

REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE MINUTES

City of Rapid City, South Dakota
C/SAC – 1ST Floor Community Room
2:00 P.M., Friday, October 28, 2011

Finance Officer Pauline Sumption called the meeting to order at 2:00 P.M. with the following committee members present: Laurette Pourier, Bonnie Petersen, Don Jarvinen, Julie Pearson and Dave Janak; and the following members arrived during the course of the meeting: None; and the following were absent: Jordan Mason.

Others present included: Dave Davis, Gary Brown, Ritchie Nordstrom, Lori Severson, Wade Nyberg and Sharlene Mitchell.

Motion was made by Janak, second by Pearson and carried to **adopt the agenda**.

Jarvinen provided an **introduction of the redistricting** process including census data collection, census geography, TIGER files, software, districting process, and districting process considerations. Jarvinen addressed the current population error noting that the correction must be processed by the Census Bureau. Jarvinen addressed the manner in which the error can be accounted for in the software until corrected.

Sumption presented the guidelines established by Pennington County. Pearson advised that the County Commission has adopted the guidelines.

Motion was made by Petersen, second by Janak and carried to **establish guidelines and prioritize criteria/suggestions** as follows:

1. Maintain as many current district lines as possible;
2. Lines must be drawn to coincide with state legislative, city wards & precincts, school district and water district lines when possible, with the exception of the Ward 4/5 area north of the Civic Center. This will facilitate common voting locations as the county auditor administers combined election ballots for other jurisdictions, thus saving money and confusion on the part of the governments and voters;
3. Retain the split between the eastern and western portions of the City;
4. Balance districts within a 5% variance;
5. Draw lines to create districts that are as regular and compact in form as practicable;
6. Draw lines without respect of any current seated council alderman, thus no gerrymandering of lines;
7. Public hearings will be advertised and held as required by law before final approval.

Pearson reviewed the process utilized to **determine the number of precincts per Ward**. Pearson recommended that, based on the review, there be 4 precincts per Ward. Pearson advised that the recommendation establishes balanced voting precincts noting that a small cost savings would be realized by the change. Discussion followed regarding the voting impact resulting from the current number of precincts and the process to balance the population count of the wards. Jarvinen reviewed the current ward population counts and variance deviation percentages. Motion was made by Petersen, second by Pourier and carried to establish a goal of 4 precincts per Ward.

Pearson recommended that the City Ward boundaries be established first and that the target completion date for completion of all district boundaries be January 1, 2012. Motion was made by Pearson, second by Petersen to have all boundaries completed and published by January 1, 2012.

Pearson indicated that she and Mayor Kooiker are committed to addressing the North Rapid issue. Pearson suggested developing maps based on the established criteria for review at the next meeting. Pearson recommended that the committee members and/or interested individuals work with Jarvinen prior to the next meeting to develop draft proposals with each draft proposal being individually labeled.

Sumption advised that she would contact the members regarding a meeting time for Friday, November 4, 2011. There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, motion was made by Janak, second by Pearson and carried to adjourn the meeting at 3:10 p.m.

Pennington County Auditor

Julie A. Pearson

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DATE: September 15, 2011

TO: Commissioners

FR: Julie Pearson

RE: New Commission District lines

As you are aware after the census numbers are finalized, most governments work on balancing the populations in all their respective districts. This means we need to rebalance the Commission Districts within Pennington County.

The State Legislature Redistricting Committee has tentatively approved the Rapid City conurbation area into 4 legislative districts. As of the writing of this memo that committee has not decided on the area outside of Rapid City now referred to as district 30.

The process has been to wait until the state legislative district lines are drawn. Then in cooperation with both Rapid City and Rapid City Schools develop lines that can coincide with proposed commission district lines.

The Board must make the decision to continue or not with commission districts at a public hearing in February 2012. Unless guided differently at this point, I will proceed with redrawing our commission districts to balance the population. The new district lines will need to be approved in February 2012, at an official public hearing.

In the redrawing of commission district lines I request the commissioners approve criteria to use to initially draw lines for presentation to the Board and public. Here are the guidelines I suggest. Please feel free to add, subtract or change.

1. Lines must be drawn to coincide with state legislative, city wards & precincts, school district and water district lines when possible. This will facilitate common voting locations as the county auditor administers combined election ballots for other jurisdictions, thus saving money and confusion on the part of the governments and voters.
2. Maintain as many current district lines as possible.
3. Draw lines to create districts that are as regular and compact in form as practicable.
4. Draw lines without respect of any current seated county commissioner, thus no gerrymandering of lines.

5. Retain the split between the eastern and western portions of the county rather than combining all rural voters into 1 district. (This split was adamantly supported at the public hearings held for redistricting in 1992 and 2002.)
6. Balance districts within a 5% variance. (Commission district goal population will be 100,948 / 5 or 20,190.)
7. Public hearings will be advertised and held as required by law before final approval in Feb 2012. (A hearing notice and proposed map must be published at least two consecutive weeks in the official papers.)
8. Hold additional public hearings, 1 in Wall, 1 in Rapid City (in combination with Rapid City) and 1 in Hill City, between November 15, 2011 and January 1, 2012. Thus covering the entire county. The discussion of keeping districts or not can be held at these meetings also.
9. Be ready for approval at the official public hearing on February 7, 2012. If any changes are made at the February 7th meeting, final approval will be held over to February 21, 2012.

Motion needed to set criteria above (or as changed) for drawing of new commission district lines.