

Board of Civil Authority Meeting Minutes

November 12, 2021

Present: Kevin Dougherty, Brenda Goupee, Julie Smith, Doon Hinderyckx, Becky Klein, Frank Severy, Mike Harvey, Orca Media. Attending via zoom: Robert Franks, Orca Media

Kevin called the meeting at 8:35 am

Kevin read the BCA agenda: The Rochester Board of Civil Authority will meet at the Rochester Town Office or virtually through Zoom on Friday, November 12 at 8:30 a.m. to discuss the Apportionment Proposed House Map.

Robert Franks asked that the members introduce themselves before speaking so those attending zoom will know who is speaking.

Kevin noted there will be Public Comment at the end of the meeting limited to 5 minutes to each speaking. Kevin asked that there will be no interruptions during the deliberation.

Frank commented that Stockbridge is not part of our proposed district. He felt that they are an important part of our district geographically, unlike the proposed town of Ripton. He noted that the Towns of Hancock and Granville are proposed in our district and that makes complete sense for all of us to be in one district since we all share the Route 100 corridor. We all use the same Regional Commission as well, whereas Ripton we don't know whom they use. Frank stated that Stockbridge has so many ties with our community such as the school. We also share roads. He felt it would behoove the state to keep Rochester, Stockbridge, Hancock, Granville, Pittsfield, and Bethel all together. Kevin agreed with Frank and added the fact that the Town of Ripton and the Town of Stockbridge both have populations in the low 700's. He felt that would be an even trade. He said adding Pittsfield would add on too high of a population for the redistricting. Kevin said he was so happy to see Hancock and Granville included in our district. Brenda said that one factor the state makes about the redistricting is to create districts that include towns which share common interest. Brenda thoroughly agreed with Frank. She said its local knowledge and when she researched this online, she noted these are both important factors. Doon spoke and read something he found stating State laws require that State Legislative districts be contiguous and compact and that they adhere to county and other political subdivision boundaries except where necessary to comply with other legal requirements. He also added in addition state statutes specify that districts should account for patterns of geography, social interaction, and common interests. He felt since the state forced the merger of the schools of Rochester and Stockbridge and then turn around and then put this division between the towns is absurd. Brenda felt the decision disregarded geography when this was done. Kevin added Hancock and Granville were a part of Orange and had no connections with Randolph. Frank felt they looked at a flat map and Ripton is two mountain ridges away from Bethel. He also added no offense to Ripton, just felt they would be better served with their surrounded towns. Becky noted it was appropriate for Pittsfield to be included in the proposed district they are in because of their ties as a community to Rutland and Killington. Brenda felt it was unfortunate to take the small hunk out of Bethel and move that to another district. Kevin thought it would affect Bethel greatly. Brenda added the smaller part of Bethel is from the underpass to the Stockbridge line. Kevin felt Bethel will have

to speak to that as it will greatly affect their voting. Doon asked if we had a proposed map that we would submit to them more to our liking. Kevin asked if there was any more discussion before continuing. No further discussion. Kevin agreed we should note we would propose to switch the Town of Ripton for the Town of Stockbridge and if we could include all of Bethel. He said it was strange to exclude the small piece of Bethel. Kevin stated we could add our opinion but really it is the legislature that will determine and make the decision. Brenda reiterated her earlier statement to not divide towns and follow the town and county lines wherever possible. Kevin asked if we would like to propose the map then with the switch of the Town of Ripton with the Town of Stockbridge as we discussed and comment on adding all of the Town of Bethel. Kevin asked if we should go through the Feedback Form and make sure we have all the information required to be reported back to the state. Doon noted we will need to modify their proposal by switching the Town of Ripton for the Town of Stockbridge, adding Towns of Hancock and Granville, and asking to include entire Town of Bethel. Mike Harvey shared that by pulling the Town of Stockbridge from the proposed district it will make this so complicated with the state. He felt that dynamic will create a domino effect. Mike said we could just make our proposal and go with it. Kevin said it sounds like we have the decisions of the board and can propose our comments accordingly.

Public Comment: Robert commented that this is a very important meeting and happens every ten years after the census is done. He agreed with a lot of the discussion.

Kevin called the meeting at 9:02 a.m. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Smith