



Onondaga County Legislature

JAMIE McNAMARA
Clerk

TIMOTHY T. BURTIS
Chairman

TAMMY BARBER
Deputy Clerk

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PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING THE REAPPORTIONMENT OF THE ONONDAGA COUNTY LEGISLATURE

NOVEMBER 19, 2024, 5:30 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. May, Mr. Meaker, Ms. Cody, Ms. Harvey, Mr. Olson, Mr. McCarron, Mr. Knapp, Mr. Bush, Dr. Kelly, Mr. Garland, Ms. Hernandez, Chairman Burtis
MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. Gunnip, Ms. Abbott, Mr. Romeo, Mr. Ryan, Mr. Brown

Chairman Burtis called the 5:30 p.m. public hearing to order at 5:39 p.m. and stated that the resolution of the Legislature authorizing the public hearing had been entered into the record.

The Clerk confirmed that the notice had been duly published.

Chairman Burtis called on the following speakers who signed in:

Kevin Ryan, Constituent

Liam O'Connor, Constituent

Mary Kuhn, former County Legislator

Chairman Burtis asked for any other speakers wishing to be heard, and there were none. One written statement was provided by Elaine Denton, Constituent, prior to the public hearing.

Chairman Burtis stated that the court directed the Onondaga County Legislature to hold this public hearing and enact new redistricting maps specifically to include approximately 1,600 individuals incarcerated at state correctional facilities located outside of Onondaga County. The Legislature is here to fulfill that mandate. It is the hope that this Legislative body will resolve this matter in the way the community expects, and in a manner that best serves the residents of Onondaga County. There will be further opportunity for public comment at the start of the December 3rd Session, which commences at 1:00 p.m. Any further written comments can be filed with the Clerk.

The public hearing was adjourned at 5:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A blue ink signature of Jamie McNamara, consisting of a stylized 'J' and 'M' followed by a horizontal line.

JAMIE McNAMARA, Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

Public Comment on District Maps

From Elaine Denton <elainemdenton@gmail.com>

Date Tue 11/19/2024 3:06 PM

To Office of the Onondaga County Legislature <onondagacountylegislature@ongov.net>

NOTICE: This email originated from **outside** of Onondaga County's email system. **Use caution** with links and attachments.

Onondaga County Legislators,

Let's review how we got here. At the end of 2021, the Onondaga Republican legislators rushed through the process to redraw district maps as required after each census. This rushed process led to maps that were challenged in court because they were alleged to be gerrymandered as the district maps sliced up communities in ways that benefited Republican candidates.

Now after a judge ruled the maps need to be redrawn due to current maps violating a state law that limits how much the districts can vary in population, we have two sets of maps to choose from. Map 1 is not much different than the maps that were challenged in court. Map 2 looks to be an improvement to districts as districts look to do it's best to follow section 34 of municipal home rule law which states "Districts shall not be drawn to discourage competition or for the purpose of favoring or disfavoring incumbents or other particular candidates or political parties. The maintenance of cores of existing districts, of pre-existing political subdivisions including cities, villages, and towns, and of communities of interest shall also be considered. To the extent practicable, no villages, cities or towns except those having more than forty percent of a full ratio for each district shall be divided;"

In Map 1, the Village of Manlius remains excluded from the rest of the Town of Manlius, Dewitt remains divided into 4 districts and the City of Syracuse's districts are still broken up into weird shapes making it hard for city residents to know who represents them in the county legislature. Map 2 fixes some of these issues. Although the Village of Manlius is still excluded from the rest of the Town of Manlius, Dewitt is only divided into 3 districts and the City of Syracuse looks much less confusing for residents to be able figure out what district they live in.

Map 2 varies less in population than Map 1 which is why these maps needed to be redrawn as the court settlement acknowledged that the current maps violate a state law that limits how much the districts can vary in population. The difference between Map 2's largest district and its smallest district is 786 people vs 1,291 in Map 1.

I ask the legislators to review these maps based on which follows state law best. I hope you will select Map 2 based on what is best for Onondaga county with the future changes coming to our area. We need districts that make sense, that connect communities of interest and are fair. Map 2 is the closest we have to this and with bipartisan support protects taxpayers from any future challenges in court.

Thank you.

Elaine Denton
Manlius, NY