

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AND THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

NOVEMBER 2, 2021

Board of County Commissioners (BCC)

Present: Commissioner Robert D. Bender, Chairman, District 4 via Microsoft Teams
Commissioner Jeffrey W. Bergosh, Vice Chairman, District 1
Commissioner Steven L. Barry, District 5
Commissioner Lumon J. May, District 3
Commissioner Douglas B. Underhill, District 2
Wesley J. Moreno, Interim County Administrator
Alison Rogers, County Attorney
DeLana Allen-Busbee, Administrative Specialist, Clerk and Comptroller's Office
Shamara Jernigan, Agenda Program Coordinator, County Administrator's Office

District School Board (DSB)

Present: Mr. William E. Slayton, Chairman, District 5
Mr. Kevin L. Adams, Vice Chairman, District 1
Dr. Laura Dortch Edler, District 3
Mr. Paul Fetsko, District 2
Mrs. Patricia Hightower, District 4
Mrs. Ellen D. Odom, General Counsel
Dr. Timothy A. Smith, Superintendent

Location: Ernie Lee Magaha Government Building, Board Chambers, First Floor
221 Palafox Place, Pensacola, Florida

Minutes prepared by: DeLana Allen-Busbee

AGENDA NUMBER

1. Call to Order

Vice Chairman Bergosh called the Special Joint Meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

School Board Member Adams led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

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3. Proof of Publication / Was the Meeting Properly Advertised?

The Board was advised by DeLana Allen-Busbee, Administrative Specialist, Clerk and Comptroller's Office, that the meeting was advertised in the *Escambia Sun Press* on October 28, 2021, in the Board's weekly meeting schedule.

4. Comments – Robert Bender, Chairman, Board of County Commissioners

BCC Chairman Bender provided opening remarks and briefly discussed his map proposal.

5. Comments – Bill Slayton, Chairman, District School Board

DSB Chairman Slayton provided opening remarks.

6. Redistricting Map Options – David Stafford, Supervisor of Elections

The Honorable David Stafford, Supervisor of Elections, and Chris Heaney, Deputy Supervisor of Elections, presented various maps for Board discussion.

7. Discussion by Board Members on Map Proposals

I. Recommendation: That the Boards discuss the three Redistricting Map Proposals.

The Boards:

A. Heard and discussed the following comments and proposed map revisions provided by Commissioner Bender:

- Move precinct 88 to District 4 from District 5
- Extend a small portion of the area south of Olive between the Interstate east to Davis into District 3 from District 4
- Extend precinct 64 south in District 4 to a clean cut at the precinct line and also extend the southwest corner south of Brent, which is an unincorporated area of Escambia County, so that the line would follow the City/County border
- An additional option would be to move precinct 72 to District 4; this is currently a split precinct with Carpenter Creek as the boundary line, but with the proposed changes it would push District 4 to the upper boundaries of a 4.92% overage
- If the proposed changes are not made to precinct 72, around 500 voters would go back to District 3

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7. Continued...

I. Continued...

B. Were advised by Mr. Stafford that:

- Another area was left out of the map revisions, which would leave an unincorporated area; if changed, it would follow the City boundary and move District 2's boundary east around two blocks and slightly north
- The City is in the midst of redistricting, and per Commissioner Bender's request, Elections staff overlaid the City's current plans over the County's map consensus from the last meeting to attempt to prevent unique areas with extremely small precincts or portions of precincts voting in different districts; the ideas put forward clean those issues up

C. Discussed how proposed changes affect population numbers and the needs of the majority-minority district and heard Commissioner May's comments regarding consideration to achieve certain numbers for the district he represents;

D. Discussed the amount of consideration given to growth patterns and were advised by County Attorney Rogers that she recommends staying within the boundaries of the census data;

E. Heard clarification from Commissioner Bergosh and Mr. Heaney that the map being revised during the previous comments was the option 2 map from the last meeting;

F. Heard and discussed the following comments and map proposals/revisions provided by School Board member Fetsko:

- Major roads and equal populations were the biggest considerations in the map proposal
- Using Blue Angel as the western boundary for District 2 and Mobile Highway as the eastern side creates a district of around 64,000 and puts Bellview in District 2 and makes Myrtle Grove whole again

G. Were advised by School Board member Adams that he liked Mr. Fetsko's map and that it was used to help create the upcoming hybrid map, but that precinct 63, which is a majority-minority district was included but would negatively affect District 3's majority-minority numbers; Commissioner May advised that a portion of 63 could be pulled, but not the whole thing;

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AGENDA NUMBER – Continued

7. Continued...

I. Continued...

- H. Viewed and discussed a hybrid map proposed by District 1, which School Board member Adams advised would keep precinct 63 in District 3, keep the District 1 library and District 2 library in their respective districts, keep Bellview middle and elementary schools in District 1, keep the new Pleasant Grove in District 2, keep the boundaries to the primary and secondary roads, as well as consolidate Myrtle Grove;
- I. Viewed and discussed a map provided by Commissioner Underhill, who advised that his primary concern for his map proposal was the continuity of neighborhoods and communities as representation greatly affects the level of volunteerism and activism in schools; heard further comments from Commissioner Underhill urging the Boards to oppose splitting the southwest sector;
- J. Returned to viewing the hybrid District 1 map [this map is available in the agenda backup and was used as the foundation for all revisions that follow, as well as the base for the final map supported by the majority of the Board] for further discussion and revisions, as follows:
 - Moved precinct 101 and a small western portion of precinct 28 from District 3 to District 1
 - Moved a portion of precinct 62, south of Michigan over to the creek from District 1 to District 3
 - Discussed the majority-minority district and was advised by County Attorney Rogers that while the court order requiring the majority-minority district has expired, the concept is still ingrained in Federal and State law and the minority vote cannot be diluted
 - Moved a portion of precinct 88, south of Olive over to Davis, from District 4 to District 3
 - Moved precinct 72, which is currently a split precinct between the City and the County, into the County and District 4
 - Moved a remaining portion of precinct 64 from District 3 to District 4, as previously discussed with Commissioner Bender's map proposal
 - Moved an area east of Palafox and south of Chase from District 3 to District 2
 - Moved a small area between Palafox and A Street, north of Government, from District 2 to District 3

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AGENDA NUMBER – Continued

7. Continued...

I. Continued...

J. Continued...

- Moved the northern portion of Mayfair, precinct 104, from District 3 to District 2
- Heard comments of concern from Commissioner Underhill and School Board member Fetsko regarding the impact the change would have on the community of Mayfair, and heard comments regarding Commissioner May's and Dr. Edler's commitment to the community

K. Heard majority support for the hybrid map and the changes encompassed in the discussion by the Boards;

L. Heard Commissioner Bergosh's request that the map be saved as final and placed on the Regular BCC meeting agenda for Thursday, November 4th; and

M. Were advised by County Attorney Rogers that the map will be turned over to County GIS services to draw up maps and legal descriptions, which will be advertised twice, and that on Thursday the BCC would schedule the Public Hearing for adoption at the December 2nd Board meeting.

8. Public Comment

The Boards heard comments from the following citizens:

Charles Krupnick
Mae Dean
Melissa Pino
Larry Downs, Jr.

DSB Chairman Slayton provided closing remarks.

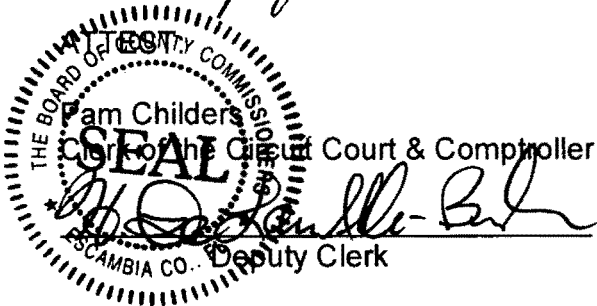
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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Vice Chairman Bergosh declared the Special Joint Meeting of the Board of County Commissioners and the District School Board adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: _____
Jeff Bergosh, Chairman



Approved: November 16, 2021