

NORMAN REAPPORTIONMENT AD HOC COMMITTEE MINUTES
PUBLIC HEARING
September 27, 2021

The Reapportionment Ad Hoc Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma met in the City Council Chambers of the Norman Municipal Building at 201 West Gray Street on Monday, September 7, 2021, at 6:30 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 and online at https://www.normanok.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2021-09-02_reapportionment_ad_hoc_committee_agenda.pdf (normanok.gov).

Item No. 1, being:
CALL TO ORDER.

Chair Aleisha Karjala called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

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Item No. 2, being:
ROLL CALL.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Christopher Tall Bear
Larla Turner
Aleisha Karjala
Katherine Leidy (arrived 6:33)
Kay Holladay
Karen Goodchild
Michael Zorba
Rich Lubbers (arrived 6:45)
Joshua Hinkle

MEMBERS ABSENT

John Johnson

A quorum was present.

CITY STAFF PRESENT

Joyce Green, GIS Services Manager
Kathryn Walker, City Attorney
Roné Tromble, Administrative Technician
Bryce Holland, Multimedia Specialist

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Item No. 3, being:

CALL FOR A PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING PROPOSED REDISTRICTING OF CITY WARDS.

ITEMS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD.

1. Proposed City Council Wards 9-8-2021 Map
2. Emails Opposing Proposed Ward 5 Boundaries

Chair Karjala asked for a motion to hold a public hearing.

Karen Goodchild moved to hold a public hearing. Michael Zorba seconded the motion.

Ayes	Christopher Tall Bear, Larla Turner, Aleisha Karjala, Kay Holladay, Karen Goodchild, Michael Zorba, Joshua Hinkle
Nays	None
Not Present	Katherine Leidy, Rich Lubbers, John Johnson

The motion to hold a public hearing passed by a vote of 7-0.

PRESENTATION OF THE PROPOSED REDISTRICTING PLAN BY CHAIR ALEISHA KARJALA.

Ms. Kathryn Walker – I want to go through what the Charter says first, then we'll talk a little bit about what the case law interpreting reapportionment tells us to do. The Reapportionment Commission is appointed to meet and review and make recommendations on ward boundaries in three situations under our Charter: when the City proposes to annex or de-annex property, upon a unanimous recommendation of Council, or as a result of the census. It's pretty typical for this just to occur every ten years and not more often. You have one at-large rep and one representative from each ward. The Commission is charged with drawing ward boundaries so as to equalize, as nearly as practicable, the population of the several wards – this is population based on people, not registered voters, not registered members of a political party – it's just simple population numbers based on the census. In addition, each ward should 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. Ward lines shall not create artificial corridors which, in effect, separates voters from the ward to which they most naturally belong. After the Commission goes through the process of proposing boundaries, they have this hearing, they'll go back no sooner than ten days after the hearing, and either make adjustments to those boundaries or vote on a resolution recommending adoption of those boundaries, and then it goes to Council and Council has final authority to adopt the boundaries, and they will not adopt these until they have their own public hearing. New this census, Council is able to make adjustments to those boundaries, as well. That will be going to Council in the future. Ward boundary changes do not affect current Councilmember terms by our Charter, so no one is getting kicked out of office based on these changes; everyone will be able to finish their current term.

State law tells us we should avoid splitting election precincts, if possible. Of course,

the challenge is the current precinct map is also being changed as a result of the census, so we know that some of these precincts may end up being split, but we do try to avoid that if we can.

Just a little bit about what the purpose of reapportionment is, and you see this similar language that we have in our Charter across the country. The basis of all this, of course, is one person/one vote. That's the baseline standard by which courts look at reapportionment or redistricting. This arises out of the Equal Protection Clause under the U.S. Constitution. The U.S. Supreme Court says absolute population equality is the paramount objection of apportionment. One person/one vote is designed to protect voters and their access to the polls. The U.S. Supreme Court says when drawing wards you can deviate from population equality to accommodate traditional districting objectives, like maintaining communities of common interest and creating geographic compactness. But how much can you deviate? We talked about that at the Commission and the maximum deviation between the largest and the smallest ward can be ten percent. This is called the Safe Harbor Rule. If it exceeds ten percent, it's presumed impermissible, so that was something the Commission really focused on, is making sure that the difference between the smallest and the biggest ward did not exceed ten percent of the difference. There's other federal laws, of course, designed to prevent discrimination that most people are very familiar with – I won't go through those. It's really focused on whether there is a redistricting plan or reapportionment plan that's diluting votes based on history or practice of discrimination against a minority group, or one that's adopted or maintained for a discriminatory purpose against a minority group.

In summary, the primary focus is population equality – we want to make sure our deviations are under ten percent, but those deviations within that range are certainly justified to ensure the wards are formed of compact, contiguous territory and drawn to reflect and respond to communities of common interest, ethnic background, and physical boundaries. Consideration should not be given to the number of registered voters in a ward, partisan membership, historic voter turnout, or current Councilmember residences, and that information was not provided to the Commission. Consideration is given to whether each ward is likely to grow in its number of residents, or whether it is already fully developed and less likely to grow over the next ten years. We know we have some wards that are fairly land-locked that are fully developed and they're probably not going to see a lot of population growth, and we know from our platting that we have some wards with a lot of growth that will probably occur over the next ten years, so that had to be considered, because we want these numbers to work for everyone for the next ten years. If each ward were exactly equal, they would have 16,003.25 residents (figure out how you split someone four ways). Obviously, we can't be mathematically precise, but that is the number that the Commission was really searching for or trying to equalize to. As you address a population shortage or overage in one ward, it inevitably affects another ward. This was my first time to see this process in action, and it was pretty fascinating to see. You think you fixed one, but that affected the next one, and that affected the next one, and you just kind of end up working your way around in a circle. So there's no one right answer, but this is what the Commission has come up with.

With that, I'll turn it over to the Chair to address the rest of it.

Chair Karjala – I think Kathryn has done a good job of the overview of the process. What I wanted to say, specifically, was about how the process took place, and that's this. Wards 2, 3 and 4 had the least population growth potential, so they needed to have population added to them. The Committee tried to leave the deviation of those wards positive to try to keep their populations in line with faster growing wards for a longer period of time. The Committee was very successful in the cases of Ward 2 and Ward 3. Wards 5, 6 and 8 have the most growth potential over the next decade, so the Committee left them with negative deviations to allow for more growth over that time period before they become much more populous than other wards, so you're taking into account the ten-year timeframe. Wards 1, 4 and 7 were left with deviations of less than one percent from the ideal ward size of 16,003.

We're going through the ward slides which show how they were changed. Here's Ward 1. On the one side you see the proposed ward, which is what the Commission is recommending, and then the current ward. So you see how much these are changing and/or not changing. The charts show their population, their starting standard deviation – how far off they were from the standard deviation due to their population, and where we took population from, where we put population in, and what the ending population was. So you see here that Ward 1 ends with a population of 16,083 – pretty good for aiming for 16,003. Ward 2 – one side is the proposed side. This was a small change in Ward 2. We mentioned that Ward 2 was a low population growth. It's land-locked, so it doesn't have a lot of room to grow. Starting population, their starting standard deviation, where they took a little bit of population. The ending population was 16,757, so they're a little bit over the standard deviation for wards. Ward 3 had a starting population of 14,824 and a negative standard deviation, so we took parts of Ward 8 and gave them to Ward 3, and took parts of 3 and gave them to Ward 8, ending with a population of 16,943, so there's a standard deviation there for that as well. Ward 4 – there's the current Ward 4, the proposed Ward 4, which we really just tried to take out the curves, starting population of 14,129. Ward 4 was the slowest growing ward over this time period, so we took a little bit from Ward 7 and Ward 8 to make this one ending population 15,897, for a slightly negative standard deviation, because we don't expect that Ward 4, which is land-locked, will be growing. Ward 5 starting population of 16,610. We took some of Ward 6 and put it in Ward 5. We took some of Ward 1 and put it in Ward 5. The ending population was 15,339, for a slightly negative standard deviation because we expect population in Ward 5 to grow. Ward 6 there's currently what it looks like; here's the proposed version. Starting population of 18,515 so Ward 6 has had quite a bit of growth. Some of Ward 8 was taken. Some of Ward 6 was given to Ward 5. The ending population 15,344, so still a small negative standard deviation because the expectation is that Ward 5 will be growing. Here's the difference between current Ward 7 and proposed Ward 7, and basically what we did here was we took out a lot of the lines and tried to make them more straight. Beginning population of 18,309, big standard deviation, so Ward 7 was a lot bigger than the standard. The ending population with making the small change that we made is 16,067, very close to the 16,003 that we were aiming for. The last of the wards, Ward 8, you see the difference between the current guidelines and the proposed

guidelines. The beginning population was 15,776, so less than what we were aiming for with 16,003. There were elements that kind of went into Ward 8 that came from Ward 2, Ward 3, Ward 4 and Ward 6. The ending population 15,596, a little bit below the negative standard deviation because, once again, we're expecting population growth in Ward 8, given where the plats are and where growth is happening. So this is what it turns out to look like as far as the proposed boundary changes.

PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING THE PROPOSED WARD BOUNDARIES.

Chair Karjala – Now we're going to open the meeting for public comment and we'll call you up one at a time. If you would, please give us your name and your address, and you have three minutes to speak. There's no particular order to this; this is just the order of them sitting in the pile.

1. Mark Wagner, 3550 Duke Drive, Ward 5 – I think Ward 5 is being treated differently in this census. First of all, by your own rules, you said there shouldn't be more than a 10% deviation between the highest and the lowest. Ward 3, the highest, has 15,943 [16,943]; Ward 5, the lowest, has 15,339, which was 1,604, so that's even outside of a very wide – a 10% variation is pretty wide. Second of all, all of Norman is land-locked; to say that one ward is land-locked implies that another is not. Ward 5 may be moreso, though, than any of the others because of the restrictions on subdividing the plats of land. Also, so therefore Ward 5, I believe, will be slower and it actually has over the 5% deviation, and the slower growth should be accounted for. In addition, I believe there are tribal lands in Ward 5, and were the citizens that live on tribal lands, which I don't believe are part of the City – were they counted in this number during your calculation? So, again, I think it may have not been the intention of it, but it appears that the rural areas on both the east and the west side of town are being diluted by putting them in with other urban areas. The southwest corner of Ward 5 is more urban and would be a more likely candidate to be added to the Core Norman than the northwest side, which is rural and was added. Thank you.

2. Tom Hackelman, 1812 Quail Creek Drive – For the past nearly two years, I've had the privilege of serving on the Charter Review Commission. Charter Review Commission, as you know, has significant issues to debate, to discuss, to wrestle with, so it's been a long, but positive two years of wrestling with these topics. The challenge I have is that you made these decisions, albeit very important decisions, but decisions that were made over a two-day, two-meeting period. One of the biggest things that I'm challenged with is, based on the instructions that includes that the committee include boundaries drawn to reflect and respond to communities of common interest. What we're looking at is, we feel like there's not been a significant approach to this from the standpoint of drawing those lines to common interest, to common ethnic backgrounds, everything else that goes along with that. And two meetings does not seem to be sufficient to argue that case, to really design this appropriately. What it looks like is you really took the attempt to really, first and foremost, draw the lines as straight as possible and cut out things irrespective of how the area and the geography has been designed. At the end of the

day, it really feels like it's gerrymandering – that we're doing things to impact a political agenda, moreso than we are to manage and balance the population circles that are there. So I would challenge you and encourage you – this needs to be postponed as far as a vote – as part of a recommendation. I really believe that you need to go back and re-examine this and start over.

3. Mark Smith, 4810 72nd Avenue N.E. – I have nothing to add.

4. Deborah Smith, 4810 72nd Avenue N.E. – Same at this time.

5. Mark Swarovsky, 9724 Lilly Lane, Ward 5 – I'm here to talk more about procedure and my understanding of what happened, kind of similar to what the previous gentleman talked about. I'm going to quote it. I can't quote the whole hour and 45 minutes of the recording, but you guys probably know the context. So the quote is "what's going on currently in 5" – Ward 5 – "kind of reflects the opposite. We have a person who I don't think is a farmer, but is dangerous in many ways." So they're referring to the current Ward 5 Councilmember. So it's disturbing that somebody is on a committee to determine boundaries of a ward and they're saying the current Councilmember is dangerous. I don't understand that. I don't know what kind of danger he poses to this person or this individual, but I really don't think a person who feels that way brings in their – I'm going to assume their political opinion or bias into a decision about ward boundaries should be a part of any committee. If what we're doing here is supposed to be all bipartisan, no political affiliations, that person should not be a part of any of this, and anything they've touched or been a part of should get wadded up and thrown in the trash, because it's tainted. That's it. Thank you.

6. Cheryl Blake, 1501 Fischer Drive – Lived out there 38 years. Was there when the lake was built. Been in Norman since 1963. It would serve you all well to go learn the history of the Ward 5 area. That land was annexed by the City of Norman back in the late 50s into the early 60s for the purpose of developing Lake Thunderbird as a water source for the City of Norman. The original intent for that obviously is you can't have a water collection system if you plug it up. And as you move your development further and further east, you are clogging up the recharge zones for the City of Norman, which was Lake Thunderbird – 50 year lake. You're now pumping water out of the Garber-Wellington aquifer. We all in Ward 5 that don't have City stuff, our water comes from a different part of that aquifer. That's the recharge zone – that's where the water that hits the surface goes down. I believe the guy last month said, from the City and ACOG, that 90% of the water that hits the ground is absorbed – the rest of it's runoff. We've got that. We have 90% going into the ground. As you encroach and you take all of that, you're messing up the recharge area, not just for us with our water wells, but you're taking it into that lake, so you're cutting your own throats every time you start moving development over into that area. I agree with the gerrymandering. I think you need to look again – this is the 1995 thing on the urban suitability, and if you look at this and start with this, you're going to find out what can be developed and what can't be developed,

because it's going to tell you where the floodplains are, what the surface stuff is, if you have bedrock, hardrock, sandstone, shifting – go try to build something on the shifting sand. This is something that you should have been looking at, and this is a consideration because everybody in these areas has a common interest – we want to keep it rural, because we need it to be rural. We didn't ask to be annexed. And if you're not going to take care of the property that was entrusted to you from the people that lived here 70 years ago, perhaps we should consider de-annexation, because you are getting rid of the intent. Greed seems to be more valuable – I get very frustrated when I hear all this stuff about we can't euthanize the cats, the dogs, but you have no problem dividing all this and pushing it all out, chasing all the wildlife off, putting in your roads and your bikeways and all this – using us for your backyard. We don't appreciate that. We care about the animals that are out there. We care about the animals that we're raising for food. We care about the animals that live out there. It's important to us. We bought that land out there – if we bought it – most of that land has been in families since statehood.

7. Jeanne Wheeler, 214 Roserock Drive – I'm sure this was not an easy task to do. So we appreciate your efforts and we appreciate you hearing our voices on this. As a realtor, one of the things that I have noticed is that particular area is one of the slowest growing. It is a very, very, very low turnover rate. As she mentioned, a lot of it is family land and they're passing it on to their families. So there is very little movement going on in Ward 5. But, as a realtor, there's a statement in the criteria of what you base this on that causes me concern, and would like for you to help me understand what you mean by it, because when I hear the term "based on ethnic background" – how does that not violate three words that you have here in this introductory paragraph of grounds of race, ancestry and national origin? How does that not violate redlining laws? So that's my question to you. Thank you.

8. Don Wheeler, 214 Roserock Drive, Ward 5 – All the ones that came before are certainly more knowledgeable than I am on the history. I heard the news program last week and would just like to echo – that was disturbing. That was clearly partisanship and bias for what that person said on that committee. It's also my understanding – and there's probably another gentleman that's going to speak more knowledge on it than I can – that I understand the City of Norman purchased software to decide districting and haven't used it. They did a committee and didn't use the software that they bought. That's all I've got to say, other than echo again, you know, back in the 1920s the courts outlawed redlining, and that's what you're doing. Thank you.

9. Delena Gleason, 8120 E. State Hwy. 9, Ward 5 – I'm against this ward boundary plan as proposed. I believe you should keep the politics out and focus on your mandates of keeping like interests together. To me it makes no sense to move eleven square miles of farmland into an urban ward. I do believe that this is more politically motivated, rather than population motivated, and there will be Councillors – the ones that it affects will be displaced, according to The Transcript. I believe that you should go back to the drawing

board. Thank you.

10. Becky Bendure, 1911 136th Avenue S.E. – I believe this ward boundary change specifically targets a duly elected representative by a council that is supposed to be non-partisan, so I am against it.

11. Roger Gallagher, 2513 Woodsong Drive – I've been on a few committees and I was on Council ten years ago. Kathryn was there at the time when I was part of the redistricting. It's probably difficult because, as the City grows, you're going to see some changes. But aside from that, the one thing that bothers me is committee members are supposed to be neutral. They're supposed to pay attention to the subject and, most of all, try to avoid personal comments that the public hears. It's a shame that happened. We all have our own ideas. Norman politics is not gentle. It's dog-eat-dog sometimes, and it depends if you're conservative, independent, or liberal. So that comment came from a person who objects to the politics of one of the Councilmembers. So I'm curious why you didn't – unless this was the last meeting – you didn't come back and say let's take another meeting and look at this, because this is not conducive to a committee thinking of the welfare of the whole city. Aside from 5 being a lush, agricultural area that we like to get out and drive through and see and fish and do those things, it is too bad Norman is changing that much. But 5 is probably going to hold that as long as possible. So my main comment here is that comment has opened the door to prejudice. Now, if you don't go back and look, you're going to inherit the concept that you were doing what you want by gerrymandering. There are three Council people – and I remember the one ten years ago when I was on Council – you try to avoid moving people around because a committee chose something that the Council simply backed up. So I think you should reconsider that. It's not a good deal. You don't coincidentally get rid of three Council people. That must have risen in your meetings when you looked at that and said, wait a minute, we're moving three Council people out, putting them in another ward. There is something to be said for wards and the so-called mini-culture of the area. But that's my main point, and this is not the right answer. I think a better answer exists, and a better answer exists by going back ...

12. Robert Gleason, 8120 E. State Hwy. 9 – I'd like to say I echo everything that's been said so far. My concern is the people in each one of these wards that you're moving the boundaries around. I've talked to so many people. I said what ward are you in? I don't know, maybe Ward 2 or Ward 3. They don't know what ward they're in. And if we move them now and the election is in February, what's going to happen to these people? Are you going to send notices out to these people that are in different wards now? How are they going to know they're in Ward 2 or Ward 4 or Ward 6? How are they going to know that, and the election is in February? It's just going to confuse things. That's all I've got to say. Thank you.

13. Maggie Logue, 2345 Blue Creek Drive, Ward 5 – From my understanding, this committee has been accused of gerrymandering. And, just to be clear, I want to give

everybody on the committee and the people here what the definition of it is. It's the practice of dividing or arranging a territorial unit into election districts in a way that gives one political party an unfair advantage in elections. From what I have seen on how you're trying to divide Norman, it affects mostly Ward 5 and Ward 3, which are our most recent conservative elected Councilmembers, and I have a problem with that. I think the committee needs to be null and void and start over, maybe with new people. My other concern is that the Reapportionment Committee members are nominated by the Mayor, and I understand they're approved by the Council, but I would like to know when you all were approved. Has it been since our new Councilmembers were elected, or was it before? That speaks volumes to me. I have an issue with y'all trying to move farmland into an urban area. The City Charter recommends that the boundary lines are redrawn with consideration such as common interest, ethnic background, and physical boundaries that reflect voters in a ward which they most naturally belong. Well, I'm sorry. Urban and rural don't exactly have the same interests, and that's an issue for me. Like I said before, the biggest impact is obviously Ward 5 and 3, and I just feel like, according to the definition of gerrymandering, that is what has happened. I also want to mention to the female – I don't know who it was that said this, but to refer to my duly elected Councilmember as dangerous in many ways and so that's to be considered – what is wrong with this committee? Seriously.

14. Patrick O'Brien, 7200 E. Franklin Road – No comment.

15. Fred Pope, 1501 Navajo Road – From what I'm given to understand, this present proposal by the Reapportionment Committee for redistricting the wards in Norman contains elements of gerrymandering that may be a bit subtle, albeit intentional, for average citizens of Norman in a proclaimed effort to make neater, straight line boundaries for Norman's wards. It just happens to move the addresses of two of Norman's present Councillors out of the boundaries for which they were elected. This has the practical and immediate effect of nullifying their election, because they would no longer reside in the ward for which they were elected. Is it, perhaps, reasonable to come to the conclusion that these two Councillors have been redlined or, in this case, straight-lined out of their duly elected positions? Why should this happen when other districts within a given ward could have been used to more equitably distribute population according to the requirements associated with the U.S. Department of Census data? According to The Norman Transcript of September 23, as someone else has – a couple of other people have referred to – a member of the redistricting committee can be heard saying at a meeting we have a person in Ward 5 who I don't think is a farmer but is dangerous in many ways. So that is to be considered. The Mayor has considerable influence and control over the composition of any committee established for the City's concerns. He or she can encourage members of a coterie to volunteer for any given committee, thus practically guaranteeing a previously desired outcome. This certainly appears to be the case in this current proposal. This proposal should be rejected and a new less biased and more objective reapportionment committee be formed to carry out its responsibility to the citizens and voters of Norman. Thank you.

16. Teresa Elam, 5921 Alameda – I get very emotional about this, so I'm sorry. I have been very emotional. It hurts my heart to see what's happening to the City of Norman. It's a wonderful city to live in and I love this city very much. I was raised here. My parents bought the house at 5909 Alameda, where I grew up, and my parents still reside. My father passed away there three years ago. Ward 5 is important to me – I mean very important to me. I don't care if you are a Democrat. I don't care if you are a Republican. I don't care. But what you should care about is what you're doing to the city – quit dividing the city. Us Eastsiders have a very important role to play in this city. Ward 5 – we are the caretakers for your water. We are the caretakers for the greenspace of Norman. We are the caretakers for the watershed. And with that, I'm going to tell you our former City Councilperson Michael Nash – we worked tirelessly on the well issue and the water issue and the boundaries. He came to me and he said, Teresa, you are the most qualified person to be on the Reapportionment Committee for Ward 5. I want you there. Nobody has filled out an application to be on this committee for Ward 5. I filled one out. He recommended me. Mayor Clark does not like me; she did not allow me to be on this committee. Four other names were recommended from Ward 5 to be on this committee; all four names that were put forward by Mr. Nash were declined by Mayor Breea Clark. I don't know how Karen Goodchild's name ended up coming up, because he called me and said, what do you think about Karen? I said, well, she lives in Ward 5. She's lived there a long time. I think she'd be great. But the person that was supposed to represent was – not Mr. Tall Bear. What is the other person's name at large? The Governor of the – Johnny Johnson. That was who Mayor Clark wanted to represent Ward 5 on this committee. He was moved to an at large because we finally got a person on here. You cannot tell me this is not political. You cannot even begin to tell me that it's not political. Whenever you have someone who is the Governor of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe to represent all of Ward 5, it is a conflict of interest. It was a conflict of interest. That is tribal land – that is not City land. The City of Norman has zero jurisdiction on tribal land – none. You have no jurisdiction over the people on tribal land, and you have no jurisdiction over their land. They are a sovereign nation, and correct me if I'm wrong. And you have included that and you have tried to include that so that you can take that 1,680 people ... farmland – 2,000 voters of farmland. The other thing I want to point out is you have said multiple times on your tape about OU – the OU issue, and we cannot divide the University of Oklahoma. Well, let me tell you something – OU is a State-owned university. What you're talking about not dividing is the land belonging to the OU Foundation. Part of the land on the North Base ...

Ms. Karen Goodchild asked if we're going to read the emails so they are part of the record. Ms. Kathryn Walker responded that they will be entered into the record.

Chair Karjala asked for a motion to close the public hearing.

Karen Goodchild moved to close the public hearing. Kay Holladay seconded the motion.

Ayes	Christopher Tall Bear, Larla Turner, Katherine Leidy, Aleisha Karjala, Kay Holladay, Karen Goodchild, Michael Zorba, Rich Lubbers, Joshua Hinkle
Nays	None
Not Present	John Johnson

The motion to close the public hearing passed by a vote of 9-0.

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Item No. 4, being:

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION OF COMMITTEE AND STAFF.

Ms. Larla Turner – I think it is well known in this room that I am the person who made the comment. My comment was in response to several comments made on behalf of Ward 5. I hope you all have listened to the tape in full very carefully. I understand that we – a rural community has special interests and needs that are different from other parts of the City. My comment was in response to suggestions that Ward 5 could not lose any population or be altered in any way because they have concerns about water, land, development, and so much more. I find that misleading when we think about what's actually happening in Ward 5. I find it my duty to point out that that is not true, because just last year Ward 5 did elect a businessman, not a farmer, and that's what was being said in that conversation – that we could not change anything because they need the power to elect a farmer. Currently there are a lot of people in Ward 5 that are really upset about development and they're not being represented. My ward and my community have a shared interest of not living in fear and having violent white supremacist groups in our cities. We've talked about the east side issue and we know that there is a large concentration of minorities in the east side, and so that does matter to us. That is one of our common interests. Our quality of life and our ability to live it happily and not threatened. My point was, and it was in response to a conversation that maybe shouldn't have been happening. But I responded to a misleading comment. It was said that Ward 5 cannot lose population because they need to keep their rural power. That doesn't sound like banding together to vote for a common interest or rural owners, so why would we use that as a reason to refuse moving ward lines in 5, if this is supposed to be an equal and non-bipartisan, I don't see how making statements that don't reflect the truth about a ward in order to keep its power can be made without such a refuting comment. If my comment was bipartisan or inappropriate in any way, I apologize for continuing a conversation that probably shouldn't have been happening then. I do not, and will not ever be sorry for speaking out against racism and the terrorism of minorities. I've heard that there have been suggestions that we disband this, and I don't really have an opinion on that here or there, but I know that we're dealing with people that are going to fight, complain, threaten and sue about everything that does not support their agenda. If you feel the need to disband, I understand, but please,

please assure that we do not lose what little diversity we have on this committee. I've learned this week that asking for consideration is a pretty radical thing to do in this town, but I urge you to take these things into consideration. I did not start the conversation.

Ms. Karen Goodchild – I would like to say I am the representative for Ward 5. I reject quite a bit of that statement from my fellow committee. I was suggesting that we take the Cedar Lane area. I, at no time, said that we didn't need to take any from Ward 5. My suggestion was that we take some of the new developments, because those people have come to me and said we want to be in a more urban ward. That was my suggestion. My concern was the farmland needed to stay with a common boundary and a common interest. I'm sorry that my fellow committee member felt like that was a racist comment and that I somehow ...

Ms. Larla Turner – I didn't say that and I don't ...

Ms. Karen Goodchild – I'm just saying I'm sorry if that's how you felt – if that was perceived, because that was not my intention at all. I wanted to keep the rural areas of Ward 5 together and move, if we were going to, because Ward 5 now has the lowest population and is not the fastest growing. And that was my concern, and I wanted to move more of the urban neighborhoods to a more urban ward.

Ms. Larla Turner – I just wanted to say real quick in response, I did not mean that you had ulterior motives. I was just saying that the idea that they need to band together for the common interest of rural priority conflicts with my city and ward's common interest of safety and equality.

Ms. Karen Goodchild – Okay. And I disagree with that, but thank you.

Ms. Larla Turner – And that's okay. Thank you.

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Item No. 5, being:

ADJOURNMENT.

There being no further discussion and no objection, the meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Passed and approved this 21st day of October, 2021.



Rich Lubbers, Secretary
Reapportionment Ad Hoc Committee