

NORMAN REAPPORTIONMENT COMMISSION MINUTES

August 29, 2011

The Reapportionment Commission of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma met in the South Conference Room of the Norman Municipal Building at 201-A West Gray Street on Monday, August 29, 2011, at 6:00 p.m., and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the Norman Municipal Building at 201-A West Gray at least 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

Item No. 1, being:

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Cheryl Clayton called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

* * *

Item No. 2, being:

ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT

David Morgan
James Sheffield
Phoebe Schmitz
Jonathan Leavey
Lea Greenleaf
Ted Metscher
Chadwick Cox
Cheryl Clayton
Karl Jahnke (arrived at 6:08 p.m.)

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

A quorum was present.

CITY STAFF PRESENT

Doug Koscinski, Manager of Current
Planning
Joyce Green, GIS Services Manager
Wayne Stenis, Planner II
Roné Tromble, Administrative Technician

* * *

Item No. 3, being:

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 28, 2011 MEETING AND THE AUGUST 17, 2011 PUBLIC HEARING

Lea Greenleaf moved to approve the minutes of the July 28, 2011 Meeting and the August 17, 2011 Public Hearing, as submitted. Ted Metscher seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, the motion was adopted by a unanimous vote.

* * *

Item No. 4, being:

DISCUSSION OF THE PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY

ITEMS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

1. Ward Populations/Deviations Moving Precinct 71 from Ward 3 to Ward 8

STAFF REPORT

1. Mr. Koscinski reported that Ms. Green prepared the result of what would happen if the Commission followed the one comment from the public hearing. It would make the percentage range 17.30% rather than 7.3% as it would be with the current proposed configuration.

DISCUSSION BY THE COMMISSION

1. Mr. Leavey commented that he visited with several folks in Precinct 71 and they didn't seem to have any problem with the change. They thought they would have as good of representation between the two Council members as they currently have. When I was Councilman I never really understood why Precinct 71 wasn't a part of Ward 3.
2. Mr. Greenleaf commented that Mr. Youngblood's suggestion was to move Precinct 71, but he later stated that he lives in Precinct 76. He said that they have no representation. Making the suggested change won't affect his representation. I wanted to take a look at it, because Mr. Youngblood did come and state his case. At the same time, his statements were contradictory.
3. Mr. Sheffield said he did a windshield tour of Precinct 71. The northern part of the precinct is more like Precinct 76 in appearance, but the southern half is not like Precinct 76. No one in Precinct 71 has made a case for moving them. He prefers to stay with the current proposal.
4. Ms. Clayton indicated her agreement with those statements. We have a good proposal and it doesn't make sense to change it with only one person making that recommendation.
5. Mr. Metscher commented that Precinct 19 is torn up by the current plan. Mr. Greenleaf also looked at Precinct 19. He wondered whether the Election Board might

do something different with that precinct. Mr. Koscinski explained that it is an awkward line that was chosen somewhat arbitrarily to make the numbers work. Staff thought that, because Ward 2 doesn't have growth potential, it will eventually need more people and could move up to Robinson, and reunify Precinct 19 in the next few years. Mr. Greenleaf commented that, looking at the plats that have been approved, Ward 3 has potential to grow. Mr. Koscinski added that the only other option to increase the population of Ward 2 was to expand it west of I-35 or east into Ward 4.

6. Mr. Cox commented that he felt Mr. Youngblood's comments were political in nature. He said that he had run for Council. He didn't like the representation he has; it wasn't that he doesn't have it.

7. Mr. Metscher said he noticed Mr. Spaulding had spoken with Ms. Clayton after the public hearing and wondered if he expressed a problem with the plan. Ms. Clayton indicated he did not.

Jonathan Leavey moved to adopt Resolution No. RCR-1112-1. Phoebe Schmitz seconded the motion.

8. Mr. Greenleaf was concerned that Section 1 of the Resolution speaks about "communities of common interest, ethnic background, and physical boundaries, to the extent reasonably possible." That language is in the Charter, but we looked at numbers strictly. The reason I am bringing this up is I'm wondering if Council needs to amend the language of the Charter. With that language in there, someone could claim some type of profiling one way or another. The way we have done it is strictly based on the number of residents, and that is the most fair way it can be done.

Mr. Jahnke asked about the wording of the Charter. Mr. Koscinski quoted the Charter language: "Wards shall be formed so as to equalize, as nearly as practicable, the population of the several wards." That is the first criterion. "In addition, each ward shall be formed of compact, contiguous territory with boundaries drawn to reflect and respond to communities of common interest, ethnic background, and physical boundaries, to the extent reasonably possible." That's the secondary group of criteria.

Mr. Jahnke said he was thinking about Mr. Youngblood's concerns about the composition of the neighborhood and that Precinct 71 is different than Ward 3. That is probably true with the value of homes on the two sides of the street, but the same is probably true within that precinct. So it is dissimilar within itself. So what is practical and reasonable enough to overrule the lowest number, which is the first consideration?

9. Ms. Clayton commented that in the past the Commission has had some pretty heated discussion over communities of common interest. The language could be changed to say: "in accordance with the requirements of the Charter." She spoke with a gentleman after the public hearing who said reapportionment should be done strictly on a population basis.

Lea Greenleaf moved to adopt Resolution No. RCR-1112-1, and amend Section 1 to read: "WHEREAS, the Reapportionment Commission of the City of Norman has met and

recommended that the wards and their boundaries be formed so as to equalize as nearly as practicable the population of the several wards, to conform with the requirements of the Charter;". Ted Metscher seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, the motion was adopted by a unanimous vote.

* * *

Item No. 5, being:

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION.

1. Ms. Clayton asked about the future schedule. Ms. Tromble indicated that this will be scheduled for first reading at the Council meeting of September 13, with a public hearing on September 27, 2011. Ms. Clayton requested that staff notify the Commission with the actual dates for subsequent meetings.

* * *

Item No. 6, being:

ADJOURNMENT.

There being no further discussion and no objection, the meeting adjourned at 6:17 p.m.

Passed and approved this _____ day of _____, 2012.

Norman Reapportionment Commission