

Commissioners:

At your last meeting on 9/21/13 you deliberated on a preliminary map that Comm. Costello and Comm. Blanco brought to the Commission. Listening and relistening to the video, <http://austintx.swagit.com/play/09212013-501>, I have listed the precincts that you tentatively agreed to at the bottom of this letter. Following a slightly incorrect map that came out in the Statesman on the 22nd, a few days later on the 24th, you all had posted a map attempting to depict your proceedings of the 21st <http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=196883>.

That map also has some errors and noteworthy constraints within it. First, the errors: (1.) By your own meeting Pct. 404 was included in Dist. 2 and later also in Dist. 5. By total population and population makeup Pct. 404 works better in Dist. 2 as you originally had it. (2.) Also, you skipped over Pct. 314 and 303 which can only go in your Dist. 8 (SW). (3.) There was some back and forth, but you all agreed to leave both 241 and 242 unassigned, but on your map you have split Brentwood (241) and Crestview (242) and put Brentwood in Dist. 9, but not Crestview; traditionally those neighborhoods are like 'peas in a pod,' they go together. (4.) Lastly for now, the far West and South edges of Dist. 6 will have to include the portions of 374, 375, 244, 312, 318, and 233 in the City limits as your deliberations included but your map did not.

Some other key constraints about this first map, presented by Comm. Costello, but which do not appear to have been recognized nor openly stated:

(1.) Your District 6 or whatever district number is assigned to it, will have to start building from Pcts 318 (and possibly 368 or 330) on the North side of Bee Caves Road as that is a discontinuous break that attorney for the City of Austin Sid Falk correctly pointed out to you all. This is important because if you build the district (Dist. 6) from there and head North and East, you will likely run out of allowable population before you have encompassed all of the Williamson County precincts. So, the "professed" goal of including all of the Williamson county precincts in that district proposed by Comm. Costello is not likely to happen.

(2.) Most importantly, your Black Opportunity District 1 is no longer a black opportunity district. It is at least 3 to 4 % points lower in black voting age population than AGR's proposed District 1. In fact, your District 1 has higher Hispanic and Anglo voting age population than Black; it is actually a weak Hispanic opportunity district. But further, you need 20,000 more people in it, and as you have this first map thus far, you cannot get 20,000 more people with even a plurality of blacks. The problem here is that whoever agreed on this subcommittee "working group" map pushed your Districts 4 & 7 too far to the east to be able to finish out your Black Opportunity District. It has been said that one of the Commissioners does not like the idea of the Black Opportunity District "going too far north." It is also manifestly clear that another Commissioner in Pct. 153 wants her precinct to be in a District aligned to the North and West, rather than in the Black Opportunity District. Neither of these reasons are appropriate or acceptable. It is precisely times like this where the standards of transparency and impartiality

from the Charter are suppose to be followed for having been chosen to be on the ICRC Commission.

(3.) Third, any discussion among Commissioners about redistricting matters (esp. map making), even in less than a quorum, should not be happening outside of an open meeting. It is inappropriate for a subgroup of Commissioners to come up with a map outside of a full Commission meeting and present it piecemeal to the full Commission. This does not meet the transparency requirements of the Charter and probably also does not meet Texas Open Meetings Act requirements. But further, the development of this first map recommended by Comm. Costello and Blanco did not follow the process the Commission agreed to on Sept. 14th. Namely, after VRA districts, starting from the constraining edges of the city limits was not consistently followed, and additions of items not agreed to in the process, such as "splitting the I-35 'barrier'" are inconsistent with the process agreed to by the Commission on Sept. 14th.

(4.) Finally, it was noteworthy that both your legal counsel and mapping consultant could be heard under their breath at one point in the 9/21/13 meeting agreeing with each other that they had not done districting map making quite like the proceedings transpired on 9/21.

Normally, districting officials will be presented a number of (5 to 10 or more) scenarios of complete maps and choose and maybe combine among them. A districting body usually does not try to build from scratch one map at a time and consider the project done without closely evaluating the population makeup data of multiple complete map scenarios considered.

Therefore, it would be *legally* unacceptable, for example, that one or two Commissioners get their pet map as with, "*When we start tweaking it, we can't redraw the whole thing.*" @ Item 6 (4 of 4) 32:40 <http://austintx.swagit.com/play/09212013-501>. Commissioners, if you do the job properly, you **will be** redrawing the whole thing a number of times, esp. from the first map you began with.

Brad Parsons,
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Precincts in order of their mention per the video from 9/21/13 (complete video posted 9/24/13):

<http://austintx.swagit.com/play/09212013-501>

District 1:

120

117

129

118

105

106
101
121
151
122
132
126
130
154
124
131
128
134
125
127
141
133
325
444

District 2:

402
401
407
116
450
443
452
405
404
448
410
441

District 3:

423
426
427
436

420
440
431
439
429
422
433
442

District 4:

156
139
140
164
142
149
223
248
217
224

District 5:

404?
406
417
416
411
414
302
304
309
310
315
408
414
463
415
435
367

366

360

350

HC Pcts

District 6:

Wilco Pcts

245

234

232

333

334

335

336

337

331

326

343

233

244

374

District 7:

153

102

103

108

226

112

216

111

109

229

205

263

259

211

258

268

218

District 8:

365

339

349

351

362

363

358

350

352

435

458

344

354

454

412

303

314

301?

District 9:

305

321

323

327

328

345

228

254

267

249

246

253

252

243

247

262

231
238
239
220
213
237
240
236
235

District 10:

None indicated yet.