



**DISTRICTING COMMISSION MEETING  
FEBRUARY 16, 2022  
4:00 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

Col. Bob Burns – virtual  
Dr. Michiel R. Noe – virtual  
Christopher Villa – 4:03  
Joshua Fematt – 4:03  
Martin Bartlett  
Daniel Anchondo – virtual 4:24  
Isabel Carrillo  
Cynthia Renteria  
Gilbert Esparza III

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:**

NONE

***City Staff:***

*Karina Brasgalla, Executive Secretary, Assistant Director Economic and International Development;  
Kevin Smith, Planning and Inspections Assistant Director; Russell Abeln, Assistant City Attorney, City  
Attorney's Office*

**I. CALL TO THE PUBLIC – PUBLIC COMMENT**

Call to the Public will begin at 5:00 p.m. Members of the public will be allowed 5 minutes to present, with additional time granted at the discretion of the presiding officer.

- Sylvia Carreon
  - James Graham
  - Alicia Villa – Washington-Delta Neighborhood Association
  - Fred Borrego – President, San Juan Association
  - Ed Telemantes
  - Sito Negron
  - Rich Wright
  - George Ibarra
- .....

II. **REGULAR AGENDA – DISCUSSION AND ACTION:**

1 Discussion and Action: Changes to the Agenda

Proposal to hear items 3, 4, 5, and 6 together. Commissioner Renteria moved; Commissioner Esparza seconded (passed 6-0)

2 Discussion and Action: Review of Minutes for the January 12, 2022 Meeting.

Motion to approve Minutes for the January 12, 2022 Meeting: Commissioner Esparza moved; Commissioner Renteria seconded (passed 6-0)

Chair Martin Bartlett thanked everyone and city staff for their efforts with redistricting process

Commissioners Joshua Fematt and Christopher Villa arrived in person

3 Information and Discussion: Review of the October 27, 2021 City Council Resolution Establishing Redistricting Criteria.

Presentation of Resolution language by Karina Brasgalla

4 Information, Discussion, and Action: Review of the adopted Guidelines for Persons Submitting Specific Redistricting Proposals.

Commissioner Esparza requested clarification

Karina Brasgalla responded

Vice Chair Carrillo requested further clarification

Karina Brasgalla responded

Vice Chair Carrillo requested clarification on leeway for criteria

Russell Abeln responded

Commissioner Renteria asked about the extent to which new districts should be similar to old districts

Russell Abeln responded

5 Information and Discussion: Updates on Board administration, Public Comment submitted electronically, and Community Meeting feedback.

Karen Brasgalla presented a synopsis of public comment, including:

- Timeline reminders
- Meeting schedule review (including auxiliary meetings, in person meetings, virtual and hybrid meetings) with turnout numbers
- Meetings available on City of El Paso YouTube – Laura Cruz Acosta noted that there is playlist for public comment
- Key feedback: Listed process concerns, requests and concerns on boundaries

Commissioner Esparza made a comment with thanks to City employees including Karina Brasgalla, Kevin Smith, Laura Acosta

Commissioner Renteria thanked City staff and the public, recognized central and south-central district turnout, northeast determination to stay east of the mountain

Chair Bartlett asked for further comments from meetings

Vice Chair Carrillo made a comment

Brasgalla: Corrected memo, future meeting will be on Wednesday, April 6 not Saturday, April 9

- 6 Information, Discussion, and Action: Drafting and Selection of District Plans, to include new submissions from Commissioner Esparza and Carmen Rodriguez with the League of Women Voters.

Chair Bartlett asked to hear new submissions, develop new timeline  
Karina Brasgalla invited commissioner Esparza to present  
Commissioner Esparza requested to defer discussion of his submission to next week  
Karina Brasgalla invited Carmen Rodriguez to present  
Carmen Rodriguez presented second map from League of Women Voters  
Chair Bartlett asked for comments  
Commissioner Burns asked a question re: geographic boundaries  
Carmen Rodriguez responded  
Commissioner Burns did not agree with Ms. Rodriguez's answers  
Commissioner Renteria made a comment  
Karina Brasgalla responded  
Commissioner Renteria made a comment  
Karina Brasgalla responded  
Commissioner Esparza asked questions and commented  
Carmen Rodriguez responded  
Commissioner Esparza commented  
Carmen Rodriguez responded to comment from Commissioner Esparza  
Chair Bartlett cautioned the room on time, asked to hear from Commissioner Renteria and Vice Chair Carillo  
Karina Brasgalla commented on 2020 census  
Commissioner Esparza commented and thanked Ms. Rodriguez  
Commissioner Renteria commented on Ms. Rodriguez's map  
Vice Chair Carillo commented on Precinct 60  
Commissioner Esparza responded  
Vice Chair Carillo responded about Precinct 60  
Commissioner Esparza commented  
Vice Chair Carillo responded  
Commissioner Esparza responded  
Commissioner Burns commented  
Chair Bartlett interjected for break for public comment  
Karina Brasgalla noted that Commissioner Burns had his hand up, asked the Commissioner to wait until after public comment  
Chair Bartlett acknowledged that Commissioner Villa had hand up as well, asked to hold until after public comment  
Commissioner Villa commented that the US Census Bureau puts out the American Community Survey

Motion to break for public comment: Commissioner Renteria motioned, Vice Chair Carillo seconded, passed (9-0)  
Commissioner Esparza recognized Ms. Carreon for her meeting attendance

Public Comment

Motion to return regular agenda by Commissioner Esparza, seconded by Vice Chair Carilla, motion passed (9-0)

Chair Bartlett asked for consensus on what to send forward/recommend  
Karina Brasgalla asked how many maps will be sent forward  
Vice Chair Carilla asked for closing date for map submittals

Commissioner Esparza suggested that submissions should be updated with new precincts and that those with old precincts should be removed

Karina Brasgalla asked for motion to remove those maps from consideration

Commissioner Renteria asked whether Commissioner Esparza and Carmen Rodriguez's proposals for this meeting were updated with the new precincts

Karina Brasgalla confirmed that they are both updated

Admin note: not sure if the first map from the League of Women Voters is corrected

Chair Bartlett asked for a motion for a deadline for submitting maps

Commissioner Renteria motioned to set deadline

Karina Brasgalla responded that the Commission needs a date procedurally, "discuss and take action", "Motion to amend guidelines for maps proposals to add a deadline, X date"

Chair Bartlett recommended March 9 as the deadline

Karina Brasgalla asked whether that will be the last day to consider a map or accept a map proposal?

Chair Bartlett asked for staff recommendation

Kevin Smith noted April 13<sup>th</sup> as final deadline for the commission, including report and all fine tuning, should not include new maps at that meeting. Should be fine-tuned before April 6 meeting, so by March 23 should have final list of maps

Commissioner Burns suggested March 2 as the deadline to submit a map

Karina Brasgalla confirmed March 2 is recommendation for submission deadline, to be heard on March 9.

Chair Bartlett asked for a motion to amend "Guidelines for Persons Submitting Specific Redistricting Proposals"?

Commissioner Renteria motioned to amend the adopted Guidelines for Persons Submitting Specific Redistricting Proposals, adding a provision of a deadline of March 2, 2022, end of day, to submit map proposals. Commissioner Esparza seconded, motion passes (9-0)

Chair Bartlett asked whether the commission wishes to send one map forward or provide multiple option to City Council

Commissioner Renteria asks if this decision can be made after an initial cut to the number of maps and can be made at a later date

Commissioner Esparza asked Karina Brasgalla if a motion is needed to remove original maps that have been converted with new precincts ("double maps")

Karina Brasgalla stated that a motion would be required, asked for clarification on the motion

Commissioner Esparza asked if all maps submitted prior to new precincts have been converted

Karina Brasgalla confirmed that they have all been converted

Commissioner Villa asked about criteria if maps are being eliminated

Chair Bartlett confirmed that these must be considered

Vice Chair Carillo asked if voter precincts must not be split

Chair Bartlett commented that municipal boundaries have changed in the far east side

Vice Chair Carillo commented about splitting precincts on her map and keeping them split unless the commission rules that out

Kevin Smith commented on precinct lines and language within the resolution adopted by the council – "Item 3: To the extent possible, districts should be composed of whole voting precincts"

Commissioner Burns commented that in looking at options, the Commission must remove those that do not meet basic criteria, and establish criteria as to whether single or multiple options shall be presented to the council

Chair Bartlett asked city staff to display criteria from city resolution, to determine which are and are not permissive

Karina Brasgalla confirmed two are not permissive: population and Voting Rights Act criteria

Chair Bartlett suggested looking at deviation as well – 10% threshold  
Kevin Smith commented that higher deviations can still be considered  
Chair Bartlett asked if there is consensus with respect to culling maps at this meeting  
Commissioner Renteria suggested waiting for further discussion, should only cull the duplicate maps with old precincts  
Karina Brasgalla commented that Chair Bartlett asked about a working session for the March 9 meeting  
Chair Bartlett asked for consensus for a working session  
Commissioner Burns asked for clarification on the process of evaluating and eliminating maps  
Chair Bartlett clarified the approach  
Commissioner Burns was in favor of Chair Bartlett's suggested approach  
Chair Bartlett responded and asked if a motion is needed to take that approach  
Karina Brasgalla clarified that the only motion needed would be one to remove the maps drawn with old precincts  
Vice Chair Carillo opposed the idea of that motion  
Karina Brasgalla clarified that no maps would be lost in removing the duplicates of converted maps

Commissioner Esparza motioned to remove original maps that have been converted with the new precincts to remove redundancy, Dr. Noe seconded. Motion carried (8-1) with Vice Chair Carillo opposed.

Karina Brasgalla noted that original map creators can contact staff to amend converted maps  
Vice Chair Carillo asked whether the motion just passed had removed those with split precincts  
Karina Brasgalla clarified that it did not

Vice Chair Carillo asked the commission if precincts must be whole  
Several answered "no"  
Commissioner Burns asked Russell Abeln about permissive language  
Russell Abeln responded  
Commissioner Burns continued to seek clarification  
Commissioner Villa commented

Karina Brasgalla commented  
Russell Abeln supported Ms. Brasgalla's assessment  
Commissioner Villa commented on prioritizing criteria

## 7 Discussion: Identify Items for Future Agendas

Karina Brasgalla commented on the proposed working session at the March 9, 2022 meeting for drafting and selection of different plans  
Kevin Smith commented that the next Commission meeting is February 23, 2022, and requested that Commissioners come to that next meeting with ideas of which maps to consider as a foundation  
Karina Brasgalla commented that otherwise the next meeting should consist of regular agenda items: minutes, changes to agenda, feedback/admin updates, district plans  
Commissioner Esparza asked if this working session will be during the regular meeting and open to the public  
Karina Brasgalla confirmed the meeting will still be posted as usual. The Commission can also propose special meetings to continue to work if necessary  
Commissioner Esparza asked if they will still break for public comment  
Karina Brasgalla confirmed

Vice Chair Carillo asked a question about neighborhood association  
Karina Brasgalla responded  
Vice Chair Carillo asked for further clarification neighborhood associations  
Commissioner Villa asked a question

Vice Chair Carillo responded  
Karina Brasgalla commented  
Kevin Smith commented  
Karina Brasgalla commented

8 Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Renteria, seconded by Vice Chair Carillo, motion passed (9-0), meeting adjourned at 6:14