

SPECIAL REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE

May 14, 2001

4:30 PM

The Clerk called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

PRESENT: Bill Gardner, Fern Gelinas and Bob Rivard

MESSRS: Leo Bernier, Alderman William Cashin, Raymond Buckley

The Clerk advised that the first purpose of the meeting shall be to nominate and appoint a Chairman of the Special Redistricting Committee.

On motion of Mr. Gardner, duly seconded by Mr. Gelinas, it was voted to elect Bob Rivard as Chairman of the Committee. There being none opposed the motion carried.

Chairman Rivard advised that the second purpose of the meeting shall be organizational in nature, and requests the Clerk to provide a brief overview regarding statutory requirements.

Mr. Bernier stated two members have been involved in the past and previously we had staff from highway and planning involved in the process. The question will have to be placed on the November ballot and the ballots will have to be ready by October 5th or 6th. It will require a public hearing and the Board of Mayor and Aldermen will have to vote on it. It will need to be advertised and the timeframe we are looking at would be the beginning of September. As of today the numbers have yet to be set from the State.

Mr. Gardner stated that was correct.

Chairman Rivard asked could that delay final action?

Mr. Buckley stated they could divide up the wards and the lines and they could even change the number of wards and the ward lines. They could use different ratios.

Mr. Bernier stated that if they started using different ratios they could go crazy.

Mr. Buckley said that could look at Alderman Vaillancourt's 5-tier plan. It could be an interesting plan, but it could get very complicated as you could be losing a seat. Currently with the population in Manchester the number being tossed around was 35 Representatives.

Mr. Bernier stated at the next meeting they could have members from the Highway Department, Planning Department and the City Clerk's Office as there is a lot of work that needs to be done. If I recall, Mona Sharma, from NH Southern Planning was involved last time and you may want to include him again.

Mr. Gelinas stated that he doesn't want it to be to complicated.

Mr. Buckley stated that at the State level they are currently doing RFP's to purchase software and looking at computer imaging.

Mr. Gardner stated the State has decided to buy it, but I'm not sure if the software will be good. I feel we should do it like last time where the city was broken down into blocks as this will make it easier.

Mr. Buckley stated that you need to look at your inner city wards and their representation. You have a lot of immigrational people living in those wards and they will need representation.

Mr. Gardner replied that last time we didn't get into that.

Chairman Rivard replied no.

Mr. Bernier replied no.

Mr. Buckley said that his word was being stretched to the limit in that there are vastly different neighborhoods and interests for those individuals and that it should be taken into consideration.

Chairman Rivard stated is this what the committee is going to do? Who lives in the ward and then make sure we get that type of person elected.

Mr. Buckley replied looking at Ward 3 having upper income people representing them versus low income.

Chairman Rivard stated that we can't solve that problem here and I'm not prepared to segregate it out.

Mr. Buckley stated that this could go to court.

Ald. Cashin stated that it seems they are all in agreement and that the primary responsibility is to break out the wards in blocks.

Mr. Gelinas replied that is what I thought.

Mr. Bernier asked what time did they want to meet next. Was 4:30 PM okay? Is Monday or Tuesday better?

Chairman Rivard replied Monday.

Ald. Cashin stated I would like to thank you gentlemen for doing this. If you need anything, Leo's office will be at your disposal and on behalf of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen thank you.

Chairman Rivard stated that we need to look at plans and start looking at the wards.

Mr. Buckley stated that Alderman Vaillancourt had already done up a letter and starting breaking out the different wards in his plan.

Mr. Gardner replied that at one point there were 56 representatives then in 1972 the city went to 12 wards and there were 48 representatives. In 1980 it went from 48 to 40 and stayed at 12 wards so there were three from each ward as well as one from each three wards. In the 1990's it dropped to 36. I am not sure what the legislature will do if they will give the 35 that is being talked about, whether it will be 34 or 36. We will need to try and keep the wards as close as possible.

Chairman Rivard asked would that decision be made in Concord as to how to split it up?

Mr. Bernier replied that if this group can't come to a consensus on how to split it up then it will go to Concord.

Mr. Buckley said that if the voters reject the redistricting plan given to them then Concord would do it.

Mr. Bernier replied that it goes to the State legislature.

Mr. Buckley said it was critical that everyone that has interest gets involved and gets behind the plan.

Mr. Bernier stated you don't want to loose control.

Mr. Gardner stated there was a problem back in 1981.

Mr. Gelinas asked if it needed to go to another committee.

Mr. Bernier replied yes. It would need to be sent to the Bills on Second Reading Committee and it will need a public hearing.

Mr. Bernier stated he would call the Chairman tomorrow to set-up another meeting.

On motion of Mr. Gelinas, duly seconded by Mr. Gardner, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee