

LEGISLATIVE APPORTIONMENT BOARD
Title 17, Chapter 34A, Vermont Statutes Annotated
<https://sos.vermont.gov/apportionment-board/>

October 25 2021
9:00 – 11:00 A.M.

MEETING DRAFT MINUTES
Meeting at Secretary of State's Office, 128 State Street, Montpelier
(Telephone Conference Call Participation Available)

Members Present:

Others Present: Chris Winters

Members Present Virtually: Tom Little, Rob Roper, Jeanne Albert, Mary Houghton, Ed Adrian

Others Present Virtually: Eric Covey, Amerin Aborjaily, Michael Chernick, Mia Kro

Members of the Public Present Virtually: Tom Hughes, Robert Bristow-Johnson, Edward Cafferty, Emilie Krasnow

1. Call to Order

Tom little called the meeting to order at 9:03am.

2. Review and Approval of Minutes of October 15 Meeting (5 Minutes)(all times approx.)

Meeting minutes must be corrected to reflect Rob's comments that Stowe could elect 3, rather than 4, members. Rob moved to adopt the minutes of the 10/15/2021 meeting with this correction, Mary seconded. Unanimous vote in favor of approving the minutes.

3. Public Comment (per 1 V.S.A. sec. 312(h)) (up to 15 Minutes)

Member of the public Robert Bristow-Johnson believed that the most elegant Senate solution for Burlington would be a single 2-member Senate district.

Member of the public Ed Cafferty said that he has submitted a Senate proposal to the Board, saying that he favors 1 and 2 Senators per district, and strongly feels that Charlotte, Huntington and Shelburne should be a part of Chittenden County, and that as a result of population shifts Chittenden should see an increase of 1 Senator and 3 House districts.

Tom Little and Ed Cafferty discussed Addison County population challenges in regards to crafting a Senate district that does not take population from Chittenden County.

4. Review and Discuss Initial Responses and Questions from Boards of Civil Authority to Tentative House Districts Map (up to 60 Minutes)

Tom L. discussed his conversations with and support to a member of the Brattleboro Board of Civil Authority (BCA), on how they can access more finite data such as population/census blocks.

Rob has had conversations with his Stowe Representative Heidi Schuerrmann.

Jeanne has had conversations with a Representative from Middlebury about what the process has been so far, and what the upcoming BCA process will be. They were unhappy with the surprise of Middlebury being split into 3 districts.

Chris Winters and Eric Covey provided an update regarding questions they have received from Town Clerks or BCA members regarding the memo and mapping resources sent out.

Tom L. discussed that he believes the LAB is limited to Census data, even if towns believe they have updates since Census data – though there is a process to seek corrections to the Census.

Tom L. believes the volume of questions will increase in the weeks ahead.

Jeanne, Tom L. and Chris discussed how mapping changes could impact District Clerks.

Jeanne found a non-contiguous portion on the current proposal, in one of the Middlebury districts, and pointed out that its existence could indicate others. Tom L. said those areas need to be identified and fixed.

Tom L. asked Amerin Aborjaily about the Legislature's inclusion of meets and bounds in Legislation, and the process by which those definitions have been incorporated historically. Michael Chernick described that historically it has been on a district by district basis, utilizing meets and bounds in specific areas where it was needed, using different maps and geographic information, but not actually going out with surveying equipment.

Tom L. pointed out that district descriptions will be needed for the LAB's report to the Legislature. To the extent that the final map proposal shares similarities to the current district map, the work will be lessened because the districts are already described, but if there are many new districts the work will become more intensive.

5. Discussion of Senate Redistricting (up to 30 Minutes)

Tom L. said that Mia is helping him get a very early test map he made from District Builder into Maptitude.

Rob's approach will be to make 5 House districts into a single Senate district, but is waiting to hear feedback from the BCA's.

Ed Cafferty offered to testify on his Chittenden County proposal and Tom L. deferred on that for now.

Tom L. pointed out that the due date for the Senate map proposal is the same as the House map.

Jeanne says she has been working on a map, working in excel using the Census data and adjusting the initial test map Tom L. had made. Jeanne is hoping there is a way to look at the current House district proposal for use while working on a draft Senate map.

Mary would also like a copy. Mia suggests placing a copy in a general folder, which could also access for everyone.

Tom L. asked about frequency of meeting. Rob believes the LAB is in a holding pattern and cannot do much until they get actionable steps by the BCAs from their feedback.

6. Updates from Legislative Counsel, Vermont Center for Geographic Information, Secretary of State's Office (10 Minutes)

Amerin believes that it could be approximately 1-2 months, or according to Michael Chernick may not come until as late as 2023 according to the Census materials, before resolution for towns disputing the Census reports.

Chris extended a thank you to Vermont Secretary of State IT staff Mia Kro and Jon Welch, Legislative Council staff members, and Vermont Center for Geographic Information staff, who all worked very quickly following the LAB's vote on a map proposal to get that into workable materials to get out the BCAs.

7. Set Next Meeting Date; Other Business (5 Minutes)

Jeanne pointed out the quick timeline for Senate mapping. Rob, Jeanne and Tom discussed timing. Tom encouraged those interested in submitting a Senate proposal to do so no later than 11/01/2021.

Chris asked about timing for providing BCA feedback to the LAB. Tom, Rob and Jeanne gave their feedback on frequency and method (posting to the website being preferred).

8. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:18am.

Note that the times allocated to Agenda items are estimates.