

**REDISTRICTING PUBLIC
HEARING TAKEN on 11/29/2011**

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RICHMOND COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS
STATE OF GEORGIA

IN RE: REDISTRICTING PUBLIC HEARING

- - - - -

REDISTRICTING PUBLIC HEARING

Before Laurie M. Hannon-Stair, Certified Court Reporter

At the Board of Education

864 Broad Street, Augusta, Georgia

On November 29, 2011, Commencing at 2:00 p.m.

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APPEARANCES

Board of Elections: Ms. Lynn Bailey
Ms. Linda Meggers/Consultant
Board Members Present: Mr. Marion Barnes
 Mr. Frank Dolan
 Mr. Grady Smith
 Mr. Jerry Brigham
 Mr. Lockett

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1 REDISTRICTING PUBLIC HEARING

2 RICHMOND COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

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

10 - - - - -

11 MR. BARNES: It is now two o'clock and we are
12 scheduled to have a public meeting. We do have the
13 allocated time so at this time in the absence of our
14 chairman and our co-chairman I am Marion Barnes, Board
15 of Education, District 1. I will preside over this
16 until one of those gentlemen come in and take over.
17 The only person we have here with us at this time is
18 Mr. Jerry Brigham, a county commissioner, so the two of
19 us along with staff will be listening to what you have
20 to say. What we would like for you to do is to address
21 anything that you would like to on this redistricting.
22 We will not accept a plan from you but we will accept a
23 discussion from you and we will try to answer whatever
24 questions that you have. You would need to come up to
25 one of these mikes over here or over there, give your

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1 name and your address and tell us what your concerns
2 are. And we have Ms. Linda Meggers, our consultant
3 here. She will be able to answer some of the questions
4 for you. And at this time I will turn it over to Ms.
5 Meggers to make a comment.

6 MS. MEGGERS: Thank you, Mr. Barnes.

7 MR. BARNES: And by the way, we have -- Mr. Frank
8 Dolan has also arrived.

9 MS. MEGGERS: I'm just going to briefly go over
10 the two plans. And I see some familiar places -- faces
11 here. Some of you, you could probably get up here and
12 do this for me. But anyway, Plan 2, which is what you
13 see on the board here is the result of the public
14 hearings, the first set of three public hearings, and
15 we took the original working plan, we listened to what
16 everyone had to say and then we tried to take in those
17 suggestions and fold them into a revision that would
18 take those into account. So from Plan 1 we had the Sue
19 Reynolds area that has been split off. Let's see. Let
20 me be sure which red lines I have on here. Just a
21 minute. Okay. The red lines on this map show you --
22 are the original plan that I had presented to the
23 committee as a working plan and a beginning point so
24 this way you can see what I changed from that working
25 plan to this plan in light of the public hearings. So

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1 this Sue Reynolds was one area of contention. That was
2 restored into District 3. And we balanced District 5
3 by taking it out and picking up Fort Gordon. By doing
4 this we still kept the Fort Gordon area in three
5 different commission districts. Another area that was
6 highly -- huge concerns was the Sand Ridge area right
7 in here. So you can see that we've moved Sand Ridge
8 into District 4 and kept it intact. We made some minor
9 changes for voting precinct lines to give them all
10 visual boundaries, for example, here where we stay on
11 the railroad line. That really involved no people. It
12 just -- kind of a little bit of a cleanup. And we did
13 some adjustment here, down here with the Tobacco Road
14 area, to -- I'm missing one of my tool boxes. But let
15 me see, right here between 5 and 4 we took this area,
16 Precinct 403, and restored it to 4 because basically it
17 was a lot of discussion that that was sort of the heart
18 of District 4. So those were the changes that were
19 made from Plan 1 to Plan 2 that were presented to the
20 committee at the first meeting after the public
21 hearings. At that meeting where we presented this plan
22 there was a recall that -- there was an additional
23 comment that was made at the public hearings about the
24 intensity of population in some of the minority
25 districts, the fact that they were -- to use a

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1 redistricting term, that they were stacked with
2 minority population. And Senator Davis on the
3 committee requested that a plan be drawn that -- where
4 no district would be over 70 percent in minority
5 population to kind of even that out and mainly to -- he
6 said to have the communities have build coalitions and
7 to work together, et cetera, and so he wanted to see
8 what a plan like that would like that and that is Plan
9 3. On this one what you're seeing in the heavy black
10 lines is the current district so you can see how they
11 would change from that. So this is -- where Plan 2 is
12 pretty much a status quo plan in that we just took the
13 current plans and made adjustments for one person, one
14 vote. They're pretty much exactly what the current
15 districts are. It kept all of the incumbents in place.
16 This plan also keeps all the incumbents in place but
17 the changes are more visible. So you can see District
18 1, instead of just coming down here to District 2 for
19 the shortage of population, actually takes some of that
20 and goes up into 7 for the first time and takes this
21 area. 7, which had been pretty much within alignment,
22 it had not been touched on the previous work plans, is
23 not pushed down and it picks up Precincts 306 and --
24 yeah, 306 down here. It's a big change here. And then
25 it also lost Precinct 701 to District 3. So that's --

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1 that looks -- is configured much differently than it
2 was. The biggest change is probably down here in
3 District 6. 2 is here, but 6 you could see had been in
4 here. It pushes farther to the west into District 6.
5 And on the backs of the maps that were handed out, on
6 the back you'll see the statistics. So those were the
7 biggest changes in District 4 because District 6
8 changed so much that drastically affected 4. But in
9 all of this you'll see that the Sue Reynolds area is
10 still intact in 3. The whole area around Sand Ridge is
11 now in 4. It maintains the Goshen area that that is no
12 longer a problem. And the Tobacco Road area is a
13 little bit more chopped up than it would have been on
14 Plan 2 but it's intact there. So those are basically
15 the changes. All the districts are less than 70
16 percent. And as I said -- and this one still minimizes
17 voter precinct changes. I think there's only three
18 precinct split in this one, et cetera. Are there any
19 questions?

20 MR. BARNES: Ms. Minchew.

21 MS. MINCHEW: I guess my question has to do with
22 District 7.

23 MS. BAILEY: Helen, please, could you just state
24 your name and address for the record, please?

25 MR. BARNES: Your name and the address.

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1 MS. MINCHEW: My name is Helen Minchew,
2 M-I-N-C-H-E-W. My address is 2942 Fox Hall Circle in
3 Augusta, Georgia. I was just wanting more
4 clarification on the changes in District 7. You had
5 stated that Precinct 701 is now in District 3 and I'm
6 not sure where 701 is.

7 MS. MEGGERS: Okay. Something has happened with
8 my --

9 MS. BAILEY: 701 would be those voters currently
10 voting at Aldersgate Methodist Church so it's -- it's
11 generally speaking the Aumond Road area going towards
12 Walton Way from the intersection of Aumond and Wheeler.
13 It goes down to the creek that runs through Waverley so
14 the effect of moving that precinct into District 1 and
15 out of 7 is that the --

16 MS. MINCHEW: District 3 I believe. It was 701
17 moved into District 3.

18 MS. BAILEY: 701, yes, it's moved into District 3.
19 Pardon me. The effect of that change is that the
20 Waverley is now divided between two commission
21 districts, or would be under that plan as it exists.

22 MS. MINCHEW: Between 7 and 3?

23 MS. BAILEY: Correct.

24 MS. MINCHEW: Okay. And my other question is the
25 other change on District 7 which takes some of National

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1 Hills and I was wondering what precincts would be in
2 District 1.

3 MS. MEGGERS: 702.

4 MS. BAILEY: 702 which is the -- has the polling
5 location of St. Mark's Methodist Church so it is the
6 Vineland area.

7 MS. MINCHEW: So Vineland will now be in District
8 1 under this Plan 3?

9 MS. BAILEY: Correct.

10 MS. MINCHEW: And then what is 7, District 7,
11 picking up then? I guess going towards Wheeler Road
12 area?

13 MS. MEGGERS: Just a second here.

14 MS. BAILEY: I think the primary area it picks up
15 is Precinct 306 which is the big voting precinct at
16 First Baptist Church so that's Hillcreek subdivision
17 and generally that area over by Doctors Hospital. Is
18 that right, Jerry?

19 MR. BRIGHAM: Yeah, I think so.

20 MS. MEGGERS: It's that area west of Walton Way
21 Extension and generally below I-20.

22 MS. MINCHEW: So District 7 is losing the Aumond
23 Road area and District 3 -- the St. Mark's/Vineland
24 area to District 1 and then picking up First Baptist
25 Church area/Doctors Hospital; is that what the changes

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1 are in District 7?

2 MS. BAILEY: That is correct. It picks up one of
3 the three precincts at First Baptist, the biggest
4 precinct. One of the precincts at First Baptist
5 remains in 7 and that's Precinct 704, was in 7 -- was
6 already in 7.

7 MS. MINCHEW: Already in 7.

8 MS. BAILEY: Yes.

9 MS. MINCHEW: So it's picking up the other, the
10 major precinct at First Baptist then.

11 MS. BAILEY: Yes.

12 MS. MINCHEW: Okay. I'm not sure if I agree with
13 that or not, especially losing St. Mark's voting
14 precinct and Vineland's area. Thank you.

15 MR. BARNES: Anyone else? Mr. Fannoy [phonetic].

16 MR. FANNOY: Yes. My name is Bill Fannoy and I
17 live at 1027 Nuguard [phonetic] Street. And my
18 question is not really about the changes but the people
19 that will be affected by the changes. Will they be
20 notified of their voting locations prior to an
21 election?

22 MS. BAILEY: Yes, sir. There is a state law that
23 requires at least 30 days ahead of the date of the
24 election that each voter be sent a notice not only if
25 their polling place changes but simply if their

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1 district assignment changes. I don't anticipate seeing
2 a whole lot of polling place reassignments but most
3 definitely between the changes in the congressional,
4 senate and house and commission school board lines will
5 see significant district reassignment going on. Just
6 as a side note, any changes that happen as a result of
7 redistricting, voters will not see those changes until
8 they go to the polls in July. So for the March
9 presidential primary things will be exactly the same as
10 they have been.

11 MR. FANNOY: Thank you.

12 MS. RINALS [phonetic]: Good afternoon. My name
13 is Martha Rinalis and I am the vice president of the
14 resident's board in Goshen. We want to just really
15 thank you for making -- keeping our neighborhood intact
16 and making that change for us. That is extremely
17 important to our neighborhood. I can't tell you how
18 much that it does mean to us and it's just -- it's been
19 good for us. Thank you, Linda. We really appreciate
20 you. Thank you.

21 MR. FINNEGAN: I'm Bob Finnegan, 2355 Norton Drive
22 in Augusta. Are we going to have comments later or is
23 this the appropriate time? Because --

24 MR. BARNES: This is the appropriate time.

25 MR. FINNEGAN: -- I do have a question, too. My

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1 question was, you had mentioned about there were like I
2 believe you said three, new, split voting precincts?
3 Could you tell us what those are, please?

4 MS. MEGGERS: Under which plan, 3?

5 MR. FINNEGAN: Yes.

6 MS. MEGGERS: Okay. Yes, sir. District --
7 Precinct 505 is split, and it's this right in here.
8 And I think this particular precinct is split on both
9 plans. It's this split right through here and then the
10 precinct adjacent to it, 506, is split. And that is
11 the same line on both plans. The -- let me see what
12 the other one was. This one is just getting back on a
13 better line but there's no --

14 MS. BAILEY: It's just south of there, back up to
15 the east.

16 MS. MEGGERS: Which one?

17 MS. BAILEY: 202.

18 MR. BARNES: While they're looking for that we'd
19 like for you to know that District -- Commissioner and
20 Commissioner Lockett have joined us.

21 MS. MEGGERS: And then the other split precinct is
22 Precinct 606. The majority of it stays in District 6
23 but a portion of it is moved into District 2, right
24 here.

25 MR. FINNEGAN: Thank you. I do have an

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1 observation. I live in District 6 so I'm real
2 concerned between the differences in these two maps
3 with respect to District 6. Plan number 2 managed to
4 keep the old District 6 intact. And due to the fact
5 that it still needed some more people added on I
6 believe it was 801 and fixed that problem. Plan 3
7 takes District 6 and carves it up like a Thanksgiving
8 turkey, chops off two precincts and then adds back in
9 three more. My concern is that we -- I would like to
10 see is to keep District 6 intact as it was and add on
11 801 as we had done in Plan 2.

12 MS. MEGGERS: And I believe that's 805; is that
13 right?

14 MR. FINNEGAN: Is it 805? The printing is so
15 small.

16 MS. BAILEY: 805.

17 MR. FINNEGAN: 805, okay. But Plan 2 is the one
18 that I prefer much more than Plan 3. Thank you.

19 MR. IVEY: Good evening, my name is Melvin Ivey.
20 I live at 4120 Country Lane in Augusta, Georgia. I
21 want to pose a question because I'm looking at Plan 3
22 and basically what it does, it -- it grafts a portion
23 of Farrington and Town & Country into District 6. Is
24 this the final or will there be some final maneuvering
25 before you take a vote in reference to the two plans

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1 that we have?

2 MR. BARNES: I'm not in a position to answer that
3 question for you at this time. Maybe Lynn can help
4 you.

5 MS. BAILEY: It's my understanding that at the
6 workshop that will follow this meeting, that would be
7 the opportunity for any committee members to make any
8 suggested changes to Plans 1 or Plans 2. I think Ms.
9 Meggers is prepared to tweak those plans on the fly, if
10 you will, and recalculate statistics and whatnot. So
11 that -- that's my understanding of how things will
12 proceed. Does that --

13 MR. IVEY: And the reason I asked that question
14 was because I understand that there was some
15 information that was provided to a couple of the
16 committee members in reference to how it impacted
17 Farrington and Town & County subdivisions with Plan 3,
18 and I was just wondering had it been considered.

19 MS. BAILEY: There were some emails circulated
20 amongst the committee. One of those was asking for a
21 particular part of Farrington neighborhood to be
22 restored to the rest of the neighborhood and I think
23 Ms. Meggers is prepared to talk about that during the
24 work session later. But even with that change the
25 Farrington neighborhood is still not wholly put back

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1 together. It's still only a partial fix for that
2 neighborhood. Like so many other circumstances that
3 you run into when you do these things, when you get
4 into densely populated areas like that it's often hard
5 to find a boundary other than a neighborhood to take
6 the -- take the district lines down.

7 MR. IVEY: Okay.

8 MR. BRIGHAM: Lynn, the request that we keep all
9 the neighborhoods all intact looked at or has it been
10 looked at or what?

11 MS. BAILEY: Yes. The request that we keep all
12 neighborhoods whole was passed along to Ms. Meggers and
13 she is prepared to talk about that during the work
14 session as well. Linda, maybe this would be an
15 appropriate time to talk about that now.

16 MS. WINBUSH: My name is Catherine Winbush. I
17 live at 2503 Parkway Drive and I live in the Highland
18 Park subdivision and I am just interested in the
19 effects that the changes will have on our subdivision.
20 Actually it would be Highland Park --

21 MS. MEGGERS: What precinct do you live in?

22 MS. BAILEY: It's right near that -- where 2 and 5
23 converge. It's a little, small precinct.

24 MR. BARNES: It's off of Highland Avenue and
25 Wrightsboro Road.

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1 MS. BAILEY: Are you in the Minnick [phonetic]
2 Park portion?

3 MS. WINBUSH: Yes, I'm on Minnick Park.

4 MS. MEGGERS: So we're looking at 201?

5 MS. BAILEY: No. It's in this area.

6 UNIDENTIFIED: -- and Hillsinger Drive.

7 MS. MEGGERS: Well, basically that area is -- on
8 Plan 3 and on Plan 2 remains in District 2.

9 MS. WINBUSH: All of it?

10 MS. MEGGERS: Just let me double check for you.

11 MS. BAILEY: Can you see the map up there, Ms.
12 Winbush? Do you see the area you're talking about
13 reflected on that map? Are you talking about -- is it
14 Kentucky Avenue?

15 MS. WINBUSH: [inaudible]

16 MS. BAILEY: Over here?

17 MS. WINBUSH: Uh-huh. You see Kelly Street, Park
18 Way and Hillsinger.

19 MS. BAILEY: Well, it looks like --

20 MS. MEGGERS: Well, the line -- the black line is
21 the existing line so if that's the area we're talking
22 about it remains in 2.

23 MS. BAILEY: It looks like -- Ms. Winbush, it
24 looks like you are unchanged.

25 MS. WINBUSH: Okay.

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1 MS. BAILEY: So it's the same I guess split, if
2 you will, that was there before between Districts 5 and
3 2.

4 MR. LOCKETT: You say it's all going to 2; is that
5 correct?

6 MS. MEGGERS: Pardon me?

7 MR. LOCKETT: It was split between 2 and 5.

8 MS. BAILEY: And it still is. That same split is
9 still there. Linda, can you point to that with your
10 pointer?

11 MS. MEGGERS: You're talking about --

12 MS. BAILEY: Yes. More north of there. Right
13 there where that --

14 MS. MEGGERS: Eastland, in this area? But
15 wherever you are now you're still in that area because
16 the lines in this particular area here are staying the
17 same. Well, this -- this area here now, Precinct 504,
18 but that's not under discussion; right? That's not
19 what she's talking about, is 504. 504 has moved. But
20 this area right in through here is -- stays in District
21 2 on both plans.

22 MS. BAILEY: Ms. Winbush, does that satisfy what
23 you were asking?

24 MS. WINBUSH: Yes.

25 MS. BAILEY: Is there -- is that all that you

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1 wanted to say about that?

2 MS. WINBUSH: Yes.

3 MR. BARNES: Anyone else? Comments? Okay. Thank
4 you very much. There are no further comments. The
5 commissioners, any comments you would like to make at
6 this time?

7 [No response]

8 MS. MEGGERS: Let me, if it's appropriate, address
9 Mr. Brigham's question about the subdivisions.

10 MR. BARNES: Yes.

11 MS. MEGGERS: Last week Lynn had the GIS
12 Department send me a subdivision overlay and a list of
13 subdivisions in Plans 2 and 3 that were split. Lynn
14 also gave me I think about three subdivisions that she
15 had heard folks make comment about for me to look at
16 specifically. But I looked at those and then I went
17 and started through the larger list, and as we get into
18 the four o'clock meeting I'll zoom in and show it. But
19 the problem with the subdivisions, many of them back up
20 to each other and the only division between one
21 subdivision and another one is -- are property lines
22 which we had not -- we can't use for redistricting or,
23 you know, for precinct lines or whatever because they
24 have to be a visible ground feature. So if I put one
25 neighborhood back together, in so doing I found myself

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1 splitting the adjacent subdivision so there may be a
2 handful, two or three or four out of that long list of
3 sixteen, that we can address, but the vast majority, if
4 I put one subdivision back I split another one just
5 because they back up to each other. There was no place
6 where I could get -- where I could get a whole
7 subdivision and go down the center line of streets or a
8 creek or something. And we can look at that more
9 specifically at the four o'clock meeting, but it's very
10 difficult.

11 MR. BARNES: I think we would prefer that.

12 Anybody else? Okay. That will wrap up the public
13 hearing. We appreciate your interest and your being
14 here, and you may remain. We will be here for awhile.

15 [Public hearing adjourns at 2:25 p.m.]

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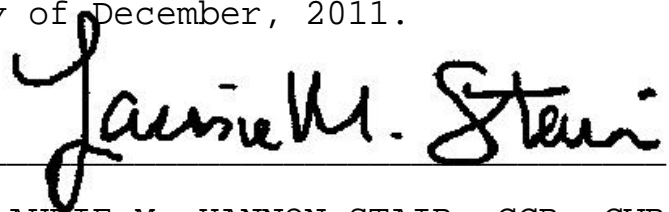
CERTIFICATE OF COURT REPORTER

I hereby certify that the foregoing public hearing was reported as stated in the caption, by the method of Stenomask, and the presentations, questions and the answers thereto were reduced to typewriting by me or under my direction; that the foregoing pages numbered 1 through 19 represent a true, correct, and complete transcript of the proceedings on November 29, 2011.

I further certify that I am not kin or counsel to the parties in the case and I am not in the regular employ of counsel of said parties.

I further certify that I have no contract with any of the parties or their counsel. The court reporting charges are the usual and customary charges for services within the industry and are available upon request by either party. No financial or services discount has been or will be given to any party participating in this public hearing.

This the 1st day of December, 2011.



LAURIE M. HANNON-STAIR, CCR, CVR
CERTIFIED COURT REPORTER
GEORGIA CERTIFICATE # B-2199

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