

# COUNCIL DISTRICT COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

November 17, 1998

A Council District Commission Public Hearing was held in the Multipurpose Room of Jefferson Elementary School, 120 South Jefferson, on November 17, 1998 at 6:41 p.m.

## COUNCIL DISTRICT COMMISSION PRESENT

Chairman Pat Langdon  
Wilford Andersen  
Lynda Bailey  
Teresa Brice-Heames  
Mary Jo Whalen

## STAFF PRESENT

Cindy Barris  
Barbara Jones  
Jeff Martin  
Andrea Rasizer  
Tom Remes

## OTHERS PRESENT (CONT.)

Florence Adams  
Lisa Dobson  
Richard Dyer  
Alan Heslop  
Jack Keller  
Elizabeth Langdon  
Yazmin Venegas  
Marilynn Wennerstrom  
Others

Pat Langdon, Chairman of the Council District Commission, advised that Spanish and sign language interpretation for the meeting are available to any citizen upon request. No requests for translation were received.

### 1. Welcome.

Chairman Langdon welcomed the citizens to the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance. Chairman Langdon introduced members of the Council District Commission present at the meeting.

Chairman Langdon briefly explained the purpose of the public hearing. Chairman Langdon introduced Drs. Alan Heslop and Florence Adams, consultants from National Demographics, Inc. who are assisting the Commission and the City in developing district boundary lines.

### 2. Review of preliminary report on districting in Mesa.

Dr. Heslop stated that a preliminary report on districting in Mesa has been prepared and is available to any individual interested in the districting process. Dr. Heslop advised that the districting process is predicated upon federal mandates relating to total population and minority representation and that based on the constitutional issues of equality and fairness, a) districts should be drawn that are equal in population to the extent possible and within the guidelines acceptable to the U.S. Department of Justice and b) districts should be drawn that give fair representation to all groups. Dr. Heslop noted that the population totals to be utilized are those of the last official census count (1995 mid-decade census) and that the Voting Rights Act and later Court decisions make clear that Hispanics, Mesa's largest minority group, must not be excluded or disadvantaged in any way in the districting.

Dr. Heslop commented that the following additional criteria have been adopted by the District Commission and reviewed by the City Council for use in guiding the districting process: a) community of interest; b) access, recognition, and geography; c) citizen input; and d) population and growth. Dr. Heslop stated that

districts should be composed in a manner that enhances the spirit of community; districts should be drawn that give voters easy access to their representatives (fully contiguous, reasonably compact, and easily recognized by voters); districts should not be drawn until full opportunity has been provided for citizens throughout the community to provide insights and participate in the process; and districts should be designed, where possible, to reflect present and future directions of growth (thereby minimizing revisions necessary in the redistricting following the decennial census).

3. Review of citizen kits.

Dr. Adams, President of National Demographics, Inc., reported that the citizen kits are available in English and Spanish. Dr. Adams reviewed information contained in the citizen kits, including an instruction sheet, summary of the districting process, list of suggested districting criteria, analysis of the 1995 mid-decade census total population and voting age population (18 years of age or older) by race and ethnicity, total population and voting age population data listings by enumeration district, zero population enumeration districts, annexations, census tract maps and data, faxable maps for use in submitting plans to the consultants, and thematic maps showing minority total population and voting age population percentages and population counts.

Dr. Adams identified differences between enumeration districts and census tracts and presented suggestions for aggregating data to configure district boundaries. Dr. Adams said that ideal districts will contain a population of 56,353 and that each citizen kit submitted will be analyzed and deviations (from the ideal district) noted.

Dr. Adams indicated that additional maps identifying issues of community interest (e.g., "Building a Healthier Mesa" areas of influence, school district attendance boundaries, and residential/retirement communities) are included in the citizen kits to assist in developing plans. Dr. Adams displayed a sampling of citizen maps submitted to date and the analysis prepared for each.

4. Discuss three alternative district concepts for Mesa.

Dr. Adams stated that three alternative district concepts (identified as red, blue, and green) have been developed for use as a reference in eliciting input as citizens prepare individuals maps for submission. Dr. Adams advised that the red and blue concepts reflect a concentration of Hispanic population in one district (approximately 33 percent) while the green concept divides the population into two districts (approximately 22 percent per district). Dr. Adams noted that is not feasible to create a majority minority district in Mesa but spoke concerning the importance of maximizing minority influence and obtaining input from the Hispanic community.

Dr. Adams said that the district concepts are available to citizens from four primary sources: a) citizen kits (color-coded), b) displays at the public hearings as well as City Hall and the main branch of the Library, c) the City's web site ([www.ci.mesa.az.us](http://www.ci.mesa.az.us)), and d) the City Manager's Office (blue line copies with street detail).

5. Question and answer on districting.

Dr. Adams responded to questions from citizens pertaining to enumeration districts, preparation of the three district concepts, development of a recommended plan and two alternatives, time frame for submission of district boundaries to the U.S. Department of Justice, and the anticipated implementation process as outlined in the initiative approved by voters at the May 19, 1998 General Election.

Dr. Adams noted that the final meeting in the first series of public hearings will be held tomorrow evening at 6:30 p.m. at Mountain View High School and that all citizen maps must be submitted no later than December 1, 1998.

Dr. Adams stated that a recommended plan and two alternatives will be presented at the Council District Commission meeting to be held at 5:30 p.m. on December 9 and the City Council Study Session to be held at 7:30 a.m. on December 10 (both meetings to be held in the City Council Chambers). Dr. Adams indicated that the schedule for a second series of public hearings is included in the preliminary report.

6. Adjournment.

Chairman Langdon expressed appreciation to the citizens for their attendance and interest in the districting process. Chairman Langdon urged those present to submit plans and to encourage others to participate.

Without objection, the public hearing adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Council District Commission Public Hearing of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 17th day of November 1998. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held.

Dated this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 1998

\_\_\_\_\_  
BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK