

MINUTES OF THE 2011 KALAMAZOO COUNTY

APPORTIONMENT COMMISSION

MARCH 1, 2011 @ 8:00 AM

Kalamazoo County Administration Building, Room 207-A

PRESENT: Mary Balkema – County Treasurer
Thom Canny – Kalamazoo County Corporate Counsel
Jeff Fink – Kalamazoo County Prosecutor
Al Heilman – Kalamazoo County Republican Party
David Pawloski – Kalamazoo County Democratic Party
Tim Snow – Kalamazoo County Clerk/Register

The meeting was called to order at 8:08 a.m. by Tim Snow, County Clerk. Roll call was taken. There were also several members of the public present.

After introductions Tim Snow suggested the temporary appointment of Shellie Stapert as secretary and Thom Canny as legal counsel. There were no objections.

Item 3 – Public Comment.

- Clarification was requested to Proposed Rule #2 in regards to the term "villages". The villages are part of the townships and the concern was that the villages would be double counted. Tim Snow clarified that the villages would not be double counted.
- It was requested that dates of the meetings be posted far enough in advance for public notice.
- Questions were raised in regards to when the commission will choose the number of commissioners. A date has not been set to decide this.
- Proposed Rules to Promote Transparency in the Apportionment Process was provided to the commission. A copy is attached.

Item 4 – Material Distribution

Tim Snow handed out several items:

- a. General Apportionment Information Book used at last year's County Clerks Annual Conference
- b. Census Bureau information
- c. Other materials
 - Fact sheet regarding the release of numbers. Tim Snow indicated that every Thursday he receives an e-mail from the Census Bureau. As of this date, 24 states have released numbers. There is no set schedule as to which states numbers will be released. Tim Snow will provide our numbers as soon as they are available. All data is electronic this year. The data is electronically forwarded to the Governor, Secretary of State and Legislative leaders. As soon as the State accepts the information, within about a day the

numbers will be on the website for everyone to see. By law the numbers must be released by April 1st.

- 2009 estimates were provided to the commission.
- General information regarding a more open process at county and state level was provided by a member of the public. This information was obtained from a training on redistricting that was presented by Michigan C3 – a collaboration of organizations that host trainings on redistricting.
- Draft rules from 2001 were passed out.
- Strength in Numbers – Your Guide to Census 2010 Redistricting Data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Each state whose numbers have been released are listed on the following website: www.census.gov

Tim Snow invited others attending the meeting to take any information/materials available. Tim Snow stated that he would make copies available of any item not available at the meeting.

Item 5 - Election of Permanent Chair

A motion to nominate Jeff Fink, County Prosecutor, to be Chairman of the Commission was made by Tim Snow - supported by Mary Balkema. The motion passed.

Thom Canny recommended that a Vice Chair be appointed in the event of illness. Al Heilman made a motion to nominate Tim Snow to be the Vice Chair – supported by Jeff Fink. The motion passed.

Item 6 – Discussion – Rules of Procedure

Jeff Fink asked Thom Canny for the appropriate number of hours required to call a meeting. Thom Canny stated that 48 hours is the minimal number of hours for posting time to the public. Thom Canny stated that 18 hours would be appropriate for calling a Special Meeting.

David Pawloski raised a question on draft Rules #1, sentence 3 referring to teleconferencing. It was clarified that a Commission Member shall be considered present and may participate in a Commission Meeting, if they become and remain in two-way telephonic and/or video conferencing contact with the Commission during a meeting. However, they will not be able to vote from two-way telephonic and/or video conferencing.

During discussion of the rules, Mary Balkema stated that the Kalamazoo County Home Page is the apparent place to put the information from Commission Meetings. Tim Snow indicated meeting minutes and notices would be on the County website with links to the census website. Tim Snow will work with IS on these links.

Jeff Fink suggested adding "but will not be able to vote" to the Rules of Procedure #1 and striking "village" from the Rules of Procedure #2.

The Commissioners also agreed to the addition of Rule #15: All meeting minutes to be posted on Kalamazoo County Home Page.

Mary Balkema recommended the addition of Rule #16 based upon Rule #5 of the Proposed Rules to Promote Transparency in the Apportionment Process that was presented during the earlier public discussion. The addition of Rule #16 should state: Within 7 days after adopting an apportionment plan, the Commission will provide to the public a statement explaining how the approved plan complies with the guidelines listed in MCL 46.404, including the provision stating that “Districts shall not be drawn to effect partisan political advantage.” The Commission will post this statement on the Kalamazoo County Clerk’s homepage or a County webpage at least as prominent.

A motion to accept the draft rules with the listed amendments was made by Al Heilman – supported by Mary Balkema. The motion passed. A copy of the rules are to be attached.

Item 7 - Computers

Tim Snow stated licenses were purchased 10 years ago. He advised the State will approve a vendor such as moonshadowmobile.com, etc. Tim Snow will check into picking a program. It was also suggested that the Commission may want to try and do it in house. The Commission may call on Lotta Jarnefelt, Kalamazoo County Planning Department, for input. The Commission will look for ways that we can load precincts and determine population in house. Concern was raised that it may be more neutral to use software that is more widely approved by the State. Tim Snow will research examples and make recommendations for a program to be used. Al Heilman requested Tim Snow to look into cost differentials between in house employee time and seeking outside options.

It would be necessary to obtain 5 licenses for all 5 members of the Commission to be able to submit their own plans. David Pawloski has a contact at WMU and will get with Tim Snow to share that information. Tim Snow will bring cost information to the next meeting.

Item 8 – Meeting Dates

After a brief discussion, the Commission decided it would be best to meet in the mornings. The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, March 15, 2011, at 8:00 a.m. The meeting will be held at the County Administration Building, 201 West Kalamazoo Avenue, Room 207-A.

Item 9 – Additional Business

Jeff Fink asked the Commission if they wanted to discuss general thoughts on County Commission numbers. Al Heilman would like to pick a “target” number and wait to see the Census results before making a decision. Tim Snow suggested we look at the Census numbers and jurisdictional lines and not focus on one particular number, but remain flexible.

Several members of the Commission voiced support to reduce the number of Commissioners

Item 10 - Public Comment.

- It was requested that precincts not be split – Tim Snow commented that as County Clerk he would not agree with a split.
- It was stated that less numbers are better in regards to the number of Commissioners.
- A question was raised in regards to the Commission adopting the guidelines. Jeff Fink stated it is understood that the Commission will follow the guidelines.

- It was requested that proposed plans be published on the website. Tim Snow will check into the software and revisit, if this can be done. Tim Snow was not opposed to this, it is just a question as to how this can be done.

Item 11 - Adjournment

With no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Al Heilman – supported by Mary Balkema. The motion passed. The Commission adjourned at 8:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shellie Stapert, Secretary
To Apportionment Commission