

June 4, 2013

Comm. Magdalena Blanco  
Comm. Mariano Diaz-Miranda  
Comm. Rachel Farris  
Comm. William Hewitt  
Comm. Carmen Llanes Pulido  
Comm. Arthur Lopez  
Comm. Anna Saenz  
Comm. Maria Solis

Dear Members of the Independent Redistricting Commission:

**Congratulations** upon your appointments! It is an important and historic responsibility that we all embark upon.

On behalf of Austinites for Geographic Representation, I would like to follow-up on my oral testimony of May 31st (<http://austintx.swagit.com/play/05312013-564/#2>) regarding your selection of the next 6 members of the full Commission from the remaining pool of 52 applicants:

1. We believe the Federal Voting Right Act requires you to choose **at least 1 African American** to be on this Commission.
2. The Charter Amendment clearly states that **there 'shall be' a student on this Commission.** [II.3.(D)(1)]
3. For this first time, in the City Charter there is the requirement that at least 3 Commissioners come from each of the 4 existing Travis County Commissioners districts, to the extent feasible. [II.3.(I)(9)] We have reviewed the remaining applications and it is feasible such that of the 6 remaining picks, **1 could come from Pct. 1, 2 from Pct. 2, 3 from Pct. 3**, with Pct. 4 having already been covered with the good 'luck of the draw.'
4. We would like to see you make an effective effort to include **at least 1 Asian on this Commission.**
5. The **Gender, Racial, and Ethnic diversity** of the full Commission of 14 can and should be balanced to represent the City of Austin. [II.3.(I)(9)] An official Austin demographic link that may assist you with this is here:  
[http://austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Planning/Demographics/city\\_of\\_austin\\_profile\\_2010.pdf](http://austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Planning/Demographics/city_of_austin_profile_2010.pdf)

In looking closely at the remaining pool of 52 applicants to the ICRC, we have determined that there are a number of combinations of 6 additional applicants with your original 8 that meet all of the above requirements. From those handful of scenarios of applicant combinations, we have noticed a few key constraints that bare mentioning. South Austin is about 40% of the population of Austin, so between 5 to 6 of the 14 Commissioners should be from South Austin, with the other 8 from North Austin, meaning 2 more from the South and 4 more from the North. The two students are in TC

Pct. 3. Since Pct. 4 is already more than adequately represented, the 2 additional Commissioners from South Austin should come from SW Austin -- Pct. 3. In order for there to be some representation near the other side of Pct. 3 in NW Austin, we would suggest that the Commissioner chosen from the farthest NW section of Pct. 2 also live closest to Pct. 3. This would still leave a Pct. 2 Commissioner to be chosen from Central Austin. Of course, it is possible to choose only 1 Commissioner from SW Pct. 3 and 1 Commissioner from NW Pct. 3, along with the student in Central Austin, leaving South Austin with only 5 Commissioners, but we believe 6 would be more equitable. We have compiled a number of scenario applicant combinations that would satisfy all of the prior constraints which we are prepared to share at your next meeting should the need arise.

It is our understanding that each of you will come to your next meeting with your 6 top picks each. In light of the prior listed considerations, and the fact that there are as many as 20 highly qualified applicants that would enable you to meet all of the constraints for the selection of the rest of the Commissioners, we believe that additional information beyond just the months old applications may be useful for the select down to 6.

Therefore, we recommend that you consider calling in (through J.J. Gutierrez) as many as 20 of your highest rated applicants to each give a 3 to 5 minute testimony statement on themselves. Those testimonies need not take much more than an hour or two in total and we believe this would clarify and add significantly to the applications as you seek to finish forming the Commission.

Again we congratulate you. We think this will be an exciting process. We believe because you are independent it should be a very good process for the City. You are setting a precedent which we hope will apply for the rest of this century, so you have an extra obligation that none of your successors will have. We're excited about that too, and we look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Peck Young  
Austinites for Geographic Representaiton  
512-422-8191  
peck@pyoungconsulting.com