

SEATTLE REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

MINUTES

Tuesday, January 18th, 2022

12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

Zoom Meeting

Approved on January 25th, 2022

Commissioners Present: Eliseo EJ Juárez, Patience Malaba, Former Mayor Greg Nickels, Rory O’Sullivan, Neelima Shah

Commissioners Absent: N/A

Commission Staff and guests : Elsa Batres-Boni: Department of Neighborhoods, Logan Drummond, Dennis Higgins: GIS Consultant King County GIS Center, Ariel Schneider: City Attorney’s Office Department of Neighborhoods Vera Njuguna: Department of Neighborhoods Community Liaison Program Manager, Gary Smith: City Attorney’s Office, Harvey Arnone: City of Seattle IT – GIS Manager

(Transcriber’s Note: Seattle Redistricting Commission meeting minutes are not an exact transcript and represent key points and the basis of discussion. The recording of the meeting is available upon request.)

Meeting Minutes:

I. Call to Order

- This Seattle Redistricting Commission meeting was held virtually through Zoom. This meeting was open to the public and was advertised through appropriate channels. The meeting was called to order at 12:03 PM once the Redistricting Commissioners were all present.

II. Welcome & Housekeeping

- Reading of the agenda, welcome

III. Agenda Review and approval

- There were no further questions or concerns from the Commissioners and the agenda was then motioned for approval by Commissioner Nickels and seconded by Commissioner Juarez. The agenda was then passed by the Commission unanimously with five yes votes.

IV. Minutes approval

- Approval for the 1.11.22 meeting minutes was motioned for a vote by Commissioner Nickels and seconded by Commissioner Malaba. The 1.11.22 meeting minutes were then passed by the Commission unanimously with five yes votes.

V. Public Comment

- Andrew Hong, the statewide coordinator from the Redistricting Justice for Washington Coalition from District 2 attended to provide public comment with two requests to the commission: 1) To allow for public input prior to the release of the first rough drafts of the new district maps, and

to also potentially create a larger number of maps and allow community members to vote or select the maps that they feel best represents them.

- Ariel Schneier from the City Attorney's office, gave an overview of the legal requirements for the first round of map drafts, stating from the charter that the only requirement legally is to have the first draft of maps submitted to the Redistricting Commission by March 15th.
- Redistricting Commissioners informed the public that the current plan is for the GIS consultant to release at least four draft maps, which will allow the public to have a frame of reference for the upcoming public input discussions and forums to get more direct feedback on things like Communities of Interest and other factors that may alter the final map layouts.
- DON Staff Elsa Batres-Boni informed the Redistricting Commission that they will also be receiving a memo from the Central Area Neighborhood District Council with their comments and concerns around keeping the district together, with specific suggestions including an invitation for the commission to attend one of their meetings.

VI. Commission's Principles and Priorities

- Commissioner Chair and staff facilitated a conversation about Commission's principles and priorities which are summarized below:
- **Guiding principles and priorities for Redistricting Commission:**
 - **Commissioner Juarez:**
 - Making sure we are transparent with each other on things like how we evaluate the maps and work with the public so we can ensure that folks can speak to their values in a transparent way. Beyond what's dictated in the charter, our values as a Commission are critical.
 - Making sure that Communities of Interest are represented and that their voices are represented.
 - That public assets, social infrastructure is considered (parks libraries etc.) and mapped out in these maps as well.
 - Transparency
 - Making sure we're communicating back what we have heard beyond just receiving a recording, making sure the public can look through comments easily.
 - Hope that we can be clear to folks about that we are hearing from an individual representing an organization. Should be tight in terms of how we use the word community. Identify the difference between a coalition and an individual community member.
 - **Commissioner O'Sullivan:**
 - A challenge we face is ensuring that we receive comment from a wide range of folks as opposed to people who already would be/are engaged in the process.
 - Will need to work very hard to make sure outreach elicits a lot of comments from the community.
 - **Commissioner Shah:**
 - Reflecting on bias that others may not see in order to be transparent and open with each other and trust and talk to each other with respect in having some difficult conversations.

- Challenge will also be defining what a community of interest is.
- Recognize bias instead of eliminate bias
- **Commissioner Nickels:**
 - Agree with the laid out set of principles for us to engage with.
 - Start with diverse input and narrowing towards narrowed options.
 - Eliminating bias (if the current maps are working, we shouldn't change it) put biases on the table so that our thought process to be known.
- **Commissioner Malaba:**
 - Goal as commissioners should be to reduce implicit bias and to encourage racial equity. How do we elevate these kinds of biases so that we don't have any blind spots?
 - Success will be underpinned by transparency in the entire process.
 - Racial equity and representation being incorporated in all aspects of this work.
 - Using simplest language as possible to ensure that this process is accessible in terms of technical language and language access.
 - Supporting communities of interest
 - Be clear to communities about the points of influence that they have. Reflect that beyond taking input that there will be input from other communities and that the role of us as commissioners is to provide leadership to reach consensus.

VII. Community Liaison Program presentation

- DON Staff Vera Njuguna gave the Redistricting Commission an overview of the Community Liaison program, which included a history of the program, Community Liaison roles and expectations, as well as a general timeline that can be expected for the outreach work.

VIII. GIS Workplan

- The meeting time didn't allow the Commission to go over this agenda item, this will be added to the 1.25.22 meeting agenda.

IX. Outreach and Budget continuation

- The meeting time didn't allow the Commission to go over this agenda item, this will be added to the 1.25.22 meeting agenda.

X. Next meetings

- The next meeting will be on January 25th, 2022, from 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

XI. Outstanding issues

XII. Adjourn

- The Seattle Redistricting Commission Chair Rory O'Sullivan asked if there was a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Malaba motioned for adjournment, and Commissioner Nickels seconded. The motion for adjournment was approved unanimously with five yes votes.
- The next Seattle Redistricting Commission meeting will be on Tuesday January 25th, 2022, from 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM.
- Redistricting Commissioners - Send any comments or recommended changes for 1.18.22 minutes before the next meeting.
- DON Staff will submit a finalized budget, workplan and outreach plan in the coming meetings for the Redistricting Commission's approval.
- Commission staff will send out calendar invites for upcoming meetings.
- Questions and comments, please send them to Elsa.Batres-Boni@seattle.gov