

Calvert County Redistricting Committee
Meeting Minutes of January 7, 2022
3:00 p.m. – Circuit Courthouse, BOCC Hearing Room
175 Main Street, Second Floor
Prince Frederick, MD 20678

MEMBERS:

Present: Dawn Collins, League of Women Voters Appointee *virtually*
Kara Dudley, Democratic Central Committee Appointee *virtually*
Judy MacWilliams, Republican Central Committee Appointee *in-person*
Michael Hawkins, NAACP Calvert Branch Appointee *virtually*
Wilson Parran, Commissioner Appointee *in-person*
Stephen Zimmerman, Commissioner Appointee *in-person*
Luke Macaulay, Commissioner Appointee *in-person*
Ronald Clark, Commissioner Appointee *virtually*
Edward Bailor, Commissioner Appointee *in-person*

Staff: John Norris, County Attorney *in-person*
Mark Willis, County Administrator *in-person*
Ashley Staples-Reid, Special Projects Program Manager, County Administrator *in-person*
Lionel Sewell, GIS Supervisor, Technology Services *virtually*
Kristen Scott, Executive Administrative Aide, Calvert County Election Board *virtually*
Gail Hatfield, Elections Administrator, Calvert County Election Board *virtually*

I. General Business & Administrative Matters

- (1) Call to order – determine quorum
Chairperson Parran determined a quorum and called the meeting to order at 3:00pm
- (2) Approval of January 7, 2022 open agenda
Motion: Stephen Zimmerman motioned to approve the open agenda
Seconded: Judy MacWilliams seconded
Action: Motion carries 8-0-1 (Dawn Collins absent for vote)
- (3) Approval of December 20, 2021 open meeting minutes
Discussion: Chairperson Parran requests that the discussion regarding whether the committee should consider CVAP or total population when recommending the districting lines be added to the minutes. Staff indicated that they would include that in the final minutes.
Motion: Ronald Clark motioned to approve the open minutes as modified.
Seconded: Judy MacWilliams seconded
Action: Motion carries 9-0

II. New Business

- (1) Review and discussion of current districting line.
- (2) Discussion and determination of data requests/needs form staff
 - (a) Chairperson Parran requested a consensus regarding whether the committee would like to discuss increasing the number of districts in Calvert County.
Discussion: Kara Dudley posed the question of increasing to 4 commissioner districts with 1 additional commissioner being election at-large.
Action: Consensus to further discuss increasing the number of districts was 1-8. The committee will recommend leaving the number of districts as-is.
 - (b) Chairperson Parran requested a consensus regarding whether the committee would like to discuss recommending a change to how the President Commissioner is currently elected.

Discussion: For background, Chairperson Parran indicated that currently the President Commissioner is elected annually in December by commissioner vote. In contrast, surrounding counties elect their President Commissioner for a 4-year term by the citizens. Chairperson Parran explained the potential pros and cons based on his former experience as County Commissioner. Stephen Zimmerman indicated that he polled past elected officials and 80% stated that they believe that the President Commissioner should be elected by the citizens. County Attorney John Norris confirmed that a change would require a change of local law by the General Assembly. Luke Macaulay feels that this is out of our purview. Dawn Collins raised concerned about the inability for annual change if a person is not effective as a 4-year elected President Commissioner as well as the general understanding of local politics among the citizens. Edward Bailor agrees with Luke Macaulay that this task is out of their purview.

Action: Consensus to further discuss recommending how the President Commissioner is elected was 2 (Zimmerman; Collins) -7. The committee will recommend leaving the way the President Commissioner is elected as-is with the caveat that if the Board of County Commissioners requests that this topic be discussed further that the committee will do so.

- (c) Chairperson Parran requested a consensus regarding whether the committee would like to discuss recommending to how the Commissioners are elected.

Discussion: Currently, all Calvert County Commissioners are elected at-large. Chairperson Parran noted that there is a potential bill at the state level that may pass that would alter law to have commissioners elected by districts instead. Kara Dudley inquired if the current way of election is in violation of the Voting Rights Act and County Attorney John Norris indicated that it is certainly an argument that has been made, but that the bill at was passed in 2013 that indicated how the commissioners are currently elected was drafted with the oversight from the Attorney General, which brings confidence that there is not a federal law violation. Judy MacWilliams suggested to leave the way the commissioners are elected as-is, pointing out that if a commissioner is elected by district only, they would still vote on matters that affect county-wide.

Action: Consensus to further discuss recommending how the President Commissioner is elected was 1 (Dudley) -8. The committee will recommend leaving the way the commissioners are elected as-is with the general assembly having the duty of passing any changes if they so desire.

- (d) Chairperson Parran requested a consensus regarding whether the committee would like to leave the current district lines as-is.

Discussion: Stephen Zimmerman would like to discuss changing the lines, specifically the lines between districts 2 & 3. Luke Macaulay would like to balance the population (add more citizens) in District 1 and suggested the committee consider future growth. County Attorney John Norris cautioned that considering uncertain, future number does not hold legal merit and County Administrator Mark Willis stated that overall annual growth for Calvert County over 10 years is .46%. Consensus to normalize the current lines was made and a list of data sets were requested by the committee members for staff to gather:

1. Minority Population per Census Blocks
2. Minority Population per Districts
3. 3 meaningful proposals from the Election Board
4. Municipalities within the county
5. Census designated areas within the county

III. Public Comment:

Chairperson Parran asked if there was anyone from the public, either in-person or virtually, who wished to speak. There were 1 individual in-person who spoke in person and 2 individuals virtually

IV. Adjournment:

Motion: Judy MacWilliams motioned to adjourn at 4:07pm

Seconded: Luke Macaulay seconded

Action: Motion carries 9-0.