

**MINUTES OF THE
REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, September 7, 2011– 9:00 a.m.– Rm 210 Senate Building

Members Present:

Sen. Ralph Okerlund, Senate Chair
Rep. Kenneth W. Sumsion, House Chair
Sen. Gene Davis
Sen. Benjamin M. McAdams
Sen. Stuart C. Reid
Sen. Kevin T. Van Tassell
President Michael G. Waddoups
Rep. Roger E. Barrus
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
Rep. R. Curt Webb

Members Absent:

Rep. Melvin R. Brown
Speaker Rebecca D. Lockhart
Rep. Christine F. Watkins

Staff Present:

Mr. John Q. Cannon, Managing Policy Analyst
Mr. Joseph T. Wade, Policy Analyst
Mr. Leif G. Elder, Policy Analyst
Ms. Allison M. Nicholson, Policy Analyst
Mr. John L. Fellows, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Kimberly A. Heiner, 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 9:20 a.m. He excused Speaker Lockhart, Rep. Brown, and Rep. Watkins from the meeting.

MOTION: Sen. Van Tassell moved to approve the minutes of the August 19 and August 22, 2011 Redistricting Committee meetings. The minutes passed unanimously with Sen. McAdams, Rep. Barrus, and Rep. Kiser absent for the vote.

2. Redistricting Plans - Committee Discussion and Action

Ms. Nicholson explained the technical changes that staff made to the "School Board: Committee Modified Base Map." She responded to questions from the Committee.

MOTION: Sen. Davis moved to approve the "School Board: Committee Modified Base Map" with the technical changes. The motion passed unanimously with Rep. Ipson, Sen. McAdams, and Rep. Kiser absent for the vote.

Chair Sumsion explained his "School Board: Sumsion Modified Base Map." He responded to questions from the Committee.

MOTION: Chair Sumsion moved to adopt the changes to the base plan in "School Board: Sumsion Modified Base Map." The motion passed unanimously.

Rep. Fred Cox, House District 32, suggested possible changes to the School Board map.

Mr. Mark Sage, Fair Boundaries, presented Senate plan "Fair Boundaries State Senate Plan A." He said that this plan was created without any consideration of where incumbents live and that the deviation of this plan was .01%. He also said that this plan keeps communities of interests together. He responded to questions from the Committee.

Chair Okerlund presented "Okerlund Draft 2 of a Potential Senate Base Plan" and explained the rationale of the plan. He said that the deviation of this map is under 3%.

Rep. Doug Sagers, House District 21, said he did not like Chair Okerlund's proposed plan because it divides Tooele County.

Ms. Mary Bishop, Salt Lake County Democratic Party, asked the Committee to measure their plans based on the criteria of population and communities of interest. She then asked the Committee to show the quantitative results of these measurements on their plans.

Ms. Kelli Lundgren, Represent Me Utah, said that Utah County has enough population to have Senate representation without including population from surrounding counties. Chair Okerlund explained that after giving Utah County five senate seats based on population, there were still over 50,000 people that needed to be represented. He explained that in his plan this additional population was represented by including them in three additional surrounding senate seats, crossing into other counties. Ms. Lundgren recommended putting that additional population into one surrounding senate seat versus dividing it up into three.

Mr. Fellows explained that to keep Utah County in six senate seats would have ripple effects into other districts, and in particular Northern Utah.

Mr. Merrill Nelson, Tooele County resident, asked to make changes to the map proposed by Sen. Okerlund to keep Tooele County whole. He suggested continuing the Tooele County line down to Salt Lake and Davis County to honor the boundaries of Tooele County. He also recommended Chair Okerlund's map include population from Weber County to get the needed population to keep Tooele County in one senate district.

Mr. Jeff McNeill, Tooele County resident, said that his community of interest has been split in the map presented by Chair Okerlund. He said that the only logical reason why Tooele County has been split by the proposed map is to protect incumbents. He suggested taking population from Box Elder County, rather than Box Elder County taking from Tooele to get the needed numbers for a senate seat in Tooele County.

Mr. Chris Sloan, Tooele County Republican Party Chair, commended Chair Okerlund for being open to changes and public input into the plans. He distributed to the Committee a letter from Tooele County Commission, a letter from Tooele City Council & Mayor, and a letter from Grantsville City Mayor. He said these letters requested that the Committee keep Tooele County in the same district.

Mr. Ken Froehle, Citizen, said it appears that the Committee is not listening to public input because few citizens have said they are concerned about protecting incumbents, and yet it appears that is what is happening with the proposed plans.

Sen. McAdams said that the Fair Boundaries proposed senate map had several good suggestions that he wanted to explore further. He also said that some of the township boundaries were adhered to in that plan when they may not necessarily be a community of interest. He praised Chair Okerlund for bringing discussion together in a bi-partisan way to discuss senate plans. Sen. McAdams stated that he will need to look beyond partisan interests and consider the interests of both Republicans and Democrats in redistricting and said that it is a mistake to confuse party with community of interest. He stated that he is inclined to vote against Chair Okerlund's proposed senate map at this point because of Tooele County's concerns over being split. He said that many of the Democratic areas will need to be tweaked, even if a base senate map is adopted today.

Mr. Fellows reminded the Committee that while population deviation is the most compelling factor that the courts will consider when reviewing redistricting plans, the United States Supreme Court has also recognized seven additional factors as valid redistricting principles. These additional principles are compactness, contiguity, preservation of counties and other political subdivisions, preservation of communities of interest, preservation of the cores of prior districts, protection of incumbents, and compliance with Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

Rep. Newbold said that she would like to recess to discuss ways to modify Chair Okerlund's plan based on public input at today's meeting.

President Waddoups said that he would vote against Chair Okerlund's proposed map if voted on today. He explained that it is possible to keep communities together if they are made the center of the universe, but as it is not possible to make everyone the center of the universe, there will have to be some compromises made and some communities of interests divided on any proposed map. He also pointed out that the map presented by Chair Okerlund divides up several other areas beyond Tooele County.

Rep. Gibson said that he would not vote in favor of Chair Okerlund's proposed map.

5. Adjourn

MOTION: Sen. Van Tassell moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed with Rep. Barrus, Rep. Ipson, Rep. Newbold, Rep. Hendrickson, and Rep. Kiser voting in opposition to the motion.

Chair Sumsion adjourned the meeting at 11:15 a.m.