

Redistricting Committee
February 28, 2012
Minutes

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE: The meeting was called to order at 8:05 p.m. by Chairman William Holden with the following members present: Jane Aiello, Suzanne Burr Monaco, Vicki Tesoro and Tony Scinto. All present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Minutes of February 21, 2012 were approved as submitted by unanimous consent.

Ms. Tesoro submitted additional information estimating drive times to each of the polling places.

In response to Ms. Tesoro's request for a legal opinion regarding "one person, one vote" and if there is a governing State Statute, Mr. Holden provided committee members a legal opinion from Town Attorney Edward V. Walsh. Mr. Holden noted that the allocation is based on population not districts.

Mr. Holden submitted a redistricting plan based on four voting districts. He informed members that he and Mr. Scinto worked together on this proposal. He reviewed the allocation per district as follows: District 1 would have 5 Council members based on a population of 8,584 which is 1/10 of 1% off an ideal number of 8,575 individuals; District 2 would have 5 Council members based on 8,552 people which is 1/4 of 1% off an ideal number of 8,575; District 3 would have 5 Council members based on 8,581 people which is 7/10th of 1% off an ideal number of 8575 ; and District 4 would have 6 Council members based on 10,299 people which is 8/100th of 1% off an ideal number of 10,290.

Mr. Holden stated that there are advantages to having only four voting districts, such as reducing the number of polling places thereby eliminating the ones that have parking issues or are not convenient for voters because of handicap access or a longer distance for voters to walk from the parking area. He also discussed a reduction in the number of poll workers necessary resulting in a savings of approximately \$4,500.

Mr. Holden reviewed the projected savings (attached) for reducing the number of municipal districts from seven to four. In addition, he stated that two tabulators are required in each district. Under the proposed four district plan, 6 fewer tabulators would be needed which would result in a savings of \$1,200 for the Town. The Secretary of State's Office is now requiring a service contract on the tabulators at a cost of \$200 per machine. The State will pay this cost through June of 2014 and then the towns must take on the responsibility for this cost.

In addition, Mr. Holden stated that 32 memory cards were programmed for November 2011 at a total cost of \$2,700. Changing to four districts would require only 20 memory cards and would save the Town \$1,000. Two phone lines are required at each polling

place (one voice phone and one for the handicap fax) at a cost of \$35 per month plus an activation fee for each line (Approximate cost of \$100 per polling place). In the event of a primary in September the phone lines are left in place as it is more cost effective to do so than to disconnect and reactive in November. Lunch and dinner are provided for the poll workers at a cost of \$16 per person. The total savings for one election per year would be approximately \$8,000. In the event of a special election or primary there would be an additional savings of about \$5,000 town wide (savings based on a one party primary). He commended Ms. Aiello for her color coding system thus eliminating voting outside voters' registered party which has reduced confusion in the polling place.

Ms. Aiello stated that when she and Ms. Tesoro worked on their plan their approach was to eliminate as many split districts as possible. She was concerned about the driving distance to the polling places in the four district plan. Ms. Tesoro stated that while she understands the cost savings she is concern about voter confusion. Ms. Aiello stated that individuals are accustomed to voting in a certain place and she would prefer to keep as many voters as possible in the same polling place.

Ms. Tesoro stated that there are advantages to a seven district plan. The Town has operated under a seven district plan for 30 years and during that time the population has only increased by approximately 3,000 people. She referenced the Committee's charge of "one person, one vote" and stated the seven district plan provides for equal districts. She stated that she is concerned that under a four district plan each Council person will be representing a significantly larger number of people in the district. Under the proposed four district plan, six Council members would now represent approximately 10,000 people after they are elected because of the larger district, whereas currently they are representing approximately 5,300. She noted the districts in some cases have doubled. She noted that the seven district plan is proportional to representing 1,715 individuals per Council member with an overall smaller district size.

Ms. Tesoro requested the number of people who will be required to change voting districts under the four district plan.

Ms. Aiello questioned why a four district plan was selected rather than a different number. Mr. Holden responded that he considered a five district plan, however, after the State finished the redistricting of the State Assembly districts a five district plan would not be as beneficial as it would result in two split districts compared to one split district under a four district plan.

Ms. Tesoro expressed her concern about increased wait time at polling places under the proposed four district plan and stated that she would not want anyone to not vote because there was a waiting line. Ms. Monaco suggested a double check-in line as has been done in the past.

Mr. Holden concurred with a double check-in line if necessary and noted that each polling place is equipped with one privacy booth for every 250 voters which helps reduce wait time.

The next meeting was set for Tuesday, March 6th at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Tesoro thanked Mr. White for his help in producing the maps.

Ms. Aiello and Ms. Tesoro moved and seconded to adjourn. There being no further business to conduct the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail J. Hanna,
Clerk

Projected savings of 4 vs 7 Voting Districts

Three Moderators	\$885
Six Ballot Clerks	\$1110
Six Assistant Registrars	\$1410
Six Tabulator Tenders	\$1080
Poll Worker Total	\$4485
Six Phone Lines (activation & one month usage charge)	\$600
HAVA (IVS) programming @ \$100 per district	\$300
Lunch & Dinner for 21 poll workers	\$336
Tabulator Service Contracts (estimated) as of 07/01/14	\$1200
Memory card programming (estimated)	\$1000
Approximate savings for a general election	\$7921

This assumes two lines of checkers in each polling place. If it is found that two lines are unnecessary, there will be further savings up to \$1410.

4 districts will also allow for reducing the number of polling places. Parking at some of the current schools is inconvenient.

More Council candidates per district reduces the likelihood of a recount. Less districts reduces the chance of being selected for a hand-count audit of the tabulator results.

It can be difficult lining up poll workers for primaries or special elections; it is sometimes difficult to get the workers required for a regular election.

The savings above are for the general elections we have every year. Town wide primaries, like we will have in August, and special elections will also see savings.