

AUGUSTA-RICHMOND COUNTY
RICHMOND COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS
AD HOC REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE MEETING

- - - - -

- - - - -

COMMITTEE MEETING

Before Kristy M. Williams, CVR, CCR

At the Richmond County Board of Education

864 Broad Street, Augusta, GA 30901

On Wednesday, November 10, 2021, Commencing at 6:00 p.m.

- - - - -

APPEARANCES

Board of Elections: Ms. Lynn Bailey

County Commissioners: Hon. Sean Frantom
Hon. Ben Hasan
Hon. Alvin Mason
Hon. Francine Scott

School Board Members: Hon. Charlie Hannah
Hon. Jimmy Atkins
Hon. Venus Cain
Hon. Helen Minchew

Legislature: Rep. Wayne Howard
Rep. Brian Prince
Rep. Mark Newton
Sen. Harold Jones

Attorneys: Ms. Zena McClain-Haymon
City of Augusta Law Dept.
Mr. Pete Fletcher
Board of Education

Chief Information Officer: Ms. Tameka Allen

INTRODUCTION BY MR. FRANTOM. 3
PRESENTATION BY MS. BAILEY 10
CONCLUSION BY MR. FRANTOM. 60

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE. 61

- - - - -

LEGEND OF THE TRANSCRIPT

dashes [--] Intentional or purposeful interruption.
Ellipsis [...] Unfinished thought. Speech halted.
Uh-huh Used to indicate affirmation, agreement, or gratification.
Uh-uh Used to say no or to emphasize a negative answer to a question, request, or offer.

(Words transcribed as spoken. Proper names may be phonetically spelled when correct spellings cannot be obtained.)

1 AD HOC COMMITTEE MEETING

2 AUGUSTA-RICHMOND COUNTY

3 [Pursuant to O.C.G.A. 9-11-28(d), Kristy M. Williams
4 has no contact with any of the parties or their counsel.
5 The court reporter's charges are the usual and customary
6 charges for services within the industry and are available
7 upon request by either party, with no financial or
8 services discount being given to any party named in this
9 meeting.]

10 - - - - -

11 **MR. FRANTOM:** All right. We're going to go ahead and
12 get started. First, I want to say welcome to our ad hoc
13 redistricting meeting for November 10th as we are back at
14 it after four successful in the community meetings.
15 Again, want to thank the Board of Education for their
16 hospitality here tonight. I want to thank those members
17 in attendance and online, as well as Attorney Pete
18 Fletcher and Attorney Zena McClain. Thank you for being
19 here tonight, as well. And the normal Travis and
20 Ms. Bailey, thank y'all for being here, as well.

21 And in the full spirit of transparency I think it's
22 important we talked about, as a committee, that when we
23 started this, that we would be fully transparent with
24 anything and everything in dealing with this committee.
25 And just last night, I received a call from Senator Jones

1 and Representative Howard, that they were willing to help
2 facilitate the process along by getting additional input
3 on the maps through the redistricting office in Atlanta.
4 And again, they're just trying to get us more information.
5 But at the same respect, it didn't go through the
6 committee process like we agreed upon when we first
7 started this process many months ago. With that, we do
8 not have that information tonight for this meeting, but I
9 do think it's important that as a committee, that tonight,
10 we agree to accept that information at our next meeting
11 next Wednesday, or decline that information. So I'm going
12 to, kind of, open up the floor here first to the committee
13 on their thoughts and emotions or, kind of, what their
14 thoughts are on this information that they were helping to
15 provide more of so the committee has approved that
16 information when it does come before us if it -- if it
17 comes before us next Wednesday, so. Yes, sir. Go ahead.

18 **MR. ATKINS:** Well, you're asking for comments on it.

19 **MR. FRANTOM:** Yep.

20 **MR. ATKINS:** You know, this reminds me of exactly
21 what happened 10 years ago. The committee had worked
22 diligently and they came up with something from what I
23 remember about the situation and I may be off in memory,
24 but they had come up with something that -- that most of
25 the -- they felt like the majority of the committee could

1 live with, and then, at the time, Senator Hardy Davis
2 presented something in the 11th hour, and that threw
3 everything out of whack and that's why it ended up going
4 to the courts. And this just, kind of, reminds me of that
5 same type situation.

6 I think the mistake that this committee has made, and
7 myself included, the maps that have been made public for
8 the last few weeks, were drawn in Atlanta by a person who
9 has no knowledge of Augusta. Now, we've acknowledged
10 that.

11 **MR. FRANTOM:** That's right.

12 **MR. ATKINS:** But they have no knowledge of Augusta.
13 And this committee is formed by 12 local residents, local
14 level -- 12 local elected officials that should be
15 representing the best interest of this community. So we
16 should have honestly never presented any type of maps. We
17 should have just introduced what the numbers in the
18 current districts were, and where the work had to be done.
19 And I see that now. Now, I met -- some of y'all may
20 disagree, but I think that was an error on our part,
21 because we got a lot of uproar, but out of that uproar we
22 also got a lot of good feedback. So as we move forward,
23 and I'll just go ahead and spell it out, most of that
24 feedback revolved around Summerville, Forest Hills. That
25 was where we heard the majority of the feedback. So if we

1 are truly good stewards for our citizens, we will take
2 that into consideration going forward.

3 **MR. FRANTOM:** Thank you for those comments,
4 Mr. Atkins. And I cannot see the screen if y'all could
5 bring up the screen. Vice-Chair Cain, did you want to
6 speak?

7 **MS. CAIN:** I'll make this short and sweet, and then
8 I'm going to get off because I just got here with my dad
9 and I really want to spend some time with my dad and my
10 family. I'm going to make a recommendation that we reject
11 the map altogether, because we did not follow protocol. I
12 think, for two people to take it upon themselves to go and
13 have a new map redrawn without consent from everyone,
14 because this is supposed to be a group effort and it needs
15 to maintain and continue to be a group effort, so I'm
16 going to put the motion on the table that we reject it,
17 the map all together, and let's do this together like
18 we're supposed to do it.

19 **MR. FRANTOM:** I'll second her motion.

20 **MR. MASON:** I'll second that.

21 **MR. FRANTOM:** Okay. Any further discussion? All
22 right, all in favor to reject the map, please raise your
23 right hand.

24 [Response]

25 **MR. FRANTOM:** Ms. Francine, what is raise your -- I

1 couldn't see what you're saying, I'm sorry, against --
2 rejection against it? Okay, yes. Okay. All right. That
3 passes unanimously. Commissioner Mason, did you have any
4 further comment?

5 **MR. MASON:** No, I just want to make sure you saw that
6 my hand was up there -- my recommendation.

7 **MR. FRANTOM:** Yes. All right. Thank you.

8 **MS. CAIN:** Mr. Chairman, I'm going to go on ahead and
9 sign off.

10 **MR. FRANTOM:** All right. Safe travels. Enjoy your
11 family.

12 **MS. CAIN:** I am. It's good to get home and see my
13 dad, ain't seen him in almost two years and my sister so
14 it's, it's a blessing.

15 **MR. FRANTOM:** Oh, that's awesome. Enjoy your time.

16 **MS. CAIN:** Okay. See y'all. Bye, bye.

17 **MR. FRANTOM:** All right, today, so we're going to go
18 ahead and move forward. First up on the agenda, is we're
19 going to go ahead and introduce the committee members.
20 We'll start to my right here.

21 **MR. HASAN:** Commissioner Ben Hasan, Commissioner of
22 District -- Commissioner Ben Hasan, Commissioner of
23 District 6.

24 **MR. FRANTOM:** Commissioner Sean Frantom, District 7,
25 Chair of the ad hoc committee.

1 **MR. HANNAH:** Charlie Hannah, Richmond County School
2 Board, District 2.

3 **MR. ATKINS:** Jimmy Atkins, Richmond County School
4 Board, District 8.

5 **MS. MINCHEW:** Helen Minchew, District 10 at-large,
6 Richmond County Board of Education.

7 **MR. FRANTOM:** Commissioner Mason.

8 **MS. SCOTT:** Francine Scott, Super District 9, County
9 Commissioner.

10 **MR. MASON:** Alvin Mason, District 4, Augusta-Richmond
11 County Commissioner.

12 **MR. FRANTOM:** And then, Representative Howard. He
13 might be traveling. Okay, those members, not in
14 attendance here are Representative Brian Prince,
15 Representative Mark Newton, and Senator Harold Jones. All
16 right. You were sent the ad hoc redistricting committee
17 transcript for the 13th and 20th. Can I get a motion to
18 approve those?

19 **MR. ATKINS:** Move to approve.

20 **MR. HANNAH:** Second.

21 **MR. FRANTOM:** Got a motion and a second from
22 Mr. Charlie Hannah. Those all in favor, please raise your
23 right hand.

24 [Response]

25 **MR. FRANTOM:** And that looks unanimous. Unanimous.

1 Thank y'all. All right. As we go through tonight, we'll
2 go through a presentation portion of, kind of, the public
3 input, we'll go through the guiding principles that will
4 really focus on educating everyone on what we can and
5 can't do as a committee as we move forward, and then,
6 we'll discuss additional paths forward of how we'll do
7 things, giving suggestions so where we can come back next
8 Wednesday and really deep -- dive deeper into these
9 suggestions. Understanding committee, that we've really
10 got to get to work.

11 We have, as a committee, agreed to every Wednesday
12 except obviously Thanksgiving, but the 1st, 8th, and 15th
13 to try to be done, but I think we're really going to have
14 to look to add some additional days, as this is going to
15 be a heavy lift to get this done by that December 15th
16 deadline. But one of the things I'll also want to mention
17 is that our IT department, after tonight, there will be --
18 we will be making changes to the map on the fly in the
19 room, as the committee discusses it and agrees to the
20 changes that they want to see, so we will have that
21 technology piece that I think is going to be very
22 beneficial to all of us to, kind of, move through the
23 process.

24 All right. So we're going to start with Number 3,
25 the overview of the guiding principles, and I'll turn it

1 over to Ms. Bailey to, kind of, give us an update.

2 **MS. BAILEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. So the guiding
3 principles. Guiding principles were -- was actually the
4 very first thing that this group did, and that was to
5 establish a set of rules by which, or principles by which
6 this committee would conduct itself as it went through the
7 process. They were well thought out. They meet all the
8 legal requirements of the law. But sometimes, if you
9 don't know the lingo, you might not understand exactly
10 what they mean, so we thought we would take a moment to
11 explain in detail what some of these guiding principles
12 mean and the impact they have on the entire process.

13 There -- there are lots of terms in here that are
14 stated that are both stated and unstated. The very first
15 guiding principle says that the committee will attempt to
16 draw the districts of equal size, and that is, as it is
17 practicable to do so.

18 Now, the real challenge this committee has is
19 recognizing the fact that we have a population of 206,000
20 people that need to be split up eight ways. We need to
21 maintain fairly well a racial balance among those
22 districts to represent so it doesn't digress at all from
23 what it is now, or at least not much, and at the same time
24 maintain a fairly equal number of people in each district.

25 There is a term that's used a lot in redistricting

1 called deviation, and what that means is how far a plan
2 deviates from that ideal district size. With this
3 particular set of population that we have, the ideal
4 population size is 25,826. And so, in a perfect world,
5 that's the number of people each district would contain.
6 The reality of it is that there are other guiding
7 principles in here as well, this committee holds dear,
8 such as, trying not to split neighborhoods, and trying to
9 hold precincts together, trying to keep communities of
10 interest together, and so in order to accomplish those
11 goals as well, sometimes it is, in fact, necessary, to
12 split neighborhoods. And in order -- and then, in some
13 instances, in order to keep neighborhoods together, the
14 deviation might be over or under the ideal district size.
15 And those are the realities of what the group is faced
16 with. Hard decisions to make no doubt.

17 There are terms in redistricting -- other terms that
18 are important to note, such as cracking and packing. And
19 what those terms mean is you can't take a community and
20 deliberately crack it or break it apart with the intent of
21 affecting the minority population within that district.
22 You can't do that. It's illegal to do that. In the same
23 way, it's illegal to pack, which means you can't pack
24 minority representation into a district with the purpose
25 of fostering a different minority group in another

1 district, you can't do those things. It needs to be fair
2 and equitable across the board. So those terms are terms
3 that you'll hear a lot.

4 With -- continuing with the guiding principles, the
5 plans that are adopted, or the plan that's adopted by this
6 group will ultimately have to be approved by the Georgia
7 State Reapportionment Redistricting office. And one of
8 the primary functions of that office will be to check the
9 plan for legal compliance. Does it meet the requirements
10 of the Voting Rights Act and the Georgia constitution and
11 the United States Constitution as mandated by law? Those
12 provisions under those different documents, for instance,
13 the Voting Rights Act -- the Voting Rights Act, is the
14 part that prohibits dilution of minority representation.
15 You can't dilute it and if you do dilute it, you have to
16 show reason why. For instance, if you -- if the minority
17 population in a particular district were reduced by 1% or
18 2%, in an effort to put a neighborhood together, then it's
19 permissible, but you have to have a reason to do those
20 things. You can't just arbitrarily do those type things.
21 The Voting Rights Act is also the part that protects the
22 minority population in the process.

23 The Georgia State Constitution mandates that the
24 districts have to be contiguous. Now, what that means is
25 the district, it can't be broken apart by another

1 district, so you should not in a district, you cannot
2 cross the boundaries of another district to go back into
3 the district where you came from. It has to be
4 continuous, it can't be broken into two separate sections.
5 So that's -- that's a requirement of the Georgia
6 Constitution.

7 Also, we talked earlier about the fact that the
8 districts have to be approximately the same size, and
9 that's provided in the US Constitution with the 4th
10 Amendment -- the 14th amendment that provides one person
11 one vote, which means that every person's vote should
12 carry the same weight. So in other words, you can't --
13 it's not legal to have a district that's overpopulated
14 because the citizens of that district are not as well-
15 served as a district that would have less population
16 because you have one represented elected official
17 representing more people and it's not fair that way. It
18 has to be equal.

19 So this whole thing we're going through now is, it's
20 not anything that's optional. It's not anything that we
21 sit around and dream up that we might do one day is to --
22 is to redistrict voters, that's not something that you
23 want to do, but it is a requirement of the law in order to
24 keep things fair and equitable across the board.

25 We also know that we can't -- when we redistrict, we

1 can't draw multi-member districts. So we can't put two
2 elected officials into one district and voters vote on two
3 elected officials from one district. That's illegal, you
4 can't do that.

5 This committee also chose to do other things, not
6 things that are particularly a legal requirement but
7 things that made sense to the committee, such as, the
8 committee voted to consider the boundaries of
9 neighborhoods and precincts, as we've talked about earlier
10 and to avoid splitting those where possible. They agreed
11 to try to keep the districts as compact as they could and
12 not sprawled out too much. They agreed to think about
13 connections to transportation links during the process.
14 They agreed to preserve the core of the current district
15 to the extent that they could. They agreed to preserve
16 communities of interest based on economic social school
17 district community or housing commonalities, shared
18 interest of the community. The committee also agreed to
19 take into consideration where the incumbents are that are
20 currently in the office and not to pair them against each
21 other to the extent that that's possible. And lastly, and
22 importantly, the committee agreed that no district shall
23 be drawn that favored any political party or incumbent
24 commissioner or School Board member or for any other
25 purpose that would dilute the voting strength of any

1 language or ethnic minority group.

2 So those are the basic guiding principles. And
3 that's the underlying bedrock that this committee will use
4 to make its decisions.

5 **MR. FRANTOM:** All right. Is there any questions for
6 Lynn comments based on what you just heard on the guiding
7 principles? I can't see the screen so I don't know if
8 anyone on there has any comments. It doesn't look like
9 it. Commissioner Hasan.

10 **MR. HASAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman,
11 my question is not directly for Ms. Bailey, but it does
12 center around the comment that she made about cracking and
13 stacking. But it's more to the IT, about what IT was
14 going to be doing in the next meeting. So based on what
15 we anticipate IT being able to bring back the next time we
16 meet, they're going to be able to move things around and
17 we see it? So will that also have a racial component to
18 it, as we move -- we'll be able to see that too or just
19 geographic -- geographical locations?

20 **MS. ALLEN:** We'll see that as well, sir. We'll see
21 the racial information as well, sir.

22 **MR. HASAN:** Thank you, ma'am.

23 **MR. FRANTOM:** Commissioner, you will be able to see
24 that ratio.

25 **MR. HASAN:** Yes, sir. Mr. Atkins.

1 **MR. ATKINS:** Thank you. I'm going to make a comment
2 before I say what I was saying because I don't want
3 anybody to misconstrue what I'm saying. I completely
4 support the cyber moving to Augusta and the growth that it
5 has brought. I was born and raised right here. Fort
6 Gordon's been a part of my life forever. I respect the
7 men and women of the military. And what I'm about to say
8 is not a slam on them, it's just a reality in Richmond
9 County. And I just -- I feel like we at no point have
10 really addressed it. But we have 72,000 residents in
11 Richmond County that are not registered to vote in
12 Richmond County. And Lynn, that is a question. When we
13 see the numbers and it says registered voters that's
14 Richmond County registered voters; correct? So if they're
15 registered in another state, their state of residency,
16 that -- that's not in that number; correct?

17 **MS. BAILEY:** I'm not sure where the 72,000 number
18 derived from. I do know, that we have with our total
19 population 206,000.

20 **MR. ATKINS:** Right.

21 **MS. BAILEY:** I know that we have approximately
22 140,000 people registered to vote here now.

23 **MR. ATKINS:** Okay. Because I think the number a
24 minute ago that was on the screen was 134.

25 **MS. BAILEY:** Oh, excuse me. Okay. I was rounding --

1 my apologies. Yes.

2 **MR. ATKINS:** And that's where I got the 72, the
3 difference in the two, in the general population and the
4 registered voters.

5 **MS. BAILEY:** Okay. And then, that would also
6 include, I guess, any children, you know, that would --

7 **MR. ATKINS:** Yeah. So what I'm getting at is, you
8 know, if we look at District 3 and -- and what was -- what
9 was proposed, in -- in the map that was drawn by Atlanta,
10 you know, Lake Forest, or Forest Hills, and Summerville
11 come out of District 3, but then all of that area up in
12 front of Fort Gordon on Jimmie Dyess Parkway is a part of
13 District 3. And a huge part of that population, people
14 who have moved here in the last 10 years since the last
15 census do not even vote in Richmond County. And I know
16 that as a military community, we have that problem. And
17 it's not a problem, but it's -- it's a fact. So in the
18 two previous times has -- have the committee considered
19 that at all, because I know like for me in District 8, I
20 have part of Fort Gordon. And I want to say it's like
21 2,000 residents, if memory serves correct, but out of
22 that, I think 120 of them voted last year at the Jamestown
23 Precinct. I mean, it was a very small number, which tells
24 me they're military, they're voting at their home state.
25 So no one -- had -- has any committee before us ever

1 addressed that? And number two, staying within the law,
2 how can we address that?

3 **MS. BAILEY:** I can tell you that in 2010, there were
4 approximately 10,000 citizens that reported during the
5 time of the census from Fort Gordon. And at that time, we
6 had around 250 or so that were registered to vote there,
7 so obviously, we had a large population, there on Fort
8 Gordon that were not actively participating in elections
9 here. It was taken into consideration. And the -- not
10 the plan that was ultimately adopted, but the plan that
11 was voted out of committee took that into consideration in
12 District 4, which at that time held the primarily the
13 biggest chunk of population, was deliberately populated
14 such that it took that into account. So it was
15 underpopulated. So it took those numbers into account.

16 One of the things that we -- that could be done, it's
17 been talked about this go round was District 3, with the
18 situation there that we have this time with our last time
19 resided in District 4, and the time before that it was
20 District 7 that wasn't necessary Fort Gordon growth but
21 just general growth that was the consideration. There has
22 been talk about, since the growth in District 3 is -- it's
23 not expected to diminish anytime soon, should the
24 committee consider overpopulating, or should I say under
25 populating District 3, so as to give it some room for

1 growth going down the road.

2 This go round with the census we have 8,700 people
3 that are reported at Fort Gordon. The majority of those,
4 there's a small bit in District 8, it's Precinct 803.
5 There are about 100 people registered to vote out there
6 and this election that we had last week had exactly zero
7 voters, you know, from out there. So the majority of that
8 area resides in District 4, and it's commingled with the
9 voters that live in the Barton Chapel Road area, so it's
10 -- I don't really have a way to segregate the registered
11 voters, per se from -- from the real residents out there.

12 **MR. FRANTOM:** But you're -- when you say that, are
13 you referring to the ones who actually live inside the
14 base?

15 **MS. BAILEY:** Which? The 8700 number?

16 **MR. FRANTOM:** Right.

17 **MS. BAILEY:** Those are people that reported on Fort
18 Gordon during the census, yes.

19 **MR. FRANTOM:** Okay.

20 **MS. BAILEY:** And we were able to pull those out. Our
21 Information Technology Department pulled those numbers out
22 for us.

23 **MR. FRANTOM:** So the military who are local
24 residents, but are not registered to vote locally outside
25 Fort Gordon -- I mean, do we have anyway of tracking that?

1 **MS. BAILEY:** Not necessarily. You know, we really,
2 we really would have no way of knowing here, particularly,
3 as people move in and out of neighborhoods and whatnot, we
4 would really have no way of knowing whether they were
5 permanent residents or temporary residents here.

6 **MR. FRANTOM:** Thank you, sir. Mr. Hannah.

7 **MR. HANNAH:** Yes, Ms. Bailey. I was actually going
8 to ride the coattail of Mr. Atkins. And I was -- I see
9 where Mr. Atkins is going and I'm, kind of, in the same
10 mindset as he is. If the growth in District 3 during the
11 period of the census is significant in regards -- regards
12 to non-permanent residents, I think that's something that
13 we really should try to take into consideration. And if
14 I'm correct, you did say there was no way that you could
15 give us the difference. How much of the new growth is
16 attributed to Fort Gordon? Did you --

17 **MS. BAILEY:** Actually, looking at the people that
18 reported from Fort Gordon itself, within the boundaries of
19 Fort Gordon, we've seen, that's about a 1,500 person --
20 it's about 1,500 people lower this time than it was 10
21 years ago that actually reported in Fort Gordon. So I
22 think the primary growth that we've seen there has not
23 been on Fort Gordon itself, but it's been on the outskirts
24 of Fort Gordon, in the neighborhoods, and in areas there
25 surrounding Fort Gordon.

1 And that's what I meant by the fact that it would be
2 -- it would be difficult to segregate out the people that
3 are living in the neighborhoods who was there, you know,
4 on a permanent basis and who was there and actively
5 participating in elections and who was not. I do know
6 this, I'll throw on my election administrator hat, and I
7 can tell you that, you know, we know from the number of
8 people who are registered to vote, and how it's impacted
9 the size of the precincts in that area that we -- we're
10 looking at splitting a couple -- at least one, if not two
11 of those precincts out there next year because of the
12 growth that we've seen. So it's definitely people that
13 are reporting into, that are going to vote into the areas
14 immediately surrounding Fort Gordon.

15 **MR. HANNAH:** Okay. I just -- just listening to Jimmy
16 makes a -- Mr. Atkins, it makes a whole bunch of sense
17 what he's talking about because the representation with
18 commission and the School Board trustee that's
19 representing District 3, in many aspects, are not
20 considered representatives of temporary, you know,
21 military. And that is just a concern of mine. I don't
22 want us to make, I would say an unfair move on a district
23 if next year there's going to be a dramatic shift in
24 population. This is just -- just my concern. All right.
25 Thanks.

1 **MR. FRANTOM:** Thank you, sir.

2 **MS. BAILEY:** I might just mention to, just following
3 up with that conversation. I did have a conversation with
4 the Planning and Development Office a few weeks ago about
5 that growth that we've seen in the Dyess Parkway/Belair
6 Road area, and certainly, you all know from the school's
7 perspective and from the zoning perspective on the Augusta
8 Commission, that area is not showing any signs of letting
9 up anytime soon. There is tremendous growth in every
10 direction out there. So that was -- that was definitely
11 confirmed by the Planning and Zoning Department as if we
12 couldn't tell already.

13 **MR. HANNAH:** Thank you.

14 **MS. BAILEY:** You're welcome.

15 **MR. FRANTOM:** All right. Ms. Minchew.

16 **MR. MASON:** I have a comment.

17 **MR. HASAN:** I do, as well, too.

18 **MR. FRANTOM:** Just a second. Ms. Michew first.

19 **MR. HASAN:** Then you can go to Commissioner Mason.

20 **MS. MINCHEW:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In talking in
21 terms of so much growth in District 3, being a District 10
22 at-large, I do cover District 3. So I'd like to address
23 that also, and sort of go back to what we have heard in
24 our last four public hearings. And primarily, yes, the
25 bulk of the input, you know, from the citizens the

1 concerns -- in nearly Summerville neighborhood, the Forest
2 Hills neighborhood, and also there were other -- other
3 requests from other citizens from District 4 and 5, I
4 believe, and others, but I would like to get more
5 information if I could. Looking at that growth in Jimmie
6 Dyess going down to Gordon Highway across to Columbia
7 County. Now, relating to what I heard from public
8 comments and residents of District 3, it was one thing is
9 that they wanted to keep their neighborhoods, of course,
10 intact. That was the primary consideration. And also, it
11 was the concern that the growth that was occurring that
12 had put so many people in District 3 was that area to the
13 western part of District 3, the Jimmie Dyess, that whole
14 area. And of course, as you said, it's going to continue
15 to grow. So comments were made that, since that was where
16 the growth was, some changes as far as in district changes
17 should be considered in that area not necessarily
18 everything in the Forest Hills and Summerville
19 neighborhoods.

20 So, in looking at the maps and going over everything
21 that was presented to us, I'd like to know, if I just, you
22 know, to throw out the possibility of looking at taking
23 the southern part. I'm looking at the area that is just
24 to the west of Jimmie Dyess and right above Gordon Highway
25 that area that is, I think Powell Road comes, ends into

1 that area, it's south of our school of Belair K-8, it's
2 South, it's just where Powell Road comes into the area
3 right towards before Gordon Highway begins in the western
4 part of Jimmie Dyess. And going over because there's
5 quite a few neighborhoods, there's quite a few
6 developments in that area, all the way to Columbia County.
7 And of course, it's right there north of Fort Gordon.
8 District 4 and 8 represent a lot -- represent Fort Gordon.
9 But I'm looking at that possibly we could consider taking
10 some of that area, as I pointed out, and maybe putting it
11 into District 4. That would take some of the people out
12 of District 3, and maybe -- and look at back to Forest
13 Hills neighborhood, Summerville and seeing what we could
14 do to work out in keeping at least one of those two
15 neighborhoods together. And I know with the draft of the
16 map, where -- it's really cutting into, again, that those
17 two particular areas which have been longtime
18 neighborhoods, especially Summerville. Summerville has
19 their own boundaries, and that's where showing to us at
20 the ARC public hearing, and it is a national historic
21 neighborhood as of 1980. And before that back in the
22 1800s -- 1861, it was actually a village of itself at that
23 time.

24 But in looking at their map, the problem with the
25 Summerville is that it's already divided up. They go into

1 District 3, District 2, and also District 1, so they're
2 already parceled apart, but so I'm thinking if, you know,
3 if somehow we could at least put them into one district,
4 the Summerville. At least one district either 2, 3,
5 possibly 1 because they have a section in 1, and I believe
6 there is a, on the draft, there is a section that would be
7 going into 1, and 2. So I'm looking at maybe keeping --
8 keeping them as much -- the boundaries as much as
9 possible, but at least within one district. And then with
10 the Forest Hills section, is keeping it pretty much
11 intact, letting it go completely down to the Wrightsboro
12 Road boundary, because to me, that Wrightsboro Road is a
13 very good defining line. And so I would just be
14 interested in trying to get some information as far as
15 working it, you know, as far as combining some of District
16 3 south of Jimmie -- in the southern part of Jimmie Dyess,
17 bringing it into District 4, and then seeing what we can
18 work out as far as keeping the Forest Hills neighborhood
19 intact as much as we could in District 3, and then looking
20 at Summerville as far as keeping it at least more intact,
21 but within possibly District 2, District 1, maybe we can
22 in District 3, depending on how much as far as moving it
23 out into District 4.

24 And another thing I wanted to point out is talking
25 about contiguous boundaries. I know with looking at the

1 map, the problem that stands out to me is District 5 sits
2 right pretty much in the middle splitting District 4 into
3 two areas. And there's a very just very fine point of
4 connection to connect it to sections of District 4. And
5 what's being proposed, it looks like District 5 is coming
6 down into even more into that little area where the two
7 District 4 sections connect. And I do know, at the
8 meeting, there were concerns about, again, from
9 neighborhoods, that Summerville will be going from
10 District 5 going into District 4. And I'm afraid that's
11 where some of this is coming and causing, like I said
12 again, it's a very just slim joining of the two section
13 4's. So I think, you know, if we could look at, maybe
14 taking some of District 5 and moving it over into District
15 4 to try and get that -- where District 4 is not two --
16 almost two separate sections. And then again, looking at
17 that one area of District 1 that just heads down, it's
18 like a leg coming down into District 8. In fact, it's
19 separated by District 6. District 6 separates the two
20 sections of District 1, but it's an area that's just
21 coming down in District 1, but it juts right down into
22 District 8, and I just don't know the reason, you know,
23 that that couldn't be looked at to try and even out that
24 area.

25 **MR. FRANTOM:** Okay.

1 **MR. HASAN:** Commissioner Mason is next.

2 **MR. FRANTOM:** All right. I appreciate the comments.
3 I'm, kind of, writing them all down, because we're going
4 to revisit the comments in just a little bit after we hear
5 the discussion on the public input. So I appreciate those
6 comments. I wrote, kind of, wrote them down, and we're
7 going to revisit that. Next, we're going to go to
8 Commissioner Mason.

9 **MR. MASON:** Can you hear me?

10 **MR. FRANTOM:** Yes.

11 **MR. MASON:** All right, very good. I appreciate
12 everyone's comments thus far. I just want to remind of a
13 couple of things, and then I got a couple of points that I
14 need to make here.

15 One, Lynn made a good point earlier, and I want to
16 make sure that we all heard that very clearly, that this
17 process is a requirement by law. It's something that we
18 must do. And so I will remind people back in 2010/11,
19 when I was the chairman of the redistricting committee,
20 District 4 had a lot of growth at that time, and we lost
21 over 3,000 people, and that's how we got split between 4
22 and 5, 4 and 8, and so forth. So I feel your pain about
23 the growth, but it is what it is. And so simply because
24 the pig squeals the loudest does not necessarily mean that
25 they should necessarily be protected.

1 Growth causes change and change is something that we
2 -- is going to happen with this -- with this process, not
3 just this year, but every year. And so I felt it big time
4 in 2010 and lost some very good, faithful voters that were
5 -- that -- that were loyal to me, and they went elsewhere.
6 And so that will happen. And so I want people to be
7 prepared for the fact that that will absolutely happen.

8 And also, District 4 is the most, in my opinion, and
9 what I see in here now, is the most split up district of
10 all your districts. We don't need to be split anymore.
11 We are split between 4 and 5, 4 and 6, 4 and 8, 3 and 4,
12 we're split. We're split, split, split. And we need to
13 really look at the rules of engagement of this particular
14 -- we need to look at the rules of engagement of why -- of
15 why we're here and those things that we can do and can't
16 do. Keep in mind of the cracking, packing and stacking,
17 when you're talking about moving people into certain
18 districts when we already have certain racial balances and
19 that sort of thing. You got to keep in mind all that when
20 you're making these comments in terms of what you would
21 potentially like to see.

22 Now all of this will come to fruition when the maps
23 are actually moved out and maybe you'll get a better
24 understanding of how that works or why the State actually
25 didn't pull it that way. Because what they should have

1 done is took into consideration those rules that we had or
2 those guidelines, and then also the cracking, packing and
3 stacking comes into play as well. And that's one of the
4 reasons why I believe you see the map the way that it was
5 in terms of proposed from a non -- from a non-biased, if
6 you will, party, that true enough, they don't know
7 Augusta, and almost that's almost the, kind of, the best
8 way because they didn't look at any other factors other
9 than those guidelines that we, kind of, put in place. So
10 that's important to know.

11 Let me say something about District 3 that people are
12 mentioning about Fort Gordon because I do, pretty much,
13 represent Fort Gordon. I'm pretty much recognized as
14 representative for Fort Gordon. I attend most of the
15 meetings with the Command. I'm very American -- and I
16 work out there as well. But Fort Gordon provides a lot to
17 this community and I don't think anybody's saying that
18 they don't. But when you say they're not really, you
19 don't really represent them, but they don't really have a
20 representative, well actually you do represent them. They
21 may not go to the polls, but they're spending money in our
22 communities, they're buying houses, and when things
23 happen, they're still calling on you for representation,
24 whether or not they vote or not. So I want to make sure
25 that we're very, very clear when we start talking about

1 Fort Gordon the impact that they have in this community
2 and by no means do they, or should they feel left out in
3 this process, whether they vote or whether they don't,
4 because this can't just be about the votes. And you just
5 can't pack them in, as you're saying here, if they're not
6 voting, you certainly can't pack them all into one
7 district, especially District 4, which we already have
8 quite a few of them, and then just pack them in, and then
9 they -- there's -- there's no votes there. So that's
10 something else to take into consideration.

11 As we look at this map, clearly with over 5,000
12 individuals that have come into the growth of -- of
13 District 3, and I'm, I'm for one, proud of the growth that
14 has come into District 3, because of the fact that it has
15 brought a lot to this community, and a lot of funds, a lot
16 a lot of stuff to our school system, a lot of funds to our
17 to -- to our city, and I want to remind the board that
18 those persons that come here, that are in the military,
19 there's certain dollars that I'm sure that you know, go to
20 the School Board for a -- or go to the schools for those
21 folks that are federally, that are part of the federal
22 installation. So at no time should we ever slight them in
23 anyway, shape, or form in terms of representation, because
24 they offer quite a bit to our community. Just want to
25 make sure that we're clear on that.

1 But now, the 5,000 that we're talking about, they're
2 going to have to be moved. There's -- there's no question
3 about that. The question is, where are they going to be
4 moved, and you've got to take into consideration all of
5 those things that have previously been talked about, that
6 Lynn brought up in the very beginning. And so when you
7 talk about contiguous, you're talking about hopefully not
8 splitting up precincts, but precincts have already been
9 split, neighborhoods have already been split. This is
10 nothing new. I don't believe that we can protect one
11 entity over another. I believe that's taking it a little
12 bit too far. If we can work that out within what it is
13 that we're trying to do, that's fine. But I don't see
14 anyone getting a free reign or free pass here. This is
15 just the situation that we find ourselves in and it's --
16 it's -- I know people want to have certain representatives
17 or -- or feel -- everybody's special in my mind.
18 Everybody has a right to feel how they feel. No problem
19 with that. But at the same time, there's going to be some
20 movement into 1. There has to be. There's going to be
21 some movement into 2, and where those lines are and where
22 -- where the population -- you got to understand that 1 is
23 missing a couple 1,000 people. Two is missing several
24 1,000 people. Four's not missing 1,000's of people. Five
25 is overcrowded, got to lose some people. So again, when

1 we're making these statements, make sure that we're
2 looking at those numbers and where we have to place and
3 where the lines are drawn which allows us to move and
4 place people into, not just arbitrarily into a district
5 because, quote unquote, it, it borders District 4, let's
6 toss them over in there. That's not the appropriate way
7 to look at it, from my opinion, based on the facts of what
8 we have, or of our -- of our guidelines and of the State
9 rules that we are bound to.

10 So as we look at this, I know we're just throwing
11 things out. My focus for District 4, and the southern
12 portion, and I would hope our super district who has a lot
13 of the southern portion, will chime in here as well,
14 because I'm -- appear there are comments from -- from --
15 from others. This area here in 6, excuse me, 8, which is
16 out of -- out in the southern portion, 4 is out in the
17 southern portion 6 and 5, 5 is, kind of, in the middle
18 piece of that, we do have a lot of split districts and
19 before we start putting other precincts into 4 and 5 and
20 like that we've got places like Woodlake that's split
21 between 4 and 5. If 5 has to lose people and 4 need to
22 gain people, we don't need to gain it from up top, we need
23 to get it from really the same subdivision. That would be
24 the most appropriate place to pull from, immediately from
25 the exact same subdivision, the same street going in, half

1 the street on the right, then half the street on the left
2 is -- is 4, half the street on the right is 5, we could
3 close that up and we wouldn't have such a big split out
4 here. Four gets the people that it needs. Five gets to
5 loose some that it needs, and so forth like that.

6 So that -- that's the type of look that I'm looking
7 at in terms of trying to help these areas and do some of
8 the things that we are trying to do. And whatever we can
9 do for Summerville and any other place for that matter, as
10 it relates to getting them into one district. So could I
11 understand about split districts? I actually do, but it
12 may not necessarily be District 3, and I think that's
13 where the disgruntlement from my perspective at Richmond
14 -- Richmond Academy, that's where the disgruntlement came
15 in. That they wanted to just remain in 3 no matter what.
16 There were, there wasn't any thought process of moving
17 out, they like where they were. And I don't blame them
18 for that. I really don't. But that's just something that
19 we have to look at. So from us in the southern piece, we
20 just have a lot of -- a lot of subdivisions that are split
21 and that sort of thing. Obviously, we don't need a lot of
22 people. We're not losing a lot of people, we're not
23 gaining a lot of people. So the southern is, is, is
24 pretty much where it is. We know that we're going to have
25 to deal with 3, 1 and 2 for the most part, and -- and

1 maybe 5, and try to figure out you know how we're going to
2 do this.

3 So those are just my comments. But let's just make
4 sure that we keep, keep track of the fact of we have rules
5 and regulations, we have guidelines, and that cracking,
6 packing, and stacking. We have to look at the racial
7 balance and the racial makeup. So you just can't pour
8 2,000 more, for instance, blacks into District 4 when we
9 already have some 60 some odd percent or 70%. You just
10 can't do that. That's, that's part of what we're talking
11 about with the cracking, packing, and stacking piece.
12 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 **MR. FRANTOM:** Thank you, Commissioner Mason.
14 Commissioner Hasan.

15 **MR. HASAN:** Thank you. Thank you. Thank you,
16 Mr. Chairman. I would like to say -- like to start out
17 with this. Let me start with this.

18 First, I want to -- let's do this with the voting --
19 voting numbers. Actually, like I say, Ms. Lynn when she
20 said, 140, several months ago, it was at 139, so that's
21 where the 140 came from. Right now it's 134,000, little
22 over 134,000 registered voters. You have 160,000 people
23 in Richmond County that are of age to vote. And so now
24 you got 46,000 different. That's what's different. So
25 it's not 70,000 -- it's 46,000 people that are now of

1 voting age, 160,000 of those are -- and 134 of those are
2 registered voters. That's the first thing.

3 Now, the next thing, is everybody knows on the Fort
4 Gordon base itself or camp whatever you want to call it on
5 this footprint itself, if it got 10,000, which is at
6 8,700, now whatever, probably only 1,500 of them are
7 registered voters. I mean, everybody knows that that's a
8 given. You get very little, but you get so much back in
9 quality of life, as my colleague, Commissioner Mason, in
10 particular, just mentioned. But when you're talking
11 about, but when you give the notion that they're not
12 voting outside the camp around Jimmie Dyess Parkway and
13 everything, nothing could be further from the truth. 309
14 and 310 gave the current commissioner over a 700 vote-
15 point lead that her opponent could not overcome, and
16 that's why she sitting commissioner. So they are voting
17 on that side. Matter of fact, I believe one of those
18 precincts has the most registered voters in all of
19 Richmond County, so they are voting out there, they are
20 registered voters out there in 309 and 310, and that's on
21 that west side of District 3, which you're mentioning. So
22 that's, that's a misnomer. Fort Gordon footprint,
23 absolutely. You're correct. Nobody disagrees with that.
24 Outside of Fort Gordon 309/310 totally different
25 conversation. Those precincts happened to come in early

1 at the last District 3 race and that build up on a 700
2 point lead and the opponent could not overcome it from
3 what came out of 309 and 310 outside of Fort Gordon. A
4 misconception.

5 So I do agree as well, I think I'm going --
6 Commissioner Mason did not say this, I think he might of
7 alluded to it he might have said it so I don't want to
8 misquote him, but my takeaway -- one of the takeaways is,
9 I think in starting this conversation, we are addressing
10 the elephant in the room. The elephant in the room is
11 District 3. Nobody can deny it. That is the elephant in
12 the room that we all see and we're going to have to find
13 some way to bite it, one bite it -- eat that elephant, one
14 bite at a time. But I think the best way to start biting
15 that elephant is to start in District 8, District 6, and
16 work our way in as opposed to trying to cut and move
17 people out of District 3, first and foremost. I don't
18 think it works that way. You know just like myself. I
19 live in Pepperidge. Well, when I got ready to run for
20 office, actually, I was thinking I was in 4. I called
21 Commissioner Mason asked him was anybody was going --
22 because he was -- he was commissioner at the time. I was
23 wanting commissioner and asked him was anybody asking for
24 their support. And he said, absolutely not. I said, well
25 then I am considering running for District 4. He said,

1 well, Ben, that's good to know, this is verbatim here.
2 Ben, that's good to know. But let me ask you a question.
3 Do you still stay in Pepperidge? I said, I do. He said,
4 do you still stay in the same place? I said, yes, I do.
5 He said, you're no longer in 4, you in 6. Lynn probably
6 can remember the actual call. I called and asked her.
7 Gave her my address. She said, yeah, you in 6. So what
8 Mason is saying is a district is gonna -- this is going to
9 be inevitable, but this is going to happen. We're just in
10 that place where we have to deal with whatever the outcome
11 is, but I do agree we're going to have to do something.
12 But I think we ought to be starting out to try to put 8
13 back together, put those neighborhoods together in 6, try
14 to put Woodlake back together, those kinds of -- and work
15 our way towards 3, and 2, and 1 and stuff to do it that
16 way. Not just try to take everybody out of 3 first, and
17 force feed everybody else. I think that's the wrong way
18 to approach this. Thank you very much for your time.

19 **MR. FRANTOM:** Thank you, sir. Ms. Minchew.

20 **MS. MINCHEW:** Yeah, I -- thank you. To address
21 Commissioner Mason. Yes, and Commissioner. My intent, my
22 main concern in this is to try and keep neighborhoods
23 together. And, I at beginning of this thought, yes, to
24 look at more than what, of course, is addressed on this
25 draft, changes that were made in neighborhoods back in

1 2010. Yes, I think we should go back and see if we can
2 definitely pull some of that, pull some of those
3 neighborhoods back together again, yes, in any district;
4 6, 8, 2, 1, whatever, because there are neighborhoods that
5 I have heard about over the past since 2010 that had been
6 divided up. And we have some concerns of neighborhoods,
7 you know, right now that are looking at going from, like I
8 say, District 5 to District 4 and they had the same
9 concern. They don't want their neighborhoods divided.
10 And also I know there were neighborhoods, Quail Ridge who
11 came and in one of the public hearings, and would like
12 their neighborhood put back together. So yeah, there's
13 quite a few neighborhoods that were separated back 10
14 years ago and I am all for looking at those situations and
15 trying to pull them back together if at all possible. And
16 just pointing, out of course, District 3 because that's
17 the one, as we all know, is the one that so overpopulated
18 and needs to have some people taken out and put in other
19 districts. But I do think as we go through this, we
20 should look at everything. I'm for looking at the whole
21 map as far as maybe trying to put back some of these
22 neighborhoods that have been separated. I just am trying
23 -- tried to not separate more is what my -- my thought is.
24 Thank you.

25 **MR. FRANTOM:** Absolutely. I appreciate all the

1 comments. We're going to go ahead and move forward.

2 Ms. Lynn, if we can talk about the areas that were defined
3 in the public input.

4 **MS. BAILEY:** Yes, sir. Thank you, Mr. Chair. There
5 were six separate neighborhoods that were specifically
6 identified during the public hearing portion meetings and
7 some of that occurred from voters in person, some from the
8 web portal, and then some through just telephone calls to
9 our office. We've talked tonight already about
10 Summerville, Pepperidge was another one that was mentioned
11 from the podium at one of our public meetings being
12 interested in being put back together. That was a slip
13 from 2010. Sand Hills neighborhood, there was a desire
14 expressed for them to be put back together. They were
15 split also in 2010. There was also, as was stated
16 earlier, a request from Quail Hollow/Quail Ridge
17 subdivision who are currently split between 4 and 5.
18 Again, that was a 2010 split, not a new split. There was
19 also a request, and this addresses Ms. Minchew's concern
20 where District 4 narrows so much under the draft plan
21 coming in on the west side of District 4, over in the
22 Green Forest/Butler Manor area that, that area not be
23 split and remain together.

24 Those were the six primary areas that were mentioned
25 during the public hearings and in the Forest Hills

1 neighborhood, of course, which I did not mention either,
2 but that was also on the list. Excuse me, there's one
3 more. This came in through a telephone call. This was
4 the Barefield subdivision, which is out off of Peach
5 Orchard Road near Hephzibah. That's in the draft plan
6 being proposed to be moved from District 8 to District 6,
7 and the request there was the neighborhood is not split,
8 but the request was to remain in District 8 rather than
9 being moved to 6. So well, I'll just leave it there for
10 now to answer your question.

11 **MR. FRANTOM:** Can you repeat those just in order the
12 -- that way everybody can hear one more time.

13 **MS. BAILEY:** I can. I can. So there was
14 Summerville, Pepperidge, Sand Hills, Quail Hollow/Quail
15 Ridge, Green Forest, Forest Hills, and Barefield?

16 **MR. HASAN:** Mr. Chairman, can you get her to add
17 Woodlake in there because we didn't have Woodlake as one
18 of them, and Woodlake was one that was split between 4 and
19 5.

20 **MS. BAILEY:** There are many others that are split.

21 **MR. HASAN:** Yeah, okay.

22 **MR. FRANTOM:** Woodlake? Okay. Ms. Bailey, I'm going
23 to ask you this question before we, kind of, talk a little
24 bit more about which -- what's the proper way to, kind of,
25 move forward? The deviation percentage, it can't be a

1 more than 5. Do you feel that the committee needs to give
2 the IT department slash, you know, when we make, suggest a
3 change and you bring it back, that percentage that we
4 definitely want to keep it to, to where if we make the
5 change here, it's over here, it keeps to that same
6 deviation across the entire map, or do we keep it more
7 open-ended at under 5%?

8 **MS. BAILEY:** I think that it would be helpful to the
9 staff to have an idea of how far into the 5% this group
10 wants to venture. You know, the -- the higher the
11 deviation, the ideal situation is to have the deviation as
12 close to zero as it can get. So if you go under or over
13 that deviation, you just have to justify it. There has to
14 be a reason -- it's a good stated reason to do that.

15 I know in 2010, the committee took a little different
16 approach. They stated a deviation of plus or minus 2%.
17 And the plan that was passed out of committee back in
18 2011, the highest deviation on that plan was 2.5% in any
19 particular district. It's -- and, you know, some were
20 over and some were under from there. So yes, I think it
21 would be a good idea. The more guidance you can give
22 staff to prepare a plan to meet the expectations of this
23 committee, I think the more time it's going to save us and
24 the -- the more helpful it would be to ensure that you get
25 a product that you're happy with.

1 **MR. FRANTOM:** Okay. I'm going to ask the committee,
2 do you want to speak on this, kind of, their thoughts on
3 the deviation and -- Mr. Hannah.

4 **MR. HANNAH:** Ms. Bailey, would it be possible for IT
5 to bring us the various options at one time, you know, if
6 we say 2% or 5%, could we view both of them? Would that
7 be possible to give us? I think it'd be easier if we
8 could look at it. Mr. Chairman, I think we should not be
9 stuck with one deviation and I think we should have some
10 options. So we can get further guidance and just find
11 what the number would be to go with the past 2.5% of the
12 5%, or 1% to 2.5% that's, you know, for the committee to
13 decide. But I'm requesting we decide to come back with
14 more than one deviation option. So definitely the first
15 one I would suggest would be 2.5. And I'd like my other
16 colleagues to come up with another number that we can look
17 at, but definitely where 2.5 is remaining.

18 **MR. FRANTOM:** Okay. I appreciate that.
19 Commissioner Mason.

20 **MR. MASON:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I actually was
21 going to say 2.5 there and -- but I do want to just
22 remember from back when that -- just keep in mind that we
23 have to justify, and I think Lynn just said that, so 5% is
24 -- is -- is not overly large, but I mean, there's some
25 justification that has to really happen for it to be that

1 far out. So 2 to 2.5%, and we haven't -- to a plus or
2 minus, so we were actually, like, at 5, but it was plus or
3 minus, it wasn't, like, 5 this way or 5 that way, it was
4 plus or minus. So might want to go that way again or the
5 2.5, I'm good with that, that Mr. Hannah mentioned there.
6 But are we talking about a plus 2.5? Or are we talking
7 about plus or minus and that and that's the key?

8 **MR. FRANTOM:** I think we're going to have to do the
9 plus or minus; correct, just based on growth and possibly
10 in District 3, we could go, you know, less. I mean,
11 wouldn't you think, Ms. Bailey?

12 **MR. MASON:** Right.

13 **MS. BAILEY:** My understanding of what Mr. Hannah
14 said, the way I took it was it would be a plus or minus
15 2.5. Not a total 2.5.

16 **MR. MASON:** Oh.

17 **MR. HANNAH:** Right.

18 **MR. MASON:** Okay. Well, if that's the case --

19 **MS. BAILEY:** Which makes it a total 5% deviation.

20 **MR. MASON:** And okay, if that's what we're talking
21 about, yeah, I'm definitely good with that. I mean, if
22 Mr. Hannah wants to put that in or something of that
23 nature, I'm definitely good with that.

24 **MR. HANNAH:** Commissioner, I was also speaking of us
25 having another option. I just think the more that we have

1 to look at the better, so I would also, you know, also
2 like to entertain 1.5 plus or minus. I just want us to
3 see more than one option. Do you have any problems with
4 that Mr. Commissioner Hassan, Commissioner Mason?

5 **MR. HASAN:** That's going -- that's going to create a
6 real problem.

7 **MR. HANNAH:** Talk to me.

8 **MR. HASAN:** That means you got to get -- have to get
9 just that many more people out of 3.

10 **MR. FRANTOM:** Yeah.

11 **MR. HASAN:** That's going to really be pushing it.

12 **MR. FRANTOM:** I think. That's --

13 **MR. ATKINS:** I think the 2.5, I mean but that's going
14 to allow more for growth more, as well, moving forward.

15 **MR. HANNAH:** Yeah. Okay. Well, I'm just going to
16 put that in motion then, 2.5 and be done with it.
17 Appreciate it.

18 **MULTIPLE SPEAKERS:** I'll second.

19 **MR. FRANTOM:** Got a motion and --

20 **MR. HASAN:** Did they answer your question though
21 Mr. Hannah. I think your question was, could you have a
22 multiple --

23 **MR. HANNAH:** Yeah, but I just -- I just rescinded
24 that.

25 **MR. HASAN:** Okay. All right.

1 **MR. FRANTOM:** Ms. Bailey.

2 **MR. HANNAH:** Yeah. You gave you wiser, wiser words.

3 **MR. MASON:** Did he get a second?

4 **MR. FRANTOM:** He did. He got a second.

5 **MR. MASON:** Okay. Great.

6 **MR. FRANTOM:** Ms. Bailey. Before we go.

7 **MS. BAILEY:** I just thought, before we voted on that,
8 I wondered, either one of the attorneys wanted to weigh in
9 on that as a reasonable option for the committee?

10 **MR. FLETCHER:** Yes, I like the 2.5 much more than I
11 like the 5% because it's going to be hard to justify that
12 high figure even though in some instances, and I think
13 this is a middle of the road approach. And if we get back
14 here and there's a few things we need to tweak, we can
15 discuss it at that time.

16 **MR. FRANTOM:** The attorney said that he believes it's
17 a middle of the road approach and agreed with the 2.5.

18 **MS. BAILEY:** And do you agree?

19 **MS. MCCLAIN-HAYMON:** What is our present deviation?

20 **MS. BAILEY:** Well, the present deviation when the
21 plan was drawn, nine years ago, the deviation was .5 at
22 the most plus or minus it was almost exactly zero, but
23 that was the plan that was drawn by the Court.

24 **MS. MCCLAIN-HAYMON:** Yeah.

25 **MS. BAILEY:** So, you know, that's where we were, you

1 know, at that point. The plan that came out of committee,
2 that was a -- that was passed onto the Commission and the
3 School Board in 2011, the biggest deviation in any single
4 district was plus 2.5%.

5 **MS. MCCLAIN-HAYMON:** The closer you get to that zero
6 -- one person, that's the better you're going to be,
7 you're going to get less scrutiny. But the higher that
8 deviation, that's where it becomes problematic. And so,
9 yeah, if you want to do 1 --

10 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I can't hear her.

11 **MR. FRANTOM:** Can you just repeat what you just said
12 so everybody can hear?

13 **MS. MCCLAIN-HAYMON:** I said the closer you get to
14 that zero, that's the idea of what you want, so you don't
15 want anything higher than that. Especially if, right now,
16 our current map is at .05, so anything higher, I think
17 that we will be scrutinized, it will be scrutinized by the
18 Court. But 2.5 is a fair place to begin.

19 **MS. BAILEY:** With justification, I think, based on
20 your guiding principles of, you know, we've done it this
21 way, because these -- it was desirous to put these
22 communities of interest or keep these communities of
23 interest together or whatnot, the justification is, is
24 held to a higher standard, I think, these days than it was
25 10 years ago. And we would need to be prepared to do

1 that. And show good reason.

2 **MR. FLETCHER:** I think if you start at point -- if
3 you start at .0, it's not going to allow y'all to look at
4 these neighborhoods like you want to. And I really think
5 we need to look at the neighborhoods because that's what
6 everybody's expressing, and if it turns out it's too hard,
7 then we can adjust down. I just think we need to look at
8 that, and we can adjust down if we need to.

9 **MR. FRANTOM:** Okay. I appreciate that feedback from
10 both the attorneys. Got a motion -- is that Commissioner
11 Mason, did you have any further comments before we go?

12 **MR. MASON:** Yeah, well, I had a question. It may be
13 for the legal team there. Given the numbers of where we
14 are and the growth that's in 3, is 2.5 or what -- what,
15 what number would -- do you think would be more
16 appropriate or is 2.5 appropriate, given what we're, what
17 we're facing, and the huge amount that's in District 3 and
18 trying to equalize this? What would be the appropriate
19 deviation that we would be looking for that would be in
20 your mind that would work?

21 **MR. FRANTOM:** Ms. McClain, do you want to --

22 **MS. MCCLAIN-HAYMON:** Right now you have the
23 opportunity to draw your maps anyway you can, whatever you
24 want to as long as we keep it -- I want to stick with what
25 Attorney Fletcher said, if we keep it at that 2.5 and

1 below. And so give your GIS Department an opportunity to
2 come back, present you with several plans. I do believe
3 Honorable Hannah, Charlie, forgive me, if I mispronounce
4 your name, suggested that the team bring back a few maps.
5 And so when the maps are brought back, we will have the
6 opportunity to evaluate those maps and, you know, chime in
7 from --

8 **MR. MASON:** Right.

9 **MS. MCCLAIN-HAYMON:** -- give our legal perspective at
10 that time. So I think it's a good idea to bring back
11 several different maps, keep it at 2.5, and give, you
12 know, other options that are below, so we want to keep it
13 as low as possible.

14 **MR. MASON:** Okay, thank you. Thank you,
15 Mr. Chairman.

16 **MR. FRANTOM:** All right. So we got a motion from
17 Mr. Hannah and a second from Mr. Atkins to two and a half
18 plus or minus. All in favor, please raise your right
19 hand.

20 [Response]

21 **MR. FRANTOM:** All right. We are unanimous. All
22 right. So the last thing we will do tonight is my first
23 -- Ms. Bailey, what do you think is the optimal number of
24 requests from this body to be able to bring back on
25 Wednesday, understanding that, you know, next Wednesday

1 we're going to dive deep into making changes on the fly?

2 **MS. BAILEY:** I think that -- to think that we could
3 put every single neighborhood back together is a, is a
4 noble thought, but I don't know how realistic it is.
5 Right now, I have on my notes, seven or eight different
6 neighborhoods to look at, and I'll just repeat those
7 again, if I may.

8 Those are Summerville, Pepperidge, Sand Hills, Quail
9 Hollow/Quail Ridge, Green Forest, Forest Hills, Barefield
10 and Woodlake. And I would say that we will have our hands
11 plenty full trying to do something with those eight
12 neighborhoods. Now if there are some, if there are some
13 others that, in particular, that anyone would like added
14 to the list now would be the time to say that and we could
15 see what we can do with those as well.

16 **MR. FRANTOM:** Do you believe that you can bring back
17 all eight of those requests next Wednesday?

18 **MS. BAILEY:** I believe that we will try. I believe,
19 you know, work on it.

20 **MR. FRANTOM:** I want to follow up on what
21 Commissioner Hasan made a point about starting at the
22 South part of the district? Is there any thoughts behind
23 that? Did y'all do that, like, historically? Like, does
24 that matter? Like, I'm just trying to understand, like --

25 **MS. BAILEY:** I think, you know, I don't know. I was

1 not inside the mind of the person who -- who developed the
2 draft, but my -- my guess is that they looked at the area
3 with the most growth and worked out from that area. And
4 because District 3 was the area of most growth, and anyone
5 who's familiar with the map, you know that District 3 cuts
6 a swath, a long swath through the entire county. And you
7 also know that it's bound on the west by Columbia County,
8 there's -- you can't go anywhere there. It's bound on the
9 south for the most part by Fort Gordon. So it's tough to
10 find somewhere there, but you can get to District 3, you
11 can get to District 4 through -- through the westernmost
12 part of Fort Gordon if you wanted to go that way. The
13 area of growth in District 3 is in the southern part of
14 District 3, so it's hard to get to District 7 from there,
15 because it's a long ways from the south to the north end
16 and District 3, so in my opinion, the drafter of the map,
17 looked at that easternmost part of District 3 as the
18 logical area to start peeling areas away -- away. And so
19 for that reason, they started more from that portion of
20 the county, and I don't think there was any other reason
21 for it other than that.

22 We'll know better, once we get into it and start
23 moving things around what the best approach will be. I
24 would say, rather than pre-determining which direction
25 north, east, south, or west that you begin, let's start

1 looking at the neighborhoods that this committee feels are
2 important to put back together and take them on a case by
3 case basis, and see -- just see what we can do with it. I
4 would imagine that there will be several different ways to
5 accomplish it and we may determine that, all things
6 considered, once you factor in where the incumbents are,
7 and the racial balance, and the population balance, and
8 whatnot, that there are some neighborhoods that this
9 committee is desirous of changing that it just won't be
10 possible to do. So, so that's the kind of information
11 that we hope to be able to bring back to you in a week or
12 so.

13 In my mind's eye, I envision, next week, when we get
14 together, that we'll have some kind of plan, and the
15 committee can look at that plan, hopefully, with getting a
16 little pre-notice or pre-warning of what it's gonna look
17 like so you can come into the meeting with some basis of
18 knowledge. And if there are small tweaks here and there
19 that can be made, hopefully, we can find ourselves in a
20 position of doing that. But if we get into a position of
21 wholesale change again, then we're going to have to pause
22 and go and, you know, go -- staff will need to step away
23 from the group and we won't be able to do as much on the
24 fly if we're talking about huge changes.

25 So, you know, we'll know more tomorrow as we get

1 together, and, and look at these specific places. But
2 again, if there are other places that we've not mentioned
3 that the committee, in particular, would like for us to
4 look at, you know, now would be the time to let us know so
5 that we can take that into consideration.

6 **MR. FRANTOM:** Okay.

7 **MR. MASON:** Mr. Chairman?

8 **MR. FRANTOM:** Commissioner Mason, go ahead.

9 **MR. MASON:** Yes, Lynn, obviously, as you start
10 putting these subdivisions back together, and I'm looking
11 at these numbers, especially out here in the southern end,
12 if we're talking about putting Woodlake, Quail Hollow, and
13 that, and I'm not sure how much deviation that would put
14 me over, but that means I have to lose something
15 somewhere. And to me, the most logical place just -- just
16 to look at as you're -- as for some additional places
17 would be, as I cross -- as I come up Morgan Road to Deans
18 Bridge, well, I don't have anything halfway up there, and
19 then it goes down Deans Bridge to Barton Chapel, and then
20 all the way up to -- up Barton Chapel, so I'm in a whole
21 nother side of town. One side of the street is 5 and the
22 other side of the street is 4. So as you're looking, can
23 you look at potentially putting Barton Chapel Estates and
24 Barton Village in 5 as I'm gaining back from 5, Woodlake,
25 and from 5, Quail Hollow?

1 **MS. BAILEY:** Yes, sir. Sure we can look at that?

2 **MR. MASON:** Just trying to even that out, because I'm
3 just trying to see if I'm gaining, gaining, gaining, then
4 obviously, I'm going to have to lose something somewhere.

5 **MR. FRANTOM:** Thank you, sir. Representative Howard.

6 **MR. MASON:** Thank you.

7 **MR. HOWARD:** Yeah, can you hear me?

8 **MR. FRANTOM:** Yes, sir.

9 **MR. HOWARD:** Yeah, thank you. I pulled over on the
10 side of the road to make sure y'all won't hear me crash
11 while I'm driving.

12 **MR. FRANTOM:** Drive safely.

13 **MR. HOWARD:** Okay. Well, I'm pulled over right now.
14 But I just want to -- don't want to open up a conversation
15 that's already been had, but some of the things that you
16 are saying is exactly what I agree with when it comes to
17 the drawing of the maps. I think, my good friend,
18 Commissioner Hasan, he made a good suggestion, but I think
19 I was thinking the same thing that Ms. Bailey mentioned.

20 When you're drawing these maps, at least, that's the
21 way I've seen it go, you start where the population is,
22 and work your way out from there. So hopefully, that --
23 that will work to our satisfaction that we can get to
24 those deviations that we need in -- in the different
25 districts. But one thing I think we need to remember is

1 that this is -- this has to also be approved by the local
2 delegation as local legislation. And keeping that in
3 mind, we have well we will have two senators, maybe three
4 still, when this is voted on. So you, if any one of those
5 three senators don't agree with what this ad hoc committee
6 sends, and for whatever reason, and what we -- what we
7 were trying to do is inform one of our senators, of what
8 was -- what was going on, and there was no conspiracy
9 amongst this delegation, and as some of the chatter that
10 we, we may have heard of, some may have heard and some may
11 have not heard. So we were just trying to make sure that
12 this particular senator was informed. And that's pretty
13 much -- so to the point that he could, whoever is talking
14 to him, he could go back and let them know that there's no
15 underlying factor of conspiracy, or anything that this
16 delegation has done, or will be doing to cause a problem.
17 So hopefully, that was -- that can be taken in the right
18 context of just being -- us being here in Atlanta together
19 right now, you know, just trying to be helpful from where
20 we are and what we are hearing. So I'll stop right there.
21 And I see Senator Jones is on the phone, so he may want to
22 add some extra to that.

23 **MR. FRANTOM:** I appreciate those comments, sir. Is
24 there any other -- anyone else who would like to say,
25 speak? Senator Jones.

1 **MR. JONES:** I was just listening in. So I mean, I'm
2 just listening in to everybody. One thing that I have any
3 concerns about was just the deviations. I think the 2.5
4 is good, but I think the lower we can go is the better
5 route, quite frankly, but we can start with the 2.5 and
6 move on from there. But I do think we have to be
7 cognizant of the fact that we're probably going to be
8 looking at even lower possibly than, you know, what, if it
9 goes to court, that that is going to be something that
10 will be looked at, but it's a conversation we can continue
11 to have, but when we start talking about plus or minus
12 2.5, I think our mentality should be more so on minus the
13 2.5, quite frankly.

14 **MR. FRANTOM:** Thank you, sir. Appreciate that. All
15 right. As far as, Ms. Bailey, just want to ask you, as
16 far as, like, marching orders from this committee, do you
17 need any -- are you good? Do you need to have any --

18 **MS. BAILEY:** No, I think I'm good. I think we have
19 plenty to say grace over, trying to put these
20 neighborhoods back together that you've given us. But
21 again, I'll say one more time for the group. If there, if
22 there are additional neighborhoods other than the ones
23 we've talked about that come to mind right now that you
24 want us to look at, this would be a good time to have that
25 information. If not, we'll go and work on these and see

1 where we are after that. The only other thing I had to
2 talk about at all was, was our path forward. And I'm glad
3 to dive right on into that.

4 **MR. FRANTOM:** Sure.

5 **MS. BAILEY:** Okay. So as was mentioned, by
6 Representative Howard, whatever plan this group comes up
7 with ultimately has to go before the General Assembly to
8 be enacted into law. So there's a process that will
9 happen. The committee or staff will take the input from
10 the committee that we've heard tonight, we will use that
11 to bring some plans back to you, I will work -- we'll work
12 in work groups with the committee to then tweak those
13 plans, as you request. The final version, again goes to
14 -- it will go to the legislative redistricting office. It
15 will be one of its first stops to make sure that it's in
16 legal compliance with the law, meets the Voting Rights Act
17 requirements, Constitution, Georgia Constitution, US
18 Constitution. Ultimately, the plans will also need to be
19 adopted by the Augusta Commission and the School Board,
20 and then go to the General Assembly for final adoption.
21 We need to be ever, ever mindful of the deadline of March
22 the 7th. And really, that's not even a deadline, that is
23 the opening day of qualifying. There was talk at one time
24 about the primary date moving from the end of May to the
25 end of June and qualifying, then moving up into April.

1 I'm not sure that that's going anywhere at all. I think
2 we need to proceed with an understanding of the -- that
3 we'll be operating under the law as it's written right
4 now, which means that qualifying will open on March the
5 7th. That makes that December 15th deadline very
6 important. Ideally, we could have a plan sitting in the
7 General Assembly at the opening of session, which I think
8 is the second Monday or so in January, to then be
9 considered, and get it in and out of there as quickly as
10 possible. So just keep that timeline in mind as we move
11 forward. Be mindful and thoughtful with the changes that
12 you want to have made, and let's all work together to get
13 this project completed.

14 **MR. FRANTOM:** Yeah, I appreciate those words. And I
15 think I, kind of, said this to the committee, like, you
16 know, we've got to plan based on, you know, we're going to
17 have eight, I guess, options next Wednesday, but do plan
18 committee to add additional days. I think they were going
19 to have to go to twice a week, at least; Monday and
20 Wednesday, something like that as we move forward to make
21 that December 15th deadline. I think that we'll see that
22 once we dive into and we start requesting changes that
23 we're not gonna get as far as we want too. So we'll talk
24 about that next Wednesday for our next meeting. Also
25 moving forward we'll be at the Augusta chambers based on

1 -- commission chambers just based on our IT department and
2 the making sure they have all the resources that they need
3 because they will be making these changes. We want to
4 make sure that they have all their resources ready to go.
5 So we'll make those changes in the chambers next
6 Wednesday, and then discuss next Wednesday, as well, kind
7 of, what we want to add on additionally to get this plan
8 done because it is going to take some definitely time and
9 effort on the entire committee. I want to thank -- is
10 there any comments before we close? Anyone, closing
11 comments or anything?

12 **MS. BAILEY:** I do have a question.

13 **MR. FRANTOM:** Ms. Bailey, sure.

14 **MS. BAILEY:** The meeting next Wednesday, will that
15 also be at 6:00 or we going to get an earlier start on
16 things because we expected a longer session or we're
17 sticking with 6:00?

18 **MR. FRANTOM:** I think --

19 **MS. MINCHEW:** Five.

20 **MR. FRANTOM:** I think that we will have to send it
21 out to the committee, but 5:00 is what they would like to
22 request.

23 **MR. MASON:** I'm good with 5:00.

24 **MR. HANNAH:** Don't we have enough?

25 **MR. FRANTOM:** Do we have enough. I don't know if we

1 have enough.

2 **MR. HASAN:** How many we got? How many online still?

3 **MR. FRANTOM:** Three, and we have four --

4 **MR. MASON:** I'm good Mr. Commissioner Frantom. I'm
5 good.

6 **MS. SCOTT:** I'm good. I'm good.

7 **MR. FRANTOM:** Okay.

8 **MR. HANNAH:** I'd like to move that we meet at 5:00
9 going forward.

10 **MR. HASAN:** Second.

11 **MR. FRANTOM:** All right. So we got a motion and a
12 second to move to 5:00 moving forward. All voting for --
13 in the yes, please raise your right hand. All right. 1,
14 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. And Senator Jones is good. So it looks
15 like we got 7, so we are good with that. And I appreciate
16 that. Again, we'll talk next Wednesday about additional
17 dates because we know we have a heavy lift in front of us.

18 Just want to take this time again to thank the Board
19 of Education for your hospitality and everything that
20 y'all have done for us. All the IT departments, all the
21 different locations, all the schools we went to, y'all
22 have been amazing hosts throughout all of this. I want to
23 thank Ms. Bailey and her team as well as the attorneys for
24 their input as well. And we will see everyone next
25 Wednesday, 5 p.m., at the Augusta Commission Chambers.

1 Thank you, everybody.

2 (Meeting concluded at 7:36 p.m.)

3 //

4 //

5 //

6 //

7 //

8 //

9 //

10 //

11 //

12 //

13 //

14 //

15 //

16 //

17 //

18 //

19 //

20 //

21 //

22 //

23 //

24 //

25 //

CERTIFICATE OF COURT REPORTER

I hereby certify that the foregoing transcript consisting of pages numbered 3 through 60 has been transcribed from a digital recording of the audio; and said hearing was reported by the method of Stenomask;

I further certify that I am not kin or counsel to the parties in the case, am not in the regular employ of counsel or said parties, nor am I otherwise interested in the result of said case.

This the 28th day of November, 2021.

Kristy M. Williams

KRISTY WILLIAMS, CVR, CCR
CERTIFIED COURT REPORTER
GEORGIA CERTIFICATE #5120-9739-
4045-7472

