

OXFORD, NORTH CAROLINA
November 8, 2021

The Members of the Honorable Board of Commissioners of Granville County, North Carolina and the Granville County Board of Education met in a special joint meeting on Monday, November 8, 2021, at 1:00 p.m. in the Meeting Room, Granville Expo and Convention Center, 4185 US Highway 15 South, Oxford. The purpose was to meet with the Granville County Board of Education regarding redistricting.

Present were:

Chair: Sue Hinman

Commissioners: Jimmy Gooch Zelodis Jay
 Timothy Karan Russ May
 David T. Smith

Tony W. Cozart was absent.

County Manager: Michael S. Felts
County Attorney: James C. Wrenn, Jr.

Present from the Granville County Board of Education were:

Vice-Chair: G. Thomas Houlihan

Board Members: Ethel Anderson Amanda J. LaBrecque
 Leonard E. Peace, Sr. Glenda Williams

David Richardson and Gregory McKnight were absent.

Board of Education Attorney: Eva DuBuisson

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Chair Sue Hinman and Vice-Chair Thomas Houlihan called the joint meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. Chair Hinman then recognized Commissioner Russ May for the invocation. Board of Education Member Glenda Williams led the Pledge of Allegiance.

WELCOME, REMARKS AND UPDATES

Chair Hinman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Vice-Chair Cozart was absent due to a work conflict. Board of Education Vice-Chair Houlihan announced that Dr. Alisa McLean was not in attendance due to her only daughter getting married and that Chair Richardson was not in attendance due to business reasons.

PRESENTATION REGARDING REDISTRICTING

Chair Hinman recognized Attorney Craig Schauer with Brooks, Pierce, McLendon, Humphrey & Leonard, L.L.P. Attorney Schauer said that after the last meeting on October 27,

2022, he left with objectives and tried to enact the changes requested. He then reviewed the changes to the maps and noted that the maps are compliant. He then asked if there were any questions.

Board of Education Member Leonard Peace asked about a requested change for Antioch Road. Attorney Schauer reported that he spoke with the demographer and the east side of Antioch Road had too much population so the changes could not be made. He then explained census blocks and talked about how dividing census blocks could open up boards to potential lawsuits, but that smaller tweaks or minor adjustments have lower risks and can be beneficial. When asked by Mr. Peace who would sue, Attorney Schauer said that it is not obvious that there would be a lawsuit but that most boards have stayed with census block information. He said that splitting census blocks was not discussed in the previous meeting.

Commissioner May noted that if the boards consider deviations, there could be others and mentioned a change in his district.

Attorney Schauer recapped the process to this point. He said the process had been very transparent and there were minimal changes from the Board.

Commissioner Gooch noted that he was perfectly willing to stay with the census blocks but would have concerns if the boards went outside of the census blocks.

Attorney Schauer reiterated that decisions to deviate from the census block lines could cause potential lawsuits and that it would be a policy decision by the boards to deviate. He noted that common practice is to stay with census blocks to be cautious of potential litigation.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Samantha Harris, 2113 Orchard Court, Creedmoor, NC, asked the Boards as they go forward in voting to consider that is not just about voting, but also about schools and people that make up these communities. She said there are so many elementary schools in the area and as we grow and redistrict, we only have two high schools other than the charter school in the area and urged the Boards to look at the whole county as everything has a domino effect. When looking at the institutions in Butner, she asked if those people have voting rights in Granville County or do they have to vote in the county they reside in.

Donna Pullium, 331 Whitehall Court, Creedmoor, NC, said she had concerns about movement on Highway 15 as you move students from South Granville High School to Granville Central High School as there is no stoplight on that road. She expressed concerns about increased

driving times for students, the bus driver shortage, and busing students. She asked that the Boards think about the entire county and the impact it has. She said her children attended South Granville High School and to consider these concerns.

MEETING CONTINUES

Attorney Schauer gave the next steps in the redistricting process noting that once both Boards agree on the maps, then the resolution adopting the maps would need to be approved to meet the November 17, 2022 deadline for the Board of Commissioners in order to get the maps ready for the upcoming elections. The Board of Education does not have that deadline, but if they are using the same maps, it is recommended they stick to the same process. He noted that the prison population has been excluded for the purpose of how many people live in a district and drawing the boundaries and does not affect the voting rights of anyone. If someone is in prison or another institution and if they are eligible to vote, then they can. At this time the Boards discussed and received clarification and direction on how to proceed and learned that a public hearing was not required for adoption of the redistricting maps. Attorney Schauer recommended based on best practices to adopt maps as drawn based on census block information without deviations. He noted that if the Boards choose to make other changes, it could open a Pandora's box of changes. Locations of the maps were announced as follows: Richard H. Thornton Library (210 Main Street, Oxford), the South Branch Library (1550 South Campus Drive, Creedmoor), the Granville County Administration building (141 Williamsboro Street, Oxford), and the Granville County website.

Chair Hinman said that today is the last chance to make changes on the proposed maps.

Board of Education Vice-Chair Houlihan said there has been a formal request by Mr. Peace and that if people want to have minor changes made, they have the right to do that. He said it almost was like he was being dismissed.

Attorney Schauer said he was not dismissive of the request but absent from instructions from the Board, he would proceed with these maps. He said the majority of those he had heard from today did not want to deviate from the census blocks.

Mr. Peace said he had several questions that Attorney Schauer was going to get back with him about.

Attorney Schauer said that he would still get the information to Mr. Peace but getting the information to Mr. Peace and drawing boundaries that deviate from census blocks is two different things. He explained that it is best practice to stay with the census blocks, but it is a decision of

the Boards as he serves the Boards. He clarified that he would need clear instructions from a majority in order to meet the November 17th deadline.

After further discussion action was taken.

BOARDS APPROVED STICKING WITH CENSUS BLOCKS FOR REDISTRICTING MAPS

Commissioner Timothy Karan made a motion to approve sticking with the prescribed census blocks from the U.S. Census Bureau for the redistricting maps. Commissioner David T. Smith seconded the motion. Commissioner Smith commented that no one in the room is 100% satisfied with the new map, but they have to work with the information they have. The Board of Commissioners unanimously approved the motion (6-0).

Upon a motion by Mrs. Amanda J. LaBrecque, seconded by Mrs. Ethel Anderson, the Board of Education approved by a vote of 4-1 (Mr. Peace voted nay) to stick with the prescribed census blocks from the U.S. Census Bureau for the redistricting maps.

When asked, Attorney Schauer said that he is not aware of a place to view the census blocks. He said in the past there was an application where they could be viewed, but it is not available yet.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Commissioner Russ May, seconded by Commissioner Jimmy Gooch, and unanimously carried, the Board of Commissioners adjourned at 4:01 p.m.

Upon a motion by Mrs. Amanda J. LaBrecque, seconded by Mr. Leonard Peace, and unanimously carried, the Board of Education adjourned at 4:01 p.m.

**It was determined after the meeting that each Board could adopt the resolution to approve the map at their regular meetings on November 15, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,
Debra A. Weary, NCCMC, CMC
Clerk to the Board