaries..." It is three months from October 6th. Mr. Frateschi stated that it is three months from the appointment of this commission. Chairman Hulslander said Mr. Czarny quoted six months to the paper, six months today, and six months at the last meeting. Mr. Czarny wanted to see the charter. In the charter, it says they have six months from the time the census data hits to start the commission. Chairman Hulslander responded it was already formed. Mr. Czarny said later on in the charter it reads, "Within three months after the submission of the report of the commission..." That is the process. Chairman Hulslander interjected that is for the legislature, and Mr. Frateschi reiterated the same that it is to the Legislature. Chairman Hulslander again stated that they have three months after the commission is formed to submit a local law. Mr. Czarny explained that his two week proposal still falls in the three months. Chairman Hulslander never said it did not, and he said they do not disagree with what the charter says. The charter says what it says. Chairman Hulslander exclaimed that Mr. Czarny was wrong about last time, he was wrong about when he spoke to the paper, and he was wrong about it today. Chairman Hulslander asked Mr. Czarny to please read things before he speaks. Mr. Frateschi pointed out the statement within the charter to Mr. Czarny

Ms. Moran asked when it comes to the vote, how hard is it to get input about people's schedules. They can stretch it out for two weeks to accommodate people.

Mr. Czarny agreed that the charter says within three months of the appointment, which means his two week proposal falls within it. Chairman Hulslander stated he did not say it does not. He agrees. Chairman Knapp said Mr. Czarny was saying the commission had until 2023, which it does not. Chairman Hulslander stated that Mr. Czarny wants to delay this two weeks, but it is already scheduled, and they definitely did what was needed to do with advance notice. They will listen to the public, and they have had the data for almost a week. Mr. Czarny interjected that they got the data Friday, and it is Tuesday. Chairman Hulslander stated Mr. Czarny will get his maps together and is fully competent to understand the data and get questions to Mr. Jordan.

Chairman Hulslander called for a vote on the motion to delay the public hearings for two weeks.

Ayes: 2 (Czarny, Moran) Nays: 4 (Hulslander, Knapp, Sardo, Rainone); Motion FAILED.

Chairman Hulslander:

- Talk about what will transpire over the next several weeks; at least with respect to the Oct 27th meeting
- Between now and then, good idea to get data, and propose maps; if indeed a member proposes a map, or another member does, it would be a good idea to get circulated before the next meeting
- Public hearings will be run simply – will be transcribed, very little if any comment from anyone except for people talking about representation and redistricting (whatever they want)
- Public hearings are not for discussion with respect to timing of hearings, legal procedures, or the charter - those are for the County Attorney to dictate

- Make sure there is a commission member present at each public hearing; do not see it necessary for every commissioner to be at every public hearing, because they will be transcribed
- There will be a sign in sheet at the hearing (no sign in ahead of time); sign in sheet with address and identification for each speaker; based on sheet sign in, speaker will have time to comment and address issues

Mr. Czarny:

- Fine with all of that; having a sign in sheet and not having people sign-in in advance
- Fine not having commission members speak at the hearings; should not – this is getting feeling of the public
- 2 suggestions for the public hearing process:
 - Ability for public comment that is not part of hearing process; (i.e.) email to provide written statements; similar to I81 project that allows people to submit comments to this body, given to commission
 - Ask for public hearings to be livestreamed on County Legislature FB page; much like the Legislative meetings are; to provide the most public wide access to discussion

Chairman Hulslander said the hearings will be transcribed and asked why they need video. Mr. Czarny:

- Transcribing different from social media livestream people can watch; has been done during this pandemic very well in every way and form
- Livestream of what is happening at these meetings is the least they can do; not talking about people having the ability to comment on livestream or be part of the hearing remotely
- Having a livestream on the Facebook page like the meetings

Chairman Hulslander does not have an objection to that, and he thinks it is a good idea. Mr. Czarny asked if they can set up an email for public comment similar to the I81 project. Chairman Hulslander is not sure and asked for the rest of the member's opinions. Ms. Sardo thinks it is fine. Chairman Knapp stated they can set something up. Chairman Hulslander said people have to be identified, and they have to know who they are. Mr. Czarny said they have to do that anyway. Chairman Knapp stated they should be directed to the Clerk, and she can disseminate to the commission. Mr. Czarny asked if the Clerk would want this as her regular email, or should they set up a separate email for this to protect Ms. McNamara's privacy. Mr. Czarny agrees there could be high passions, and he would like to protect the people involved. Chairman Hulslander is most concerned that people are identified, so they know the people who are commenting; otherwise, it could be crazy emails. Mr. Czarny commented that if they are crazy, they would disregard them. Chairman Hulslander stated there should be a format disseminated to know who the person is, their address, and who they are. Mr. Czarny agreed that the public comment should only be from Onondaga County residents, not from outside the county. He has no problem having public comment coming from people that give the correct information. Chairman Hulslander is not sure how they will determine if they are legitimate or not, and whether it is truly someone from the county or not. Mr. Czarny said he has voter registration. Ms. Sardo said they could have a form to fill out. Mr. Czarny replied to Chairman Hulslander that he would determine if the person is the real person in his off hours to see they have voter registration records attached and ensure they have correct information. Chairman Knapp said name and address would be necessary to identify. Reference Facebook livestream, Chairman Knapp stated they would do that to the best of their ability; possible local WiFi issues or anything that may affect it. Mr. Czarny said they could videotape it and upload it later. Chairman Hulslander stated they would make every effort to handle it. Mr. Czarny responded to Chairman Hulslander that he addressed his issues.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:51 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



JAMIE McNAMARA, Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: REAPPORTIONMENT COMMITTEE

DATE: OCTOBER 19, 2021

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
JOEL RINNE	OCDC
Dustin Czornyj	OCDC
Michelle Sardo	BOE
John	SELF
Demere	OCDC
Nick Pano	LEG
Darcie Lesniak	LEG
Dan Kwashowski	SOC PA
Edward Turk	SOC PA
Don Jordan	SOC PA
Christina Whiteside	Constituent
KYLE W. MADDEN	PUBLIC
Tony Black	media
Yvette Velasco	LAW
Joe Ramirez	Comm.
Sue Stanczyk	CE
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