

**MINUTES OF THE
REDISTRICTING PUBLIC HEARING
Monday, July 16, 2001 – 6:00 p.m. S Santy Auditorium, Park City**

Members Present:

Sen. Michael G. Waddoups, Chair
Rep. Gerry A. Adair, Chair
Sen. Ron Allen
Sen. Beverly Evans
Sen. Pete Suazo
Sen. John L. Valentine
Rep. Chad E. Bennion
Rep. Ron Bigelow
Rep. Jackie Biskupski
Rep. Katherine M. Bryson
Rep. Don E. Bush
Rep. Brent H. Goodfellow
Rep. Wayne A. Harper
Rep. Thomas V. Hatch
Rep. Loraine T. Pace
Rep. Jack A. Seitz
Rep. LaWanna Shurtliff
Rep. Glenn L. Way

Members Excused:

Rep. Patrice M. Arent
Rep. James R. Gowans

Staff Present:

Mr. Stewart E. Smith, Redistricting Team Manager
Mr. John L. Fellows, Associate General Counsel
Mr. John Q. Cannon, Research Analyst
Mr. Richard C. North, Research Analyst
Mr. Mark J Allred, Technical Support
Mr. Joseph T. Wade, Research Analyst
Ms. Alicia Gambles, Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present and handouts distributed are on file in the Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel.

1. Call to Order

Chair Adair called the public hearing to order at 6:05 p.m.

2. Committee Business

MOTION: Rep. Bryson moved to approve the minutes of the June 28, 2001 public hearings in Richfield and Cedar City. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Introduction to Redistricting

Mr. Richard C. North, Research Analyst, Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel, presented an overview on the redistricting process. He discussed reasons for redistricting, population shifts, and the 2000 census results, with specific emphasis on Summit County and surrounding areas.

4. Public Input/Comments

Mr. Bob Richer, Chair, Summit County Democratic Party, suggested that political boundaries be kept the same as Summit County boundaries. He indicated that Summit County is economically intertwined and has many common interests. He distributed copies of the week's Park Record Editorial.

Ms. Shauna Kerr, Summit County Commissioner, stated that the numbers drive the process. She explained that Summit County has been working on uniting its people within the county and stated her belief that Summit County should not be divided. She stated that it is time for Summit County to have its own representative in the Utah House.

Mr. Gill Blonsley, Summit County resident, stated that the community of interest is significant in Summit County. He indicated how the county has built its own not-for-profit community hospital. He explained that Summit County has a significant community of interest and a unique tax for arts and recreation.

Ms. Carol Murphy, Summit County resident, echoed the comments of other residents in the public hearing. She stated that the redistricting plan should not be an election plan and expressed her desire for the county to have its own Utah House district.

Mr. Joe Kernon, Summit County resident, expressed his belief that counties should be combined only with counties that have similar interests or similar concerns. He stated that Summit County does not have common interests with other counties and, therefore, should not be divided.

Mr. Jim Santy, Summit County resident, stated that the county is very unique to the state. He stated that years ago no one wanted to share a district with Summit County. He stated that he did not want the county divided.

Ms. Sally Elliott, Summit County Historical Society, stated that if it had not been for Park City providing a market for others in the early days, Utah would not be the thriving state it is today. She indicated that Park City and Summit County depend upon each other and indicated that much of Summit County is employed in Park City.

Rep. Way indicated that Provo has benefitted from having six people represent them in the legislature. He asked why Summit County would want to reject that kind of representation. He concluded that it helps to have more than one voice in the legislature.

Mr. Leonard Johnson, Snyderville resident, stated that Summit County's representative currently represents two other counties as well. He stated that it is similar to having only one-

third of a representative. He expressed favoritism for Summit County having its own representation.

Ms. Linda Blonsley, retired attorney, stated that Summit County has asked not to be gerrymandered. She stated that the people who have testified all believe that one Utah House representative would be more beneficial to the county than multiple representatives. She explained that Summit County has relied very heavily on second property taxes from Summit Park, but also explained that if that issue came up a representative would have to consider the other counties he/she represents. She stated that a representative cannot take both sides; they have to make one choice for their districts. She also stated that they would like quality instead of a fraction of quantity. Ms. Blonsley inquired which criteria the committee would consider when dividing Summit County. Rep. Bigelow explained that compactness, commonality, geographical boundaries, and significant geographical features are principles the committee has adopted.

Ms. Becky Richards, member of Legal Women Voters, Park City resident, stated that if 10,000 residents were joined with Salt Lake County, people would lose their crucial voice because they will only be a fraction of the new district. She requested that the committee not divide the county.

Ms. Diane Bracey, Oakley resident, stated that what happens in Park City directly affects the residents of Coalville, Oakley, and Kamas. She asked for these cities not to be separated from Park City.

Mr. Randy Ovard, Summit County resident, expressed his appreciation to the committee members for their service to the state. He said that they are perfectly happy with the way the boundaries are currently drawn. He stated that the committee should consider meeting in Randolph and Morgan to hear the voices from and all over the area. He also stated that he was asked to represent the opinion of the City Council Mayor and that he is also very satisfied to have a rural and urban voice.

Mr. Bob Reynolds, Snyderville resident, stated that there is a fear of cross representation with Salt Lake County and that Summit County could not be better represented than it is today. He indicated that there is a large geographical distinction and tourism-driven economy that he feels deserves consideration from the committee. He indicated that if the county had to be divided, they would rather be divided into north or east as opposed to west because combining a resort area with a rural area would not assist in maintaining commonality of interests.

Sen. Allen stated that because of the growth in the area, the area cannot be left as it is currently.

Mr. Joe Tesch, citizen, stated that, in a perfect world, each county would have its own representative. He indicated that this concept would be the most beneficial in terms of school districts, special service districts, county seats, and communities of interest that exist. He stated that Summit County just happens to fit the puzzle perfectly. He indicated that they would not like a diluted voice, but one strong voice that represents only Summit County. He requested the committee give the county full representation by leaving the county intact.

Mr. Arthur Mayo stated that the people in Summit County have many things in common that they do not necessarily have with other counties. He explained that Summit County residents should be one united district.

The committee asked the public to respond to who the county would want to be combined with if divided. Commissioner Kerr explained that when it comes to the Senate seats, Wasatch County is more similar to Summit County. She stated that, with regards to federal seats, Summit County is probably more similar to Salt Lake County.

Mr. Bruce Fryer pointed out that Park City has only one high school and that school districts would be an important factor when considering redistricting Summit County.

Ms. Bracey asked if the notion that the committee has already made up its mind is true. She asked the committee to dispel that notion and asked them to be open minded about the process. Sen. Waddoups stated that he has not seen any plans yet and explained that, though he has drawn up a map that would work for the Senate district, he redraws it every week after the redistricting meetings and discussing redistricting issues with numerous people. He stated that he can say without a doubt that the committee has not made any decisions yet.

Sen. Valentine stated that they have not yet made any decisions and have not voted on any plans. He indicated that the committee has tried to keep the districts the same as they have been for the last ten years and explained that no decisions have been made and that public input is very important.

Rep. Bryson stated that there have been a lot of efforts and input from constituents as far as looking at different maps. She reassured the public that the committee has not heard much about anything concerning Summit County, which is the reason for the public hearing.

Rep. Bigelow stated that there must be a consensus of the committee and even after it decides on a proposal that is acceptable, it could easily change on the House floor. He stated that it does not matter if the committee has made any decisions, it must have enough votes to make sure the decision is reasonable to everyone and that it makes sense.

Rep. Bennion stated that the committee has not started redistricting in Box Elder County. He indicated that there are five subcommittees working on different regions and stated that there will be a number of different plans. He also stated that the individuals on the subcommittees and on the Redistricting Committee will have different ideas on what the representation should be for each area.

Mr. Blonsley stated that the committee seems to be struggling with the idea of redistricting. He asked if the committee has looked beyond the borders of the state to see how other lines have been drawn. He stated that he is aware of different approaches as guides for developing redistricting plans.

Chair Adair indicated that he has been in many different states listening to the ideas of many people and stated that the committee has incorporated many of those principles. He stated that the committee is trying to get as much input as possible while proceeding with the process.

Rep. Bennion stated that the committee has been given materials from many organizations in other states and pointed out that Utah, ten years ago, was one of eight states that did not have any lawsuits regarding redistricting. He indicated that the committee does not want to see any lawsuits, and therefore, is taking the process slowly and carefully.

Sen. Evans said that the jury is out and decisions have not been made. She encouraged the residents to contact her with their personal input about the redistricting process. She stated that she is trying to get the best representation possible for the citizens of Utah.

Ms. Ruth Wagner, Summit County resident, stated that Summit County has supported each other with many commonalities of interest. She requested a representative that will represent all of Summit County and have their best interests at heart.

Mr. Greg Jones, Park City Counsel, stated that Park City has been viewed as the oddity of Utah and explained that the second-home growth and resort growth of Park City is not reflected in the numbers. He indicated that Wasatch County is dealing with the same problems as Park City, and have been for many years. He said that Park City has more commonality concerning governmental issues with Wasatch County than it does with Salt Lake County and explained that the resort area, during the traveling seasons, must accommodate 12 -15,000 people, which requires much support from the county.

Mr. Michael Todd, Chair of Summit County Republican Party, stated that twice as many Republicans register than Democrats. He expressed his favoritism for dividing the county, not along boundary lines, but in a way that would create two representatives of Summit County. He also stated that the county will continue to grow in population and that if the county is divided by its geographical boundaries, the population will be obtusely skewed in the next redistricting phase.

Mr. Phil Thompson, Park City resident, expressed concern for Summit County being lumped with Salt Lake. He stated that if the committee decided to divide Summit County it should be divided into the East, rather than the West.

Rep. David Ure, House District 53, explained that sometimes it appears that the committee seems to have its mind made up, but that playing the role of devil's advocate is helpful when determining how to solve the dilemma that is before them. He stated that any decision the committee makes for Summit County will force a rippling effect on the rest of the state.

Sen. Waddoups identified to find the public input form in the materials distributed to the audience, and explained the various means by which interested persons could make further comments to the committee.

5. Adjourn

MOTION: Sen. Evans moved to adjourn the public hearing at 8:30 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.