

COUNCIL DISTRICT COMMISSION MINUTES

July 16, 2001

The Council District Commission of the City of Mesa met at Pedro Guerrero Elementary School, 463 S. Alma School Road, on July 16, 2001 at 6:30 p.m.

COMMISSION PRESENT

Pat Langdon, Chairman
Jim Driskill
Alice Swinehart

COMMISSION ABSENT

Dwayne Priester
Marti Soza

COUNCIL PRESENT

None

1. Welcome – Jim Driskill, Council District Commission Member.

Commission Member Driskill welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated that Spanish and sign language interpretation for the meeting are available to any citizen upon request. No requests for translation were received. Mr. Driskill introduced Chairman Pat Langdon and Commission Member Alice Swinehart, and also introduced Dr. Alan Heslop of National Demographics Corporation (NDC).

2. Review and discuss Report on Citizen Kits and Citizen Input.

Dr. Heslop provided a brief overview of the redistricting process to date and the criteria adopted by the Commission to guide the process. He commented on the Voting Rights Act and other Justice Department regulations that apply to the districting process including benchmarks Mesa must meet regarding sustainable Hispanic population percentages in Districts 1 and 3, and District 4 in particular.

Dr. Heslop spoke concerning the favorable response and participation to date in the redistricting process, noting that 15 fully developed plans, three partial plans and many excellent written comments were submitted. Dr. Heslop commented on citizen maps submitted by Marti Soza, Marilynn Wennerstrom, Joseph A. Gorski, Ann Kulik and Teresa Brice-Heames. Dr. Heslop stressed that the level of citizen participation has been exemplary.

3. Review of recommended redistricting plan and two alternatives.

Dr. Heslop presented the Recommended Plan and Alternatives 1 and 2 prepared in response to the input received from citizens. Dr. Heslop discussed the following noteworthy features contained in the Recommended Plan:

- District 4 total Hispanic population is 48.16% and Hispanic voting age population is 44.03%.
- Two other districts have been created with significant Hispanic populations:

District 1 with total Hispanic population of 18.59% and Hispanic voting age population of 16.06%; District 3 with total Hispanic population of 19.59% and Hispanic voting age population of 16.73%.

- The population deviation in each district is relatively low, with an overall deviation of 7.93%.
- District 5, a rapid growth area, has a negative deviation, and Districts 1 and 2, which are relatively slow growth areas, have positive deviations.
- The Districts in the plan respect the major communities of the City, follow several well-known boundaries, depart little from existing district configurations and incorporate significant citizen input.
- Each district in the plan includes a high school.

Dr. Heslop reported that Alternative 1 achieves the benchmark in District 4 with a total Hispanic population of 48.16%, a Hispanic voting age population of 44.03%, and a total deviation of 7.07%. Dr. Heslop commented that Alternative 1 would create a positive deviation in District 5 and a slightly negative deviation in District 6.

Dr. Heslop advised that Alternative 2 also meets the benchmark, with District 4's total Hispanic population at 48.05% and the Hispanic voting age population at 43.87%. Dr. Heslop stated that the deviation in District 5, an area of rapid growth, is positive. Dr. Heslop explained that in Alternative 1 and Alternative 2, a high school would not be included in each district.

4. Questions and comments on recommended redistricting plan and two alternatives.

Dr. Heslop and Dr. Florence Adams of NDC responded to questions from the public regarding the Hispanic voting age population of District 3; the consistency of the boundary lines of District 4 in the Recommended Plan and Alternative 1; the necessity of moving the eastern boundary of District 1 further east in the Recommended Plan; factors considered when moving boundary lines besides population counts and percentages; and Districts that have a low concentration of actual voters.

In response to a question regarding incorporating the entire Evergreen Historic District into District 4 of the Recommended Plan, Dr. Adams stated that the benchmark of District 4 would still be met with this modification.

In response to a question regarding the actual number of voters that will be disadvantaged in the Districts that have not yet voted for a District Councilmember, Dr. Adams reported that with

implementation of the Recommended Plan, the total population that will be disadvantaged is approximately 25,000 and the total disadvantaged voting age population is approximately 17,000. She further reported that with implementation of Alternative 2, the total population that will be disadvantaged is approximately 22,000 and the total disadvantaged voting age population is 17,717. She noted that the numbers represent individuals eligible to vote as opposed to registered voters.

In response to a request from Marilyn Wennerstrom, a Mesa resident, Dr. Heslop commented on the various interpretations of "community of interest" with respect to the districting process.

Special Assistant to the City Manager Jenny Sheppard reported that the three remaining public hearings will take place on July 17th at Hale Elementary School, 1425 N. 23rd Street; on July 18th in the Lower Council Chambers; and on July 19th at the Superstition Police/Fire Substation, 2430 S. Ellsworth Road.

5. Adjournment.

Without objection, the District Commission meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the District Commission Meeting of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 16th day of July 2001. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

pjt