

Legislative Apportionment Board
128 State Street
Montpelier, Vermont 05633-1101

The Williston Board of Civil Authority (BCA) met on November 8, 2021 to review the proposal from the Legislative Apportionment Board (LAB) for the Legislative District currently known as CHI-2. Williston is currently one district with two representatives covering the entirety of the town.

The 2021 LAB proposes:

- (a) that Williston become two new districts (CHI-13-1 and CHI-13-2), each with one representative; and
- (b) that a third, newly formed district (CHI-12-5), consisting of approximately 1,680 Williston residents, be shared with the City of South Burlington.

While the BCA understands that due to population growth, there is no longer a path forward for Williston to remain one district with two representatives, sharing a district with another municipality represents a major change for the approximately 1,680 (displaced) Williston residents who will no longer be included in CHI-2.

Upon careful reflection, neither proposal presented by LAB is satisfactory to the Williston BCA. Specifically, the Williston BCA desires:

1. That Williston remain a single, two-member district comprised of as many Williston residents as is statistically possible; and
2. That displaced residents, who cannot Constitutionally remain part of be the voting district, be absorbed by a neighboring town which shares the same sense of community, the same school district, and other similar geo-political ideologies as Williston. With reference to the statutory factors set forth in 17 VSA §1903(b)¹, Williston has a long-established sense of community and shares ideologies with the other four towns making up the Champlain Valley School District (CVSD). Conversely, Williston does not have a level of community connection with, nor does it share resources (such as a local library) with the City of South Burlington. As would be expected, So. Burlington has its own non-consolidated school system and the two communities share few county resources.

¹ 17 VSA §1903(b) provides in relevant part: “The representative and senatorial districts shall be formed consistent with the following policies insofar as practicable: (1) preservation of existing political subdivision lines; (2) recognition and maintenance of patterns of geography, social interactions, trade, political ties, and common interests; (3) use of compact and contiguous territory”.

Williston citizens/residents/voters are typically not acquainted with whomever is running for office in So. Burlington and they may not follow, or agree with, the politics of a city double the size of Williston.

In summary, the Williston BCA desires that the newly formed district consisting of Williston residents (currently conceptualized as CHI-12-5) be comprised of citizens who share similar, basic common interests and goals, including a consolidated school district, a library, a zip code and other social geographical commonalities. Aligning such communities will create a more cohesive and inclusive district; one that will reflect many commonalities among the citizens who will form a welcoming unit moving forward with the years of continued population growth to come in both Williston and its neighboring towns. Of note, prior to the configuration of the current districting, Williston shared a representative within our unified school district.

After applying the factors of 17 VSA §1903(b), and after much discussion, the following motion was duly made, seconded, and approved by 13 members of the Williston Board of Civil Authority:

That the Board of Civil Authority make a recommendation to the Legislative Apportionment Board and the House Government Operations Committee that: a) the Town of Williston remain a single district with two representatives; and b) the proposed district CHI-12-5 be altered to be comprised of a newly formed group of citizens from the same unified school district (CVSD) and other shared resources between our consolidated school communities.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Andy Mikell

Chair, Williston Board of Civil Authority