

CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
SPECIAL COMMITTEE on REDISTRICTING

PUBLIC HEARING

THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 2011

6:00 PM

ATTENDANCE: Council members: Holloway; Co-chair, Martinez; Co-chair, Brannelly, Lyons, Taylor-Moye, Brantley

NON-COMMITTEE: Council members: T. McCarthy, dePara, Vizzo-Paniccia

CITY ATTORNEY: Mark Anastasi

OTHER(s): Kim Brace, Election Data Services

Co-chair Holloway called the meeting to order at 6:15 pm.

He announced that the microphone wasn't operating and he requested that all speakers talk loud to be heard.

He introduced the council members present on the committee.

He stated that this was an informational session to allow the public to submit information only; not a question and answer session.

The Special Committee on Redistricting Public Hearing to hear public comments concerning redistricting to establish new city council district lines in Bridgeport, Connecticut based on Demographic Census Data 2011

Mr. Brace, Election Data Services stated that he was there to talk about what redistricting means. He referred to the PowerPoint presentation that was distributed for reference. He stated that in terms of redistricting, it has been a much debated subject. He noted that the original founding fathers talked about fair representation and they have the U.S. Senate representing the matter on the basis of the state and the U.S. House or representatives on the basis of the population. The concept is what they are

experiencing today, because the court said that all districts need to be fairly populated. He referred to the presentation and noted that he has been involved with the census. He added that everyone was asked to fill out a census form. He explained that there were two different concepts; redistricting and reapportionment, which involves the allocation of the House of Representatives seats to an area. He further explained that every state goes through the process of redistricting and drawing lines of those districts. From a standpoint of the redistricting track, there is one person one vote to make the districts equal in population. *He referred to page 4 of the presentation that outlined the Redistricting Factors.* For the one person one vote concept, they looked at a 10% margin window, which consists of 5% above the ideal and 5% below the ideal equals the district size criteria. The Voting Rights Act outlined on page 4 “Fairly reflect minority strength”. The “Kitchen Sink” includes everything else they thought about, such as; Jurisdiction geography – how to divide; Community of interest; Political factors & incumbency; Compactness and Others. This is the third tier that reflects the continuity of districts. *He referred to page 5 that outlined Federal Census Efforts & Timetable* for 2011 that consists of Jan. – Special Citizenship tabulation released; Feb. – March Redistricting data released (Redistricting can start, Data for every block, Total & Voting Age Population by Race & Hispanic) May – Group quarters file released (Total count of persons for group quarters like prisons, college dorms, etc.) Summer – Full SF1 data file released (Includes Hispanic subgroup data (Cuban, PR, Mexican) Fall – 2011 ACS data released. He commented that the Hispanic origin isn’t considered a race, but an origin from a racial categorization.

Mr. Brace reviewed page 6; question 5 where it reads; Is this person of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin. He noted that this is a yes or no question. He reviewed question 6 where it reads; What is this person’s race? He commented that the racial categories have been used for the last thirty years. However, during the year 2000 there were many bi-racial children, so the option was given to check as many multiple races that applied. He noted that due to the data, they now have numerous choices. He referred to page 6 that outlined the Race Data –Decision on use. He commented that the Hispanic data isn’t identified, so they needed to take the six Hispanic race origins and calculate them out to come up to 100%. From a conceptual standpoint, the numbers are correct depending on the combination of multiple races. He further explained the process and how the multiple race choices were calculated. The census provides the total population *(as denoted in the first six rows in the chart & the bottom six rows that denote the Voting Age Population).*

He referred to page 7 that outlined the 2010 Census Race Distribution. He commented that the percentages only denoted the race categories. He referred to page 7 that

outlined the 2010 Census Race Alone or in Combination. He referred to page 8 that outlined the district and how it appeared on a map. He stated that the information was plugged into the computer for tallying up all ten (10) districts, to come up with the population for those districts. He noted that this information was contained in the CT Bpt CC 2000.xls Dev Sum packet. He commented about the 10% margin window and how it affected Bridgeport. He said the Ideal District Size Target was 14,423, noting that the low range raw number was 13,255. He reviewed districts 133 and 134, noting that those districts are overpopulated and they have more than a 5% window. Districts 137 and 183 are under-populated. He explained that to take over the population of districts 133 and 134, they have to move across the city and shrink the numbers to accomplish this. The numbers must be rippled through the other districts to balance out the entire city. He went on to review chart-1 and he noted that if they are concerned about the Hispanic population, they should look at the A-tables to determine the demographic mix of the city. He referred to the census map that was distributed that showed the various racial groups and origins in the data. He pointed out that the guide at the bottom denoted the different ways of deciphering the mixed populations.

Mr. Brace expressed that it was important to hear from the public to hear what they had to say in terms of how they look at their neighborhood; what the boundaries are etc. He explained that they will then work with the city council and the public and return to address the public again. He suggested that everyone read the information and digest it as reference for a future meeting that will be scheduled for public input.

Co-chair Holloway clarified that the item discussed tonight referred to the city council districts only and not the state districts.

Mr. Brace concluded his presentation.

Co-chair Holloway announced that each speaker would have 3-minutes to address the committee:

- **Americo Santiago** stated that he was there to speak on behalf of the Latino Redistricting Committee. He thanked the committee for holding the public hearing. He went on to mention that there has been a long history of working together. He spoke about the past challenge regarding redistricting in the Latino community and he said he hoped to be able to put their differences aside and work on the redistricting plan together. He noted there has been a long history of working with the African-American community and he wanted to make sure that the one person one vote concept wasn't violated. He asked for assurance to protect the individuals and allow fairness and transparency and to remain open

to their concerns. He further commented that they should consider tweaking the areas where the population should be represented.

- **David Dukes** stated he was a resident of Bridgeport and the chairman of the Latino Redistricting Committee. He expressed interest in getting involved with redistricting and he was looking forward to learning more about the subject. He ended to say he hoped they could all work together.
- **Elena Padin** echoed Mr. Dukes comments.
- **State Representative Edwin Gomes** stated his interest in redistricting. He recalled that during 1990, the population figures were disputed and they wound up in court and a decision was eventually rendered that pleased everyone. He said he hoped they could do this in a fair manner this time around. He further expressed that there are some districts that don't gel and he hoped those districts would be balanced equally.

There were none heard, *and...*

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO ADJOURN THE PUBLIC HEARING**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

ADJOURNMENT

The public hearing adjourned at 6:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services