



Minutes of the Redistricting Commission Special Meeting
December 22, 2011

Hearing Room 1, John A. Cherberg Building, 304 15th Ave, Olympia, Washington
Webcast Live on TVW

Commission Members Present:

Lura Powell, Chair
Tim Ceis

Dean Foster
Slade Gorton

Tom Huff

Commission Members Absent:

None

Commission Staff Present:

Bonnie Bunning
Heather Boe

Genevieve O'Sullivan
Rachel Gay

Nick Pharris
Ryan Wilke

Other Attendees:

David Anderson, Citizen
Adam Bartz, House Democratic Caucus
Jerry Cornfield, Everett Herald
Rusty Fallis, Assistant Attorney General
Mary Johnson-Hall, Pierce Co. Elections
John Milem, Citizen
Ryan Moore, Senate Republican Caucus

Joann Poysky, Citizen
Jam Ross, VFCW141
Don Skillman, House Republican Caucus
K-Y Su, House Republican Caucus
David Valiant, Pierce Co. Elections
Emily Walters, Senate Democratic Caucus

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:02 p.m. with Lura Powell presiding as Chair.

2. APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 16, 2011 MEETING MINUTES

The minutes for December 16, 2011 were presented by the Chair for approval.

Motion: Commissioner Slade Gorton moved to approve the minutes.

In favor: Commissioners Ceis, Foster, Gorton, and Huff.

Against: None.

3. MATTERS PERTAINING TO REDISTRICTING

Commissioner Ceis said the Senate subcommittee is close, and they are down to some fine details. Commissioner Gorton said they had hoped to have something for today, but perhaps was too optimistic. He added that they were meeting later today and he hoped they would have something tangible and substantive tomorrow.

Commissioner Foster said they have met several times and have been trading maps. They will meet again this afternoon. He commented that in negotiations you are either close or

closer, and it will come together when it comes together. Commissioner Huff said that to some degree the issues could be significant or insignificant, and it was in the eye of the beholder how close they might be. He added that he hoped they would have a map tomorrow. Commissioner Foster said he wasn't as hopeful as Commissioner Huff. He said they wanted to give care to the districts in eastern Washington, and that they are dealing with both significant and insignificant details while looking at the big picture as well. He said it takes a while to turn around a map, and consider the big picture and details of small land areas, and there are a lot of those in eastern Washington.

Chair Powell took a minute to remind everyone that when the commissioners are negotiating the maps there are a lot of criteria to be balanced; equal populations, contiguous, compact, taking account all public comment. It is quite a complex system that they have to master and figure out what the right thing to do for the people of Washington is.

Commissioner Ceis wondered whether in light of the status of the discussion it would make sense to hold the meeting on Friday. It would give them additional time to finish their work, and get ready for when they meet again on Tuesday at the regular scheduled meeting. Commissioner Huff reminded the Commission of the timelines under consideration, and said a couple weeks ago they were going to have this buttoned up and that it was important to keep scheduling meetings until they come to a conclusion and the public needed to know that. He said he was not in favor of delaying the meetings. Commissioner Ceis said he didn't think it makes sense to hold another meeting to say they are close, and would prefer to finish by Tuesday. Commissioner Huff said he and Commissioner Foster were meeting later today and hopefully they could move forward and come to a conclusion. Commissioner Foster said he supported the idea of waiting until Tuesday. Commissioner Gorton said he thinks the more they meet, the more pressure there is to complete. He doesn't mind meeting tomorrow.

Chair Powell asked if there was a strong possibility they could have a congressional map by Friday since they were close and wanted to know if they could release one piece at a time.

Commissioner Ceis said it was obvious that the Commission didn't have unanimity on the question of meeting, and if people preferred to meet, then we'll meet.

Commissioner Huff said it takes two to tango, and if they didn't want a meeting, he could just look at a wall and Slade could look at a wall. He said he didn't understand why they wouldn't allow the opportunity to further discussion to come to a meeting of the minds and conclude this in a somewhat orderly manner. Doing everything on January 1, didn't make him feel comfortable. Commissioner Ceis said he is not suggesting they stop work between now and then, just that a public meeting is not going to further the process.

Chair Powell stated that there appears to be a deadlock and that she can't break a tie.

Commissioner Ceis replied that it would take an affirmative vote of the Commission to cancel the meeting, and that he was not going to make such a motion since there was obviously a deadlock, so the meeting will go forward.

Chair Powell asked that they consider whether it would make sense to release part of their work on Friday.

Commissioner Ceis asked what comments had been submitted by the auditors. Ms. Bonnie Bunning said they had heard from Skagit, Snohomish, Pierce, Island, and Benton Counties. King County said they would have something tomorrow. Commissioner Foster asked staff to characterize the comments received. Mr. Nick Pharris, GIS and Data Specialist summarized the comments by stating that there were no gaps or double assigned areas, often it is an isolated block on the wrong side of the roadway, or scraps of a city that was put in different district. There were a few suggestions of using nearby roads instead of a small creek. Commissioner Ceis asked if it was anything dealing with major population shifts. Mr. Pharris said the largest block suggested as a change is the distance between the current city limits of Puyallup and its urban growth area, which has about 80 people.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Amanda Taub (Online)
Sue Lani Madsen (Online)
Mary Johnson-Hall, Pierce County Auditor's Office
John Milem, Citizen

Commissioner Huff requested a five-minute recess at 1:25 p.m.

Reconvene at 1:28 p.m.

Guy Palumbo (Online)

Commissioner Foster reminded people that the Legislature has thirty days to make minor changes up to two percent of the population of any one district and it would require two thirds vote from each chamber.

J. Paul Wagemann (Online)
Sue Lani Madsen (Online)

A transcript of the public testimony will be published on the Commission's website at <http://www.redistricting.wa.gov/forums.asp> and can be viewed as a webcast at http://tvw.org/index.php?option=com_tvwplayer&eventID=2011120090.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting was adjourned at 1:31 p.m.