

CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
SPECIAL COMMITTEE on REDISTRICTING

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2011

5:00 PM

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

NON-COMMITTEE: Council members: T. McCarthy, Baker, M. McCarthy

CITY STAFF: Fleeta Hudson, City Clerk
Erroll Skyers, City Attorney's Office

OTHER(s): Kim Brace, Election Data Services

Co-chair Martinez called the meeting to order at 5:08 pm.

Presentation by Consultant Kim Brace of Election Data Services, Inc.

and Discussion of Establishment of new city council district lines in Bridgeport, Connecticut based on Demographic Census Data 2011

Mr. Brace explained the purpose for him attending the meeting. He stated that he was there to talk about redistricting and the census. He recalled that he assisted with the redistricting process ten years ago – *he distributed copies of the Powerpoint presentation for reference.*

He began his presentation to say that a poster titled "Who is Election Data Services, Inc." was produced that denoted a red map for the 2010 election results. This has been done every two years by Election Data Services. He stated that the process of redistricting was outlined on the back of the map. He noted that they also keep track of the voting equipment that has been used since 1980; they also collect the election returns, so they have been at it for a long time. They have done redistricting throughout the country, in large cities such as: Chicago, New York, Rhode Island, Massachusetts

and they've done Connecticut for the last two decades; so they are familiar with the New England states. He talked about what they were seeing in terms of the census and how it affects redistricting in terms of impact that is based on equal population. He said they must have districts every two years that are equal in population. What is equal depends on the individual person, for example; when they draw congressional districts at the capital, all are the same. And that's what governs reapportionment, which is an allocation of seats to an area. This is thought of as congressional districts to a state that is governed by population. He commented that if there is something to do with data and concerns elections, they are probably involved. He referred to page 4 that outlined census circumstances and how they go about redistricting. Page 4 also outlined reapportionment vs. redistricting and what the difference is.

Co-chair Holloway stated that they lost a congressional state. Mr. Brace stated that's part of the reapportionment process.

Mr. Brace explained that redistricting takes place for the city and one person one vote is the criteria they look at when redistricting. He noted for the state legislator, they have given a window of 10% that equates to 5% above the ideal and 5% below the ideal, which applies to local government also. There is a movement at the state legislative level that says we have to be more equal. He recalled that a judge mandated that the city councils and the common councils have to look at equal redistricting. In reality, when you look at the raw number there are concerns, because in a small town, they may vary a great deal depending on the number of people they're looking at. The second criteria consist of the second tier that is the voting rights act. This is defined as being fairly reflective of the minority population in an area, based on how the data is activated, defined and interpreted. The third tier of redistricting is called "The Kitchen Sink", i.e. anything else thought about can go into this tier, but they must have districts that are equal in population.

Co-chair Holloway questioned when the minority population is the majority, how is that defined. Mr. Brace explained that it then goes the other way; the majority population becomes the minority.

Mr. Brace referred to page and noted that the census bureau has reduced the population by crafting of the district configurations within an area. They also published a special tabulation that deals with citizenship and mostly impacts the Hispanic group. However, it can also impact other groups such as Haitians etc. During May, they will see new data called group quarters, which includes certain persons in specific housing environments. The total count for these persons include group quarters like prisons, college dorms etc. He said they should see that file shortly and it will be another factor

to take into account. During the summer, they will see what's called the SF1 (Standard File), which will include Hispanic subgroup data for (Cuban, Puerto Rican and Mexican). And during the fall, they will have a new set to ACS data released that outlines information related to communities of interest.

Council member Brannelly asked if prisons would be represented in the community. Mr. Brace said the issue pertains to where it started that was in New York. This was where prisoners were being shipped upstate and there was a feeling that they were being diluted to the north. He clarified that it's not the number of people that make the different, but those being represented.

Council member T. McCarthy stated that he felt prisoners should be counted in Bridgeport for the purpose of bumping the numbers from a government perspective. Mr. Brace said the government follows what the census does and they will be included, when they look for equal population.

Council member Lyons asked about the group quarters data for college dorms, hospitals and senior homes. Mr. Brace said they are considered the usual place of abode, so they are counted where they are in terms of the census; however from a census standpoint, you may have a double count. So for purposes of federal funding, you have the population here.

It was stated that if a prison is an ex-district, they are counted as the population for that district. Mr. Brace stated that was correct.

Mr. Brace referred to page 5 that outlined the voting age population. He noted that not everyone can vote, so that decreases the numbers. In addition, turnout to the polls brings down the number, because not everyone shows up to vote. He explained that when you look at the equation of impact and bringing down the numbers, it happens nationwide, geographically and in districts. Overall, the numbers vary in terms of geography. As a result of this, when they look at redistricting, all factors are taken into account to see how it is reflected in different parts of the city.

Council member T. McCarthy asked if there was a certain minority group that didn't vote as often, how does this affect the data. Mr. Brace responded that in the past, there was a theory that if they wanted to create a 50% district, they needed to add 5% because of the voting age; the data could reflect 5% above or 5% below. But they determined that 65% is no longer gospel and jurisdictions need to determine their own numbers. He mentioned that they need to be concerned of being too high or too low. It has to be just right from a court's standpoint, because redistricting is governed by what happens every ten years. There has been some discussion of how they should allocate the lower and upper chamber and how population and territory should be reflected. So that's why the census was defined.

Council member Lyons asked how to determine redistricting, when there aren't any actual set bodies, in terms of numbers. Mr. Brace said in that case, it becomes a matter of interpretation, but there are general guidelines for using the census. For the purpose of looking at minorities, there are two questions that read: 1) Is this person of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin? 2) What is this person's race?. Co-chair Holloway stated there was a problem with the word Hispanic because they aren't a race of people. Mr. Brace agreed. He clarified that Hispanic origin is an origin or ethnic group, not a racial group, so that's the reason for the two questions. One dealing with Hispanics and the second that deals with race that is broken out into five categories as: White, African-America, American-Indian, Asian, Pacific Islander and Other race that was subsequently added.

City Attorney Anastasi said Hispanic is usually assumed to be correct and many answer the first question yes and then go on to the second question. It was asked if the person is lead to pick White, African-America or other. Mr. Brace said what has been done in the past, is that half of Hispanics check white and the other half check other; so those are the two groups that are most impacted.

Council member Taylor-Moye asked about the Puerto Rican category and how they are identified. Mr. Brace said there was a sub-grouping of Hispanics to choose from. He added that since the year 2000 through 2010, there is a multitude of categories.

Council member T. McCarthy asked how a category gets filtered into a minority group if they check off Hispanic. Mr. Brace referred to page 6 that outlined the Race Data – Decision on Use. He said this page outlined the different impacts of what is happening with racial impact, in terms of data. He further noted that the page identified generic data only and not specific to Bridgeport. He pointed out that the information looks at race alone and the six categories add up to 100%. However, what is missing is the Hispanic data. On the second line, where it reads Non-Hispanic Race Alone, this indicates 20% of the population. And because the census cross tabulates the information, they can pull the Hispanic data and treat it as though they are a racial group. He further reviewed and commented on the information outlined on page 6 where changes in the numbers occurred and where they didn't occur, as it pertained to the Non-Hispanic race.

Mr. Brace noted that during 2010, people can pick two or more races indicated on the third line where it reads race combined, this results in going above 100%.

Council member M. McCarthy asked if half black or half white is chosen, do they break down the data to reflect half and half. Mr. Brace said no, the whole person is reflected.

Mr. Brace referred page 6, the third line under Race Data – Decision on use. He pointed out that it doesn't show Hispanic, but it's reflected on the forth line, where it reads Non-Hispanic Race Combined.

Council member T. McCarthy asked if they are allowed to choose more than one race for the Hispanic question. Mr. Brace said they can choose Puerto Rican, Cuban or Mexican, but they are identified as Hispanic.

Mr. Brace explained that due to the confusion with multiple races, it was determined that they will treat the issue in a specific manner, but the guidelines are only for government use. And for many minority groups, they get counted for the number of times they're minority, but not if they're white. This process gets them closer to 100%, because multiple races are counted. He explained that what this accomplishes, is you have a variety and they may want to look at the maximum, but all six ways are correct. He explained that when you look at the 18 and over voting population, where you see the voting age, tends to bring down minority numbers – *he noted that numbers for each district will be submitted to give them a better understanding of the information.*

Mr. Brace stated that in March, all the numbers for all the states were released, per the chart on page 6. He reviewed page 7 and stated that from a nationwide standpoint, impact was based on the combination of numbers as they were outlined. From a Bridgeport standpoint, he explained that they took the council district lines and overlaid them on the new census files in accordance with geography and the numbers. He stated that Bridgeport was assigned District 130 that will be added to all the other numbers. He referred to page 8 and explained that the numbers denoted a hodge podge throughout the city. He suggested that they take a look at how different the city is, noting that it's not just one specific area. The data show a color scale of 50 to 75% in solid colors and the cross hatch colors denote the dominant group or plurality.

Mr. Brace referred to page 9 that outlined Olympic Command for Redistricting Season: he noted the command for redistricting going into the forth decade; one person one vote.

He distributed copies of the tables that outlined Bridgeport, CT Districts with 2010 Census Data. He briefly reviewed the tables and commented according.

Mr. Brace noted that on page 1, the equal population consisted of ten (10) districts indicating the Statewide Population of 144,229, noting hat there was a gain of approximately 5,000 people.

City Attorney Anastasi asked if 100% was a guide or a mandate. Mr. Brace said it was only a guide. He commented that it wasn't binding at the local level.

Council member T. McCarthy commented that they want to get as close to 100% as possible. City Attorney Anastasi stated that while 100% is acceptable, if they can't get 100%, they should strive to achieve at least 50%.

Mr. Brace reviewed page 2 that outlined numbers for individual districts per the total number of persons equal the number of people that currently reside in District 131. He explained that the information denoted 151 persons under-populated. He said in theory, District 131 can stay the way it is, however, they may need to shift it and come across other districts. He noted that districts 3,4,7,8 aren't on one side of the city, so this results in having to consider the four outer layers to include the other districts. Co-chair Holloway stated that no sitting council person will be redrawn out of their district.

Council member Brantley asked if the districts were broken down by ethnicity. Mr. Brace referenced pages 3 through 14 that outlined that information.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS MOVED TO ADJOURN
** COUNCIL BRANTLEY SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 6:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services