

MINUTES
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
LAWTON REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
JANUARY 20, 2012

George Moses, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Notice of meeting and agenda were posted at City Hall as required by the Open Meeting Act.

ROLL CALL

Present: Godlove, Ernest; Henry, Pat; Jester, Kent; Moses, George; Smith, G. Wayne; Stewart, James.

Absent: Holland, Dennis; Knippenberg, Don.

Also Present: Frank Jensen, City Attorney; Richard Rogalski, Planner Director; Michael Jones, GIS; Monica Baughman, Election Board Secretary; Denise Ezell, Deputy City Clerk.

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1. Approve Minutes of January 16, 2012.

MOVED by Smith, **SECOND** by Jester, to approve the minutes of January 16, 2012 as written. **AYE:** Henry; Jester; Moses; Smith; Stewart; Godlove. **NAY:** None. **MOTION CARRIED.**

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2. Discuss and Review Draft Ward Boundaries and take action if necessary.

Moses stated Jones has done a great job with providing us the information we asked for. It is not a very pretty picture. How do we notify the voters of any changes that are made?

Baughman stated by letter and postcard.

Moses stated let's turn it over to Rogalski so he can tell us what we are looking at.

Rogalski stated I want to apologize for all the data coming at you with disarray. We wanted to get several alternatives to you. We understood you wanted an alternate that was based solely on population and I do believe Jones did a good job on that. That will be the big map. I'll let Jones talk to you about the population numbers and how it came about.

Jones stated the criteria on creating this map was population quality across Wards. I started out by trying to keep the Wards in their general locations to stay with the familiarity of where the voters voted. I started with that and from there I graph census blocks from one precinct to another as needed to get the population as close as I could across the Wards. I tried after that to recognize the census block tract boundaries as closely as possible and I followed those as well as I could. Those seem to follow major streets, arterials and that sort of thing. There are eleven crossed precincts boundaries in this map. The Wards general locations are about the same. They look a little different, but the population came out pretty close across all.

Moses stated the population numbers look very good.

Rogalski stated two of the eleven are split three ways.

Moses stated this is an alternative and is the ugly end of the spectrum.

Stewart asked which of the two precincts are split three ways.

Rogalski stated 21 and 11. At the last meeting we discussed Alternate A and I made a shift to create Alternate A1. I moved precinct 32 back to Ward 7. This does not change the population equity at 27% between the high and low. I believe this is our best alternative when it comes to holding the precincts together. I have an Alternate E which makes the least impact on precincts. It splits only five precincts. Looking at precinct 2 in Alternate E the population is split between Wards 8 and 1. It takes Sherwood Village population and moved it to Ward 3. In precinct 8 I put the area south of the railroad tracks back into Ward 7. In precinct 11 I took the area west of 52nd Street and moved it to Ward 6. That keeps it with the newer development.

Moses stated everything south of Lee beyond 52nd and it picks up everything southwest of Coombs Road. That is a big change.

Smith asked do you have a sheet that shows the population numbers for Alternate E?

Rogalski stated yes. Precinct 31 is a very large precinct so I tried to stay west of Cache Creek and shift that area into Ward 2. Ward 4 had too much population and Ward 2 was too small. I wasn't able to get the numbers I wanted so I took the square mile between Gore and Flower Mound. Precinct 31 is split between Ward 2 and 4. It runs up Flower Mound and then west on Cache and then 53.

Henry asked is that now contiguous?

Rogalski stated yes. Ward 2 runs up into Ft. Sill and then back down. It is still very contiguous and in fact if you look at precinct 32 there is really nobody there.

Godlove asked legally will that present a problem to have it split in that fashion?

Jensen stated it says "to the extent practical."

Moses stated we need to ask the State to cut that sliver off and put it in whatever Ward results there.

Rogalski stated we could split precinct 32 without affecting anybody.

Henry stated that is right and I think that we should do that.

Jester asked how many crossovers are we going to have?

Rogalski stated in Alternate E we have five. Just below that is precinct 33 and I did a split between Ward 7 and Ward 4 right along Flower Mound Road. This moved 346 people. I

tried to really tweak those numbers where we were almost exactly where we wanted to be. I was pretty aggressive in splitting precincts, but still trying to hold back with as little as possible. I did get the 10%. I was doing this manually so the numbers may be a little off.

Moses asked do you have other alternatives?

Rogalski stated I have a C and D, but they were 19% and split the same amount of precincts.

Moses stated this is the best we can do with the minimum precinct crossover, the worst precinct crossovers and very good numbers.

Smith stated it also gets us within the parameters set by the guidelines as far as percentages.

Godlove asked are there any precincts split three ways in Alternate E.

Rogalski stated no.

Stewart asked did you put this in the computer and ask for feedback?

Rogalski stated not for Alternate E. I pulled the census tract data and started counting and adding numbers. That is why I said this is a little cumbersome. I did this on a hand calculator.

Jester asked so possibly these numbers could be off a bit?

Rogalski stated yes. If we want to push that 10% a little more we could not split precinct 33. I think you will have to split four precincts if you want to get anywhere near on the numbers.

Moses stated I'm sure each member wants to look at this carefully. It would be nice if you could give us one or two steps to take to undo some of the crossovers and not make the numbers so bad. What wiggle room do we have with Alternate E to minimize precinct crossover, but not really damage the numbers?

Rogalski stated the only option you have is precinct 33. It has a total population of 2,268 and the split only moved 346 people.

Moses stated we could put it back.

Rogalski stated if you put it back Ward 7 goes down and your population between the largest and smallest goes up to 12%.

Moses stated that would split four precincts. Is there anyway to measure any of the other criteria we are suppose to deal with such as minority population, Voting Rights Act parameters,

contiguous, or compactness? Can those be ran through the model and give us the number on these alternatives?

Jones stated I can put in more criteria to be considered. Looking at the maps the most basic breakdown is census blocks.

Moses asked if we sum those up by one of these alternatives and look at those numbers would it give us a feel for whether we are improving or degrading those criteria's.

Jones stated I haven't look at that, but I think so.

Moses stated I think we would be well served if we study these maps a little bit before we try to come to grips with a decision of any kind. Jones will give us some numbers that show what the Wards would look like relative to those parameters with the primary one remaining population. It looks like we can get an alternate that will meet the population requirement or come very close. I think the committee has to come to grips with between these two alternatives where do we want to go. Is there another criteria you want to look at to help us decide? I would leave that open for discussion.

Godlove stated don't we need to here from Baughman as to what the cost impact is going to be.

Moses stated yes for Alternate E.

Baughman stated I don't have enough machines for the alternate with eleven splits.

Stewart asked how many extra machines will you need?

Baughman stated it will be according to which Wards are up and if there is a race. I hate to take the chance if we need eleven extra machines.

Moses asked if we split five precincts do you have enough?

Baughman stated right now I have three extra machines. To get more I will have to call the State office and I have no idea on the cost of a machine.

Moses stated we need to research this between now and our next meeting.

Godlove asked is cost a consideration?

Jensen stated I'm going to view it as being a consideration. I want to emphasize that just because we get below 10% that doesn't make us automatically in compliance. We have to stay as low to zero percent as we can. I understand it is just a guideline, but I don't want us to think if we are at 9% across the board that we are automatically okay and don't consider other criteria. I like this option and now in addition to the cost impact in voting machines I would like for Baughman to state all the other potential impacts it may have as far as crossing precincts go.

Moses stated I agree. I think we need to study Alternative E. We need to look at what we might do to tweak it at the margin to minimize the precincts that we crossover, to lessen the number, and improve the numbers if we can. At the next meeting we will have to figure out where we are, how we want to nail this down and which option we want to proceed with.

Godlove asked do we have the figures individually to be able to tweak those as staff does? We don't have the breakdown. Under Alternative E precinct 8 is split between Ward 3 and 7. Before a portion of what is now precinct 8 was in Ward 7 and now that portion has gone to Ward 3. I don't know the demographics for the people that are in the yellow. I think we are going to be entirely dependent upon staff to do the analysis.

Moses asked is there a way to summarize what Godlove is suggesting? Can you put together a table to show the adjustments that have been made and the population that was affected by that adjustment?

Jones stated I believe we can.

Godlove stated I really have reference to Ward 7. Ward 7 was the Ward that was discussed the most in the Charter reorganization. It has the most diametrically different configuration as far as its makeup. That could be the case with some of the other Wards I just haven't looked at it that good.

Moses stated would you take a stab at putting that together and send it to everyone between now and the next meeting. That will help inform our judgment about our ability to live with this.

Godlove asked isn't there a considerable potential for growth in the precinct 11.

Rogalski stated absolutely. By moving Ward 6 over to 52nd Street it cuts that in half and significantly reduced it. There is still a lot of useable ground out there. Rolling Hills and Highland are still in Ward 7. Precinct 11 is a growing area even though Wolf Creek runs through there. We have seen a lot of growth in the south area. I moved most of precinct 11 into Ward 6.

Godlove stated I would say in Ward 7 there is a lot of difference between the characteristics of the people living in that area. Are there other Wards that have a similar type of demographics where there is considerable deviation?

Henry stated I don't think so.

Moses stated at the last meeting Councilman Wells stated when you look at the development map and you couple that with the nine mile sewer plant we can certainly expect there to be growth on the periphery of the city particularly on the east, west and south sides. We have to leave room for growth to accommodate over the next ten years the population numbers or we are going to come back to the table and be in the same boat we are now.

Godlove asked don't we expect that all the time?

Moses stated yes, but not as bad as it was this time. Last time we left things alone and now we are wrestling to sort it out. Growth is more dominantly on the east, west and south part of the city. The center is going to remain rather stable.

Tenis asked why didn't we leave out the population of Cameron. Isn't it figured into the census?

Moses stated I would guess it is.

Tenis asked so why is that figured into the numbers?

Moses stated I don't know how we would sort them out. There are transients throughout the City and they were included in the population numbers.

Haywood asked on the big map did you go all the way to Parklane?

Jones stated yes.

Haywood asked is this just a proposal?

Jones stated yes.

Henry stated I have asked Jones to give us an overlay map, by Wards, of what the City looks like today and to lay over the two proposals so we can see where the changes are. I think that would really help.

Stewart asked do we have permission to call staff to ask questions?

Moses stated I believe we need to bring them to the next meeting. We don't want staff to be inundated with questions and everyone on the commission needs to hear the questions and answers.

Godlove asked what about the possibility of doing it by email? That way it will go to everyone.

Moses stated that would be good. Email the questions to Ezell and she will forward it to the right staff person so everyone will be included.

Jensen stated after emailing the questions and answers the commission doesn't want to start a discussion by email amongst each other, because we would be in violation of the Open Meetings Act.

Moses stated that is a good point. When we come to the table we will discuss them.

Haywood stated you have Bishop School here with Flower Mound School so this will go on the opposite side and you are including me in 33 from Gore all the way to Flower Mound Road from Gore to Lee.

Rogalski stated this is just a proposal. It does take it all the way to Gore and Flower Mound. There are 346 people in that section to get us to the 10%. That might be one we could back off the 10% criteria to not split the precinct. That is just a suggestion at this point.

Henry stated one of the criteria we were suppose to look at was where do the kids go to school. I don't think we have done that.

Rogalski stated I haven't done that in any of these proposals.

Haywood stated the students from Tower Road all the way to 45th Street on Lee and all the way to Bishop attend Flower Mound Road Elementary. They will go to secondary school in Lawton Public Schools. You must remember Flower Mound gets the monies for those students regardless if they are in high school or whatever.

Moses asked are there boundaries of organizations or entities that we should look at? I would suggest those to be overlays if you want to look at them.

Godlove asked do they vote by Ward or by precinct?

Moses stated whatever decision we make we want to be mindful of how it affects where people attend school.

Henry stated I thought the school boundaries were a criteria we should take into consideration if we start looking at changing precincts.

Rogalski asked are you talking about the elementary schools?

Henry stated I would think elementary would be the only one we could look at.

Godlove asked aren't we just dealing with the Wards?

Moses stated yes. In this case all we would be doing is looking at where those boundaries would fall to see what changes we make.

Godlove asked when dealing with just the Wards are we affecting any sort of public school election?

Baughman stated no.

Godlove stated where a student goes to school might have some impact because it will indicate the type of community they are in. It really want have an impact as to how we vote.

Baughman stated you vote within your precinct.

Godlove asked do the precincts determine any sort of school election.

Baughman stated school, Ward, House, Senate, or Commissioner.

Godlove asked and this commission only deals with Council?

Baughman stated yes.

Godlove stated in my opinion schools are not that significant. I do think the type of people that live within a particular Ward is significant and we can't disenfranchise that. I also think cost needs to be considered.

Moses stated Baughman will have to bring the cost to us.

Godlove stated I understand what Henry is saying, but I don't think it is really that significant.

Henry stated okay.

Moses asked are there any other questions about Alternative E for clarification. I think the way to proceed is to take Alternate E and the table with the break down of the parameters and at the next meeting come to grips with how we structure the best alternative we can. You see how ugly it can get if it goes the other way. It looks like we have a pretty good alternative that is pretty close.

Godlove asked can you give us the top three criteria that you will be confronted with?

Jensen stated population below zero if possible, the affect on the precincts and compact and contiguous.

Godlove asked how do you see the affect on the precincts?

Jensen stated the affect on the precincts as far as crossing precincts.

Godlove asked yes.

Jensen stated the statute that I read to you says "the governing body, to the extent practical, shall not sub-divide precincts established by the County Election Board in establishing Wards or Council boundaries".

Godlove asked the negative impact to dividing up precincts is it primarily cost or is it because of an attempt on a part of the State, who set the precincts, to put people into their appropriate communities?

Jensen stated for my purposes I'm viewing it as cost and the potential negative affects it will have on the operation of the election. I hope to get that on the record and will when we pass a resolution.

Moses asked now do we know how we want to proceed? Is everyone in agreement with proceeding this way? When we come back we will get into a lengthy discussion of this alternative and any changes we want to make to come to grips with nailing this down.

Rogalski stated we can go digital with our meeting.

Moses stated that is a good idea.

Henry stated when looking at these two alternatives we want to be sure we are all comparing the same map. The map I see as the one that represents the existing precincts and Ward lines is the one that says "City of Lawton 2012 Precinct Lines".

Moses stated it is dated November 16, 2011 and was handed out at the first meeting. We should put the rest of the maps aside except for the two alternatives that were given to you today. With these two pieces we have to come to grips with a recommendation that will be formed into a resolution. Then we will hold a public hearing concerning our decision. Is everyone okay with all this?

3. Discussion.

4. Audience Participation

5. Establish date for next meeting.

Moses stated the next meeting will be January the 30th at 9:30 a.m. in the Banquet Hall.

6. Adjournment.

MOVED by Jester, **SECOND** by Smith, to adjourn. **AYE:** Jester; Moses; Smith; Stewart; Godlove; Henry. **NAY:** None. **MOTION CARRIED.**

George Moses, Chairman
Redistricting Commission