

**Cuyahoga Falls City Council  
Ad Hoc Committee Meeting for Redistricting  
October 24, 2011**

**Members:** Don Walters, Chair  
Jerry James  
Jeff Iula

Mr. Walters called the meeting to order at 6:57 p.m. All members were present.

The minutes from the October 10, 2011 Ad Hoc Committee meeting were approved as corrected.

**Discussion**

Mr. Walters stated the committee has been discussing one proposal, which will be referred to as Proposal A. A new proposal is being introduced tonight that will be referred to as Proposal B. He pointed out the three maps that were displayed at the side of the room that showed the districts as they are now, who they would look under Proposal A and also under Proposal B. Mr. Iula thanked Mr. Walters for the hard work he did on Proposal A. He knew a lot of time went into preparing it. In Proposal B, they tried to stick to the same objectives that Mr. Walters did, but they looked at the wards more as districts. Proposal B is more compact so each Council person is close to their constituents. They tried to centralize everything. They wanted to make the east side into two wards but could not do that when they looked at the numbers. They, too, followed the Census blocks. Mrs. Pyke stated they began with Mr. Walters' numbers and used the 2010 totals to get a mean of 6,203. There is really not a lot of difference between Proposal A and Proposal B. They also tried to take a proactive approach to future growth. Mr. Guerra spoke on imminent growth in various wards. They are comfortable that these projects will happen in the next five years:

<u>Ward</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Number of Add'l Residents</u>	<u>Year</u>
1	Danbury	40	2012
	Manchester	<u>172</u>	2012-13
	Total	212	
2	Watermark	55	2012
	Watermark Phase II	<u>70</u>	2013-15
	Total	125	
3	Bath Creek Nursing Home	100	2012
8	Boulder Estates	160	2012-18
	Hidden Lakes	<u>250</u>	2012-18
	Total	410	
	Grand Total	847	

Mr. Walters appreciated the numbers on the proposals. He realized that the projects were going to happen but the totals over the past ten year period went down, most likely due to vacant homes. Ward 6 was the smallest in population but ten years ago, it was on the mark. The numbers for future projects do help but the bigger picture is the density of homes that are vacant. Mr. Guerra did not know whether vacancy numbers were included in the 2010 Census. In 2000, the City had 3% – 5% vacancy but that is probably greater now. Mr. Walters stated that could skew the numbers in the wards and it could go either way. Mrs. Pyke stated all of the wards are suffering from vacant homes, and a turn in the economy will show a growth in the wards. She added that Proposal B corrects errors made in the past. The opportunity is there to make these wards back into neighborhoods. Proposal B uses the expressway and river as a dividing line. They did not change anything in Ward 8, other than giving the area on Wyoga Lake Rd. to Ward 5. Mr. Guerra stated there is nothing in the pipeline as far as growth in Ward 5. Mrs. Colavecchio asked about Mill Pond. Mr. Guerra stated they have not heard from anyone on that project for three or four years but acknowledged it could be a potential development if the economy changes in the next five years. Mr. Walters stated that prior to the 2001 redistricting, the dividing line was State Road and Portage Trail and that is what Proposal A goes back to. It seemed more appropriate for Ward 5 to move north. The whole purpose to change Ward 3 is to use the main roads and keep everything west of State Road and north of Portage Trail in Ward 8. As far as Wards 1, 7 and 6 on Proposal B, he will have to look at the numbers. He felt residents may not care where their boundaries are but they do care who their Council person is. The shaded area on Proposal A is the only area that changed. If the wards are made rectangular in shape, a lot of people would be affected. He tried to have a minimal affect on residents and didn't use a crystal ball to try to predict future growth. Public input might be that they want to stay where they are now. Mrs. Pyke stated they took that from the previous meeting. Proposal A would affect 10.4% of residents and Proposal B would affect 11.7% so that is only a difference of 1.3% between the two proposals in the number of residents moved. Proposal A moves 5,141 residents and Proposal B moves 5,794 residents. Proposal B shows a large portion of those displaced residents being in the high rise apartments. Those people are usually in transition regarding where they want to stay. Currently, Elmwood is moving in and out of wards. Proposal B keeps it in two wards. Every ward stays within +/- 4% in Proposal B, and perhaps in ten years, it would need to be tweaked a bit. Mr. Walters stated if the wards all grow equally with development, then the target number would go up in ten years and either proposal would be on par. Mrs. Hummel asked how many people were moved in each ward. Mrs. Pyke stated the numbers were as follows:

Ward 1	Loses 107 to Ward 7 Gains 169 from Ward 2
Ward 2	Loses 169 to Ward 1 Gains 286 from Ward 3
Ward 3	Loses 286 to Ward 2 Loses 313 to Ward 4 Gains 572 from Ward 5
Ward 4	Loses 1,305 to Ward 7 Gains 313 from Ward 3 Gains 1,058 from Ward 5 Gains 369 from Ward 7
Ward 5	Loses 572 to Ward 3 Loses 1,058 to Ward 4 Gains 1,214 from Ward 8

Ward 6	Gains 508 from Ward 7
Ward 7	Loses 508 to Ward 6 Loses 369 to Ward 4 Gains 107 from Ward 1 Gains 1,305 from Ward 4
Ward 8	Loses 1,214 to Ward 5

Mrs. Colavecchio stated that in Ward 7, Proposal B chops off the western jagged edge but there are more numbers in that area than in Proposal A. Also, Ward 4 in Proposal B is more condensed geographically than it is in Proposal A yet it has more people than Proposal A. Mrs. Pyke stated that is because that section had the three apartment towers. Ward 4 picked up from Wards 7, 5 and 3. That is a very dense area so it was moved to Ward 7. Mrs. Colavecchio stated that Ward 5 was changing the most. Her new boundary to the south is now Graham Road. Her only objection to that is it takes her out of the Portage Crossing Development. What she likes about Proposal A is that it creates a natural boundary between Wards 6 and 5 by moving a lot of the houses on Oakwood to Elmwood and into Ward 6. She receives a lot of calls from people in that area who did not know who there Council person was. She also likes how Wyoga Lake Road takes the boundary to the northern border. Mrs. Pyke stated that in Proposal A, there are four Council representatives for residents from Oakwood to Elmwood, and ward boundaries are moving in and out. Proposal B has turned that into two wards. Mrs. Colavecchio stated it divides those houses because it only goes over to Elmwood. She pointed out that the top of Elmwood near Graham is commercial.

Frank Tompkins, 124 Chart Road, stated that both plans have pros and cons. He asked if there was an answer to his question from the last meeting regarding special provisions granted to the original Northampton Township at the time of the merger. For example, some areas are allowed to raise farm animals and he wanted to know if that would change if that area were to be under a different ward. Ms. Jones stated that per the merger agreement, those sections of the Codified Ordinance would not apply to what was formerly known as Northampton Twp. It would not matter what ward it is because it wouldn't change unless there is specific action taken by Council. For example, the City's curfew ordinance does not apply in Northampton Twp. The only section she noticed a change in was the one relating to removal of weeds and grass, which was changed to exclude residents who live in an R-1 area. Any other action would be per the Zoning Code which would trump merger documents and anyone living in a subdivision. For example, electric fences are allowed in Northampton Twp. but not in a subdivision. She stated the bigger issue would be the zoning. The City would redistrict an area if something came up. Mr. Mader thanked Mr. Tompkins for raising that important issue. Mr. Rubino commented that Proposal B has a more significant impact on Ward 1 than Proposal A did regarding the outline and number of people. As Proposal B is laid out, it would be a welcome addition to Ward 1 as far as geography and the number of people. Mrs. Pyke commented it was hard for her to let go of those 169 people and stated that if Proposal B is adopted, those residents would still be welcome to call her if they wanted, even though Mr. Rubino would also be representing them well. Mr. Rubino thought it would be a good idea to blend the better aspects of each proposal. Mr. Walters stated that anything is possible. He was also going to try to get this moved to a vote by the end of November so it can be completed before the budget process begins. He is going to schedule the next meeting for November 7 and, at that point, felt the committee could make a recommendation to the Public Affairs Committee, and then it could go to Council for a vote before December.

Karen Nelsch of North Haven Blvd. stated this is a very important decision. It is a ten-year plan while the budget is one year. She did not think Council should rush it. Mrs. Nelsch felt that the sections could be

blended with a little more time and she suggested that Council take that time. Mr. Walters agreed it is important. He stated there are two more weeks to review the proposals and possibly come up with a blended one. He did not think the boundaries would matter to a resident. If they are comfortable where they are, he did not think they would want to be moved. Ten years ago, there was not a lot of thought given to keeping it compact. He thought it better to move less people and not worry about what a ward looks like. That is the true goal. Mrs. Pyke stated it is only a 1.3% difference between the proposals in who is being moved. When talking about making wards compact, it makes them more of a neighborhood. Mr. Walters agreed with what was said about neighborhoods but Proposal B chops the presidential streets into two wards. Those streets have always typically been considered a neighborhood area. Council owes it to residents to move as few of them as possible. Mr. Mader understood everyone's feelings on borders and pointed out he has some islands of areas that are surrounded by parks and by Akron.

Mr. Walters scheduled the next Ad Hoc meeting for 6:45 p.m. on November 7, immediately after the committee meetings. At that time, anyone can contact another member of Council if they have a proposal. He pointed out this redistricting can be done a million different ways. They will ask the committee for a recommendation to go to Public Affairs for discussion and when that committee would be ready to bring it out for a vote is up to them. Mrs. Pyke stated she could email a copy of either Proposal A or B to anyone who wanted one.

Meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.