



MINUTES

Temporary Redistricting Advisory Commission

Monday, February 22, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT

Deidre DeJear
Ian Russell

Chris Hagenow
David Roederer

LSA CONTACTS: Organizational staffing provided by: Ed Cook, Senior Legal Counsel, 515.281.3994; Minutes prepared by: Joe Simpson, Legal Counsel, 515.725.2251

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Temporary Redistricting Advisory Commission

I. Procedural Business

Call to Order and Adjournment. The first meeting of the Temporary Redistricting Advisory Commission was called to order at 2:03 p.m., February 22, 2021, as a videoconference meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 2:58 p.m.

Election of Temporary Chairperson. The commission declined to elect a temporary chairperson for the commission.

Adoption of Rules. The commission adopted rules of procedure that were submitted to the commission on February 18, 2021. A copy of the rules is attached.

Next Meeting. The commission agreed to schedule the next meeting for Monday, March 1, 2021, at 2:00 p.m. as a videoconference meeting.

II. Introductions

Mr. Ed Cook, Legislative Services Agency, introduced Mr. Gary Rudicil and Ms. Jodi Flory, Legislative Services Agency, as the employees along with Mr. Cook who have been assigned redistricting duties within the agency. Each of the members introduced themselves to other commission members.

III. Commission Duties and Responsibilities

Mr. Cook explained that the duties and responsibilities of the commission will be delayed, as census data is now expected to be released to states by September 30, 2021, instead of by April 1, 2021. Mr. Cook explained that the role of the Legislative Services Agency is to create Congressional and General Assembly redistricting plans in a nonpartisan manner and submit the plans to the General Assembly for approval. Mr. Cook explained that the delays do not have a direct impact on Congressional redistricting, but could impact how legislative redistricting is conducted due to deadlines in the Iowa Code and the Constitution of the State of Iowa.

Mr. Cook stated that the initial responsibility of the commission is to select a fifth member who will serve as the chairperson of the commission. Mr. Cook explained that the role of the commission is to provide advice to the Legislative Services Agency if the Legislative Services Agency submits a written request for such advice, which the Legislative Services Agency has not done since 1981. The commission is also charged with providing advice to the General Assembly after receiving input from the general public. The commission's primary public role is to conduct three public hearings and submit a report to the General Assembly on the first proposed redistricting plan. The Iowa Code requires that public hearings occur as expeditiously as possible after submission of the first plan and that, ideally, the hearings occur at three different geographical areas of the state.

The commissioners asked questions relating to the standards for redistricting, deadline requirements, and the potential role of the Iowa Supreme Court. Mr. Cook explained the standards that the Iowa Code requires the Legislative Services Agency to use and discussed past challenges to enacted legislative redistricting plans that were decided by the Iowa Supreme Court. However, Mr. Cook noted that no challenges have been made to adopted redistricting plans since the current process for redistricting in Iowa was enacted in 1980. In response to a question of whether the Legislative Services Agency might submit more questions to the commission due to the delays, Mr. Cook explained that the written requests for advice from the Legislative Services Agency to the commission are intended primarily to receive advice if there is a question regarding application of the redistricting standards.



IV. Discussion of Election of Fifth Member of Commission

The commission discussed the procedure for electing the fifth member of the commission. Mr. Cook explained that the Iowa Code requires the commission to elect its fifth member by February 15, but the last three commissions did not meet that deadline. The commissioners declined to elect a fifth member at the meeting but agreed to submit nominees to the Legislative Services Agency for consideration at the second meeting if the commissioners had nominees available.