



City of Farmers Branch Workshop Meeting Minutes City Council

Farmers Branch City Hall
13000 Wm Dodson Pkwy
Farmers Branch, Texas
75234

Tuesday, July 26, 2022

7:00 PM

Council Chambers

Present: 6 - Mayor Robert Dye, Council Member Omar Roman, Council Member Michael Driskill, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Council Member Traci Williams, Council Member Richard Jackson and Mayor Pro Tem David Merritt

Staff: Interim City Manager John Land, Assistant City Manager Benjamin Williamson, City Secretary Stacy Henderson, Assistant City Secretary Argie Ree Potter, City Attorney Braden Metcalf, Director of Innovation and Technology Mark Samuels

CALL TO ORDER - COUNCIL CHAMBERS (7 P.M.)

Mayor Dye called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

22-422 Review Redistricting Committee's Recommended Map and Conduct Redistricting Map Exercises

Mr. Bronson Blackson, Chairman of the Redistricting Committee along with Cameron Arceneaux, from Bickerstaff Heath Delgado Acosta LLP, discussed and reviewed Map No. 7 recommended by the Redistricting Committee. Mr. Blackson explained he had met with each Council Member individually to review the proposed map and receive feedback.

Mr. Blackson reviewed with the City Council revised Map No. 8 that was created based on Council Member comments. Mr. Blackson displayed the differences proposed between recommended Map No. 7 and proposed Map No. 8.

Council Member Roman noted he was in favor of Map No. 8 as presented.

Council Member Driskill discussed proposed changes to District 2 and asked for further clarification regarding the changes. Mr. Blackson explained that it was necessary to take some population from District 2 to meet specified requirements and apartment demographics.

Council Member Williams asked if the committee was involved in creation of proposed Map No. 8. Mr. Blackson explained that Map No. 8 was created based on comments from the City Council only. Council Member Williams shared her concerns that the Redistricting Committee was not included in the creation of Map No. 8 and that the redistricting process was followed. Council Member Williams was not opposed to the revisions proposed in Map No. 8.

Council Member Jackson suggested some refinement to the maps could occur to follow Rule No. 2 of the City Charter that states splitting neighborhoods of interest should not occur whenever possible.

Bob Heath, from Bickerstaff Heath Delgado Acosta LLP explained that equal population within districts was a Constitutional requirement, Voting Rights Act requirement, and City Charter requirement. Meeting the various legal requirements would require compromise within each district.

Mayor Dye explained that there were approximately 26 neighborhoods within Farmers Branch and Map No. 8 keeps a majority of those neighborhoods intact.

Council Member Merritt noted that he was comfortable with Map No. 8 which kept a majority of the neighborhoods together, and the overall deviation within the districts was in line with previous district maps. Council Member Merritt asked if it was possible to place all of Eric Lane within one district rather than dividing the street. Mr. Blackson explained that the census block was drawn down the center of the street; and therefore, could not be kept within the same district.

Council Member Jackson distributed to the Council and Mr. Blackson a new map he created, proposed Map No. 9. Various mapping exercises were conducted with proposed Maps 8 and 9 to determine how numbers would be affected within each district.

Mr. Blackson and the Council noted that proposed Map Nos. 8 and 9 were very similar.

Mayor Dye asked that discussion regarding redistricting be placed on two separate City Council agendas for citizen comment and further Council discussion, along with an executive session item to discuss redistricting at the August 2, 2022 City Council meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Dye adjourned the meeting at 8:17 p.m.

Approved by: _____
Mayor Robert C. Dye

Attested by: _____
Stacy Henderson, City Secretary