
Commission Meeting

of

NEW JERSEY REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

*“To consider certifying a Congressional redistricting plan for
New Jersey for use during the 2000 decade”*

LOCATION: Committee Room 4
State House Annex
Trenton, New Jersey

DATE: October 26, 2001
10:00 a.m.

MEMBERS OF COMMISSION PRESENT:

Alan Rosenthal, Chairman

Leonard Coleman
Dale Florio
George R. Gilmore
Elizabeth Randall
Candace Straight
Assemblyman Gary Stuhltrag

Karen Brown, Esq.
James P. Dugan, Esq.
Zulima V. Farber
Lionel Kaplan
Dana Redd
Frank Robinson



ALSO PRESENT:

Frank J. Parisi
Office of Legislative Services
Commission Secretary

Meeting Recorded and Transcribed by
The Office of Legislative Services, Public Information Office,
Hearing Unit, State House Annex, PO 068, Trenton, New Jersey

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*(The New Jersey Redistricting Commission met on October 26, 2001, at 10:00 a.m.
Members physically attending: Alan Rosenthal, Leonard Coleman, Dale Florio,
Elizabeth Randall, Karen Brown, James P. Dugan, Zulima Farber, Lionel Kaplan,
Dana Redd, and Frank Robinson. Members attending telephonically: Assemblyman
Gary Stuhltrager and Candace Straight)*

ALAN ROSENTHAL, (Chairman): I'd like to call to order the New Jersey Redistricting Commission for the meeting of October 26 to decide on a Congressional redistricting plan.

Will the Secretary call the roll of Commissioners?

MR. PARISI (Commission Secretary): Karen Brown.

MS. BROWN: Present.

MR. PARISI: Len Coleman.

MR. COLEMAN: Here.

MR. PARISI: James Dugan.

MR. DUGAN: Here.

MR. PARISI: Zulima Farber.

MS. FARBER: Here.

MR. PARISI: Dale Florio.

MR. FLORIO: Here.

MR. PARISI: George Gilmore.

MR. GILMORE: Here.

MR. PARISI: Lonnie Kaplan.

MR. KAPLAN: Here.

MR. PARISI: Lisa Randall. (no response)

Dana Redd.

MS. REDD: Here.

MR. PARISI: Frank Robinson.

MR. ROBINSON: Present.

MR. PARISI: Candace Straight. (no response)

Gary Stuhltrager. (no response)

Chairman Rosenthal.

MR. ROSENTHAL: Here.

The first order of business is to adopt the minutes of the Commission meeting yesterday, October 25.

MR. GILMORE: I'll make that motion, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ROSENTHAL: Is there a second?

MS. FARBER: Second.

MR. ROSENTHAL: All those in favor, signify by saying aye.
(affirmative responses)

All those opposed. (no response)

The ayes have it. The minutes of the October 25th meeting are adopted.

MR. GILMORE: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a motion that we recess this meeting for one hour to attempt to resolve the minor differences that remain and then reconvene in one hour.

MR. ROSENTHAL: Okay. We will--

What time is it right now?

MR. GILMORE: 10:10.

MR. ROSENTHAL: We'll reconvene at 11:10 then, under that motion.

Is there a second to the motion?

MS. FARBER: Second.

MR. ROSENTHAL: All those in favor say aye. (affirmative responses)

Opposed. (no response)

The ayes have it. We will recess for an hour.

(RECESS)

AFTER RECESS:

MR. ROSENTHAL: The Congressional Redistricting Commission will reconvene for purposes of considering--

MS. FARBER: Where's Lisa?

MR. GILMORE: We thought she was with us. She stopped for a second. We have someone going to--

MR. ROSENTHAL: Okay. We'll wait.

MR. GILMORE: What about our two commissioners who are calling in? Are they on?

MR. ROSENTHAL: We're just waiting for--

MR. GILMORE: Lisa Randall. And we also have Candy Straight and Gary Stuhltrager calling in.

MR. ROSENTHAL: Eleven members of the Commission are present. Two will be calling in. So there will be a full Commission to participate.

ASSEMBLYMAN STUHLTRAGER: Gary Stuhltrager here.

MR. GILMORE: We're just waiting for Candy to call in, and we're waiting for Lisa.

ASSEMBLYMAN STUHLTRAGER: Okay.

MS. STRAIGHT: This is Candy Straight. Are we doing anything yet?

MR. GILMORE: Yes, we are, Candy. We're just about to start. We're just waiting for Lisa.

MS. STRAIGHT: Thank you.

MR. GILMORE: Candy and Gary, just so you know, we have a full Commission here but for Lisa. We have-- The press corps is here, and all staff members are here.

MS. STRAIGHT: Okay. Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN STUHLTRAGER: Okay.

MR. GILMORE: Gary and Candy, we're just waiting for Lisa. As soon as Lisa gets here, we can start the meeting.

ASSEMBLYMAN STUHLTRAGER: Okay.

MS. STRAIGHT: I'm here. I'm just going to put you on mute so I can make some other calls.

MR. ROSENTHAL: We truly are reconvening the meeting that started a while ago of the Congressional Redistricting Commission. The purpose

is to adopt a congressional redistricting plan. And the Secretary of the Commission will take the roll.

MR. PARISI: Karen Brown.

MS. BROWN: Present.

MR. PARISI: Len Coleman.

MR. COLEMAN: Here.

MR. PARISI: James Dugan.

MR. DUGAN: Here.

MR. PARISI: Zulima Farber.

MS. FARBER: Here.

MR. PARISI: Dale Florio.

MR. FLORIO: Here.

MR. PARISI: George Gilmore.

MR. GILMORE: Here.

MR. PARISI: Lonnie Kaplan.

MR. KAPLAN: Here.

MR. PARISI: Lisa Randall.

MS. RANDALL: Here.

MR. PARISI: Dana Redd.

MS. REDD: Here.

MR. PARISI: Frank Robinson.

MR. ROBINSON: Present.

MR. PARISI: Candace Straight.

MS. STRAIGHT: Here.

MR. PARISI: Gary Stuhltrager.

ASSEMBLYMAN STUHLTRAGER: Here.

MR. PARISI: Chairman Rosenthal.

MR. ROSENTHAL: Here.

MR. PARISI: All are in attendance, Mr. Chairman. You have a quorum.

MR. ROSENTHAL: Thank you.

Are there any motions to adopt a congressional redistricting plan?

MR. GILMORE: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make a motion to adopt a bipartisan redistricting plan.

MR. ROSENTHAL: The one that we have been working on for a while?

MR. GILMORE: That is correct, Mr. Chairman.

MS. FARBER: I'll second that motion.

MR. ROSENTHAL: Will the Secretary call the roll?

LEON J. SOKOL, ESQ.: Mr. Gilmore, just for the record, isn't it true that the plan that you've just moved is the plan that has been placed on the desk before each member?

MR. GILMORE: That is correct. And respective staff have reviewed and agreed that this represents the agreement between the delegations.

MR. PARISI: Okay. On the motion on the vote on the plan:
Karen Brown.

MS. BROWN: Yes.

MR. PARISI: Len Coleman.

MR. COLEMAN: Yes.

MR. PARISI: James Dugan.

MR. DUGAN: Yes.

MR. PARISI: Zulima Farber.

MS. FARBER: Yes.

MR. PARISI: Dale Florio.

MR. FLORIO: Yes.

MR. PARISI: George Gilmore.

MR. GILMORE: Yes.

MR. PARISI: Lonnie Kaplan.

MR. KAPLAN: Yes.

MR. PARISI: Lisa Randall.

MS. RANDALL: Yes.

MR. PARISI: Dana Redd.

MS. REDD: Yes.

MR. PARISI: Frank Robinson.

MR. ROBINSON: Yes.

MR. PARISI: Candace Straight.

MS. STRAIGHT: Yes.

MR. PARISI: Gary Stuhltrager.

ASSEMBLYMAN STUHLTRAGER: Yes.

MR. PARISI: Chairman Rosenthal.

MR. ROSENTHAL: Yes.

MR. PARISI: Mr. Chairman, you have 13 votes in the affirmative and none in the negative. The plan is adopted. (applause)

MR. ROSENTHAL: That plan will be available by 3:00 p.m. today, from Frank Parisi, in Room 277 of the State House Annex.

Before we conclude the meeting, a few of us would like to make statements for the record. I'd like to make a statement for the record about the plan that we just adopted.

From the point of view of the congressional redistricting plan as a product, I would say it is a very commendable product. I think we can all be proud to have adopted it. If the constitutional standard is no population deviation, this plan is essentially zero population deviation.

In terms of continuity of representation, roughly 90 percent of the people in New Jersey will be living in the same congressional district or with the same congressional incumbent that they lived with before. So there's greater continuity, and people might even know who their congressman is.

Let me just ask the attorneys. Does the plan stand the test of constitutionality, as far as you can see?

Leon Sokol?

MR. SOKOL: Yes, Mr. Chairman. We have reviewed the plan and believe that it meets all of the constitutional requisite standards.

MR. ROSENTHAL: Donald Scarinci.

DONALD SCARINCI, ESQ.: Yes. We have looked at the plan.

HEARING REPORTER: Excuse me, Mr. Chairman. He has to come up here? He's not going to be on the record.

MR. ROSENTHAL: Could you come up here for the record?

MR. SCARINCI: This is Donald Scarinci, Scarinci and Hollenbeck, Co-Counsel to the Democrats.

We have reviewed the plan. We have reviewed the resolution, and we feel that it meets all of the requirements imposed on it by law, and that the map that this Commission is adopting is constitutional.

MR. ROSENTHAL: Thank you.

John Sheridan.

JOHN SHERIDAN, ESQ: Mr. Chairman, I agree with co-counsel in every respect as to constitutionality and also as to all of the procedural requirements of the New Jersey Constitution. I believe they have all been met.

MR. ROSENTHAL: Thank you.

Well, the plan not only meets legal and constitutional standards, I think it is the politically fair plan. It's fair to both political parties. And it reflects the present conditions -- the partisan conditions in the State of New Jersey. But it also allows for changes in congressional representation if the partisan distribution of the vote in the state changes. So in terms of a product, it is a fine product.

Secondly, let me just talk briefly about the process by which this plan was arrived at. The first thing about the process is it was consultative. We held three public hearings. A number of people testified. And actually, some of the testimony -- some of the suggestions in the testimony is reflected in the plan that was drafted, particularly testimony about Woodbridge.

We considered-- We have considered four maps before forging this compromise. One map was the congressional consensus map that was agreed to by the 13 members of the Congress from New Jersey. The second map was a map submitted at a public hearing. The third map was a map developed by the Republican members of the Commission. The fourth map was a map

developed by the Democratic members of the Commission. And it has been an iterative negotiating process.

It's been not only consultative, it's been deliberative. Things have gone back and forth. They have been partisan, and they have also been bipartisan.

The process has been thorough. It's been lengthy. It's been five months since we began. And it has been a continuous process of negotiation. And I must say, in terms of redistricting as it's carried on throughout the nation, I think New Jersey has much to be proud of. I think the Commission -- this Commission, particularly -- the commission process works well. And I think the workings this year are testimony to that.

Having a Commission doesn't guarantee that the process will work well. It facilitates it working well, but it really is up to the people involved. And I want to commend a number of the people that have been involved in this process, particularly -- or to begin with, the congressional delegation, which managed to put together a consensus plan to which seven Democrats and six Republicans agreed. It was a bipartisan consensus plan.

And in putting that plan together, I think the delegation worked together and kind of built the kind of cooperation amongst members that, perhaps, hasn't existed before. They came together, and I would suspect that on many issues in the future, they may stick together, not on all, certainly. The delegation was important.

I think the staff to the Commission was outstanding -- the staff of OLS; Frank Parisi, the Secretary; the attorneys for all sides, John Sheridan for the Republicans, Donald Scarinci for the Democrats, Leon Sokol for the

Democrats, Bill Barrone for the congressional Republicans. The consultants who did the numbers were absolutely superb, Tom Bonnier for the Democrats, and Pat Torpey for the Republicans. And they were superb, and they could work with their delegations and with one another. It was a most civil enterprise.

And then finally, obviously, I want to express my gratitude to the members of the Commission who had a really difficult job representing so many constituents and constituencies -- political constituencies that they had to satisfy, that they had to negotiate with. And then they had to negotiate amongst themselves and then with one another. And this went on in a really spirited fashion, but I think, generally, in one of a good mood.

My job was very easy. I only had to represent myself. Fran Lawrence didn't expect me to report to him, as you people had to make reports.

So I just want to say I think it was a very worthwhile enterprise. I think it went the way it should have gone. And I think we can be proud of the process and the product.

Thank you.

MR. GILMORE: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to echo your comments, but also take time to commend and thank all the members of the Commission, on both sides, for the time, effort, and input that they put in to forge this map.

I think it's rather remarkable that we have 13 members of a bipartisan commission coming together to agree upon a map, and 13 members of the congressional delegation upon that map, as well. I think we've taken a great step to show that this commission process can work. It does work, if time and effort is put in, which was done here.

I also would be remiss if I didn't take the opportunity to thank the staff on both sides. Obviously we had much more interaction with our own staff on the Republican side. They did a tremendous job. I appreciate that. We all appreciate it.

Thank you very much.

That's all, Chairman.

MS. FARBER: On behalf of the Democratic caucus of the Commission, I want to thank the Chairman, Dr. Rosenthal, for his guidance and for his patience. When things got spirited, as he called it, he was most helpful in being patient with all of us.

I was heartened by the bipartisan nature of the negotiations in these proceedings, and I want to thank my fellow Republican members of the Commission, and in particular the Chairman, Mr. Gilmore, for that spirited but bipartisan way in which the negotiations were consulted.

And I want to echo Dr. Rosenthal's and Mr. Gilmore's thanks to both staffs for their efforts and for their help.

Thank you very much.

MR. ROSENTHAL: Any more comments from other members of the Commission? (no response)

If not, is there a motion to adjourn?

MS. FARBER: So moved.

MR. ROSENTHAL: Seconded?

MR. GILMORE: Second.

MR. ROSENTHAL: All in favor, signify by saying aye.
(affirmative responses)

Opposed? (no response)

The ayes have it.

Our work is over. (applause)

(MEETING CONCLUDED)

C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, Harold White, Hearing Unit Coordinator for the Office of Legislative Services, certify that the foregoing is a complete and accurate transcript of the recording of the New Jersey Redistricting Commission public meeting, held in the City of Trenton, on the 26th of October, 2001.

Harold M. White
(Certified Transcriber, AOC Certificate 509)

Office of Legislative Services
Coordinator,
Hearing Unit

Date: _____