

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON REDISTRICTING MEETING MINUTES
March 16, 2011

The Ad Hoc Committee on Redistricting of the Broome County Legislature met on Wednesday, March 16, 2011 in the Legislative Conference Room, Sixth Floor, Edwin L. Crawford County Office Building, Binghamton, New York.

Members Present: D. J. Reynolds (Acting-Chair), R. Locker, M. Whalen, D. D. Reynolds, J. Laughney, V. Pasquale, M. Turna, M. Johnson

Members Absent: R. Keibel

Others Present: J. Black; M. Diffendorf, S. Herz, J. Hutchings, M. Pasquale, M. Schafer, A. Martin, J. Baumgartner, L. Rogers, Legislature; J. Campbell, Press & Sun-Bulletin

The Ad Hoc Committee meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 4:19 PM.

1. Mr. D. J. Reynolds welcomed the members, noted that he was serving as Chair because Mr. Keibel was at Jury Duty, and reiterated the mission of the Committee.

2. On request from Mr. D. J. Reynolds, Mr. Whalen made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Locker to approve the minutes of the February 24, 2011 meeting.
Carried. Ayes-8, Nays-0

3. Responding to a question from Mr. D. J. Reynolds, Mr. Whalen stated that Joseph Sanfilippo has mentioned that he might retire at the end of the Legislative term but no other member of the Minority Party has made any indication of retirement. Mr. D. J. Reynolds stated that he knew of no member of the Majority Party who planned to retire.

Mr. Laughney stated that by inquiring what members of what party plan to retire it could look, in the eyes of the public that the Committee is going to be protecting its incumbents by eliminating districts of members who retire. Mr. D. D. Reynolds agreed with Mr. Laughney and also stated if that is taken into consideration for redistricting it should be far down the list of criteria. Mr. D. J. Reynolds agreed that getting a count on who plans to retire could look like protecting incumbents but that the Committee should be looking to create districts around communities.

4. Mr. D. J. Reynolds directed the Committee to review the Standards for Redistricting which was distributed at the organizational meeting. Mr. D.D. Reynolds stated that the original list differs from the one Mr. English had distributed earlier. Mr. Baumgartner stated that Mr. English had put together a list of ideas on his own where the list distributed by the Chairman had specific citations from State and Federal Law or Case Decisions.

Ms. Turna asked if the Committee was bound by New York State Home Rule Municipal Law. Mr. Baumgartner stated that he had conferred with Mr. Behnke from the County Attorney's Office and it was determined that because Broome County is a Chartered County they are not bound to the provisions of Article 2, section 10 of the Municipal Home Rule Law.

Mr. D. J. Reynolds stated that the Committee should formally adopt what criteria they will follow with regards to drawing the Legislative Districts.

Mr. Whalen stated that the utmost important factor should be population, once the Committee has Census data and can determine how many people should be in each district then the Committee should figure out where to start drawing districts. Mr. V. Pasquale stated that the Committee should work its way from the City of Binghamton outward.

Mr. Laughney stated that the Committee cannot do anything until the Census information has been released and the Board of Elections has had the time to analyze the enrollment of the Election Districts.

Mr. D. D. Reynolds asked why the Committee is looking to rush and finish by the end of May. Mr. D. J. Reynolds stated that the plan was to have one or more redistricting proposals presented to the County Administration Committee by the end of May, as stated in the Committee Formation Notice, and from there a final would be presented to the Legislature as a whole. He also stated that there may be the need to adjust the Committee's end date, currently set for May 31, 2011, but that can be addressed when the time comes.

Mr. Whalen requested that someone from the Planning Department/GIS and the County Attorney's Office attend each of the Committee meetings.

Mr. V. Pasquale with agreement from Mr. Laughney stated that the only criteria the Committee needs to follow is how many people per district and that the Committee will not have that number until the Census information has been released and analyzed. Mr. D. J. Reynolds stated that he disagreed with the Mr. V. Pasquale's assertion that he best way to proceed is by starting with the City of Binghamton and working outward. He further stated that those districts at the outer corners of the County have fewer options in design and that they should be the first to be evaluated.

5. Mr. Baumgartner stated that the Census data for New York will be released with the last group of States to be released, which should be by the end of March. Mr. Whalen stated that when the Planning Department/GIS have received the data they should notify the Chairman. Mr. Baumgartner stated that Mr. English will notify the Chairman as soon as the information has been received and analyzed.

6. Mr. D. J. Reynolds stated the Board of Elections is still working on the enrollment of the proposed Election Districts.

The next meeting date of the Committee was not set pending notification from the County Planning Department that 2010 census data had been received and a timetable for its input into the proposed Election Districts. As soon as that information is received, the Committee will be notified.

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Laughney, seconded by Mr. D. D. Reynolds. The meeting adjourned at 4:43 PM.