

**MINUTES OF THE
REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE**

Saturday, July 9, 2011 – 4:00 p.m.– Price, Utah

Members Present:

Sen. Ralph Okerlund, Senate Chair
Rep. Kenneth W. Sumsion, House Chair
Sen. Gene Davis
Sen. Benjamin M. McAdams
Sen. Kevin T. Van Tassell
Rep. Roger E. Barrus
Rep. Melvin R. Brown
Rep. Gage Froerer
Rep. Francis D. Gibson
Rep. Neal B. Hendrickson
Rep. Don L. Ipson
Rep. Brian S. King
Rep. Todd E. Kiser
Rep. Merlynn T. Newbold
Sen. Stuart C. Reid
Rep. Christine F. Watkins
Rep. R. Curt Webb

Members Absent:

President Michael G. Waddoups
Speaker Rebecca D. Lockhart

Staff Present:

Mr. J Brian Allred, Policy Analyst
Mr. Benjamin C. Christensen, Policy Analyst
Mr. Leif Elder, Policy Analyst
Mr. John Fellows, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Wendy L. Bangerter, Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present, a copy of related materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at www.le.utah.gov.

1. Committee Business

Chair Sumsion called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Members of the Committee introduced themselves and indicated the areas of the state that they represent.

2. Overview of Redistricting

Mr. Christensen gave a presentation on what redistricting is, why it is done, and the redistricting principles that were adopted by the Committee at the May 4, 2011 meeting. He discussed the ideal populations for Senate and House districts and outlined the timeline for the redistricting process.

Mr. Elder gave an overview of the redistricting public website, RedistrictUtah.com and demonstrated the online redistricting tool that allows the public to create redistricting plans. He explained that the plans created can be shared or submitted to the Legislature for review and will be posted on RedistrictUtah.com.

3. Presentation of Redistricting Plans

Chair Sumsion asked if there were any in the audience who had submitted plans through the online redistricting tool that they would like to review for the Committee. There was no response.

Sen. Davis reviewed his statewide U.S. Congressional Plan – Plan I. He feels that the "donut" plan gives citizens stronger representation. He stated he listened to public comments and tried to implement them into his plan.

Sen. Okerlund discussed the Senate plan named Okerlund Plan B. He noted that the plan will require some changes that will have a ripple effect on the other districts. He outlined those areas of the state that have experienced a significant increase in population growth. He emphasized that the redistricting meetings being held are to hear the public's concerns, but to also gather comments, ideas, and plans that will help in the redistricting process.

Chair Sumsion distributed his proposed Complete House Plan and explained how he began the process of drawing these maps. He explained their efforts to mesh the 75 House districts into one complete statewide plan. He reiterated the requirement to use 2010 census data.

Rep. Barrus reviewed and explained the northern counties and other northern areas included in the Complete House Plan.

Rep. Kiser explained the relative reduction of population in Salt Lake County, which may affect some state legislators' areas of representation.

Chair Sumsion reviewed several proposed maps and how they differ in configuration. He presented a randomly chosen map submitted by a citizen and read the submitter's comments on the difficulty of the exercise. He answered questions from the public regarding the maps.

Sen. Okerlund compared his state Senate map with a map submitted by a citizen.

4. Public Comment and Committee Discussion About Redistricting

Mr. John Watkins, Carbon County resident, commented on the Complete House Plan and stated he is not interested in the dividing of the county as this map would do.

Ms. Darrelyn Davis, Grassroots Advocacy Partnership, spoke in favor of not dividing counties. She encouraged the Legislature to consider the distances of travel for elected representatives as well as those trying to work together in a cohesive partnership in the county.

Chair Sumsion asked for a raise of hands of those in favor of the "donut" approach and those in favor of the "pizza" approach to the redistricting process. A majority of respondents favored the pizza approach.

Mr. Mike Milovich, Carbon County resident, also asked for consideration for travel time in trying to keep counties together. He expressed appreciation to the Committee for bringing the meeting to the area. He suggested that grouping counties that were members of the same association of governments (AOG) might make sense. He commended the Legislature for their efforts. He also emphasized the need to consider traveling distances and hazards.

Mr. Walter Borla, Carbon County resident, spoke in favor of Sen. Davis's congressional plan and Rep. McIff's Utah House Plan C.

Mr. Sam Rawson, Carbon County resident, asked for clarification of the "donut" and "pizza" plans and spoke in favor of the "pizza" plan.

Sen. Okerlund explained the difference between the "pizza" plan versus the doughnut hole plan.

Sen. McAdams asked for a show of hands how many people feel they would be better represented by a legislator from Salt Lake City or by one from the rural area.

Mr. Larry Ross, Roosevelt resident, stated his interest in drawing a map to join Duchesne County with those counties with similar needs and issues, not across the mountains.

Ms. Lynna Topolovec, resident, spoke in favor of putting Carbon County into a single district.

Chair Sumsion and Sen. Okerlund expressed appreciation to the public for their ideas and suggestions to help with the redistricting process.

5. Adjourn

MOTION: Sen. Reid moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Sumsion adjourned the meeting at 5:30 p.m.