

BOARD OF CIVIL AUTHORITY

FEEDBACK FORM

For the Submission of Feedback on the: VERMONT HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - TENTATIVE RE-APPORTIONMENT PROPOSAL by the LEGISLATIVE APPORTIONMENT BOARD

The following is a report of the decisions and discussions of the Board of Civil Authority of the town/city, concerning the initial House district reapportionment plan proposed by the Legislative Apportionment Board, as required by 17 V.S.A.

§1905: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/17/034A/01905>

It is due on or before November 15, 2021 through this online portal.

This form is for reporting from the BCA through its authorized representative only. There should be only one report from any one BCA. This is not a portal for public comment. This link is not for public distribution. The public should be encouraged to comment to the BCA directly or can reach out to the LAB through its website: <https://sos.vermont.gov/apportionment-board/contact-the-board/>

* Required

1. **Town/City:** *

Rockingham

2. **Name of Submitter:** *

Kathleen Neathawk

3. Role of Person Submitting This Form (Town Clerk, BCA Chair, etc.): *

Town Clerk

4. Contact Phone: *

802-463-4336

5. Contact Email: *

clerk@rockbf.org

6. Date(s) the Board of Civil Authority met on the reapportionment plan: *

October 26, 2021 Rockingham BCA met 12 members voted in favor of a Proposal 1 having a 2 m

7. District(s) reviewed that the BCA recommends changing:

Please use the district names used in the proposed map.

Windham District 6 (keeping Saxtons River with Rockingham)

8. District(s) reviewed that the BCA recommends keeping as proposed:

Please use the district names used in the proposed map.

District 8 adding Saxtons River back

9. Description of District(s) recommended to be changed: *

Please provide a clear description of the recommended district. For an example of the way this has been done in the past, please refer to 17 V.S.A. §1893:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/17/034/01893>

Use as much detail as possible. If the BCA's proposed district(s) have more than one member, please include that detail. You may also copy the map provided to you and re-draw the line, if desired, but you must also include the description. If necessary, email any attachments to sos.labmembers@vermont.gov and clearly include your town and district in the title and body of the email.

We are sending a hard copy along with results from Rockingham and Saxtons River.

10. Rationale and comments: *

Please give in detail your rationale for the change(s) that the BCA made as well as rationale for leaving the district(s) as drawn by the Legislative Apportionment Board.

See enclosed

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Town of Rockingham Board of Civil Authority Response to Re-apportionment

The Rockingham Board of Civil Authority met on October 26, 2021 and submits the following response to the proposed change in the district which affects Rockingham, particularly Saxtons River Village and the very southern portion of the Town.

As proposed, the Village and the area on the south side of Rte. 121 would become part of the proposed district consisting of Westminster and Brookline.

Criterion 2

This criteria states that districts shall seek to maintain geographical compactness and contiguity.

The area of Rockingham which would become part of the Westminster-Brookline district is not contiguous to Brookline. Rockingham does not share a border with Brookline at any point. In fact, one must drive through the Town of Athens to reach Brookline.

Criterion 3

Further, districts shall seek to adhere to boundaries of counties and other existing political subdivisions.

As proposed, the district would not follow any existing boundary of Rockingham. While it would follow the Westminster and Brookline boundaries, it would slash from Rockingham its second Village and a very small area on the south side of Rte. 121. This is not allowing for adequate representation of this particular area of Rockingham which has significant and important ties with the rest of the Rockingham community.

Criterion 4

The districts shall be formed consistent with the following policies insofar as practicable... (2) recognition and maintenance of patterns of geography, social interaction, trade, political ties and common interests.

As proposed, the district makes no consideration for the socio-economic interaction between Saxtons River Village and the rest of the Town of Rockingham, which includes Bellows Falls Village. Residents of Saxtons River Village interact regularly with other areas of the Town - both culturally and economically. This includes for banking, schools, shopping, visiting Town Hall, and more. While Westminster is a good neighbor, it is not the main focus of social interaction, trade or politics by any means. The vast majority of affected residents have little to no interaction with Brookline.

Criterion 5

In making a proposal [for dividing initial districts] under this section, the boards of civil authority shall consider (1) preservation of existing political subdivision lines; (2) recognition and maintenance of patterns of geography, social interaction, trade, political ties and common interests; (3) use of compact and contiguous territory; (4) incumbencies.

Under the current two representative district, one representative is from Windham and the other from Rockingham. The Rockingham representative is knowledgeable about all of Rockingham and the affected area of Saxtons River Village and the very small part of Rte. 121 having previously served on the Rockingham Selectboard, and residing just north of the Village and being active in Village affairs. This affected area of Rockingham will not have the representation it is entitled to if portioned off to a different district consisting of all of the Town of Westminster and the Town of Brookline.

The Rockingham Board of Civil Authority strongly opposes the proposed re-apportionment design which would remove Saxtons River Village and the southern portion of Rte. 121 from the overall Rockingham district and proposes a unified district for all of Rockingham.

It is moved that the Board of Civil Authority for the Town of Rockingham would not support Proposal Number 1, a single member district, but would support Proposal Number 2, a two member district.

Rockingham Board of Civil Authority

Dated: October 26, 2021

Number of Board of Civil Authority members voting in favor of the above motion: 12, plus Rockingham Selectboard members voting in favor of the motion: 3.

Signatures:

Kathleen Neathawk 11/8/2021
Kathleen Neathawk, Rockingham Town Clerk Date

Paul Obuchowski 11/9/2021
Paul Obuchowski, Rockingham BCA Chair Date

Peter Golec 11/10/2021
Peter Golec, Rockingham Selectboard Chair Date

attachment: Letter from Saxtons River Village Trustees to Legislative Apportionment Board

Village of Saxtons River
P.O. Box 243
Saxtons River, VT 05154

November 3, 2021

To the Vermont Legislative Apportionment Board

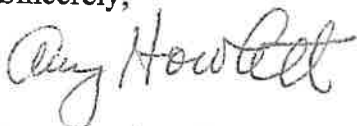
The trustees of the Village of Saxtons River discussed the proposed single member districts, approved by the Legislative Apportionment Board and posted at <https://sos.vermont.gov/apportionment-board/map-drafts/>. The new district excludes the Village from the Town of Rockingham, adding it instead to Westminster and Brookline. The Village Trustees voted unanimously on November 1, 2021 to join the Rockingham Board of Civil Authority in disapproval of the proposed single member district. This letter verifies our vote.

The Village of Saxtons River is an intrinsic part of the town of Rockingham. We have little in common with the two towns of the proposed new district, Brookline and Westminster. Brookline and Saxtons River share no supervisory union or schools, and have no shared border. Our taxes, our elementary school, our discussions, shopping and routine day to day activities are Rockingham. We notice that the two-member district of the past two decades has served us well; we would lose both of the incumbent representatives, Carolyn Partridge of Windham and Leslie Goldman of Rockingham, if the new plan were adopted.

The minutes of the November 1, 2021 meeting recording the vote and accompanying discussion will be posted at the Town website, <http://rockinghamvt.org>, under Agendas & Minutes.

We would be happy to meet with you if the Legislative Apportionment Board decides to record testimony.

Sincerely,



Amy Howlett, Chair
Carl Ball, Vice Chair
Matthew Brennan, Trustee
Ellen Clark-Lawrence, Trustee
Rick Holloway, Trustee