

LEGISLATIVE APPORTIONMENT BOARD  
*Title 17, Chapter 34A, Vermont Statutes Annotated*  
<https://sos.vermont.gov/apportionment-board/>

October 15, 2021  
9:00 – 11:00 A.M.

MEETING DRAFT MINUTES  
Meeting at Secretary of State's Office, 128 State Street, Montpelier

Members Present: Rob Roper

Members Present Remotely: Tom Little, Jeanne Albert, Jeremy Hansen, Mary Houghton, Ed Adrian, Tom Koch (9:22)

Others Present: Eric Covey

Others Present Remotely: Chris Winters, Mia Kro

Members of the Public Present Remotely: Robert Bristow-Johnson, Thomas Hughes

### **1. Call to Order**

Tom Little called the meeting to order at 9:04am.

### **2. Review and Approval of Minutes of October 4, 8 and 11 Meetings and Work Sessions**

Jeremy Hansen moved the October 4<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes be approved as presented, Rob seconded: 5-0-1 vote in favor of approving. (Aye – Tom Little, Rob Roper, Jeanne Albert, Jeremy Hansen, Mary Houghton. Abstain – Ed Adrian)

Jeremy Hansen moved the October 11<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes be approved as edited, Rob seconded. Unanimous vote in favor of approving.

October 4<sup>th</sup> work session minutes do not require approval due to lack of a quorum.

October 8<sup>th</sup> work session minutes moved to be approved as presented by Jeremy, seconded by Rob. 4-0-2 voted in favor of approving. (Aye – Tom Little, Rob Roper, Jeanne Albert, Ed Adrian. Abstain – Jeremy Hansen, Mary Houghton)

October 13<sup>th</sup> work session minutes moved to be approved as presented by Jeanne, seconded by Rob. 4-0-2 voted in favor of approving. (Aye – Tom Little, Rob Roper, Jeanne Albert, Ed Adrian. Abstain – Jeremy Hansen, Mary Houghton)

### **3. Public Comment (per 1 V.S.A. sec. 312(h))**

Member of the public Robert Bristow-Johnson offered a map he has created with 5 two-member districts for Burlington.

#### 4. Updates, Comments on Prior Agenda Items

- Review of and Vote on House Redistricting “Tentative” Proposal to Send to the Boards of Civil Authority

Tom Little provided an update on the status of the LAB’s process, including next steps for sending to the BCAs for feedback once the LAB votes to take action and approve a tentative map recommendation today.

Tom L. also reminded the LAB members that, in addition to the Senate District map, there will be other future mapping the LAB needs to perform, based on feedback by the BCAs on the tentative House District map.

A coin was flipped to determine presentation order of the draft maps. Jeremy called heads. Tom L. flipped the coin vigorously, and the result of the flipped Cumberland Island Memorial Quarter was tails, giving Jeanne the floor.

Jeanne introduced her map. Tom L. asked Jeanne to present the metrics of her map. Jeanne presented these metrics and attributes, which included details about deviations, overall deviations, deviations within or outside of certain percent margins, and a side-by-side comparison of her map plan attributes and the same data for Jeremy and Rob’s map plan. Jeanne said she believes the Board’s statutory obligation is to get as close to ideal district size, while also prioritizing the other items in the list of considerations such as geography, existing political subdivisions, or compact and contiguous territory, as mandated by state law.

Jeanne reminded the Board that the deviation % numbers represent actual people.

Mary asked if Jeanne created two-member districts in the instances where the deviations were too large. Jeanne said that she can’t say she did that every time, but she certainly did some portion of the time and explained the other reasons why two-member districts may be formed (population make-up of a town, and the other statutory criteria like geography).

Jeanne said she would argue that her plan is the better plan if the LAB’s plan is to adhere to the standards established in statute.

Tom K. asked how many people from Williamstown are being put in with Barre Town in Jeanne’s map. The number is approx. 400. She felt that the Orange County area would be best divided into 2 House Districts, but they were too large while Barre Town was too small, so she found that this was the best way to make then numbers work. Tom K. says the people from Williamstown would go unrepresented in his opinion. Jeanne said she is willing to take that Williamstown portion out.

Ed believes the Board should not be focused on the needs of any one specific town, but that we should focus on the state as a whole.

Rob introduced his and Jeremy's map, including their deviation statistics, and specific contentious areas, as well as highlighting the survey results suggesting that the majority of feedback was in favor of single member districts.

Jeremy pointed out that their deviation numbers could be improved if they did further town subdivisions.

Jeanne said she believes that the implication in statute is that it needs to be followed closely as a guiding rail.

Tom K. said that he believes Jeanne's map goes more towards the numbers and Rob/Jeremy's goes more towards the communities. He is leaning towards Jeremy and Rob's maps.

Mary thinks that having single member districts may or may not be a good goal, but under the law it's not the LAB's goal, and that advocates should get it figured out in the Legislature. She hasn't heard a compelling argument for single member districts, and believes Jeanne's map best meets the LAB's statutory requirements.

Ed thinks this all comes down to fairness and equity, and he believes single member districts best accomplish this so he will be supporting Rob's and Jeremy's map.

Tom L. said he does not believe that prioritizing all single member districts meets their charge or the requirements in statute.

Jeremy moved the LAB approve the single-member district map as presented. Motion seconded by Rob Roper.

Rob identified a town, Stowe, where under Jeanne's map the town potentially could elect three Stowe residents to the House. Jeanne pointed out that certain regions on Rob and Jeremy's maps as well where the same phenomenon could occur.

Ed pointed out that the Board should congratulate itself because they are poised for a tri-partisan vote.

Tom L. asked for the vote, on approving the single-member district map for distribution as the Board's tentative House proposal, to be taken by roll call.

Tom Koch: Yes, Rob Roper: Yes, Mary Houghton: No, Ed Adrian: Yes, Jeanne Albert: No, Jeremy Hansen: Yes, Tom Little: No. 4-3 vote in favor of the motion to approve Jeremy and Rob's map as presented carries.

## **5. Updates on Plans for Sending Initial House Map Proposal to Boards of Civil Authority**

Eric and Mia provided an update to the Board on the packet that will be sent to the BCAs, how that packet will be sent, and how the BCAs will share feedback. Tom Little asked if the Secretary of State's office staff can add instructions for the BCAs to email minutes or supporting documents to a shared inbox, or somewhere for the Board to receive.

**6. Updates from Legislative Counsel, Vermont Center for Geographic Information, Secretary of State's Office's**

None.

**7. Set Next Meeting Date; Other Business**

No other business. The Board will not meet the week of 10/18/2021. The next meeting will be 10/25/21, 9-11 a.m.

**8. Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 10:30.