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CITY OF SANTA FE
INDEPENDENT CITIZENS' REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 2015

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MINUTES OF THE
INDEPENDENT CITIZENS' REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

Thursday, March 24, 2015

A scheduled meeting of the Independent Citizens' Redistricting Commission was called to order by Karen Heldmeyer, Chair, on this date at approximately 3:00 p.m. in City Council Chambers, 1st floor, City Hall, 200 Lincoln Avenue, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

1. PROCEDURES:

a) Roll call indicated a quorum as follows:

Members Present:
Karen Heldmeyer, chair
Steven M. Bassett
Erin McSherry
Roderick E. Thompson [arrived later]
Elizabeth West

Members Absent:
Lillian J. Montoya, vice chair [excused]
William E. Beardsley

Alternates: Suzanne Ronneau arrived later. Neva Van Peski and Jody Larsen were excused. Peggy Vasquez was absent.

Staff Present:
Zachary Shandler, Assistant City Attorney
Yolanda Y. Vigil, City Clerk

Others Present:
Brian Sanderoff, Research & Polling, Inc.
Carl Boaz, recorder for Charmaine Clair

b) Approval of Agenda

Ms. McSherry moved to approve the agenda as published. Ms. West seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

c) Approval of Minutes of March 12, 2015

Mr. Beardsley moved to approve the Minutes of March 12, 2015. Mr. Bassett seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

Ms. Ronneau entered the meeting at this time.

Chair Heldmeyer said that the Commission is to come up with the redistricting plan for the city that gives equal representation to all four districts. She explained that after annexation, District Three had roughly twice the population and lacks the representation of the other districts.

She said the ICRC has met several times and arrived at draft maps. She said at the last meeting the consultants Brian Sanderoff and Michael Sharp of Research and Polling, were asked to create maps with the neighborhoods superimposed on them.

Mr. Shandler said there would be three opportunities for public comment. He said a brief presentation by the consultant will follow the initial comments from the public and there would be another public comment.

Chair Heldmeyer opened the floor to Public Comments at this time.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Mary Schruben at 2119 Rancho Siringo Road said she a number of questions on the maps as follows:

1. When will the county review or revise their precinct sizes and are they mandated to do that every ten years like the city.
2. She asked for clarification of Precincts 81 and 70 south of I-25 and the Old Pecos Trail and Highway 14: a) where do they vote in the city legislative/PRC/school districts; b) what or where is their community of interest; c) what is their population; and d) how can they be considered contiguous. She understands the areas were brought in during Phase I annexation.
3. She asked the same questions with Precinct 80, west of 599.
4. Where is the annexation Phase III (2-A or West Alameda) which is not indicated on the maps and what the population is for the area and does that also split precincts.
5. Is a shaded map of precinct density available?

Ms. Vigil replied to the first question regarding the county revision of their precincts. She said code 1(31) on adjusting precinct boundaries states "*before each federal decennial census every precinct boundary shall be adjusted to coincide with feature boundary*" and lists the required criteria. She said the BCC (Board of County Commissioners) recently considered, or will soon consider their precincts on a future agenda. That will be for the next county election and will not affect the city's election.

Chair Heldmeyer said that Mr. Shandler answered a question at the last meeting about the West Alameda annexation and the likelihood of re-districting.

Mr. Shandler said he presented a memo regarding further annexation plans for Santa Fe that is a public document. He said he would be happy to make copies. He read from his memo about his conversation with Planning Commission staff: '*in three years approximately 2018/2019, Phase III of annexation will begin*'. He said city data shows 640 people in that area.

There were no further speakers from the public at this time.

Mr. Thompson arrived at the meeting at 3:17 p.m.

3. OLD BUSINESS

a) Standing Item-Legal Issues Surrounding Redistricting

Mr. Sanderoff said the precincts are functions of the county and the city is forced to use the precincts that the county designs. The county can change those precinct boundaries at will, as long as changes are not made in certain years close to an election.

He said there could be funny looking things like Precincts 80 and 81, because you are dealing only with the *portion* of the precinct within the city limits. He indicated that anything in color is in the city and the white is outside of the city. He said precincts are not being split within the city, but the city boundaries split the precincts and there is no choice but to conform to the boundaries of the precinct that is within the city.

Mr. Sanderoff said there are shaded maps of the precincts with their populations showing precinct density in hard copy and online; the larger the population, the darker the color. Shading was also used to show ethnicity and the percentages of Hispanics and is available in hard copy and online. He said he can also provide the populations of the precincts *within the city*.

Mr. Sanderoff said the Commission selected a diversity of plans to take to the public that they feel are the best thus far. Two sets of maps are much the same, but one map has neighborhood boundaries overlaid.

He said he will give a brief review of those maps. (Exhibit 1) He said the City Charter lays out the priorities and principles that the Commission must follow and includes in ranked order; to create districts where the populations are substantially the same, based on the most recent census. He said the basic principle and most important reason to redistrict is to adjust district boundaries to account for population shifts. He said typically that is done every 10 years. The City Council chose to do that in the middle of the decade and use the Commission, because the annexation added 13,000 people into District Three. District Three became 47% larger than the ideal population of a district and the boundaries had to shrink and the other districts boundaries had to pick up the excess population.

Mr. Sanderoff said the Charter also speaks to drawing districts that avoid the dilution of minority voting strength. He said not only is that the second most important thing laid out in the Charter, but also the second most important thing laid out in federal case law. The primary things are to adjust the population; avoid diluting the minority voting strength; take into account the communities of interest, including ethnic and economic factors and neighborhoods; and make the districts compact/contiguous. Each district should be compact, contiguous territories within the precinct.

He said compactness also is an interesting concept, because it still deals with compactness within the constraints of the municipal boundaries. The Charter even speaks to a calculation on the total length of all district boundary lines.

Mr. Sanderoff said he passed out a recap (Exhibit 2) and summarized the highest the differences in the plans. A summary of the recap follows:

- Plan A: has as few changes as possible compared to the current plan, recognizing that there had to be a lot of changes because District Three was 50% too large.

- Plan A-2: is the same as Plan A except Precinct 76 is in District Four on the eastern side of the district. The objective of the Commission was to lower the population in District Four to account for projected development.
- Plan B: District One excess population is picked up in the Osage area and stretches from the north end of town to Jemez Road. This plan gets the precincts close without splitting precincts or neighborhoods.
- Plan C: the Commission made the decision to show this to the public for variety. Districts Three and Four have an east-west configuration and Airport and Rodeo Roads become the boundaries between those two districts. Two districts cross Cerrillos Road.
- Plan D: the Commission requested a plan that changed the configuration of Districts One and Two to a north-south configuration. Districts Three and Four are identical to Plan A.

Mr. Sanderoff pointed out that the current plan has only one Hispanic district and most of the new plans have two Hispanic districts; Plan B has three Hispanic districts.

Mr. Sanderoff said a Summary Table is included on page 2 of the new handout; a calculation of the sum of the mileage of the district boundaries per plan, per the criteria to be considered listed in the Charter. He said Plan A is 100 miles and two tenths; A-2 is close to that and Plan C was the largest with 105 miles.

Mr. Sanderoff confirmed that there are no dramatic differences in any of the plans.

Ms. McSherry asked clarification that the three Hispanic majority populations in Plans B and D are overall population and looking at adult population in Plan D, is fifty-fifty.

Mr. Sanderoff said he was speaking about adult Hispanics. He explained typically when looking at the population deviations equality among the districts, you speak to *total* population. When looking at not diluting minority voting strength you look at the percentage of ethnicities; Hispanics, Native Americans, etc. among the adult population.

He said Plan D has two majority Hispanic districts as well and a third district that is very close at 48% adult Hispanic population and the Plan is over majority for *total* population.

Chair Heldmeyer invited members of the public who would like to speak to come forward.

4. NEW BUSINESS

a) Listening Session

Mr. Vince Kadlubeck at 2541 Vereva Encanto said he is in Precinct 76. He asked for clarification on Plan A-2 that looks like Precinct 76 moves from four to two [districts]. He confirmed that the handout was incorrect and the actual shift was from District Three to District Four.

Ms. Marilyn Bane at 622½ B Canyon Road in Precinct 47, District Two said unacceptable to her is Plan B and Plan D; both are a vertical change with District Two going into District One. She said the main reason she is advocating for Plans A or A-2 is because the minority vote is watered down. She explained that Plan B would have 70% Anglo instead of 59 percent. She has lived in Santa Fe for 22 years and loves the

mixture of Hispanic and Anglos specifically, and the mix of rich and poor in her neighborhood. She would like to maintain that and Plans B and D do not work. She asked that the Commission consider Plan A-2.

Mr. Rick Martínez at 725 Mesilla Road and he wanted to recant his choice last week from Plan B; he likes Plan A. He said having to two councilors in two districts representing the downtown area will help things move instead of having one councilor in one district that controls the whole downtown. He said he thought the same about the south side; there should be more representation. He said he is used to his City Councilors and he knows who to call on and sometimes change is hard.

Councilor Lindell said at the last meeting she understood the Commission was not looking for the overall perimeter. Chair Heldmeyer explained there was a discussion and the Commission had agreed they wanted the *overall perimeter*, which is the technical, legal definition of compactness.

Councilor Lindell said the handout does not break out the perimeter district by district in each plan.

Mr. Sanderoff explained the measurement is the perimeter of the boundaries of each district and the sum of them is the total mileage of the districts in each plan.

Chair Heldmeyer confirmed that Councilor Lindell wanted to see the total perimeter individually for each of the four districts under each plan.

Councilor Lindell agreed. She said her point is that in Plan B the boundary of District One is huge and has nothing to do with *compactness* and is disproportional to all of the other districts. She said Plan B boundary is inappropriate and far from compact and the ethnicity breakdown concerns her. She said in Plan C, Districts Three and Four are reversed out and she thought it important that districts have identity and people within the district identify with their district. She said as Mr. Martinez mentioned, it is important that people have a familiarity within their district and with their councilors.

Councilor Lindell said also keeping the current councilors could provide a district with seniority and sometimes can make a difference for appointments to committees and has value to a district.

She said to change and move vast numbers of people into different districts without substantial gain, either demographically or ethnically, does not serve the people of the district. She said they have an identity already with their district and it is not just to look a little better on paper.

Councilor Lindell said for that reason she prefers Map A-2; it gives the numbers and keeps the look and the feel of the districts. She said as Mr. Sanderoff said; it is the 'status quo map'. She said Map D accomplishes very little and displaces many, many people without a substantial improvement.

Councilor Lindell thanked the Commission for their service and time and said she appreciates that.

Mr. Thompson said Councilor Lindell is the third or fourth person that has expressed a preference for Plan A-2 and he is a fan of Plan A. He said Plan A-2 only changes one relatively small thing. He asked why the Councilor prefers A-2.

Councilor Lindell said because Precinct 78 (Las Soleras) has the potential for a lot of increase in population. She said Plan A, District Four is already at a 5% deviation and taking out that small area and putting into District Two would give the district room to grow in the next 3 to 5 years.

Ms. McSherry asked if her desire for the potential growth would outweigh keeping it with its current district.

Councilor Lindell said it is not her district and to her understanding the precinct is not part of an identified neighborhood.

Mr. Sanderoff said we concluded that Precinct 76 would be the best, if a precinct has to be shifted from District Four to District Two in order to lower the population of District Four for anticipated growth. He said Precincts 50 and 35 would split a neighborhood and Precinct 29 was too big.

Ms. West said that could be looked at as the best compromise and most of the Commissioners saw it that way too.

Mr. Thompson asked for the opinion and preference from Mr. Kadlubeck; a resident of Precinct 76.

Mr. Vince Kadlubeck said he goes back and forth; he grew up in the neighborhood and could not see a reason for moving the precinct. He said in the long run the neighborhood would be fine with moving to District Two, but for now, the neighborhood does not identify as much with the activities or the economy of District Two as with District Four.

Ms. Marilyn Bane said she wanted to add another point on her preference to A-2. She said in addition to what Councilor Lindell spoke about, the overwhelming reason she prefers A-2 is that Plan A shows the white population at 56.3% to 38.7%, which reduces Anglos 55.6% and expands Hispanic to 39.4 percent.

Ms. Joyce Blalock at 1301 Arenal Court (the intersection of Hyde Park at Gonzales Roads) said she is in Precinct 9, District One. She said she would echo her email to Mr. Shandler (Exhibit 3). She said those who have become aligned with their council members whom they elected, are comfortable with the councilor's positions and respect; they would like to keep. She said she understands that some of the plans will disrupt that. She said she hopes a prime recommendation of the Commission is to keep the councilors in the districts they are in. She said she appreciates the Commission's efforts.

Ms. Mary Schruben asked to clarify the questions brought up by Mr. Thompson on splitting Precincts 50 and 35. She pointed out that Precinct 35 is primarily retail, commercial, educational and city and government district with very little population. She said there is St. Michael's shopping center down Llano Street to a number of schools, two federal properties, the State Printing Office and city land that houses different buildings that abuts a three-story state office building facing Cerrillos Road. Ms. Schruben said Precinct 50 is her neighborhood association on the east and the Belamah extending west over Camino Carlos Rey; her neighborhood is sparse and the Belamah neighborhood is dense. She said splitting that specific Precinct 50 would be adverse, but that does not apply to Precinct 35.

Chair Heldmeyer asked if any of the plans treat Belamah correctly, in the sense of not splitting it.

Ms. Schruben said in terms of Precinct 76 being in either Districts Four or Two, the precinct is isolated because of its boundaries. She said it was built at the same time as the districts around it and the

population is about the same age and has community of interest. Ms. Schruben agreed with the previous speaker that most of the people identify with District Four, rather than District Two. She was not sure the area is a Belamah development.

Ms. Suzanne Schmidt at 372 Calle Loma Norte said she and her husband are new to Santa Fe. She thought from a psychological perspective, any of the plans other than Plan A and A-2 are extremely disruptive. She said it would be difficult for her to understand the logic when it appears that the Commission's task can be accomplished without doing something that would psychologically damage some people.

Mr. John Salazar 1237 San Jose Avenue, Precinct 32, City Council District One said he wants to support Plan A. He thought Precinct 76 should not be separated from the rest of the Belamah neighborhood. The neighborhood should stay in District Four. He said there is a good chance there may not be a population increase in Precinct 76 until after the next census, in which case they will have to revisit this anyway. He said he likes Plan A and for the time being it is a good plan.

Mr. Roman Abeyta a resident of District 3 said he wanted to comment on Plan A-2 and Precinct 67. He said in talking about areas that identify with a district; Precinct 67 identifies with District Three, not Four. He said Airport Road and Jemez Road consider themselves part of the Airport Road area. He said they should be included in District Four rather than District Three if the Commission decides on Plan A-2.

Mr. Shandler said in looking at the populations, perhaps Precinct 67 instead of Precinct 76, could stay in District Three.

Mr. Sanderoff agreed with Mr. Abeyta that Precinct 67 has great merit in kinship in District Three. He said this deals with the issue of making the populations equal and District Three was so large, it had to shed 47% of the district and why Precinct 67 ended up in District Four. He explained that if Precinct 67 went into District Three and Precinct 76 went into two District Three; the District would become too big. He said he agrees that Precinct 67 is a casualty due to the number one principle of districting and the Charter and the case law, in equalizing the population.

Mr. Shandler said approximately 4,791 people are in Precinct 67 and that supports if District Three is too big to begin with, then Precinct 67 is big to move around. He said that defeats his idea to leave Precinct 76 as is and move Precinct 67.

There were no further speakers from the public at this time.

Mr. Thompson said to Councilor Lindell that the Commission had received an email from Ms. Blalock who spoke earlier that is very glowing of the Councilor. He asked the Councilor which precinct she presides in because it appears one or more of the plans put her at risk of being outside of District One. Councilor Lindell replied she is in Precinct 9.

Mr. Kadlubeck said as a business owner, another concern is the Siler Road district. He said Plan A splits half of the Siler Road district to District Four and the other half into District One. He thought that could potentially be a mistake given that the identity of the neighborhood is coalescing into one identity, whether on the east or the west side of Siler Road. He thought it advantageous for the Commission to look at

Precinct 31 and consider that the neighborhood thinks of the strip from Rufina to Siler and Calle de Comercio and Harrison as one development.

Chair Heldmeyer said they put out the future land use map that shows the expected uses of different areas. She asked Mr. Sanderoff to address the concern about using Siler Road as a boundary.

Mr. Sanderoff said Siler Road is a good road because it is straight and is on a precinct boundary. He said if Precinct 31 with about 1100 people was added to District Four, which is already on the high side...a plan could be developed, but it would make significant changes to the district perimeters. He said the consultants did play with that idea.

Ms. West said the Commission had been cautioned about splitting precincts, and it is already split along Siler Road.

Mr. Sanderoff explained that the *precinct* does not split and Siler Road *is* intact. He said that Precinct 31 is awkward and odd shaped and if they take the whole precinct they have to take the neck that borders on Agua Fria north of the Santa Fe River.

Chair Heldmeyer said this is the first of four Listening Sessions and the Commission is anxious for feedback from the public. The city's website has the maps and within a couple of days, all of the numbers for populations, etc. will be available.

She said as the Listening Sessions progress the Commission will be glad to take specific suggestions if someone sees a plan could be better and still meets the Commission's objectives: a relatively equal population; not diminishing the minority voting strength and relatively compact. She said the Commission will take the maps on the road for the next several weeks.

Ms. Suzette Schmidt at Calle Loma Norte asked if the asked if the information on the maps is on the website and published in the New Mexican; or would it be.

Chair Heldmeyer said the maps have not been published, nor has the press release happened yet. She said the maps and tables are so data heavy that it made since to have them on the website; and there are little changes every time the Commission meets. She said the press release and the information will tell where a person could find the maps as well as the underlying numbers.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT- None

6. BOARD MATTERS

Chair Heldmeyer asked if there were further directions to the consultants or city staff on anything that should be brought to the other Listening Sessions.

Ms. West confirmed that Plans A and A-2 are online. She thanked the people who came and participated.

Ms. McSherry confirmed that if the standard measurement for the entire perimeter of the whole city is removed, the measurement left would be the additive boundaries between the districts. She said she thought that Councilor Lindell was hoping to see that. She said they do have that, but the majority of the

miles are the perimeter and taking away that number [the perimeter of the whole city] would make the remaining miles significantly smaller and show a significant difference as well. Ms. McSherry said she would be interested in knowing the perimeter of the whole city.

Chair Heldmeyer said the averages are based on the individual district's perimeters being calculated, added together and averaged. She asked Mr. Sanderoff if he could pull out the individual district boundaries per map for the next meeting.

Mr. Sanderoff said everything she mentioned was correct except they are not averaged; it is the sum of the numbers. He said he could bring the figures.

Chair Heldmeyer asked if he could also prepare a large map of the precincts by population, which was also talked about a lot.

Chair Heldmeyer thanked everyone who attended the meeting and is thinking about the problem. She said everyone wants to do what is best for the city and they want citizens to participate as much as possible.

a) Next meeting on April 7, 2015 at 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm at the Southside Library (District 3)

Chair Heldmeyer announced the next meeting date, time and location. She said anyone can come to any or all of the meetings.

7. ADJOURNMENT:
Having completed the agenda and with no further business, the chair adjourned the meeting at 4:18 p.m.

Approved by:

_____
Karen Heldmeyer, Chair

Submitted by:

Charmaine Clair

Charmaine Clair, Stenographer