

**Town of Readsboro
Board of Civil Authority
Jan 26, 2022
5:30pm**

2022 Reapportionment (Redistricting) Meeting

Attendees: (BCA Members) Rhonda Smith, Ted Hopkins, Raymond Eilers, Joseph Berard, Omar Smith, Richard Codogni. **Absent;** Amber Holland & Normajean Marchegiani.

At the onset of the meeting, Rhonda Smith, Chairperson handing out to each member a packet that included the letter from the State of Vermont Office of Legislative Council, maps and Sibilias recommendations and Omar Smith's thoughts. In the letter from the State VT, it stated that the House of the General Assembly has passed H.589, which proposes to reapportion (also known as "redistrict") the House of Representatives into single-and multi-member districts bases on the 2020 decennial U.S. Census population data and based on a reapportionment plan from the Legislative Apportionment Board (LAB), known as LAB Alternate Map (or LAB Minority Map).

The letter went on to explain that the House Committee on Government Operations is seeking some feedback from each town's BCA on the following;

1. Proposed district lines contained in the maps that was provided
2. BCA proposal to subdivide H.589's proposed two-member districts into two single members districts (if desired);
3. BCA proposal on how to subdivide any initial district that is listed in H.589 as having three or more representative into one-or-two member districts; and
4. Any additional feedback on the LAB's Adopted Map.

Three maps were provided;

1. The current district Readsboro is in; Stamford, Readsboro, Searsburg, Somerset, Dover, Wardsboro.
2. The district map that the State proposed on 11/23/2021; Readsboro, Searsburg, Woodford, part of Bennington.
3. The district map that the State proposed on 01/19/2022; Pownal, Stamford, Readsboro

Omar Smith said he talked with Laura Sibilias, Readsboro's representative, and she said to keep in mind, that a district needs to be made up of roughly 4287 people. She said that the 2020 census changes in population total 4402 people living in the towns in the current district, so there is no reason to change our current district and that there is no constitutional imperative to add or subtract people from the current district. She said Dover weighed in with the LAB opposing any changes to the district and Stamford weighed in opposing being separated from Readsboro.

Rhonda Smith suggested we look at what abutting towns Readsboro share in common things with and sharing resources with like schools and fire dept mutual aid. She recommended maybe Stamford, Readsboro, Whitingham, Searsburg, Halifax and part of Wilmington though she didn't know the census count with the part of Wilmington we would split.

Raymond Eilers agreed that we look at similar problems that Readsboro has that other towns have too, like crappy roads.

In the packet handed out, Omar Smith made a list of what commonalities with its three border towns of Stamford, Searsburg and Whitingam. He said we have not so much with the proposed town of Pownal, Woodford or Bennington. The list contained;

1. Fire Service
2. State Road Access & Maintenance
3. School District
4. Recreation
5. Other Infrastructures; Deerfield Valley Communication Union District (DVFiber Project)
6. Other considerations; town budget similarities, demographics, household incomes, property values, population density.

Rhonda Smith looked up what the State based requirements are for criteria that they may look at when redistricting;

1. Contiguity referring to the towns within a district should be physically adjacent.
2. Compactness referring to being as near to one another as practicable.
3. Community of Interest as having common political, social or economic interests.
4. All the district should maintain patterns of geography, social interaction, trade, political ties, and common interest.


After further discussion the BCA recommends that their first choice is that Readsboro stay at the current district it resides in with Readsboro, Stamford, Searsburg, Somerset, Dover & Wardsboro as the new census numbers haven't really made any difference in changing this district.

Also, after further discussion and seeing the criteria that the State of Vermont may look at in redistricting, the board feels we have more in common with our second choice of a new district of Readsboro, Stamford, Whitingham, Halifax, Searsburg and Woodford. This district which makes up 4220 people, which is in the range they are looking for, and the commonalities that the BCA feel are important to Readsboro, plus the criteria set by the state, this district configuration would be a better fit for Readsboro.

A letter with these written feedbacks and proposals will be written up and sent to the Vermont General Assembly, Office of Legislative Counsel at the address provided by February 15 as they requested.

Being no other further business, meeting was adjourned at 6:20pm by Omar Smith and Seconded by Raymond Eilers. All in Favor.

Respectfully Submitted,



Rhonda Smith
Chairperson/Acting Secretary