

Cuyahoga Falls City Council
Ad Hoc Committee Meeting for Redistricting
September 12, 2011

Members: Don Walters, Chair
 Jerry James
 Jeff Iula

Mr. Walters called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. All members were present.

Discussion

Mr. Walters stated this Ad Hoc Committee was formed to discuss redistricting pursuant to Article 4 Section 7 of the City Charter. He stated the purpose was to re-draw City wards to make them substantially equal in population so that all citizens would have equal representation. It is important that any redistricting be passed in ordinance form by the end of the year. The objectives are to maintain all ward representatives within the districts to which they were elected prior to redistricting. Also, in order to minimize disruption to residents, Council members must promptly communicate the specifics (such as neighborhood issues, underground utilities, vacant properties, etc.) occurring in any lost territory to the new Council representative. Ward representatives build a rapport with, and get attached to, their constituents and hate to lose any of them. It will be good for a new representative to be brought up-to-speed. His data source for his information is the County's GIS Map which contains 2010 census data. He felt it would be more cost effective to the City if Council handles any redistricting vs. hiring an outside mapping consultant which would cost anywhere between \$500 to \$5,000. The Census Bureau's map cannot be printed so he referred everyone to Summit County's website where there is a link to the map that breaks the City down into census blocks. The 2010 census totals are: Ward 1 – 6,090; Ward 2 – 6,090; Ward 3 – 6,241; Ward 4 – 5,865; Ward 5 – 6,628; Ward 6 – 5,733; Ward 7 – 5,746; Ward 8 – 7,230. The 2010 population total is 49,623, which equates to a target number of 6,203 per ward. Using the variation of +/- 5%, which is the norm used by the state and county governments, new ward totals must be between 5,893 and 6,513. The need for most of the population shift will occur in Wards 8 and 5. It will take a lot of work to shift south. He recommended that everyone review the map and get some ideas. He will crunch numbers and come up with a proposal for the next meeting. He assumed that the legislation text would have to spell out each boundary. Ms. Jones stated she would pull the ordinance from ten years ago to see how it was done then. Mr. James liked the direction Mr. Walters was going and felt it was a solid plan. In the end, it should be the least intrusive to residents as possible. There will be some give and take but that will be unavoidable. Mr. Iula asked if the growth of Ward 8 would necessitate adding another ward to the City. Mr. Walters stated it would have to be a Charter change and go to a vote of the people. Mrs. Hummel thanked Mr. Walters for his work so far. She commented on the boundary difference between the desk blotters Council had and the map Mr. Walters distributed. Mrs. Pyke stated it was drawn by census block. She added that she understood members did not want to make new boundaries based on future development but wanted to point out that development on Front Street will add 50 new people within the next six to nine months. Mr. Walters stated they can take some of that into consideration. He added that he will have the IS Department put a link on the City's website to the census map so it will be more easily accessible.

He scheduled the next meeting for September 26 at 6:31, immediately after the Council meeting.

Meting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.