



## **OFFICE OF THE CHAMPAIGN COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

1776 East Washington Street, Urbana, Illinois 61802-4581

**Darlene A. Kloeppel, County Executive**

### **Champaign County Redistricting Advisory Group MEETING NOTES FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 15, 2021, 6:30PM**

**Members Present via Zoom:** Leanne Brehob-Riley, Trisha Crowley, Nicole Darby, Brian Gaines, Chuck Lansford, and Gabe Lewis

**County Staff via Zoom:** Darlene Kloeppel (County Executive) and Mary Ward (Administrative Assistant)

**Others Present:** None

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County Executive Kloeppel started the meeting at 6:31 p.m.

Ms. Crowley gave an update on the League of Women Voters activities. The state organization is had a series of webinars on April 13, 14, 15 to educate people on how to use open-source mapping tools.

Mr. Gaines is part of a group doing a free public webinar through the U of I Extension Service on April 19th. There will be three presenters to cover Federal, State and Local redistricting information in a short amount of time. Ms. Kloeppel will send the link.

Ms. Kloeppel gave an update on the County Board Committee of the Whole meeting, where she has given them an update on our group's activities, a draft of the ordinance to review and the time frame for the redistricting process steps. The Board made no comments. Only one question was asked about the source of the ESRI data.

Mr. Lewis said there were no updates on Census data.

Mr. Lansford asked, what if there is a significant difference in the outcome of the census data vs. the material used in the mapping. Is there a way that can be changed at that point? Once they're in, the maps can't be changed except through judicial means. The maps can be challenged in court if people feel they are not fair. Our goal is to try to get the districts as close as possible percent wise, so there is not much variance in population between the districts.

The ESRI data estimates are historically close to the Census data. Ms. Brehob-Riley feels that at the Block-Group level the Census and ESRI data match up, but it's at the Block level where they've made some changes so that the Blocks are more accurately reported. Mr. Gaines expressed some concern about more variance this year due to the Pandemic. Mr. Lewis said with the U of I submitting the group quarters information, students housing should be accurate. Ms. Crowley requested that we see if cities have any development plan data to help anticipate what direction cities are growing.

Ms. Darby shared some new maps. The app now lets you see all the maps that have been submitted so far. She walked the group through some of the features on the app for comparing the different maps and ways to mark the map. You can use the draw tool to mark up the maps. In the Directions, you can click on the hyperlinks to get the statistics for each plan. There's an overview of the map and all the statistics for comparisons.

To date, the public has submitted a few communities of interest. Ms. Kloeppel is aware that there community members who are planning on drawing maps and Mr. Gaines plans on trying to draw one or two.

Mr. Gaines asked if all the maps so far are based on our estimated populations from ESRI. All the maps have been adjusted to the new estimates. He requested Ms. Darby to include the existing map without any adjustments, just for comparison, so we can see areas of growth/change.

Ms. Kloeppel asked if the group wanted to have districts that are competitive. Competitiveness is one of the attributes that can be considered. Do we want to have districts that are close, they could be won by either party or do we want to have districts that are predominately one party or the other? How competitive do we want to make them? Likewise, do we want to split a predominately African-American district; do we keep them all in one district so they are pretty certain of getting someone from that minority elected or split them into two districts where they have a lesser chance but could possibly get two people from that minority elected.

The group agreed that preserving a community of interest is more important than competitiveness and that we should draw at least one, if not majority at least sizeable, African American population district.

The group established an order of importance for rating factors:

1. Population Equality – goal under 2% variance.
2. Keeping communities of Interest together - the ones we identified were:
  - a. Rural areas outside Champaign, Urbana, and maybe Savoy
  - b. African American community
  - c. Rantoul
  - d. college students, with proxy of campus housing
3. Jurisdictional Boundaries – not crossing too many boundary lines of cities (Champaign, Urbana and Savoy) We would rather cross the line in urban areas instead of reaching out into the rural areas.
4. Competitiveness – Dave’s Redistricting tool uses an average of data from contested races over multiple years. Ms. Darby will check into the Dave’s Redistricting tool and add to our stats.
5. Compactness – simple shapes

The group wasn’t interested in using the Diversity Measure as it does not appear to add anything to our analysis.

Ms. Darby will add the current map, so we have it for comparison. She’ll also get the competitiveness information from the Dave’s Tool and put that in for another layer. Mr. Gaines is trying to draw a couple of maps and hopefully we can have those by next time.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.