

**Commission on Reapportionment
Meeting Minutes**

DATE & TIME: January 12, 2022 – 6:00 PM
LOCATION: Powered by Zoom Meeting by Dialing (646) 558-8656,
Meeting ID: 871 1855 9447
PRESIDING OFFICER: Regis Obijiski
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Fawn Tantillo
PRESENT: 1st Deputy Chair Sarah DeStefano, 2nd Deputy Chair
Andy Monk, Donna Lutz, Travis Rask, and Kathleen
Waithe
ABSENT: None
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: Legislator Phil Erner; Ulster County Kristin Gumeat,
Ulster County Planning Dennis Doyle and Robert Leibowitz; Mike Baden, Supervisor,
Town of Rochester.

Chairman Regis Obijiski called the meeting to order at 6:02.

Motion No. 1: To APPROVE the minutes of December 8, 2021

Motion By: Commissioner Waithe
Motion Seconded By: Commissioner Panza

Discussion: None.

Voting in Favor: Commissioners Obijiski, DeStefano, Monk, Lutz, Rask, Panza,
and Waithe

Voting Against: None

No. of Votes in Favor: 7

No. of Votes Against: 0

Disposition: **Minutes APPROVED.**

Chairman Obijiski acknowledged the guidance documents for outlining how the public may submit a map for consideration had been posted on the website and a press release inviting the public to participate had gone out.

Clerk Tantillo explained the deadlines for submitting legal notices. In order to hold a public hearing in the week of May 16-20th a draft plan needs to be approved and submitted for a legal notice in the official newspapers by April 29th.

The commissioners agreed to schedule at least one public hearing on May 17 and to have a draft plan ready to submit by April 28.

Commissioner Panza shared a document he prepared outlining the process he used to develop a draft map.

The commissioners discussed the process of developing and vetting maps including how to address compactness, how to identify and define gerrymandering, a method to “score” map submissions and/or creating a matrix.

The commissioners discussed getting together in small groups to learn how to use the mapping tools. Ms. Gumaer reminded them to be cognizant of the open meetings regulations as they do this and if more than 3 commissioners are meeting for any reason, they need to notice the meeting.

Director Doyle praised the process document presented by Commissioner Panza and felt it would be good to formalize it to explain how the commission reached their final draft and final plan.

Public Comment

Legislator Erner thanked the commissioners for their work. He asked if they could consider the current City of Kingston Ward boundaries as the redistricting maps are developed. He also discussed the importance of “de-invisibilizing” incarcerated individuals and appreciated that they were a part of the redistricting conversation.

Commissioners clarified some of the challenges of census blocks and population shifts as well as changes in the law since 2011 in regard to incarcerated individuals.

Supervisor Baden discussed the scheduling of public hearings and how they were done in 2011.

Chairman Obijiski asked if there was any other comments or business. Hearing none:

Motion to Adjourn

Motion Made By: Commissioner DeStafano

Motion Seconded By: Commissioner Rask

No. of Votes in Favor: 7

No. of Votes Against: 0

Time: 6:28 PM

Respectfully submitted by: Fawn Tantillo

Minutes Approved: February 9, 2022

**Commission on Reapportionment
Meeting Transcript**

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PRESENT: 1st Deputy Chair Sarah DeStefano, 2nd Deputy Chair Andy
Monk, Donna Lutz, Travis Rask, and Kathleen Waithe
ABSENT: None
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: Legislator Phil Erner; Ulster County Kristin Gumeau, Ulster
County Planning Dennis Doyle and Robert Leibowitz; Mike Baden, Supervisor, Town of
Rochester.

Regis Obijiski

So, it's 6:02, January 12, 2022, and I'm calling this meeting to order. Welcome everyone. And for the benefit of our guests on Zoom and on the, on the telephone, I will ask Fawn Tantillo, again, to call the role of the seven commissioners. And so when we, when your name is called, please wave your hands so everybody knows your winsome face and name. Say present. Okay, so go ahead, Fawn.

Fawn Tantillo

All right. Regis Obijiski.

Regis Obijiski

Here present.

Fawn Tantillo

Sarah DeStefano?

Sarah DeStefano

Here. Hi.

Fawn Tantillo

Andy Monk? Hi, there's Andy. Donna Lutz?

Andy Monk

I was muted. I'm here. I'm sorry. Geez louise (laughter)

Andy Monk

Ken Panza?

Kenneth Panza

Present.

Travis Rask

I'm here.

Fawn Tantillo

Travis Rask?

Fawn Tantillo

And, Kathleen Waithe.

Kathleen Waithe

Present.

Regis Obijiski

Well, we have a, we have a quorum. So we're, we're ready to proceed. But before we do, I'd like to just say that we have county personnel who have been participating in every single commission on reapportionment committee meeting. And each is a valuable resource to us. And so I'd like for, like for everybody who is a guest, in a sense, to meet the county folks that have been of such great help to this commission. And so one, I'm going to ask you to just introduce yourself and just, your function in the county and then point out the County, County officials that are on call, so that they could do the same.

Fawn Tantillo

Sure, here comes, Andy. Andy? I have you joining a second time too. Oh, it's because of your audio. Right, my name is Fawn Tantillo. I'm one of the clerks of the Legislature and I just am the one of the, do the paperwork for this committee. And then we have Rob with the Planning Board. Rob, you want to introduce yourself a little bit?

Robert Leibowitz

Sure. Rob Leibowitz, of the county planning department. I'm also liaised with New York State Data Center Department, so I have a lot of experience in demographic and GIS mapping background, including my other roles with the county.

Fawn Tantillo

And Kristin Gumaer. Am I pronouncing your name right, Kristen, you were with the county attorney's office?

Kristin Gumaer

Yeah. Gumaer, I'm the first assistant county attorney and I'm here to take back any legal questions to research, report back to them, if necessary, if you want.

Fawn Tantillo

And then we have a member of the public, Carol Nolan, who is watching, and, and one of our newly-elected legislators, Phil Erner, is with us tonight.

Phil Erner

Hi.

Regis Obijiski

Well, thank you, and, and welcome. Welcome to everybody. We, we have received all the documents from the December, December 8 meeting, which was a very, very exciting meeting and, to say the very least, and we have had a full transcript of that, of that meeting. And so, for I guess, those of you who do not know, but on, on the Ulster County website and the Commission on Quality Reapportionment are our meetings and notes and minutes from those, those meetings are, are there for anybody's reading and scrutiny and, and sleep time aid. We, so we have, we have the minutes for the December 8 meeting and I, I'd ask for a motion to accept those minutes. Can someone please? Kathy? Okay. Second, please?

Kenneth Panza

I'll second it.

Regis Obijiski

Okay. Thank you, Ken. All those in favor, signify by raising your hand and say yes. Yes, yes. Okay. Carry, those opposed? If anybody wishes to raise their hand and say no, that's fine, too. Okay. Any abstentions? No. Okay, so the minutes for December 8 have been, have been approved. Thank you very much. Are there any questions or comments from the commissioners first of all, about any aspects of the, of the agenda? What should be there? What isn't there? What's there that's not clear? We could, we're just going to ask, ask you first, and then, and then everybody else. So commissioners first. Anything, any comments on the agenda? Anything you want to add, or need clarification for? Okay, thank you. Now for, for others who, as participating and generalized, ask members of the, the, the county personnel who serve as support to us if, if they have any, any questions or comments about the agenda? Okay, and finally, our guests. If you have seen the agenda, and you would you have you have questions or comments. You could speak up now. Okay, thank you very much.

Regis Obijiski

I'm sorry, yes, go ahead, please. What, that, first state who you are, where your, where your municipality is, and, and what your comment is. Go ahead. Unmute yourself, please. Hello?

Fawn Tantillo

We have a comment.

Fawn Tantillo

Carol, did you have a comment for us?

Carol Nolan

No, I was talking under my breath about Phil unmuting himself. Sorry.

Regis Obijiski

Okay. I thought it was a dramatic pause, and we were all going to get a little frightened first, but thank you for that.

Sarah DeStefano

It seems like Phil might be having trouble unmuting himself. I don't know if that's the settings of the call or internet issue. But.

Phil Erner

No, hi. I misunderstood that it was my turn to speak. Is it?

Regis Obijiski

Yes, it is. Yes. Go ahead, Phil.

Phil Erner

Okay, thank you. And I did not see the agenda, unfortunately. But I, is this, is this a time when I can just ask a general question? And

Regis Obijiski

Well, we have, we, at the, at the, at the end of the meeting we have comments for, for a general question. This one is just about the agenda. And then, at the end, you can ask questions, anybody can ask questions, or make comments. Okay, so if you don't mind, Phil, all right. Okay, thank you. Thank you very much.

Fawn Tantillo

Phil, I just emailed you the meeting materials with the agenda attached, so.

Regis Obijiski

Okay. Alright, so we're gonna, we're gonna, we're gonna proceed. Before we get to the fourth bulleted item on the agenda, I just wish to use the chairs' privilege of the floor for a moment to make a couple of acknowledgments. The guidance document that, that we completed at the last, the last meeting, as you know, has been posted to the website as of December 21. And, and Fawn Tantillo, has been gracious in releasing a press, putting a press release out there on the Commission on Reapportionment's invitation for the public to participate, and the guidance that's required in order to participate. We're also, we also want to express our gratitude to, once more, to the, to the committee that prepared the first draft of the, of the guidance document and that was Sarah DeStefano, Andy Monk, and Travis Rask. The lion's share of the last meeting on December 8, the, the commission was dedicated to refining that document, and Andy who was on the shaping of the, of the penultimate draft of, of that, of that document, let us in a coordinated facilitated discussion that went on for several lively minutes. And, and he did the wordsmithing at the end to put the put the bow on the package. So I really want to acknowledge him and, and the committee that he was, he was a part of. So thank you again for that. And somewhere in the cake mix of last, last month's discussion on redistricting exercise. Someone

said, I think it was one of the commissioners, that learning is an individual sport. And while I think that that is really quite true, the dynamic of creating the guidance document, I think demonstrated abundantly that, that learning is also a group sport, and that we are learning through collaboration. And in fact, the exercises that you know we're engaged in really is a collaborative process. And so I think that the guidance document was that in spades, collaboration in spades, and so, you know, I thank everybody for learning together and sometimes it's a struggle but, it is, it. I think the product that we came up with was pretty terrific. So I just want to say thanks for all that.

Regis Obijiski

So the next, next item on the agenda tonight is is Fawn Tantillo. We were talking about the deadlines, and what they mean. And I thought I knew what they meant, and because of Fawn's wise counsel, I learned a little bit more about what they actually mean. And so Fawn, I'd like you to go over the calendar of what that means. So the our first, our first deadline is the 28th of February when the public has to have their contribution, their submissions, their mapping plans, submitted, submitted to the commission. And then, and then, the, the next, the next deadline is May 20, which to me was a little fuzzy. But it's not, it's not anymore. But I'd like you to explain how that works, and what that looks like on a calendar. So if you could.

Fawn Tantillo

Sure, I am going to share my screen, I can. So I made a calendar for April and May months only. And what the charter says is that the commission shall hold one or more public hearings on or prior to May 20 of each year ending in a two, and shall make that draft plan available to the public for inspection and comment, not less than 10 days before such public hearing. So clearly, the 20th is the deadline to hold a public hearing. One other issue is the day that the legal notice goes in the paper does not count as part of that 10-day period. So if we, so a legal notice would have to appear in the paper on the 10th in order for by the 10th in order for us to hold a public hearing on the 20th. The problem was, with that is, that the legal notices, our papers are weeklies, and the legal notices come out on Wednesdays. So if we put the legal notice in to appear on Wednesday, the 11th, you wouldn't have time. It would have to be in the paper by Wednesday the fourth. That means you could hold the public hearing any time that, that whole week. But you would have to have it in the paper, it would have to appear in the paper on the fourth. But to back that up, we have to give, the paper has a deadline for legal notices, I need to have that legal notice to put in the paper with your plan by the 29th of April, to hold a public hearing the week of the 16th through the 20th. So, it, you could hold the public hearing anytime that week. But you would have to have that legal, the, the drop dead deadline for us to have your draft plan is going to be the 28th. If you want to hold, you know, a meeting on the week of the 9th through the 13th also, you would have to back it up yet another week. So I just want you to be aware of your time constraints. I don't know if that.

Regis Obijiski

Yeah, that's, that, that's clear. So it's a little scary. It's, it means we don't have quite as much time as, as maybe well, at least I thought, maybe others have thought, and you know, that it's really good to go, to go through this. Does anyone else have any questions of Fawn on this, or clarification, need for clarification? Please, please speak up. Because we're going to have to pick a date. Excuse me. Before we pick a date, we have to also figure out if we want one or more public turns. Do we want one? Do we

want one and make a backup date just in case something happens? Or do we want two? What's, what's the pleasure of the, of the Commission on this? Given what everything that, that Fawn has, has outlined here? Anybody?

Fawn Tantillo

One thing I would recommend is not holding a public hearing on a Friday. Generally people frown on that. If we had to, we certainly could. And that week of the 17th. I believe we don't have the legislative calendar yet, but I suspect we will have either a session or a caucus night on the 17th. So we could hold one night with legislators that night if you want to unveil it to them. And that could be a public hearing for the public as well. But again, that's entirely up to you.

Kenneth Panza

What was your experience from the last Reapportionment on Public hearings? Was one sufficient, or were two?

Fawn Tantillo

The last public hearing, I believe, we held three public hearings in three different locations in the county. One up on 28, I think we had one in Ellenville, and I know we had one in the Legislature. We might have had one in New Paltz. I know, there were at least three public hearings the last time.

Kenneth Panza

That was a lot for, probably by geography as much as

Fawn Tantillo

and again, we were going from 33 legislators to 23 single member districts. So it was a huge change.

Kenneth Panza

Was there a strong attendance? Or was the attendance weak? Um,

Fawn Tantillo

I would say there was a relatively strong attendance with like, probably five or six people at each public hearing.

Robert Leibowitz

I only attended the legislative one, and that was standing room only. But of course, then Legislature had the vote on that. They don't this time.

Kenneth Panza

Well if the public hearings on lyattracted five or six people, we could probably do that in one zoom session.

Travis Rask

I agree. I agree with you Ken as well. If it's only five or six people, it's not really necessary to hold multiple.

Fawn Tantillo

If we're still meeting by zoom, then.

Committee Members

(Laughter)

Sarah DeStefano

Yeah. As we have seen, almost nearly every time as this commission, I think we can probably guarantee by April we will be also meeting on Zoom at this rate. So I agree. I, I think if it's it Zoom, which I think it largely will be, one is probably sufficient.

Regis Obijiski

One of the things that Fawn said is do we want to have a separate one, for, for the legislators. I mean, it's different this time, of course, because it's not like several people are, are going to, we're not going to shrink the Legislature, it's going to remain the same size, it'll change. But should we do one just for the legislators? And what do you think? I'm not advocating it.

Fawn Tantillo

And it wouldn't be just for the Legislature. If you're holding a public hearing, it would be for the public.

Regis Obijiski

It would be for the public. Okay.

Andy Monk

I wonder if we should do one on Zoom for people who don't want to come all the way to Kingston, and then a second one for the legislators on the 17th, as you suggested. That way we can cover all of those bases.

Sarah DeStefano

If we're, if we're trying to maintain the idea that we're not influenced by legislators, though, what would be the purpose of having a meeting with the legislatures about what we've come up with, it seems entirely counterintuitive to sort of the ground rules that we established, from our very first meeting of the four of us picking, you know, additional three members.

Andy Monk

I mean, I think if we can incorporate like a meeting where the public is there, and the legislature, legislators also happened to be there, I mean, they're going to find out about it at some point, you know, so I feel like getting their feedback. Like, we're still obviously like, the commission is the ones in charge of making the final decision. But I do think it's possible that some of the legislators might have information that we might not have. And so obviously, it's our choice, whether or not we incorporate that feedback into our plan or not. But I come from the perspective that like, having all the information is better than not having it.

Regis Obijiski

So Andy, are you say, are you suggesting two meetings?

Andy Monk

I think one online, if we're still doing that, and then one in person with the legislators if that's possible.

Fawn Tantillo

They may still be on Zoom too.

Travis Rask

Yeah, I think the legislators are on Zoom.

Sarah DeStefano

I think the legislators can come to the Zoom meeting. But I think it's entirely counter to our entire philosophy that we've been working with to have an extra meeting, just to have legislators on the call. I, I'm sure that they have information to add, I, they're sort of in the best position to provide us with information. The whole point of us being at an arm's length with them was that because they have so much information that is just inherently in a conflict of interest. That we're trying to stay away from that. So no, no doubt they have information, but that information has a heavy gloss of their own political livelihood. And I feel really uncomfortable with having a meeting just so that we can have legislators on it. No one can keep them from coming. We have one on right now. But to have one just for them seems against the philosophy and I feel very.

Andy Monk

I didn't mean one just for them.

Kenneth Panza

This isn't to change the philosophy that it established at its first meeting. I mean we've had a year under our belts, there's been a lot of discussion, and you know, opinions have changed. And I agree with Andy, we've got to invite the legislators in to see what. We may have made some significant mistakes in our, our draft proposals, and the legislature would be able to point that out and we'd be able to fix it before we approve it.

Kenneth Panza

Well, my opinion has not changed, and I don't think that the philosophy of the public has changed either. But if the, if there are members on this committee that want to change the philosophy, it'll be out in public, then that's what happened.

Kenneth Panza

Well then, we ought to have a vote.

Regis Obijiski

Well, let's, let's hear from others first. And we could do that. We could do exactly that, Ken. But others who haven't spoken about this, are there any any feelings about it, please?

Robert Leibowitz

Oh, if I may.

Regis Obijiski

Yes.

Robert Leibowitz

The vote is, it's up to you. All you're doing is gathering information. So whatever way, I mean, you, if you have, I would do a public hearing on Zoom. I mean, at this point, you don't have, you don't know where it's going to be. So a public hearing on Zoom, and a public meeting in front of, it doesn't have to be in front of legislative session. It could be just at the county office building. That would probably be the way I would do it. Have one, I would probably do it this way, have it joint or you can either have one on Zoom, or one at the legislature. It doesn't have to be at a legislative session. But that's where the legislators can come see you and, and they're also able to join in on any meeting you have, and provide their input. It doesn't mean you're going to, it's still up to you.

Andy Monk

If I could just clarify too. I was not, I think I was thinking ahead to a point where we might do one in-person meeting at the county office building, and encourage the legislators to attend that one. So we could get their feedback at once. And then have one Zoom meeting for anyone who doesn't want to come to Kingston or can't make it or whatever. Granted, those plans can't really be made right now. Because we don't know if we'll be in Zoom or in person or whatever. So that's what I was thinking when I made my comment. But I obviously know that we'll need to modify, of course, that plan according to what is going on at that point.

Regis Obijiski

Donna, Kathy, what do you, what do you think about this?

Donna Lutz

I agree with Sarah. I think that the I think that the legislators can come to any, any of our meetings that we've held, or come into, to chat with us. I feel it's a conflict of interest as well.

Regis Obijiski

Okay. Kathy?

Kathleen Waithe

Same as what Donna and Sarah had said.

Regis Obijiski

Yeah, well, I would, I would agree with, with you. And, and, and with Sarah about a special one for legislators. It seems to me that we can have two. We can have one online. And if we can, have one in person at the county office building for anybody. Is that acceptable to everybody? Would that? Would that? Would that sort of like split the baby? Or what do you think?

Kenneth Panza

I think that covers it.

Travis Rask

As long as it's open to everybody? I don't, I do agree that it shouldn't be just for the county legislators. I think it should be fair, they're, like you said, encouraged to come, like Andy had said, but they're also encouraged to come to the Zoom meeting if they want to as well.

Regis Obijiski

Yeah. So could we say that the Zoom? With the first meeting, Zoom open to everybody, of course, would be on, let's say, I don't have that calendar in front of me. I don't know if you could put that back up again, Fawn? Maybe the 16th, perhaps? The beginning of that week, is that, is that a Monday, I think, right?

Travis Rask

Could we, could we do this? Could we do the 17th?

Regis Obijiski

The 17th?

Travis Rask

Yeah, that's just a bit hard for me, for, for work on the, it's my not-for-profit deadline.

Regis Obijiski

So I think the more important one is the Zoom meeting. And so, and we, we scheduled the schedule for the, the 17th, and then work backwards, Fawn, as you had suggested? And what about for the, for the in person, if it's possible, at the county office building for anybody? What day would that be?

Travis Rask

The 18th?

Regis Obijiski

Yeah.

Travis Rask

You do two in a row.

Regis Obijiski

That'd be okay. So it's okay with me. Is that okay with everybody else?

Fawn Tantillo

That would be fine. Just the one caveat I have to give you is if the legislators are meeting in person, and they're meeting on one of, if they're standing, we'll have to see how their calendar shapes out. Before we finalize that.

Regis Obijiski

By then we'll know what their, what their calendar looks like.

Regis Obijiski

Well you know what? Okay. Well, why don't we, why don't we, why don't we say the 17th, a Zoom meeting, and then at our next meeting in, in February. We'll decide on, on, on a public meeting. How's that?

Regis Obijiski

Okay. Okay. And, and, and I do agree, I have to say, you know, we've said right, right from, right from the start, that we weren't, we weren't going to carve out a special interest for legislators, that they're unimportant. Obviously, not. But they, they, they, they are not going to be, you know, influencing, you know, this process other than, as any other citizen would. So. Okay. All right. So, so good that we've made, we've made quite, quite a bit of headway. Alright. So I think what, we're gonna leave that for the time being, is there anything else on the, on the calendar, Fawn, that you want to share?

Fawn Tantillo

Well, just that you have, I think you should, may want to add the deadline of the 28th of April for your draft plan.

Regis Obijiski

Ah, okay. All right. So that gives us a month after the 28th of February, right? So, a month, a month after the.

Fawn Tantillo

Two months. March, April?

Regis Obijiski

Oh, March and April. Okay. Correct. I'm sorry, March and April. That's, that's, that's, that's enough time. So does everybody feel comfortable with that? Is that April 28?

Fawn Tantillo

Yes.

Regis Obijiski

Yeah. Okay. All right. That's a, that's a big deal. We have to get that, have to get that in place. So thank you for that clarification, Fawn. And everybody's participation in that. Appreciate that very, very much. Okay. The next, next item on my agenda is one of our fellow, fellow commissioners, Ken Panza. And Ken sent us last week, I believe, last Thursday, a 19-page document, in which he said, 'Here's a plan. Not a complete plan. Here's a process toward, a toward a plan. And, and I'm going to be finished with it

on the 28th of, on the 28th of February,' but knowing Ken, it'll be before then. I'm pretty sure. So I call up Ken with a certain amount of enthusiasm about this because I just thought this was a great process document. Not a product. A process document, and it made me think that's where we're at right now, in this whole business, this whole reapportionment commission business, it's, it's right now it's, it's all process. And so I was, I was going on to Ken, I call him at his, at his phone, and, and characteristically, he said, 'Listen, Regis, you want to save the praise for when I finish it?' And I said, 'No, I don't care when you finish it.' I said, 'I like this. I like the unfinished, thoughtful, tell me what you're thinking about as you're, as you're doing mapping, kind of kind of a process.' So I was, I was pretty excited about that and asked him if, if he would just share, not that whole document, of course, but maybe a couple of slides in which he could give us, give us an idea of just, just how he, how he went about this. So Ken, would you mind proceeding with this please?

Kenneth Panza

Alright. Would you share the screen with me please? Alright. Am I on a share screen?

Fawn Tantillo

You should be able to share, yes. I don't see it yet, but.

Kenneth Panza

This was always a trick.

Travis Rask

You can try, look at the bottom, it's a green button, says share screen when you're hovering.

Kenneth Panza

I've lost the whole screen. Oh, maybe we're at it now.

Travis Rask

See the, the share screen, the green, green arrow. At the bottom.

Kenneth Panza

Can you see the presentation now?

Travis Rask

No, no, you have to click share. You have to click it.

Kenneth Panza

I think I lost the whole thing I had.

Travis Rask

You see like all of us though, Ken? Like do you see us?

Kenneth Panza

I can see you.

Travis Rask

Right so at the bottom of like, this screen, you're gonna see where it says, like, share screen.

Fawn Tantillo

If you move your cursor toward the bottom of the screen,

Kenneth Panza

All I did was I minimized that. Alright, I got.

Regis Obijiski

There we go. There we go. Okay.

Kenneth Panza

Alright. I got to do more of these so I can figure out how to do them. All right. Well, as Regis explained, he called me up and asked for a couple of slides on, on what I did. And this is sort of a follow on to the, the other presentation I gave. I have more than a couple of slides, but I'll go through them quite rapidly just kind of hit the highlights of what I submitted to the commission. But I, my overall plan was, on mapping was, really to define four major geographic areas. Saugerties, Ulster, and the town of Kingston, which all sort of fit together the City of Kingston, the western part of Ulster, and then the southeastern corner of Ulster, and create maps for each out area and merge the results. But the, those areas seem to be susceptible to being analyzed by themselves and then put, put together as sort of a larger puzzle. Last time I talked, I wasn't using Maptitude, because I didn't have it yet. But a lot of this work was done with Map, Maptitude. But beyond that, you know, we, I asked for a desktop environment when we got started on this and that request was denied. So I built my own, using legacy software, and I have all the 2010, 2020 all the New York adjusted census data now available on my, my desktop computer. I also use the census maps for the towns, which are available from the census, which provide a lot more detail about where the blocks are, where the, where the boundaries are, where the tracks are. And so you can really get down to the detail of where individual blocks are. And also, you know, going to use the Ulster County district map because once we start looking at the moving specific blocks around, we need to look at voting districts and, and things like that. One of the first things I did was to compare the, the prison population changes, with the, the original 2010 census, this is sort of New York's approach to, to a prisoner exchange program. And what really came out was that, you know, the, the loss of population in Shawangunk and Wawarsing was much larger than I expected. You know, sort of expected a 2000 person loss, but around 3500, which left a huge hole in those districts down there. For the most part, you know, all the towns got a few extra people as part of the prisoner exchange, but overall, it's those two, two towns we're seeing, and Shawangunk, which really are causing

Travis Rask

Ken, can you just find the slides? Because we can't see the slides you're reading. I'm assuming you're on slide four at this point?

Travis Rask

Yeah, you can't see the slides?

Travis Rask

No. You've just got to click it.

Regis Obijiski

You need to click on it, yeah.

Kenneth Panza

Oh, okay. I was using buttons, I'm sorry.

Travis Rask

No problem, no problem.

Kenneth Panza

New York adjusted census?

Travis Rask

Yeah, that's, that's the one. Yeah, I'm assuming that's the one that you're talking about.

Kenneth Panza

Alright, the one that has all these numbers.

Travis Rask

Yes. Can you click it?

Regis Obijiski

Can you click that? yeah.

Kenneth Panza

I'm not sure what you're missing.

Travis Rask

Oh, you might be in slideshow view, right?

Robert Leibowitz

Well he's not. I think Ken, there's a, you see where it says 95% on your screen? There's a button right to the left of it, that's presentation mode, you might want to click that.

Kenneth Panza

I don't see that on this thing. What am I supposed to click?

Robert Leibowitz

Right on your lower right hand side of your screen, on your PDF, there's some, there's like a little, if there's 95% number right next to it, is a, like full screen.

Kenneth Panza

I don't see that.

Travis Rask

I think he's in slideshow mode.

Robert Leibowitz

That's weird.

Robert Leibowitz

I don't know what you're sharing, you're sharing.

Travis Rask

Oh hey, there we go.

Regis Obijiski

There you go, there you.

Travis Rask

Thanks Ken.

Andy Monk

Ken, I'm so sorry, now you're on mute.

Regis Obijiski

You gotta unmute yourself, Ken. We can't hear you, Ken.

Andy Monk

Fawn, as the host, can you invite Ken to unmute the microphone, I think there's a button.

Kenneth Panza

There we go. You know, these drop back into the background. And I don't, they don't pop up unless you hit the right spot on the screen. Alright, some of the, the mapping assumptions I use when doing the maps, I was really looking to do, be non-destructive districts, meaning, I didn't want to really change the districts I was looking at significantly. So, you know, the results I wanted, I wanted to look sort of like what the current districts look like. That's truly not possible for the southern districts where you have that huge hole that was created by the, removing the incarcerated prisoners. I use only Census blocks. There are 155 block groups. And, you know, these really eliminate a lot of the problems of state and town boundaries, within the village boundaries, with the minimize, the use of individual blocks, which is possible now, but at the very end, some of that's going to have to change. And I define the four geographic areas. So going quickly through them.

Regis Obijiski

There we go.

Kenneth Panza

The first file I looked at was Saugerties, Ulster, and the town of Kingston. The population of those towns hardly changed at all. Saugerties dropped, and the Ulster, and the town of Kingston picked up, and those cover for existing districts, and you could easily create four new districts out of those populations, and meet the, the 15 criteria. But the, with the, the lower district sizes, part of the, part of that population has to be removed. So what that looks like, we have this, these are the current districts, and this is what the Maptitude would look like, with the new districts I combined. And what has been taken out is this section of Hurley, or of Ulster, which is just west of the town of the City of Kingston. Because the, well now, the, because of the lower population of the lower sizes, the districts are going to have lower populations. But the, the criteria of having districts that look like what they originally looked like, is pretty closely followed here. The same thing with the City of Kingston. They pick up a few more incarcerated prison, prisoners on their total population counts. But the city of Kingston fits, again, within the three districts they already have, although the district boundaries might be a little bit different. And this is what it looked like on the Maptitude. And this was, you know, these lines were drawn just based on the numbers of the size of the block groups. And there's, you know, I have no understanding what these neighborhoods are, or what the lines cover, but these are the three districts just based on the numbers, for the City of Kingston. And then the town of Woodstock was sort of a standalone case. The town got bigger, but the district sizes had to be reduced. So we had to remove an area from the town of Woodstock in order to reduce the district size. In this case, I chose to remove the, this, this voting block here, which is the lefter part of Hurley, of Woodstock. So the overall result is, is that you can define the entire northeast corner of Ulster County, essentially using the same types of district boundaries that were, that existed beforehand. So, no one is really surprised by the way the districts had been redrawn, except you have to, you know, two areas had to be removed. One from the town of Ulster, and one from the town of Hurley, which now have to be reestablished and put into a new area. But from the viewpoint of what I did, this now is all locked in place, because it doesn't really need to be changed beyond this. So now I defined the Ulster County West, which is the towns of Hurley, Marbletown, all of Rochester, Rosendale and then the Shandaken, Hardenburgh, Denning area. This whole area has declined in population by about 871 people, but the idea was that, at this point, had to find a place for that place of, that district of Hurley, which we moved out. And then we had three alternatives. One, move it with the, move it back into Hurley, and combine it with the rest of the Hurley districts, merge it with Olive in district 22, or create a brand new district, which was encompassing the, the Ashokan reservoir. Now this third option, this was just one of these options, what if, no one's asked for this type of rearrangement, but I just thought I'd try something new and different. If you merge that section out of Woodstock into the Hurley, which is, you know, this was originally this part of the town of Hurley, and all we're doing is remove, putting it back into Hurley, what happens is that you rearrange the, the boundaries for district 18, down into Hurley, into Marbletown, and you rearrange the district boundaries for Rosendale. But they don't look all that different from what is already in place with the existing maps.

Kenneth Panza

So this is the way it works out, you have three districts, 18, 19 and 23. Everything balances out, and there's no changes to the western districts of 21 and 22. The second option was to merge that section of Hurley with Olive in district 22. Now what happens there is that the, that whole western district which is 22, gets larger, and you have to push out, essentially Denning and Hardenburgh, and you have to attach that to Rochester. And you end up with new districts 18 and 19, 21 and 22. But some of them don't match up yet. On district 18, we're over about, or under about 5.4%. But that district line runs right through Stoneridge. So it's easy to see how we can move that line and then resolve that, that differential. The other area is that, this area is over by probably about 1000 people in district 22. But that's right next to the, the hole that was created by removing the prisoners. So you need, we need extra people down there in order to fill in districts where Wawarsing and Shawangunk. So that, what we end up with is, is some partial arrangements which have to be fixed when we get to the southern districts. And finally, I created a district which encompasses the Ashokan. Attach Hurley to Olive, bring it all the way around. Not really happy with this approach. But this is just another option that could be considered. The disadvantage is that no one's really looking for this sort of district. And secondly, parts of Marbletown get attached to, to Olive, get attached to Shandaken, which would certainly, I'm sure, surprise the people who are currently residing in Marbletown. Again, the tablet shows that, you know, we have about 1000 people extra in district 21, which need to be, would move into the, into the hole that the the prisoner exchange program created. So this is where we end up, or where I've ended up. I have the northeastern corner of, of Ulster pretty much locked down. No reason to change those, those proposed districts. The middle part, we have three options. Two, which is real, probably really valuable, which can be brought together. And then the southeastern portion is open. And I put, in the report, I put in two alternatives that can be laid there. And then, if we move around some of the blocks, the interim Census blocks, then we can create an entire new Ulster County district map. Ulster is somewhere else. So I mean, this is where I am, I'm ready to finalize four different district maps. The combination of three of the district maps for Western Ulster and two of the southeastern altar have to balance the populations using census and eliminate those overages to create the documentation that goes along with these, and then I'll submit these district plans to the, to the Commission for their consideration and evaluation. I put down the date February 28. But I probably could have this done before our next meeting for, for your review. That's it.

Regis Obijiski

Okay, yeah. Thank you, Ken. And, you know, I think the virtue of this, what Ken has done is a kind of an example of what we can do with each other as we are shaping, shaping our own maps. Mine was a little bit different than what, what Ken had described, but there's just so many variations. But I appreciate the articulation of the process. That is, I think, where most of us are at. I, I don't know where everybody else is, you know. I've, I've certainly tried my hand at this and came up with one complete, one complete map and one still, still incomplete. My goal is to finish two, but I don't know that I'm going to get much more done than that. And some, some folks are still, are still into looking at partial, partial maps. But I think the discussion is worthwhile. I encourage, I encourage all commissioners to, to read Ken's report to us as a, as a, as a process document, not a product document, as a process document. And I thank you very much, Ken, for you know, all this, all this hard work, and the explanation that you just, you just provided, which leads us.

Kenneth Panza

If anyone has any questions, certainly just send me emails, and I'll be glad to respond as best I can.

Regis Obijiski

That's great, Ken, thanks for making yourself available. Appreciate that. The, what we're, what we're looking at, is, we kind of got the hearings, not quite out of the way. But we know, we had that, we have a direction on that. All of that's, to the good. The next question, and I'm not going to try and prolong this, but, but I really want to stimulate some conversation, the bullet points that I included in the agenda items, were really only for, for discussion. I was really popcorning there, you know, whether we should have a, a committee or not, or whether the entire commission ought to be working on evaluations. There are different ways, different ways of looking at it, and I'd like to, I like to hear from the other Commissioners, what they, what they feel about our next steps. And, and before you know it, February 28th will be here, and we're ready to, to, for, to consider maps that people are providing, and also the commissioners are providing. And, you know, how do we evaluate them? Do we have a list of criteria? Well we do, with the software. There's a sense of completeness, with regard to contiguity, as well as population, unassigned, signed areas. So, there, the software does provide some of that, but it doesn't provide, it does provide other things. So we have to come up with criteria by which we're going to judge these things. I think we need a certain, correct me if I'm wrong, a certain facility with mapping ourselves so that we, when we look at someone else's map, let's just say a map from one of the people from, from the public, then we would be able to say, you know, this works. The software, the software says that it meets all the specifications. What else are we going to, what else are we, are we looking at? So I would like to, you know, open this up for a conversation on how we would go about doing this. Do you think that there needs to be a committee that, that, that first of all vets the, the submissions to make sure that all the basics are there. That they're, that they meet all the criteria of the, of the software? That could be a kind of a level one review. Another one could be, could mean, could be, does it meet compactness? Compactness, meaning that, that the boundaries are, are not contorted. That they're not dispersed, that they're not squiggly, that they don't spike out. That, another level could, could be, are we keeping and trying to maintain the boundary levels of municipalities as best we can? I know if we look, if we do, if we do group blocks like, like Ken is doing, sometimes it spills over, sometimes it nicely boundaries, boundaries the municipality. So there are lots of ways of looking at it. How do we make sure that we're defining geographic features such as the water Ken was talking about? The Ashokan? So let's say, a reservoir, lakes, streams, mountains. You know, you know, how are we, how are we maintaining that kind of integrity? Another, another is, we said that there'll be no gerrymandering. What does that look like?

Regis Obijiski

I don't know. I myself don't know what gerrymandering looks like, the first map that I came up with, it was all about numbers, and had nothing to do with gerrymandering. And somebody could take a look at this and say, 'Wow, that you really gerrymandered, the City of Kingston?' I'd say, 'it wasn't deliberate if I did, because I don't, I don't know what that means.' And so, does anybody know what that means? And who could make a, make a call on what, what, what gerrymandering means? Another level that we could, you know, throw into this mix is, you know, is there a possibility to mix and match? In other words, two or more pieces of two or more maps, that with some, some adjustments could actually work. So it's not just accepting one entire map. It could be two, or three, because, you know, the western part of the county looks better this way, that the the southern, which lost a lot of population, looks better that

way. City of Kingston looks better that way. So we can, we can glean ideas. So there's, there are different levels of criteria, I think that we could impose, you know, on, on our decision making. So I'd like to know from you. First of all, if you think that we need a kind of a vetting committee, that would help us, the vetting committee could be a composition of anybody, it could be a couple of commissioners, a couple of staff from, from the county who wish to do this, and to sort things out so that we don't have to do it as a group of seven, that, that will have been done for us. Or maybe you think it should be done, you know, all by, by the, by the commissioners themselves. So with that, I hope I'm not, not confusing things too much. But, how are we going to go about doing this? How are we going to go about making, making, making some decisions? Based on what? And can we say, and can we say with any certainty that it meets certain standards of certain criteria that, you know, that we espouse. So anyway, have at it, I appreciate, you know, anybody's reflection on this. What do we do? Yes, go ahead Rob.

Robert Leibowitz

I have few. Sure. One, well, the first step, if, if you're talking about completeness, there is the submit button. A submit button, a plan can't be submitted unless you press that submit button. And it's a complete, and it's compact. So it, and it's contiguous. So you have, the software handles that first threshold, so anything that gets complete is, is technically a legitimate map for consideration. So that means, you have, what you really need is a second level. And what I'd recommend, is that the committee come up with a matrix, and that is something that a subcommittee can do. You can base it off your, your criteria you find in the charter, plus the software I have, I will be able to bring in them. And I'll be able to run some other compactness analysis on them too. So I'll be able to provide that to the committee too. And we'll, I should be able to bring them all in at once. And we could look at all the plans. on one screen. I haven't done that before yet. So that's, that's the next thing. But going back to the matrix, if you come up with a matrix, and then as a homework assignment, once every, all these maps are submitted, each committee member could then look at them, rank them based on the criteria, and then come back and see what, see how they score, and then maybe take the top 3, 4, 5, and then take them back into the program and play with them, and see what aspects you like. And then, that's when you get down to the real nitty gritty, and you start really playing with the, as a committee, heads up, this line here, this line here, that kind of stuff. That's, that's the way I would handle it.

Dennis Doyle

So, so, Regis, if I may, I apologize. I just want to build on what Rob said. The planning department has quite a bit of experience in terms of selection. And if that's what you're really doing here. And we build matrices all the time and they can be weighted, they can be unweighted, some things can take priorities, or other things, and there's quite a bit of, there's quite a bit of discussion that goes into the matrix. The good thing is when you come out, is everybody sort of is looking at and agreeing that when we score these things, we're looking at the same set of criteria for each of the sites. You're going to come up with different scores. But the idea would be, and we've, we do this in selection of consultants, we actually do this in site selection, or we're currently engaged in site selection for a government operation center, we spent quite a bit of time developing criteria in terms of how we would cite that, and making the choices there. And one of the other thing is it's defensible on a lot of other reasons. It's, it's, it's a, it becomes pretty defensible in terms of how did you arrive at that, at that, and then what we ended up doing, what I would suggest, in agreement with, with Rob would be, everybody scores, all the

ones that you, that are eligible to be scored, you end up averaging the scores. And then if everyone's comfortable, you pick the top five, the top three, you pick, you pick whatever number you want to do. And then from those, you can basically say, okay, what do we like, then we can go through the exact same same thing that Ken is done, what do we like about these, and what don't we like about these. You do pros and cons. And then you can start to, to, to look at what I would call a composite. And see where we are in composites. So you may put, you may produce two or three composites, or you may even say this one's just great, it works. And then you could rank the composites, and then go, and then go from there to to end up getting to a preferred, a preferred selection. The nice thing about that is, is that a couple things. One is, is that it's a clear methodology in terms of how the committee got to a final decision. And two is that we always look at this in terms of in terms of the environmental work that we do and others. It's defensible, not only in terms of the general public, but it's also defensible if you end up going to court.

Regis Obijiski

Thank you. Yeah. Well, Dennis, that is great. And Rob, thank you. That's exactly what, that's exactly what I was looking for. I was struggling with that this afternoon. And you know, I came up with these levels. I mean, I mean, it's really a matrix is what you're talking about. And a matrix by which, by which commissioners can score. And as you say, we could these things could be, this, this could be averaged out. I love it. How do we get there? How do we get to that? Should, should, should a couple of us meet with Ron?

Kenneth Panza

Let's have a discussion about what this matrix is? I mean, I don't have to mean, you throw out a matrix, and then we do some numbers. What are the dimensions of the matrix?

Sarah DeStefano

I think that the only way to really have a matrix on this, I mean, we had a great discussion on the last time, on our instructions. As Ken noted, none of our preferences on geographic features or town lines is supposed to really have any preference over any other. So, unfortunately, it seems to me that a matrix on the features of the maps themselves, it probably is time consuming, but also potentially runs afoul of the charter that we're working under. If our philosophy on it was that none of the features can really, has any preference over others, so. But I think the idea of us scoring what we like, and then having it be, you know, some sort of average, amongst the seven of us, makes sense, it shows what our priorities are from the maps. So, I think that might be the way of going about it. But the features-wise, I think, coming up with, you know, weightings and whatnot, as hazardous?

Kenneth Panza

Well, what, I just don't understand what, what you're saying, Sarah. So, instead of creating a matrix by which we would score, you're saying, to score it to create the criteria? Because what you like, or what I like, could be very different, right?

Sarah DeStefano

But that, probably, probably, we can't come up with a matrix that, we're trying to come up with a standard, and then we're gonna weight a standard, and weight. It would, we'd all come up with the

same result then, right? So, I just don't think that we can really put a weighting on like, 'Oh, I like that this avoids a mountain range, or that this is respectful of a town line, when we've already agreed that those considerations really have no, like, there's no list of, this one is more important than the other, than doing it in a matrix inherently says, this one is more important than the other. Where, we've already agreed that the first one is the way the charter explains to us, we're supposed to be proceeding.

Robert Leibowitz

I would think of it this way. The matrix should be, how close do you think this meets the considerations of the charter, take that across the board, and think about, map, and each line that way this way? You're not, and it can be a little bit, I mean, everybody's got their own opinion on how well it meets that threshold of the charter. But, that, that's the way I would do it.

Sarah DeStefano

Right. That's what, I'm sort of saying is like, we, we can score it based on how we feel it is sufficient to meet criteria. But like, that's basically like scoring it based on our preferences, like, score, ranking it, like if there's seven of them, the best one is seven. And the least, the one we like the least is one, you know, and then having that be an average amongst us. But otherwise, I don't think you can, you can really weight the internal features of the map.

Regis Obijiski

So you're. Go ahead, Ken.

Kenneth Panza

Last month, we, we defined what the features are that are required. It was a four or five bullets that we put in that the documents. And I suppose, oh that's one dimension of the matrix, and then the other dimension is the various plans, and we mark each base, how well they meet that previously-defined criteria. Because that's what, you know, people are working towards. And that's from, right from the charter. I mean, otherwise, you know, this discussion about matrix is very esoteric. I mean, unless you actually start identifying what the dimensions are, it, you really can't make a decision whether to do it or not. But we have one dimension, which we already defined in the, the document we did last month. And I suppose we could just mark all the, all the maps against those criteria that we already established. And I'm not sure that's any different than what Regis just suggested.

Regis Obijiski

No, it's not any different from what I just suggested.

Robert Leibowitz

Just remember, one thing you will have is, you will have numbers, and you will be able to look at them and say, 'Okay, how many deviations was, what's the greatest extent and lowest extent of any district? And how close overall are all the districts to the median.' So you will be very, there, there will be some numbers, it won't all be subjective to it, or, you will have numbers.

Kenneth Panza

What numbers, numbers of what?

Robert Leibowitz

How far you, each, each overall map deviates from median. So what? From zero. So it's like, you can look at the districts and say, okay, these, all these districts, this map keeps all the districts closest to the median, that's, that meets the compactness threshold much better than one that has minus five plus five all over the place. If you have all ones that are, you know, plus one, plus, minus two all over the place, then that's a more compact map that might be, that would be, technically be a better map. You'll have that number to look at.

Kenneth Panza

Well, we got that number out of Maptitude already, right?

Robert Leibowitz

Right. But you'll be able to compare them all, is all I'm saying.

Regis Obijiski

Well, I'm not sure we're gonna, we're gonna do this tonight. In fact, I am sure that we're not, but I myself would like to meet with, with Rob about this, and look at the criteria that's, that's already, Ken, as you said, you know, in the, in the guidance document. Everything well, first of all the population, and those things, the Maptitude does not allow you to make a map that isn't, that isn't complete. But then, there are things that they don't measure, such as what we were talking about, with regard to boundaries. Whether those are political boundaries, or geographical boundaries, or whatever boundaries we want to, want to think of. So, would anybody like to join me in meeting, meeting with Rob about this. We'll see if we can get, get this thing by the tail the next time. Because I don't really want to get into, I wouldn't want us to, to start, to start scoring willy nilly, you know, on our own what we like, you know, and then, and then see what everybody else likes. But there's, you know, there's, there's a little bit more method to it.

Kenneth Panza

You know, I think there's another consideration here. I mean, none of us were chosen for those groups based on our mapping skills.

Regis Obijiski

Right.

Kenneth Panza

I mean, I'm sort of an exception, but that was less than, that wasn't, wasn't purposeful. It was just kind of, you know, I'd done zoning and, and water and, and stuff like that. So I, you know, have an interest in maps over a long period of time. But we were chosen because we have an understanding of various parts of the county. I mean, I'm pretty good at the northeast corner of little Woodstock, and understand Saugerties and Ulster and Olive, because I meet with those people on a lot of my climate work, but at the south end of the county, I mean, I've only recently learned how to pronounce Shawangunk, you know, I mean I have no idea what the, you know, I again, I just do the do the numbers, and I may be

doing things which some one else would look at and say, that that doesn't really belong there. You need to move this town over. And like, Mike told us with Kerhonkson. You know, based on what his comment was, we put Kerhonkson into, into Rochester. But I'm sure there are other situations like that in southern Ulster, which I have no idea about, which other members of the commission would, would be able to inform us about. And, you know, that sort of discussion, we also need to have, not just, you know, what the standard deviation is of the population variances on, on the various districts? I mean, that's an interesting number. But, you know, once the district reaches its, is within the criteria, I'm not sure or really care.

Regis Obijiski

Yeah. Well, let me ask the question, again, would anybody like to accompany me to really, to meet with Rob, and to try and get, get our arms around this a little bit better than what we have right now?

Kathleen Waithe

I was meeting with Rob tomorrow, right? At two o'clock, so if you want to jump in on it, we're meeting.

Robert Leibowitz

I thought that was a training session, actually, Kathy.

Regis Obijiski

Yeah. I wouldn't want to cut into, into, into that, into your training session, Kath? You know, but, I don't know what Rob's time is either. You know, I can't speak to that.

Robert Leibowitz

I'll let you know.

Regis Obijiski

Yeah, well, okay. But.

Kristin Gumaer

I'd, I'll jump in here for a moment. I just feel like we need to be careful about how many, once there are two or more and you're discussing what you're going to do, moving forward, then it becomes a meeting, and you need to invite every, the public, you need to invite the public.

Regis Obijiski

Two or more, or four or more?

Kristin Gumaer

Reading right now, my understanding is two, what, two or more if you're discussing public business, whether or not any formal action is taken. So you, you can't do public business without, like you can't act in.

Fawn Tantillo

They can have. My understanding is that, because we've discussed this, they can have three commissioners on a on a subcommittee or something like that without doing a formal. And once they get four, they have a quorum, and they have to notice it. But up to three of them can be it can be training, or working on a project.

Kristin Gumaer

Training, okay. You're not making any decisions.

Regis Obijiski

No, we're not making any decisions.

Kenneth Panza

My interpretation on the committee of Open Government, on this specific question. When the Woodstock Town Board assigned two town councilman to work on zoning revisions. And I asked him, isn't this an open meeting, and they said, under those conditions, that subcommittee is established by the town board, is considered an independent committee, and is required to follow the open meetings law.

Sarah DeStefano

I don't think they're publishing. I don't, I mean, I actually am not even sure I would approve of a subcommittee on this topic. So it seems to me it's just a information gathering by Regis and, and Kathy, and I guess Donna.

Regis Obijiski

I like that. I, I, let's not call it a committee.

Sarah DeStefano

I don't think it's something you have got to be voting on, and I don't think I would even approve the creation of which so. Yeah, that's where.

Regis Obijiski

No, it's really, yeah. Thank you. That's a, that's really, really helpful. Kristin, does that, does that stack up okay, with you?

Kristin Gumaer

I think it's fine if the three of you are meeting with Rob just to gather information on. Right. Yeah.

Regis Obijiski

Okay. All right. Well, you know, since, since no one's really, really elbowing to, to meet with me and Rob, I'll ask you to, you all have my email and my telephone number. Could you could you call me or email me with your interest in doing a, an information session with Rob? Okay. So we'll leave it, we'll leave it. We'll leave it there. And this. I'm sorry.

Kenneth Panza

I'm under quarantine. So I can't really do much in the way of in-person meetings.

Regis Obijiski

Okay. Okay. All right. But those who can, and wish to, I appreciate, I'd appreciate hearing from you. Thank you. The, the last thing I wanted to mention was the final plan, which is exactly the, exactly the same thing. How do we go about doing this? And what occurred to me is something that, that perhaps it was Dennis that said, if this is ever challenged, we really should have, you know, some sort of method we could say, this is what we did. This is how we did it. It's why we did it. And we did it with a certain sense of, a certain sense of rigor, and, and, and try to leave arbitrariness at the door, and certainly prejudice at the door. So.

Dennis Doyle

I real, I really like the idea of thinking about running through this when you finally get to a decision-making process, that the commission, looking at what Ken Panza has done, that the Commission produce a document that says here all of the considerations that we have, that we arrived at that, and that the Commission voted on the document as a whole, not that somebody says, 'I did it because of this,' somebody else says, 'I did it because of that.' But really, it's a commission decision. We all agree with the facts of how we got there. And I think Ken's, Ken's short, short PowerPoint gives you an idea of a legal document that you can write out and say, 'This is how we do it,' and the Commission votes on that particular document for that particular plan. And for me, that, that would, that would be, I mean, I'm not an attorney, but that would be the, that's what we advise local planning boards. Don't do things individually, do things as boards or commissions.

Regis Obijiski

Right.

Sarah DeStefano

I also want to note that, I don't know that a matrix is this objective standard that we think we're creating. There are plenty of matrices that have been used over time that have baked discrimination and prejudice into them for generations. I mean, we look at redlining in the United States was, was subsequent to a matrix. So I think having a document that explains fully what our thought processes was, is very important. Obviously, we'll justify all the decisions we made. But I think we should not kid ourselves that a matrix protects us from any sort of, you know, arm's length objective standard. There's plenty of times that matrix is baked in our subjective biases, and we should be, we should be very careful about that. So like I said, I think Dennis is correct. Having that document is a necessity, but, let's be careful about thinking our matrix is objective.

Regis Obijiski

All right. Okay. Anybody else on this topic? Okay. I think we have come close, close to the end, so new businesses. Does any, any commissioner have new business for us to consider beyond what we talked about tonight, or at a future meeting?

Regis Obijiski

Okay, old business, I think we've covered, for the most part. Public comment, this is the time for anybody who was a guest, either via zoom or by phone, that have any comments on the work of the of the Commission. So we'll start with the, those who were on, on Zoom. Phil, you may want to go, want to go first, and say what you wanted to say in the beginning. Phil, you still with us? Good. Yes.

Phil Erner

Yeah. Thank you, Chair, and, and thank you Commission for your work. Thank you for having me here. You know, I, I read the sample map that, that you, or at least one sample map that you had drawn, Chair Obijiski, and also one that Supervisor Baden had submitted, and now, seeing the presentation from Commissioner Panza, and I came in here seeing how the, those proposed maps of the City of Kingston would mix up the different wards, and then I came through tonight's presentation appreciating how actually, throughout the county, many, if not most of the towns, get broken up into, you know, it doesn't line up your, your town board and your county representative. And I'm wondering if there's any coordination that you all, through your insight in working on this, can do, or would like to do, with the existing town and, and village and city governments. I'm not sure if any towns elect by, by district, but I, of course, the City of Kingston does elect by wards. And, but of course, the whole town elects its government separate from other towns. So I guess, to make my point, what consideration do you give to, it sounds like you do give some, but, but it's not possible with a population and other constraints, always to keep it lined up in that way. And I'm not sure I've asked a question in the end, but I appreciate you hearing me talk about that, and, and just seeing that we can keep communities together that have an interest that's the same or think they do, or have some representation that might be the same, and, but in general, I appreciate your work. And thank you for, for thinking about all these things and working on it.

Regis Obijiski

Well, thank you, Phil. I'll just, I'll give you a quick, quick response. At least, that's my response, and anybody else can jump in on this. I've heard from at least two elected officials, beside yourself, that there is a certain desperateness that occurs with reapportionment, where county legislators and municipal officials don't blend. You don't, you, there's, there's no crossover. And, and, and people who happen to live in a municipality, have no idea who their state legislator, excuse me, their county legislator even is, and may not have even seen her or him ever, and wonder why they don't come to council meetings or top board meetings. And that happens a lot, all over the, all over the place. And so two elected officials says, 'Can't you just keep us whole?' Well, that would be neat. If you take for example, I live in the, I live in the town of Ulster. To have that whole, first of all, it's there's 12,600 people. So you can't make, you can't make two, you can't make one, it's going to be a little bit, a little bit messy. It's going to be a little bit of this, and this, and that. We spill over into the town of Kingston. So there's, it's, we don't, our focus is not to, in a sense, pick the districts, pick the leg- excuse me, pick or try to fit in a Procrustean way, the, the, our work into, into a certain legislative, legislative district. We do what we do based on the population. And you know, we even had to discipline ourselves not to, not to talk about voters. You know, we're just talking about population. And so there's a, there's a difference, there's a difference there. So it's, from, from a legislator's point, point of view from, from, as a, as a county legislator, and as a municipal official, these things don't blend neatly. They just don't. And, and we don't work from that, we work from the other end. So it doesn't, it doesn't, it often seems like it's a bit messy. Unless, of course, you live out in, in Shandaken, Olive, and Hardenburgh. And, you know, they,

those things sort of fit nicely, and they have for years, except for Ken tonight. He decided to do something different in the far west, far west of the county. But that's been stable for, for years, almost, almost to the number. And so, it's very neat, and it's all boundaried. But that's one of the few places in the entire county where that, where that works. But I, we certainly understand your point of view, and we've heard it before. So, but we try to be sensitive to it.

Kenneth Panza

I might add one thing is that, the Census change between 2010 and 2020 for Ulster County was very small. And you could also make the case, well, we could just keep the same districts. Except that they moved out 3000, 3500 incarcerated prisoners, and that dropped our population by about 35, well, well, actually about 2500, which reduced the size of all the available districts. So even if the district, nothing has changed, it's gonna get smaller. And so, you know, some places that makes, that's easy to do. Like a nice, on the northeast corner, we can shrink things up and rearrange it and take a few sections out and move them somewhere else. Well, those other sections where you're moving new parts of a town into something that wasn't there before, like the far west, or where you have a big hole, like way down in Shawangunk and Wawarsing, I mean, that's a major reshuffling of those district boundaries, just to make up for that deficit.

Regis Obijiski

Okay, is there anyone else that that is on Zoom that would like to make a comment or ask a question?

Mike Baden

Yeah Regis. Mike. Mike Baden.

Regis Obijiski

Yeah. Hi, Mike.

Mike Baden

So, um, while you guys were discussing the public hearings, I clicked back to the Legislature website. And, not that it matters, but there were three public hearings. Fawn was indeed correct. There was one at the Legislature. There was a north and a south public hearing, is how it was broken up. But something I discovered that I had sort of forgotten about is on there, is there's a whole host of written comments that were submitted on the 2011 redistricting, and just scrolling through them, I had a flood of remembrance of a lot of the issues that were discovered in 2011. And many of them, I see you guys sort of having the same conversation. So just a thought, not that it specifically pertains to what you're doing now. But from generalities, it might be interesting to go back and look at some of those discussions and some of those comments that were made, because many of them are probably still appropriate now, because they're talking about geo, geography, not necessarily population. So I just thought I would mention that. It was, it definitely was all home week for me from 10 years ago. So, but just, just to comment that it was very remindful to me, but to many of you reading it for the first time, it might be interesting.

Regis Obijiski

Thank you, Mike. Anyone else have a comment for us, or a question on Zoom? If not, how about on the telephone? If there's anybody on the phone, please unmute yourself and speak up, please. Okay. All right. Well, thank you. Thank you, everyone.

Andy Monk

Regis, it looks like Phil does have one more question.

Regis Obijiski

I'm sorry. Oh, Phil, I'm sorry. You do have your hand up. I apologize. Go ahead.

Phil Erner

Thank you. Again, I just wanted to mention the discussion around the shifting of population due to incarcerated folks. And I'm grateful that we're talking about this here, and I think it's important that we, de-invisibilize our incarcerated neighbors, and if this commission is, in so talking about, we can acknowledge the massive number of people we've imprisoned in our county. And, I also wanted to thank Commissioner DeStefano, particularly, thank you for mentioning some of what you've been saying around equity, and the past history of redlining and so forth. I really appreciate you bringing that up into this conversation. So thank you, again.

Regis Obijiski

Appreciate your sensitivity on that. Thank you, sir. Anyone else, please?

Sarah DeStefano

To follow up on that, we actually by law have to remove the prison population from our census counts. Not because we're trying not to consider them, but because they'll actually be considered in the location that they call home. So just to, you're nodding, it seems like you're aware of that. But just to make clear that we're not trying to banish them from our account, but that there's been a legal process, and that they're actually be considered where they really probably should be.

Regis Obijiski

Yeah, yeah. Well said. Thank you, Sarah. Last call for a comment or question.

Fawn Tantillo

Rob has his hand up.

Robert Leibowitz

Yeah. When did you want to actually publish the Caliper Maptitude website to everybody? Have we released a press release? Is it linked to the committee redistricting website? That would be apropos to do so.

Fawn Tantillo

Yes, it's on the website.

Robert Leibowitz

Okay. Okay. Have we advertised it?

Fawn Tantillo

Yes, we made a press release about it.

Robert Leibowitz

I haven't seen any news articles on it.

Regis Obijiski

There was. Yeah, Pat Doxsey wrote an article. Yeah.

Fawn Tantillo

I'm sorry, Rob, I.

Kenneth Panza

How many people have signed up? How many people have signed up to do, to use it?

Robert Leibowitz

There are a number of shared plans now. But um, you'd have to go in and start a plan to see all them. Couple, most of those people are people already on this call, though.

Regis Obijiski

Okay. All right. Anyone else? Okay. I'm requesting a motion for adjournment.

Sarah DeStefano

So moved.

Regis Obijiski

Travis? Oh, all right, Sarah. Travis second?

Travis Rask

Sure.

Regis Obijiski

Okay. Thank you very much. All in favor.

Committee Members

Aye.

Regis Obijiski

Okay. Thank you very much. Well, enjoy the rest of your evening. We'll see you on February 9, and I hope to hear, I hope to get a phone call or two from, from some of you. Thank you. Bye bye.