

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
ORDINANCE COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
JUNE 13, 2011**

ATTENDANCE: Andre Baker, Chair; Richard Paoletto, Richard Bonney, Angel dePara, AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Council President Thomas McCarthy

OTHERS: Council Member Lydia Martinez, Council Member Robert Walsh, Council Member Robert Curwen, Council Member M. Yvette Brantley, Council Member Susan Brannelly, Atty. Mark Anastasi, City Attorney, Associate City Attorney Eroll Skyers; Kimball Brace, Election Data Services, Inc. via telephone

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Baker called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. and introduced the members of the Committee.

95-10 Resolution from Special Committee on Redistricting regarding Redistricting Plan/Map

Council Member Baker distributed copies of the redistricting map Draft #5; and Draft #3, a census population report. He explained that Draft #5 is the latest version of Draft #3.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS INTO THE RECORD:**

EXHIBIT A - POPULATION AND CENSUS DOCUMENT;

EXHIBIT B - TERRORITY CHANGED FROM 2000 PLAN TO INITIAL DRAFT PLAN 3 CITY OF BRIDGEPORT;

EXHIBIT C- INITIAL DRAFT PLAN 3, 2010 CENSUS CITY OF BRIDGEPORT, CT;

EXHIBIT D - INITIAL DRAFT 5 CITY OF BRIDGEPORT, CT

COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY SECONDED.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council President McCarthy then said that that Council Member Holloway and Council Member Martinez had worked on this original plan. He cautioned everyone that even making tiny changes to the various districts could result in a major disruption in the balance of the minorities, the population and other important factors. Council President McCarthy then reviewed the various aspects of the maps. These changes will not impact the upcoming council district races, but will take effect next year.

Council President McCarthy said that there was a Latino Redistricting group that was unhappy with a percentage of the Hispanic in a particular district. They stated that they would sue if the percentages were not increased. Mr. Santiago, the leader of the Latino Redistricting group has indicated that the group would not sue if the Draft 5 changes were approved.

Council Member dePara said that the annexing of the 132nd into the 136th was not something that he was involved in. He was content with the figures that were submitted from the special redistricting committee.

Atty. Anastasi then asked about the increases in the border changes. Council President McCarthy said that Mr. Kim Brace, the Redistricting expert, who would be on the phone shortly, would be the best one to answer the question.

Council Member Brantley said that she would like to request the Committee to approve the original map from the Redistricting Committee. Council President McCarthy then displayed a copy of the original map with the ethnic breakdown of the various districts.

Council Member Brantley said that she had concerns about Mr. Santiago's recommendations. It was implied by Mr. Santiago that it was not a black or Hispanic district, as if to indicate that it should be someone other than a black or Hispanic representing it. She requested that the Committee approve the original plan submitted by the Redistricting Committee.

Council Member Walsh said that he felt that the more geographically that the district lines were, the better it was. He said that he was content with the original districts submitted by the Redistricting Committee.

Council Member Paoletto said that after hearing that Council Member dePara was satisfied with the original figures on Draft C, and the fact that Council Member Brantley had concerns about the changes, he was agreeable to approving the recommendations given by the Redistricting Committee. He added that Council Member Walsh had said that he felt it wouldn't change things significantly.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked Council Member Martinez if she had any thoughts on the proposed changes. Council Member Martinez said that she felt that it should have been left the way it was.

Council Member Curwen said that Exhibit C shows that the park was not in his district. Discussion then followed. He said that Exhibit A was incomplete and he could not gage anything by it.

Mr. Kim Brace, of Election Data Service, Inc. of Manassas, VA was then contacted via conference call.

Council Member Curwen asked Mr. Brace about the changes in the 138th district. Mr. Brace explained that that there were only two blocks in that district that were changed.

Atty. Anastasi then asked Mr. Brace about the proposed change from Plan 3 to Plan 5, which would increase the Latino population by .3% in the 136th up to 4.5%. This is still a relatively safe variance.

Council Member Brantley asked about the 132nd district change requested by the Latino group. Mr. Brace said that it would reduce the numbers by about 300 people and decrease the percentage by a negative 1.76%.

There were no additional questions for Mr. Brace and the conference call was concluded.

RECESS

Council Member Baker called a recess at 7:48 p.m. The meeting was called back into order at 7:58 p.m.

Council Member Baker asked Atty. Anastasi to give a scenario about the possible lawsuit from the group. Atty. Anastasi said that there was a minimal change between Plan 3 and Plan 5. If litigation is brought the plaintiffs will not be limited in the release that they request to Plan 5. The court could come up with additional changes. He said that it was important to be aware of the risk. It will be a challenge to whatever plan is adopted and will be decided by the court. The final result may not be the proposed change from 136th to 138th, but a judge's or the courts decision. Council Member Walsh said that there was no way to know if another group would file against the new plan. Atty. Anastasi agreed.

Council Member Brantley asked why they were not present tonight based on their possibility of a suit. Atty. Anastasi said that there was no guarantees that the City would not have been sued anyway, but reminded everyone that the request was a downward adjustment.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BONNEY MOVED TO ADOPT PLAN 3, EXHIBIT C.
** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.**

Atty. Anastasi said that Mr. Brace had indicated that there would be a reduction in both Latino and Black voters in the 132nd.

Council Member Brannelly said that she was not a big fan of responding to potential lawsuits and would hate to see the changes made to what the Committee believes what is right to appease a group.

Atty. Anastasi asked if the Committee would conduct a public hearing or if it would be done later. This was briefly discussed and it was decided that there would be a public hearing before the next Council Meeting.

**** THE MOTION TO ADOPT PLAN 3, EXHIBIT C PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO SCHEDULE A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE NEW REDISTRICTING MAP DRAFT PLAN 3, EXHIBIT C BEFORE THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING ON JUNE 20TH. ** COUNCIL MEMBER BONNEY SECONDED.**

Council President McCarthy said that he was in favor of making the change. He thanked everyone, and in particular, Council Member Martinez for all the work.

Council Member Baker thanked those Council Members for their attendance.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BONNEY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services